The IPOP Exhibition Development Toolkit and Process: A Summary

The toolkit consists of 11 activities that are designed to be applied during the exhibition development process. The activities exist within the IPOP framework, a personality theory applicable to museum visitors, but can also be used independently of IPOP in many cases.

1. **Forming an IPOP team** – by assembling a team of individuals whose preferences include the conceptual (Idea), emotional (People), aesthetic (Object), and somatic (People) dimensions of experience the exhibition is more likely to avoid a narrow experience focus.

2. **Understanding IPOP** – by immersing themselves in the theory of IPOP, the team is able to appreciate how individual perspectives differ and need to be accounted for.

3. **Interviewing visitors** – since many of the activities involve interviewing, the team needs to include people who understand how to conduct open-ended, non-directional interviews.

4. **Concept development** – by engaging the public with a summary of the exhibition the team identifies any gaps between their way of seeing the topic and the visitors'. In addition, because it focuses on unexpected responses, this process brings new ideas to the table and enhances team creativity. After multiple rounds the team can have a clearer sense of what the exhibition should be.

5. **Title creation and testing** – by creating a title (and, ideally, an image) and demonstrating its power to draw visitors, the team ensures that it can interest the audience it wants.

6. **Content card sorts** – by having visitors select the Ideas, People stories, Objects, and Physical experiences that most appeal, the team can start to refine content in the four dimensions. The card sort process also reveals the way that visitors conceptualize the topic and the words they use to describe key aspects of it. Because the process includes an IPOP survey, it is possible to identify sub-groups of content with strong appeal to audience segments. When this is done in multiple rounds, the team can shape the key content for maximum effectiveness.

7. **The IPOP matrix** – by reviewing the whole content from an IPOP perspective, the team can identify gaps that need to be filled in a final content plan.

8. **Experience design** – by considering the flow of experiences through the exhibition the team can orchestrate experience for maximum effect.

9. **Testing 4E displays** – by testing, revising, and retesting with visitors the effectiveness of combinations of ideas, stories, objects, and activities, the team can create a set of key displays were "flipping" from ones usual preferred dimension to another is more likely to happen.

10. **Testing section themes** – by prototyping key introductory texts with visitors, ambiguities and confusion can be avoided.

11. **Prototyping** – by testing as many details as possible with visitors, final refinements and enhancements can be made with confidence.

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