

COVID-19 Preparedness - An Ounce of Preparedness is Worth a Pound of Cure

from IFCPP Member Doug Beaver, CPP, National Museum of Women in the Arts

Benjamin Franklin's axiom that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is particularly relevant today, during the coronavirus pandemic, as it was when Franklin made the quote. Over the course of the past several months cultural organizations globally have progressively restricted their public activities, and ultimately closed completely, due to the coronavirus pandemic. The gradual reopening of museums in particularly hard-hit countries is a sign that there's a light at the end of an unknowingly long, dark tunnel. Upon reopening cultural institutions must understandably prioritize the health and safety of visitors with extensive precautionary measures.

It's understood that we must all prepare for a protracted battle with coronavirus. Within our cultural institutions there are changes we should consider now to prepare for what's next. The public demand for cultural activities is expected to return, but at an unknown time and with the assumption that conventional cultural experiences will continue to be fashionable, however, in many cases altered.

The reality is we can't just hit a reset button and revert to how things were before. This pandemic, like all great pandemics, threatens to reappear in subsequent waves over the next year to eighteen months, until we find a vaccine or develop group immunity. It is important that we get prepared safely and securely for the future.

When the cultural sector does reopen its doors, it will undoubtedly do so with reduced programming and a lower cost structure that anticipates decreased attendance for at least the next year due to reduced global and domestic tourism and spending.

What we do now and over the course of the next 12 to 18 months will matter greatly to the safety of our institutions, the public health of our workers, and to our economic rebound. If we all plan now for the eventual return to normalcy, the process will lead to a smooth transition for our staff and visitors.

If you have reopening strategies you'd like to share, I'll compile them into a guideline document for distribution to all who participated!

Please forward your ideas and strategies to rob@ifcpp.org and DBeaver@nmwa.org

Webinar coming up toward the end of April from IFCPP and Doug Beaver: ***Security Considerations for Re-Opening***