

The Value of Museums: Enhancing Societal Well-Being

by

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Synopsis

Written by one of the world's leading authorities on the public use of museums, *The Value of Museums: Enhancing Societal Well-Being* provides a timely and compelling way for museum professionals to better understand and explain the benefits created by museum experiences. The key insight this book advances is that museum experiences successfully support a major driver of human behavior – the desire for enhanced well-being. Knowingly or not, the business of museums has always been to support and enhance the public's personal, intellectual, social and physical well-being. Over the years, museums have excelled at this task, as evidenced by the almost indelible memories museum experiences engender. People report that museum experiences make them feel better about themselves, more informed, happier, healthier and more enriched; all outcomes directly related to enhanced well-being. Historically, benefits such as enhanced well-being were seen as vague and intangible, but Falk shows that enhanced well-being, when properly conceptualized, can not only be defined and measured, but also can be monetized. However, as many in the museum world are painfully aware, what worked yesterday for museums may not work in the future as recessions and pandemics rapidly alter the landscape. Although insights about past experiences are interesting, what is needed now is a roadmap for the future. Fortunately for museums, the public's need for enhanced well-being will not be disappearing any time soon; enhanced well-being is now, and will always be, a fundamental and on-going human need. What has and will change, though, is how people choose to satisfy their well-being-related needs. *The Value of Museums* provides tangible suggestions for how museum professionals can build on their legacy of success at supporting the public's well-being, adapting to changing times, and remaining relevant and sustainable in the future.

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