

The Minicon Moderator's Guidelines

The Minicon 25 Programming Committee, Sharon Kahn, Co-Chair

Presumably^c, you are looking at this document because you are planning to originate a programming item, moderate it, or both. If you are entering this process sometime after Section 1, it is strongly suggested that you find out what the originator of the panel had in mind, and what, if anything, has been communicated to the panelists so far.

Section 1: DEFINING THE PANEL

TOPIC: Exactly what is the point? Be specific. Come up with a 1-3 sentence description that will leave no doubt in the mind of all the panel participants what they will be talking about. This description will also appear in the program book.

PURPOSE: Why are you doing this? To inform? Entertain? Showcase a GOH? Spark a group discussion? Stir up a controversy? It has been suggested that there are only two possible purposes for a panel: to inform or to entertain (with the best panels, of course, accomplishing both.)

TITLE: There seem to be 3 general approaches to titles:

(1) Explicit: "Collaborations: How It's Done, Why We Shouldn't Do It, and Why We Keep Doing it Anyway"

(2) Clever: "Worldcon Envy: Does Size Matter?"

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Disclaimer: These guidelines and suggestions are the distillation of a series of brainstorming sessions. In other words, this document was originated by committee. So if it waffles, backpedals and blatantly contradicts itself, that's just the way it goes. The project was started and organized by 1990 Minicon Programming Co-Chair Sharon Kahn, and involved many people's input. Dave Romm volunteered to take the mass of data, add his further input, organize and format it for the Mac, and give it to Sharon for final revision. What you see here is Dave's file, adapted to html, not Sharon's final, though changes were slight. E-mail me for the original 6pp file in MS Word 3.1 (Mac).

(3) Hybrid: "Lime Jello, Myth or Reality: The Origins of Fannish Legends"

The entire topic is surprisingly controversial, actually. But everybody agrees that titles should not be overly generic, for instance "Women in SF" or "Fantasy or Science Fiction?" The more specific the better.

SIZE: Experts suggest an ideal panel size of 5 including the moderator, rarely fewer than 4 or more than 6. Remember, 60 minutes divided by 5 panelists means 12 minutes for each person, assuming the audience doesn't participate (ha!).

FORMAT: Now you know what you are doing and why, let's talk about format.

Panel, Discussion Group, Debate, Free-for-all? This should be decided on far enough in advance to put in the program book.

Question Policy: Audience questions can be encouraged throughout or only taken during designated question period(s). Be sure to make the policy clear to all panelists (and then to the audience during the panel).

Facilities: Do you need a large room, a small room or an intimate space? Will you be seated behind a long table, around a round table or just chairs facing an audience? How many microphones will you need? Do you need special equipment like a slide projector or overhead?



CONSIDER MODERATOR STYLE: There is no single "best" way to moderate a panel. The style you use depends not only on your personality, but the topic and purpose of the panel, the personalities of the panelists, and what happens when the bullets start flying. In Section 3, you will find a list of moderator styles that have been observed in action at conventions that are now history. We had fun identifying these and we hope they provide food for thought.

Section 2: PRE-PANEL PREPARATION

MAKE YOURSELF A CRIB SHEET FOR USE DURING THE PANEL. Including but not limited to:

Panel title, 1-3 sentence description.

At least 3 questions that can be asked during the course of the panel. A starter question or two and then keep several emergency questions handy.

Panelist names and pertinent info about each (names of books, etc.).

READ SOMETHING BY EACH PANELIST, if possible. If not, at least know their latest book or a recent accomplishment.

TALK WITH THE PANELISTS BEFORE THE CON, if possible. Let them know if you will be gathering in the Green Room before the panel.

MEET WITH THE PANELISTS AT THE CON, either one by one or in a group. The Green Room is available for this purpose. If you can't meet in the Green Room, at least spend a few seconds before you convene to introduce yourselves.

IN THE GREEN ROOM:

Review panel description, purpose and format with the participants.

If you haven't already, introduce yourself and each other.

Check with the participants: Anything you've thought of since we last talked? Anything in particular I should ask? Anything to avoid? Get preferences and suggestions.

If panelists seem to need warming up, try out one of your Questions on them. If they're shy, feed them several questions so they can think about their answers for a while.

There are refreshments in the Green Room which participants can take to the panel.

Relax.



GETTING STARTED

Arrive on time. A few minutes early is ok. If you're arriving from the Green Room, arrive all at once; it really impresses the audience.

Sit down. If possible, arrange the tent cards yourself so the panelists are where you want them. Feel free to move people if they've beaten you to the seating arrangements. You may choose to sit at the end of the row of panelists instead of in the middle. It will make it easier to keep an eye on everybody.

Start the panel by establishing rapport with the audience. The traditional opening is "Hello? Hello? Is this mike on?" If it is,

smile and continue. If it isn't, turn it on (or otherwise make arrangements to be heard).

Identify yourself and briefly describe the panel.

Introduce panelists, referring to your notes as needed.

Give the ground rules ("If this goes according to plan..."). Be sure to address Question Protocol (questions taken any time, or only during specified question period)

Throw out the first question. Think carefully about who to address it to! The first questioner will set the tone for the panel. Some possibilities: The most senior GoH, the person with the most experience, the quietest person on the panel, the person who originally proposed the idea for the panel, the person most likely to set the tone you are striving for. Play out the question, giving everybody a chance at it.

FINISHING UP

Finish on time!

Give a 5 or 10 minute warning that time is running out. Issue a summing-up question.

If you have to interrupt the last person, do so. "I'm afraid we're out of time. Thank you all for coming."

Thank the panelists for participating.

If a discussion is still raging, suggest that the discussion can continue in Krushenko's [or any open site, including the consuite or the bar].

Announce the next panel.

Section 3: MODERATOR STYLES

We present these as examples for your consideration. Most moderators combine elements of more than one style. The style used for any panel depends on the personality of the moderator and the interaction of the participants. Some of the building blocks for a style can be found in the Section 4.

EVEN-HANDED: Keeps things moving, involves everyone, facilitates discussion without taking sides or expressing opinions. A good even-handed moderator can moderate a panel on a topic he knows nothing about and isn't even interested in.

NURTURING: Much like even-handed, but even more so. Especially attentive to quiet panelists who need to be drawn out and encouraged to enter the discussion.

PARTICIPATING: Joins in the discussion and expresses opinions, but without taking over or dominating the panel. At times, panel may appear to be a round-table discussion with no one moderating. However, the moderator is in fact leading the discussion, raising questions, encouraging participation by everyone and dealing with interruptions. This style is difficult to pull off. You must be able to split yourself into 2 people—the moderator and the participant. Do not call on yourself more often than any other participant.

TIGHTLY REINED: A moderator who naturally tends toward Participating Moderator trying very hard to function as an Even-Handed. Produces tremendous dramatic tension as audience waits for moderator to crack.

QUESTIONING: Intensely interested in the topic, but hasn't made up his mind how he feels about it yet and is hoping to gain insight into the subject (frequently a difficult or controversial one) by questioning the panelists.

PROVOCATIVE: This moderator believes that life is a bit dull without conflict. Specializes in questions like, "I sense that you may have some disagreement with the last speaker," and "You aren't going to let him get away with that, are you?"

Not to be too judgmental or anything, we do hope you avoid elements of the following styles:

IGNORANT: Not only knows nothing about the topic of this panel or the people on it, he didn't even know he was moderating it until about 5 minutes ago. (Best solution is to admit your ignorance ["But I find the topic fascinating!"] and get

the panelists to suggest appropriate questions, perhaps when you have them introduce themselves.)

FAILS TO FACE THE PANEL: Runs dull topics into the ground, interrupts discussions just as they're getting interesting, lets one panelist dominate the time, doesn't prompt reticent speakers, cuts off panelists in mid-sentence but lets audience loudmouths run on forever, etc.

OUT-OF-IT: Too sleepy (or otherwise underbrained) to pay attention. Calls the panelists by their wrong names, misremembers their books, gets the topic of the panel wrong and/or is still trying to get in the last word from the previous panel.

Section 4: THE ART OF MODERATING

Prepare in advance, but go with the flow. Don't be afraid to alter your original plan radically if it seems like a good idea. But do have a plan. Maybe more than one.

Keep the level of energy high. Be aware when a question or topic has run its course and be prepared to change direction.

Play devil's advocate if things get dull.

Refer to your prepared questions when you need a new topic.

Watch the audience. Start taking questions if too many hands are up; pick up the pace if people start to fidget (or leave).

Repeat questions from the audience, especially if the room is large.

Pay attention to the panelist's answers and ask follow-up questions if appropriate.

Pay attention to the people farthest from you: They may be participating less. Seat shy or quiet panelists close to you.

Pay attention to body language. Watch for signs of impatience, annoyance or general disagreement with the last

speaker (frowns, muscle tension, leaning forward, leaning backward, folding arms across chest). If a light bulb suddenly goes on over someone's head, call on them quick before they forget the idea!

Use body language. Lean forward slightly and make eye contact to encourage a shy panelist. To cut someone off politely: lean back, catch their eye. If that doesn't do it, slowly reach toward the mike.

Prompt the audience, if necessary. Lead the applause or laughter, but squelch any which goes on too long.

Remember: The audience didn't come to see you. Sometimes the moderator's main job is to stay out of the way. This happens more often than you might think.

Be firm. Don't lose control of the panel or audience.

Have fun. Encourage the panelists to have fun too. If the panelists enjoy themselves, so will the audience.



Moderator Emergency Kit

WHEN THE CONVERSATION GRINDS TO A HALT

- ❖ "Let's open the panel to questions from the audience."
- ❖ "What's the greatest challenge for you in your work right now?"
- ❖ "Is there anything we're leaving out here that needs to be addressed?"
- ❖ "What's the biggest controversy in this area?"
- ❖ "What's the greatest misconception people have about...?"
- ❖ "How did you handle this problem when you were working on...[insert book title or character name from author's work]?"
- ❖ "What made you decide to tackle this subject?"
- ❖ "Speaking as a [person not normally involved in this area] what's your perspective?"
- ❖ "What's the question you are most tired of hearing on this subject, and what would you like to say about it so you never have to answer it again?"
- ❖ Ask another person on the panel the question.
- ❖ Ask a follow-up question.
- ❖ Ask a different person to comment on another panelist's answer.

SQUELCHING THE PANEL

- ❖ "Excuse me, but we have wandered far afield..."
- ❖ "Getting back to the original topic..."
- ❖ "That would be a good subject for another panel."

- ❖ "Excuse me, but we haven't heard from [reticent panelist] in a while."
- ❖ "Let's take a question from the audience."

SQUELCHING THE AUDIENCE

- ❖ "No comments from the peanut gallery."
- ❖ "In order to make the best possible use of our panelists, we're only taking questions from the audience, not statements."
- ❖ "We're only taking statements from the audience, not questions."
- ❖ "Oh, let's not always see the same hands."
- ❖ "Thank you for your interesting suggestion. You may be right."
- ❖ "You're making some rather broad generalizations."
- ❖ "Ok, ok, I think I understand the question. Now, which of our panelists wants to handle it?"
- ❖ "Would someone in the back please call hotel security."

Moderator Mantras

- ❖ It's only an hour.
- ❖ This has never killed anyone yet.
- ❖ I do not have to go home with this person.
- ❖ It's okay to do this—I'm the moderator.
- ❖ Hey, this is a nice looking tablecloth!

Minicon Moderator Preparation Sheet

Name of Panel: _____

Description _____

Day and Time: _____ Room: _____

Panelist Intros (including yourself)

Starter Questions

Emergency Questions and notes

The Boskone 43 Moderators Guide: (and other interested parties)

As the moderator, you can help make a panel focused and fun. You should try to:

Be prepared. (And, hopefully, you've already given some thought to this program item!) Pick up the panel's name cards at Program Ops. Briefly talk to your fellow panelists before the program item. Think up some questions or topics to keep the panel going if conversation lags. Make a crib sheet. And...start on time!

Briefly outline the topic of the panel for the audience.

Briefly introduce the panelists, or ask them to introduce themselves. (Do not allow others to join the panel unless the Program staff authorizes this addition.)

· Avoid the temptation to start the panel by announcing that you have no idea what it's about or why you're on it. Keep others from doing the same. (Yes—it is an easy way to start, and could well make the audience feel a sense of rapport with you. It may even be amusing. However, even if this is true, drawing attention to the convention's failings is rude and generally unnecessary.)

Make sure that all panelists start with an equal chance to participate, but once the panel is going, give more time to people who are making it a good panel and less to those who are inarticulate or prove to have little useful to contribute. Be fair, but firm.

Prevent the discussion from drifting away from the topic. Don't let panelists (including yourself!) pursue individual agendas unless they are directly on topic.

Allow time for questions, but don't let individual questioners monopolize the panel or drag it away from the topic. (If necessary, consider announcing that you will only take audience questions and comments after a specific time: don't move to questions too quickly!) If you are in a large room,

repeat questions from the audience so everyone in the room knows what was asked.

While you should try to keep the program on track, don't let any of these rules cause you to stop a discussion which is interesting to both the panel and audience! Keep the "big" picture in mind.

Keep an eye on the time (check a watch or clock, or keep an eye out for our adorable Program Ops workers who will may be around to flash "5 Minutes" and/or "STOP" signs for some panels). Consider asking a summing-up question near the end of your allotted time. Then, bring the panel gracefully to a close when your time is up. Thank everyone!

Please do not linger after the panel, and discourage other panelists from doing so, so that the next program item can start on time. If people want to talk with the panelists, please encourage them to do it outside the room.

To the best of our knowledge, moderating has never killed anyone. Yet.

Go with the flow. Relax. Enjoy.

Being a moderator is a JOB—but it can be a rewarding one.

Thank you for your willingness to take it on.



On Moderators and Moderating

Mary Kay Kare

Everything below is my opinion. I have a lot of experience behind those opinions, but I'm not infallible (you're shocked, I know). Circumstances and local mores must always be taken into consideration.

I wonder sometimes what people are thinking when they assign moderators. Also, what they are thinking when they don't. I suppose in that latter case maybe they may not have the people for it, but that's kind of difficult to believe. I've certainly seen some odd people assigned to moderate panels. Known mike hogs. People with an axe to grind/hobby horse to ride re the topic in question. Timid, quiet, shy people. Combative, tactless people. People with no social skills.

People, good moderating is hard work, but it can be invaluable in giving the panelists and attendees a good experience. So how do you choose these moderators so as to encourage success and a positive experience for all?

First of all, the moderator of a panel should be interested in the topic under discussion but not have a stake in it. I, personally, don't believe I can both moderate a panel well and participate in it. However, if it's something I'm interested in, I can, with luck and planning, keep things moving by asking questions the audience would ask did they have the chance. This assumes that the audience is interested but not expert themselves, but you kind of have to assume something about them.

When I've seen programming happening behind the lines, as it were, all too often, the moderators get assigned at the last minute without much thought. Often the programming folk merely ask someone already on the panel if they're willing to moderate. Really people, inscribe this on your brain:

STAKEHOLDERS DO NOT MAKE GOOD MODERATORS.

Now of course, almost all of us can cite some instance where, in fact the moderator was a stakeholder who did a fine job. I can tell you a lot more horror stories than success stories though. (Make it a Hendricks on the rocks with a twist of cucumber and I'll even try to make them entertaining.)

There's no way around it though: you're going to have to attend some panels and watch your panelists and moderators in action. No other way to judge their ability. Well, ok, the reports of someone/s you trust. But somebody's experience is about the only way to judge good moderating. You want people who

1. Keep the discussion moving and lively
2. Make sure that everyone (including the audience) gets a fair share of time
3. Have a wide-ranging and inquisitive mind
4. Can be both tactful and assertive – at the same time even
5. Won't be fazed by fractious panelists refusing direction (once again I can tell horror stories if oiled by good gin – or Lagavulin maybe)
6. Have social skills

Once you find these people, cultivate them, give them what they want/need, and USE them. Your panelists and attendees will thank you.

All righty then. You've been asked to moderate X panel and you've agreed. Now what? Well obviously, you want to perform whatever functions your particular program director

expects of moderators. Assuming they have any and that they share them with you. There are some general points though.

Be Prepared. One of your job functions is to keep the panel moving when/if the panelists run out of things to say. Or never even get started. This is where it helps to be interested in the topic yourself. Some knowledge of the field is useful in framing questions to ask the panelists to give them something to start with. However, you can successfully moderate panels on topics about which you know nothing whatsoever. Research is your friend. And it doesn't have to be fancy either. A good encyclopedia article or even Wikipedia can furnish you with enough knowledge to ask leading questions. (If you need to be taught how to do research, that'll cost you \$50/hr. Or I can do your research for you at \$65/hr plus expenses.)

If you don't know the panelists you'll be moderating, find out what you can about them. If the program head has time, he/she can be a gold mine of information about them. Otherwise ask your fannish friends. You need to attend a lot of programming (and listen to a lot of gossip) in order to know who needs what kind of special handling. And some of them do. Knowledge of your panelists is as important as some basics on the topic.

Once you know the topic and the panelists, invest some time thinking about strategies to make it the best panel it can be. If it's part of the program's ethos, take advantage of supplied information to contact your panelists before hand. Don't do a lot of discussion on the topic before hand – that can make you stale – but find out what the panelists expect and want in regards the panel. They'll love you for it.

Okay, you've got your questions and strategies and information. Now it's time for the panel. Your information from programming should include what they expect you to do. Pick up name tents from the Green Room? Meet the panelists in the Green Room X minutes before the panel? Pick up drinks for your panelists? If the info isn't there ASK. Even if it's a con

you're familiar with ASK. They may want to change things. There might be a new program head. This panel may need X special thing. Especially ask about timing considerations. When should the program item be ended? How long is it supposed to run? (Do not be afraid to end a panel early if you, the panelists, and the audience have run out of things to say. Staying there til the bitter end does no one any good.)

Okay, so you're heading off to your panel with whatever programming wanted you to have. In addition, take a watch and paper and writing implement. If you haven't all met in the Green Room (and you probably haven't) try to introduce yourself to the panelists you don't know yet before the panel starts. Try very hard to start the panel on time – even if all the panelists aren't there.

The first thing I do, even before I introduce myself is to ask all the people in the room to either turn off their cell phones or at least turn the ringer off. Cell phones ringing in the middle of a panel are RUDE and people who let it happen should be mocked unmercifully. (Ask me about the time a panelist's phone not only went off during the panel, HE ANSWERED IT AND HELD A CONVERSATION!!!)

Usually I ask panelists to introduce themselves, but use your judgment. If it's a con of 50 people all of whom know each other, duh.

Okay, things get less clear cut now. If you've had a chance to talk with the panelists before hand, you can start off with a gentle push in the agreed upon direction. Otherwise, you have to use your judgment and observational skills. If they don't need a nudge but are willing to jump right in, let'em go. Save your hard won questions for when discussion begins to flag.

Listen carefully to what your panelists are saying – you may want to make a note of questions their statements provoke in you. It really is best not to rely on memory here and that's what you brought the pen and paper for anyway. Watch the

audience for cues to confusion. Ask questions to clear that up if you can. Make sure that everyone on the panel gets a chance to contribute. Though I've had people refuse to do so. Why they agreed to be on the panel to start with Roscoe alone knows, but don't push them too hard if they're recalcitrant.

You may have to interrupt, repeatedly, if you've got a mike hog. If this thought makes you quiver in apprehension, moderating is not for you. Try to work out a way to do it smoothly, but do it. Some people won't actually read your non-verbal signals, or will read them but ignore them. Be prepared to be what most people would consider rude in that case.

Audience participation can be tricky. I've been in panels where the audience was so valuable as to be a panel member in aggregate. I've also seen panels derailed by idiots. Just about every fannish community has its Cross To Bear. Know this person and avoid calling on him/her in the audience participation segment. (Which can be throughout the panel or 10 minutes at the end. Know local expectations and practices.) (The audience can also help out when panelists run dry.)

All the while, keep a close eye on the clock. About 5-10 minutes before it's time to end, ask the panelists to sum up and make closing statements. If the panel doesn't want to end, suggest a venue for continuing the conversation. Make a closing statement that further questions and autograph requests should go out into the hall because there's another panel coming in. Thank the audience and your panelists and then get everyone the hell out. You can now go to the bar and have a well-earned drink.

This may just be personal prejudice on my part but I have one very strong DO NOT DO for moderators. Do not, for the love of Roscoe, come to the panel with a long list of questions and insist that each panelist answer them in turn and then go down the list that way. I will get up and walk out. Good panels are a conversation among the panelists, moderator, and audience. That's my opinion of course, but it's an opinion developed and confirmed by 30+ years of attending panels.

Above all, have fun. If you're having fun your audience is having fun. That's why we're here, right?



THE ART SHOW

Notes on Being a Better Panelist

Steven H Silver (with suggestions from Priscilla Olson and Michael D. Thomas)

Some do's

- I. Be prepared. If possible, find out the topics beforehand and make notes prior to the convention.
- II. Do have a general discussion with your co-panelists before the panel (meet in the Green Room before your panel if this is possible), but nothing too specific. At the very least, agree on what you're going to talk about!
- III. Especially if you are discussing something controversial, do back up your arguments and assertions with facts/
- IV. Do start and end on time (and take discussions/autographing that often pop up the end of the program item out of the room.)
- V. Turn off your phone (or, at least, put it on vibrate) before the panel starts.
- VI. If you speak softly, do remember to either speak as loud as you can or request a microphone. If only the first two rows can hear you, it doesn't matter how brilliant your observations are.
- VII. Do know how to use the technical equipment you asked for (well ahead of time...)
- VIII. Do use humor and/or try to be entertaining, where appropriate. (This is particularly important if it's supposed to be a funny program item!)
- IX. Do expect surprises. They happen.
- X. Be polite.
- XI. Have fun

Some things not to do:

- I. Do not announce that you don't know why you're on a panel. If you get put on a panel that you feel is not appropriate for you to be on, let programming know ahead of time so you can be removed from the panel.
- II. Do not sit on a panel and only promote/refer to your own work. You can mention what you've written, but your focus should be on the topic, not on selling your books/stories/whatever. If you are only at the convention to sell, that's what the dealer's room is for.
- III. If you have books with you, do not stand them up like a wall between you and the audience. It is distancing. Hold the titles up when you introduce yourself, but then either put them away or lay them flat on the table (see #2)
- IV. Do not monopolize the conversation. Chances are that if you do so, you will both bore and annoy your co-panelists and the audience. Unless you are Harlan Ellison, in which case they've probably given you a solo slot.
- V. Do not drone.
- VI. Do not be a wallflower. If you aren't adding to the conversation, there is little reason (if any) for you to be on the panel and someone else who can/will talk about the topic would have been a better choice.
- VII. Do not be afraid to disagree. Panels in which everyone agrees are boring. A little debate goes a long way to

make a better and memorable panel. That said, don't disagree just for the sake of disagreeing.

- VIII. Also, do not insult people—other panelists, the audience, the committee....
- IX. Do not drag the program item off-topic.
- X. Do not call on people in the audience for questions if you're not the moderator—corollary: in fact (unless you are the moderator OR the moderator isn't doing the job) don't moderate.
- XI. Do not add other people to the program item, or allow people to add themselves to it.



Programming—First Principles

Mary Kay Kare

Steven talked to me about doing an article on programming, but the topic is too huge and sprawling to take on. You could write a book about it, let alone a fanzine article. There are, however, a couple of things I would like to talk about – call them basic principles on which to build your programming.

1. What is your convention's mission statement? It may be explicit or implicit, but most conventions will have something they're aiming at. Keep that mission in mind as you build your programming and ask yourself, "How does this contribute to our mission?" Of course, since this is probably not a for-profit

venture we're talking about, not everything has to be directed to fulfilling this, but you'll have a better-organized, more coherent program if you keep it in mind.

2. Our guests of honor are here to be honored. Ask them what they've always wanted to do on programming and never got to do. Devote a substantial amount of your programming to them and their work. And note, they do not have to be on every panel about their work – it can be better if they aren't.

3. Your program should be chock-full of things you want to go see. If it isn't, why are you doing this?

4. Know your panelists. Who work well together? Who needs a firm moderator? Who is currently feuding with whom? Who is good to put on panels that need another person, i.e., can talk about many things well and entertainingly. (Buy that person a beer or a martini or whatever else they need at every opportunity. They're GOLD.) Know who has hobby-horses that need avoiding. If you have, for some reason, to program with panelists you don't know well, find someone who does and bribe them with whatever is necessary to get them to help you. The panelists are the actors who will execute your plan; do a good job of casting them and you'll all be happier.

5. Your panelists, moderators, and staff are your prime assets work hard to give them what they need and they'll work hard for you.

6. Comedy is always popular, but hard.

7. Try new things. Steal from other cons' programming. Ask people for ideas. Collect program books and pocket programs from other conventions. Even conventions very different from yours can provide a new idea for organizing or staging or something.

8. In this, as in so much of life, balance is key. Not everything needs to be Bright! Shiny! and New! But some of it had better be. Good luck.