



Make A Difference Day

Volunteer Leader Resource Guide



MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY BEGAN IN 1992 AND TAKES PLACE ANNUALLY ON THE FOURTH SATURDAY IN OCTOBER. MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE EMPLOYEES OF TEGNA AND LONGTIME PARTNER POINTS OF LIGHT.

Make A Difference Day

Make A Difference Day

Make A Difference Day is one of the largest national day of community service. Celebrated on the fourth Saturday of October, thousands of volunteers unite in a common mission to improve the lives of others. For over two decades, Points of Light has partnered with media to mobilize and celebrate the power of people to make a difference. This year, we are thrilled to continue this tradition with TEGNA Media, which includes 46 television stations in 23 states.

On Saturday, October 22, 2016, Points of Light and TEGNA's affiliate television stations will seize the moment to inspire, equip and mobilize corporations, nonprofit organizations, families and individuals to improve their communities. Together, we will recognize the efforts of this day by awarding \$10,000 to the charities of each of the 10 National Honorees and three Community Awardees. Enter your project today at HYPERLINK "<http://www.MakeADifferenceDay.com>" www.MakeADifferenceDay.com.

Volunteer Leader Resource Guide

This resource guide was developed for volunteer leaders like you to learn how to create high-impact, well-managed projects that will help you sustain volunteers and have a positive impact in your community on Make A Difference Day.

You may be asking yourself, what is a volunteer leader? A volunteer leader is someone who sees a local community need and takes the initiative to find a solution.

The content in this guide is organized into action-oriented chapters that will help you work with the community to meet needs, effectively plan and manage projects, and develop a framework for projects. This guide does not prescribe how your project should be structured; it does, however, provide pointers and connects you to tools and resources you can use to meet your local community needs.





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1. Focus on your community

Overview

When you begin to plan a service project, it is important to involve the community from the very beginning. What are the social issues that the community is facing? What are the needs of local non-profit organizations, schools, parks or other community areas? By working with community members, you can identify projects that will make a true impact. This section will help you discover ways to focus on the community to identify true needs.

Goals

- Work with the community to identify community issues or needs
- Discover avenues for finding a project

You may already have a passion for a particular issue, such as education, the environment, the economy or disaster preparedness/response. However, a community needs assessment is still an important part of designing any service project. Assessing community needs can be as simple as taking a walk through your neighborhood or as complex as surveying the entire city. The important thing is to focus on the community when identifying what is needed. By working together with community members, you will build community awareness and help ensure community buy-in and support for your service efforts.

You can use a variety of methods to assess community needs. You should select one that fits the scope of the volunteer effort. For a one-day project, you may want to choose an assessment technique that is less time-consuming. If you are committing to a long-term project, you will want to conduct an in-depth assessment to ensure that you are effectively utilizing your resources.

Here are some ideas for conducting a community needs assessment:

- **Brainstorm:** Gather volunteers, or other community members to brainstorm community issues or needs. As a group, examine the causes and effects of the issue and then brainstorm potential projects to address the needs identified.
- **Community Dreams:** As you meet and mingle with people living in the community, ask them about the changes they would like to see happen. If they had unlimited resources, what would they like to change? How would they go about changing it?
- **Community Walk:** Hold a forum to collect information from community members about issues or needs. Ask them to offer suggestions for potential projects.
- **Survey:** Conduct a formal or informal survey of community members to identify issues or needs. What problems do you see in the community? What are the most pressing issues in the community right now? What types of service projects would be most beneficial for the community? List two things you want to change in the community.

2. Narrow your scope

Overview

In your community needs assessment, you identified a community issue on which you want to focus. This chapter will help you narrow your scope so that you can develop a project that is effective and manageable.

Goals

- Research the community issue
- Identify project partner(s)
- Visit the potential service site(s)
- Decide on a project

Researching the Issue

The first step in narrowing your focus is to learn more about the issue or issues you identified in the community needs assessment. You need to find some statistics about the issue in your community, the background and underlying causes and some ideas for projects to address the need. Research what groups—non-profit organizations, religious groups, neighborhood associations or other civic-minded groups—are already working in this area. Are they meeting all of the needs? If so, you may want to focus your efforts on another issue. However, it is more likely that they would be an ideal partner for your project.

Partnering with a Community Service Organization

Once you know what groups in your community are working in a particular issue area, you can approach them about partnering for a project. You may already be working with this partner, in which case you should have a good understanding of how your organizations will work together and the resources that each partner can bring to the project.

Conducting a Site Visit

Take time to visit the potential project site to determine the greatest needs. Whether you are working at a shelter, a park or a community service organization (CSO), a site visit will help you identify potential projects.

Schedule a time to visit the project site with at least one representative from your partner organization. If possible, you should visit with key stakeholders and decision makers such as the volunteer coordinator and/or maintenance staff. This will ensure that critical decisions that can affect the project development process can be made quickly. Also, by involving key stakeholders in the project planning process as early as possible, it is more likely that the CSO representative will be able to garner support for the project as well as increase the likelihood of obtaining resources they would not have been able to obtain otherwise. If a project has well-rounded community support, you can more effectively apply resources toward its success.

During the visit, ask questions that help you understand what the organization's greatest needs are and the ways that ongoing or one-time volunteer support can have the greatest impact. While touring the site to review potential projects, keep in mind the following elements of a successful project:

- Does the project build upon and promote positive relationships within the community?
- Will the work completed make a difference to the organization, persons served or community?
- Will persons served/community members benefit directly or indirectly?
- Is it a project that the community genuinely wants?
- Will the project generate or save money for the organization?
- Is the project volunteer-friendly?
- Will volunteers be utilized effectively during the project?
- Are special skills required? If so, are there opportunities to be trained in new skills?
- Are volunteer leadership opportunities available?
- Will volunteers feel as though they have completed something worthwhile when they are finished with the project? Will they see some result from their efforts (smiling faces, a cleaner yard or park, freshly-painted walls, etc.)?

2. Narrow your scope

You might be hoping to organize a large event for a high number of volunteers but find yourself with a project that seemingly can't provide enough work for everyone. During the site visit, you can explore ways to expand the project. Walk around the project site and view all areas that might not initially seem to be feasible project task areas.

You may find a room that needs painting or a place in need of landscaping. You can also discuss the needs, wants and dreams of the organization's staff members. As you listen to their responses, you will begin to see possible project ideas that can be developed. You should write down any ideas that you have and discuss them with your team and project partners.

Be sure that you manage the expectations of the organization's contact person. Help him or her to see both the possibilities and limitations of working with volunteers on the project. Also, be clear about budget and time constraints for tools and materials. Do not "over promise" as you expand the project. If you have a question regarding the feasibility of any project task (i.e., scope of task, tools and materials needed, volunteer limitations, time constraints), clearly communicate to the representative that you will get back to him or her with a decision on the expansion. Promising more than you can deliver can hinder your ability to develop the best possible project. Be realistic in what you can deliver. Use the service project site visit checklist to help guide your visit.

Deciding on a Project

Once you have assessed the needs of the community, researched the issue, contacted the CSO partner(s) and visited the prospective service site, it is time to decide on the project. Volunteer projects can vary greatly, so it is important to define your scope. The scope will dictate how large or small the project will be, the number of volunteers expected, the intended impact, the duration and the general theme of the project.

When selecting a project, pay close attention to:

- Required time or days to complete the project
- Overall project scope: Can the project be scaled up or down as needed?
- Diversity: Can a broad spectrum of community members participate?
- Overall cost of producing the project
- Weather impact: What is the plan in case of inclement weather?
- Accessibility to building and facilities
- Amount and type of skilled labor needed

In addition, you should decide if you want to plan a one-time, special-event project; an ongoing series of projects; or a combination of these options. A one-day event could be a large project involving hundreds of people, or it could be small group of volunteers working together on a service project for a day. Ongoing projects engage volunteers on a consistent basis, providing the opportunity to go beyond a one-time experience and have a sustained experience and impact in the community.

Now that you have selected the project, it is time to develop the plan for how you will implement and manage the service event. Section three will walk you through the project mapping process.

3. Map your project

Overview

As you narrow the scope of your project and determine what you are going to do, you will need to formulate ideas for how you can achieve your goals. In order to have a successful service project, you have to plan well. You need to prepare for every detail, from the number of volunteers to the method of reflection you will facilitate. This chapter will help you map out your project so that you can work effectively, meet your goals and make an impact on the community.

Goals

- Create a task list
- Design a project map
- Plan for reflection and evaluation

Creating a Task List

Part of the planning process is determining the tasks involved in completing the project. Consider what you want to accomplish and the tasks needed. Then, create a comprehensive list of the assignments and the number of volunteers needed for each task. If there are multiple goals, prioritize them according to each task's importance. This list will guide you as you recruit volunteers and plan the details of the day.

Project Mapping

An important part of the project development process is determining the resources you need to complete the project, including human, material, financial and educational.

Human Resources

You have already created a task list; now, determine the number of volunteers you need to complete these tasks. Establishing volunteer needs can be a challenge. Consider these variables:

- **Volunteer skill levels:** Is the work appropriate for beginners, or do you need more skilled volunteers?
- **Volunteer age:** What is the age limit for the project?
- **Duration of project:** What is the time commitment required?

- **Availability of supplies:** Will you have enough supplies so that every volunteer has the necessary tools to be occupied throughout the project?
- **Physical space available to perform the work:** How large is the service site? How many people can comfortably work there?

Material and Financial Resources

In addition to assessing your volunteer needs, you must also address your tangible resource needs. Determine what supplies, materials, goods and services you need in order to complete your project. With your project partner(s), strategize about the types and amounts of resources that are needed. Make your list as comprehensive as possible, including resources for every aspect of the project - from nametags and refreshments for volunteers to tools and restroom facilities.

You will be able to work with your project partners as well as your volunteers to secure many of the resources at no cost. In addition, think about businesses, community members and other organizations that may be ideal for securing elements needed for the project. What resources can they offer to help you carry out the project? Consider things such as supplies, meeting space for volunteer orientation, printing of marketing materials and consulting or professional services.

While in-kind contributions will help you complete the project, some items will require financial resources. As you list the supplies and materials needed for the project, note the ones that have a cost associated with them. How will you secure the resources needed to cover these costs?

3. Map your project

Educational Resources

You will need to consider how you will orient and train the volunteers working on the project. In order for your volunteers to be an effective part of the project, they need to understand the issue that the project addresses and the impact that it will make on the community. Volunteer orientation can be conducted prior to the project or included as part of the events on the actual day of service.

Orientation should include a brief overview of the CSO's mission and services and how volunteer support is contributing to that mission. To incorporate service learning into the project, discuss the community issue that is being addressed by the agency and the project.

A brief history of the issue, statistics, current events related to the issue area (e.g., legislation activity), and other civic engagement opportunities linked to this issue (advocacy training, future service projects) are all extremely helpful in educating volunteers. Orientation should also include an outline of the project and what volunteers will be doing during the project so that everyone knows what to expect and what is expected of them.

The orientation and education portion of the project has many positive impacts on volunteers. It allows them to:

- See the impact they are having on the community
- Feel a greater part of a whole when they see all of the services the organization provides
- Gain a better understanding of the community's critical needs
- Gain a better understanding of how to affect change within the issue area being addressed

In addition to orientation, you may need to train volunteers for the work they will be doing. You may recruit volunteers who already have the necessary skills; however, many volunteers will need some instruction. If volunteers are prepared for the project, they will feel more comfortable with the work, the project will run more smoothly and your team is more likely to achieve its goals for the project.

Planning for Reflection and Evaluation

Reflection and evaluation are important parts of a service project. Reflection is a process through which volunteers think about their personal experiences, and evaluation is intended to assess the project. You should take time before the project to plan how you will incorporate these steps into the overall service activity.

Reflection

Throughout the project, provide structured time for volunteers to think and talk about their service experience. This time of reflection can create a stronger sense of accomplishment, establish a deeper connection to the community, deepen volunteers' understanding of the social issue your project addresses and increase their commitment to service.

Reflection is designed to encourage volunteers to examine the project in terms of what they did, what they learned, how it affected them and how they will continue to support the social issue. Reflection can take many forms. Volunteers can have a group discussion, write about their experience, create a photo-journal of the project or respond to quotes about service. When planning your project, decide which form of reflection you will use. Tailor the reflection activity to the project; for example, if volunteers are assisting with arts and crafts classes at a daycare center, they can create a simple art project about their service experience.

Evaluation

You should always evaluate your project so that you can report success to volunteers, partners and the community. Evaluating will also help you learn what was successful and what things you should change for future projects. Overall, the evaluation process will provide you with valuable information to show the impact of the project on the community and to help you in planning, managing and implementing your next project.

3. Map your project

Evaluation (continued)

As part of your project development, plan how you will evaluate the project, whom you will involve and how you will use the results. You can consider three types of evaluation:

- Goal-based: Did you meet the goals of the project?
- Process-based: Was the project planned, managed and implemented effectively?
- Outcome-based: Did you achieve the objectives of the project?

Please use the sample project evaluation and final report forms to help you in your evaluation efforts.

Now you have determined what you need for the project, from volunteers to supplies. In the next section you will explore ways to acquire the resources you need.



4. Secure Resources

Funding, Products and Services

You can obtain funding, products and services for your project in several ways. Grants, gifts and in-kind donations are a great way to get support from individuals, corporations and community organizations. Contact businesses in your neighborhood or companies that already have a connection to your clients or mission. Who do you know?

Below you will find some basic ideas of how you can obtain various resources and support for your service project.

- **Businesses**
 - Corporate sponsorships to support staffing and operations
 - In-kind donations (like beverages, snacks, printing of course materials)
 - Meeting space
- **Colleges and Universities**
 - Community research
 - Course presenters
 - Interns to support project development, marketing and evaluation
 - Meeting space
- **Faith Groups**
 - Community research
 - Course presenters
 - In-kind donations
 - Meeting space
- **Foundations**
 - Grants to support staffing and operations
 - Technical assistance for project development, marketing and evaluation
 - Community research and presenters
- **Neighborhood Associations and Civic Groups**
 - Community outreach and recruitment
 - In-kind donations
- **Non-profit Organizations**
 - Grants to support staffing and operations
 - Community research
 - Course presenters
 - Community outreach and recruitment
 - Meeting space

Develop a strategy for approaching a group or business about donating money, services or in-kind goods. Identify the correct people to contact, and make a targeted request that appeals to their needs or wants.

Map out a case for support that expresses why the project is important, the impact it will create, your team's ability to complete the project and how the group or business can be a part of the effort.

Be specific about what you need from them, whether it is funds to purchase a certain item, three hours of consulting time on a particular topic or contacts to other like-minded organizations that might want to be involved. Prepare your strategy, and then ASK!

Make connections that count! Here are some tips:

- Begin with people you know (family, friends, neighbors, co-workers).
- Ask people you know to engage their friends to support your project.
- Partner with associations and institutions in your community. Businesses, non-profit organizations, community centers, colleges and neighborhood associations can help you recruit participants, secure donations, obtain meeting space and assist with meeting other needs specific to your project.
- Talk personally with people to "sell" your project and get their support.
- Know what you need, and ask people how they can contribute.
- Create and post fliers in your community. Be sure to include e-mail and phone contact information.
- Publicize your project in local newspapers, websites and newsletters.
- Don't be afraid to "tap" people's emotions (happiness, anger, fear, passion) and incite them to get involved.
- Try creative outreach, such as posting fliers or hosting outreach stations at local corner stores, bus stops, fast food spots or other informal gathering places.

4. Secure Resources

Orientation and Training

During the project-mapping phase, you planned your orientation and training and identified the resources you need. Look at the list of partners and potential partners and determine what resources they can offer for orientation and training. Consider asking for meeting space, printing of materials or experts to facilitate training. Don't forget to include representatives from the CSO to share about the agency and the impact the project will have on the community.

You have planned your project and identified and secured the resources you need to complete your project. As the day of the project approaches, it is time to finalize your plans. The next section will help you take care of the final details so that your project is a success.



5. Finalize Project Plan

Overview

Have you ever planned a service project, arrived at the site and realized that you forgot something important? It may have seemed like a minor detail early in the planning process, and so you decided to take care of it later... but later never came.

Instead of discovering what's missing on the day of the project, take time to carefully review your plans to make sure that everything is taken care of ahead of time. This section will provide you with an idea of the types of details you should keep in mind.

Goals

- Complete the project plan
- Communicate with volunteers
- Volunteer registration
- Plan for safety
- Create contingency plans
- On-site logistics
- Plan for fun
- Prepare for project day checklist

Completing the Project Plan

In the weeks before the event, you will need to iron out any kinks and confirm that all aspects of the project are ready to go. The pre-project checklist tool will help you in this process.

Volunteer Communication and Registration

You have created a recruitment strategy and enlisted volunteers for your project. It is a good idea to pre-register volunteers. Pre-registration can be as simple as providing a contact name, number or e-mail address where volunteers can sign up. If volunteers pre-register, you will be able to contact them about project details and also discuss with them the skills, supplies or friends they might also want to bring to the project.

Prior to the event, check with volunteers and make sure that all special needs (medical or otherwise) have been addressed and met. Also, keep the commitments you make. People will not support you if you do not provide information requested, address issues they have or miss scheduled appointments.

Continue to be in contact with your team. Keeping volunteers motivated and excited about your project is the best guarantee for its success! The more contact you provide, the more engaged your volunteers will be, and the more motivated they will be when they arrive. Also, respond to inquiries in a timely and thorough manner.

Make sure to confirm project details with all parties.

Contact volunteers with a phone call or e-mail that:

- Introduces you (or another staff person, partner or volunteer) as the project leader
- Thanks them for volunteering
- Provides the date and time of the project, site address, directions, and parking information
- Describes what will occur at the project
- Explains what to wear or not wear to the project
- Encourages volunteers to bring supplies they may have
- Tells volunteers whom to contact if they have a change in plans

On the day of the project, designate an area for volunteers to "check in." This will allow you to better manage volunteers that attend the project and effectively track their volunteer hours. Use the Project Sign-in Sheet as a guide.

Please use the sample volunteer information sheet and volunteer assignment sheets in the resource section of the guide.

Safety

Ensuring the safety of life and property is critical. By reviewing the project for possible hazards and educating volunteers about safety, project staff will reduce the chance of someone getting hurt.

Review the safety/emergency plan with your project leaders. Know of all nearby emergency exits, first aid kits and automated external defibrillators (AED's). Assign a safety point person for the day of the event. Always have a first aid kit on hand and a phone to call first responders if necessary.

5. Finalize Project Plan

Contingency Planning

Always think through the worst-case scenarios. Play “devil’s advocate” as you analyze the possibilities of what could go wrong. Record your strategy to handle these problems. When you plan ahead for a problem, you can handle it with minimal disruption and cost. The key here is to not only think about what to do before you need to do it, but to also know whom you need to contact and whose phone numbers you need readily available.

Create contingency plans for weather (rain, extreme heat or cold, etc.) and other problems that can be anticipated. Another problem could be varying numbers of volunteers. What will you do if you have too many or too few volunteers for the project you planned? During step two when you visited the service site, you made a list of all the potential projects. Later, you created a task list and prioritized the jobs to be done. If you have fewer volunteers than you anticipated, use this list to determine which tasks are the most important and can be finished by a small group so that the volunteers have a sense of accomplishment at the end of the project. If you have more volunteers than you expected, look down the list for more tasks to be completed.

Plan for fun! It is volunteers’ experiences that keep them coming back for more, and many times this is because they have had a good time. You want your volunteers to leave the project with a feeling that they worked hard, made a difference and had fun! Here are a few ideas on how to incorporate a “fun factor” into your projects:

- **Music:** Get a local volunteer or staff member to play the role of “DJ for the Day” (a.k.a. DJ Serve) to pump music over a speaker system.
- **Warm-Up Exercises:** Think about incorporating some fun stretches as part of the morning “run-of-show” announcements and before the small group teams begin working. This is a great way to get people warm and smiling before they get to work.
- **Nametags or Group Names:** If your projects are broken up into smaller tasks with task

leaders, you can organize them by naming the groups something fun and having a unique sticker identifier on the name tags to break people up into the small groups. Then, when it is time to break into teams, you can have the task leader hold up a sign to gather the group. For example, the “Monkey” group would have a monkey sticker on their name tag and the task leader could hold up a sign and bananas to gather the team when the large group splits.

- **Hearing From the Agency Partner or Community Members:** Many times volunteers leave projects noting that the most memorable part of their experience was hearing from the agency partner or a community member who was impacted by the project. Providing time and space for these community partners to thank volunteers and provide them with a deeper sense of the impact of their service is an essential element of a meaningful experience for volunteers.
- **Volunteer Cheerleader:** Have an energized volunteer play the role of project cheerleader for the day, kind of like Extreme Makeover: Home Edition’s Ty Pennington. This person could walk around the project site and tell people how much time is left and where additional help is needed, but he or she could also shout out great volunteers and generate excitement. This person could carry a Polaroid camera to take picture of volunteers at work and give them away as keepsakes.
- **Reflection:** We all know that this is a really important piece of the project but it is often hard to do in a large group at the end of the project. With that in mind, here are a few ideas. You could have a Reflection Board posted where people write their thoughts during the lunch break. A volunteer could read some of them out loud at the end of the day. Or, at the end of the project, simply have a volunteer go around with a microphone (Phil Donahue style) and gather volunteers’ quick reflections about how they felt about the project and the impact they made. Additionally, at the end of the project, you could have task leaders give “shout outs” to great volunteers who served on their task teams.

6. Manage your Project

Overview

Successful projects exhibit a good balance between logistics, time and people. As a project manager, you will need to balance these three elements effectively in order to implement a successful, productive service project. This chapter will discuss the various elements of a service project and how they can be managed effectively.

Goals

- Discuss how to manage time while on-site
- Learn techniques in managing people, their personalities and their skills
- Learn how to set the tone for a safe day

Managing Time

The first 30 minutes of every project may seem a little chaotic as people get acclimated to their tasks, become familiar with the site area and mingle with other volunteers. However, **YOU KNOW THE PLAN!** Try to remain calm and confident at all times.

Project leaders can play a key role in monitoring progress at the project. Ask them to adjust the work according to the progress being made. It is better to fully complete a portion of the project than to not complete any of the project(s). The volunteers will feel a sense of productivity when they see the fruits of their efforts, even if it is only part of the project that is complete.

If it helps, apply the “80/20 Rule” to time management. This rule, also known as Pareto’s Principle, can be a very effective tool in helping you manage time and tasks effectively. The “80/20 Rule” means that in every project, a few things (approximately 20 percent) are vital and many (approximately 80 percent) are incidental.

Project managers know that 20 percent of the work (most likely, the first 10 percent and the last 10 percent) consumes a large majority of your time and resources. The value of the Pareto Principle for a manager is that it reminds you to focus on the 20 percent that matters most. When the fire drills of the day begin to zap your time, remind yourself of the

20 percent that needs your undivided attention. If something in the schedule has to slip – if something is not going to get done – make sure it is not a crucial aspect of the project. This “80/20 Rule” can help serve as a daily reminder to focus the majority of your time and energy on the percent of your work that is really important. Don’t just work hard; work smart!

Managing People

Being a manager of people can be rewarding, yet challenging. You need to juggle different personalities, various skill levels and individual motivations all at the same time. The key is being able to accurately identify personality traits and know how to position the range of personalities and skills within the varying teams of your project. Below is a general overview of four basic personality types that you might encounter.

- **The Leader: The “A” Type Personality** – Individuals who exhibit the “A” personality are usually very independent, direct and to the point. They exude a take-charge personality and often will ask you to “get to the bottom line” or give them the “executive summary” to read. They do not like routine and often delegate mundane chores to someone else. They are very decisive and persistent in getting what they want and need.
- **The Socializer: The “B” Type Personality** - Individuals who exhibit the “B” personality type love to have fun, travel and be a part of groups. These people are the center of attention often. They love excitement and being in the limelight and usually have high energy levels. The “B” personality is as supportive of others, as they are direct in their approach. This type tends to be very talkative and outgoing with people and is usually quite persuasive.
- **The Details, Details, Details: The “C” Type Personality** - Individuals who exhibit the “C” personality type thrive on details and accuracy, and they take just about everything seriously. They are usually very neat, calculated and precise in just about everything they do.

6. Finalize Project Plan

- **The Ever Dependable: The “D” Type Personality-** Individuals who exhibit the “D” personality type do not like change. Instead, they prefer to have a set of guidelines from which to follow, and they won’t mind doing the same thing repetitively. They are usually punctual and consistent.
- When finished with tools, be sure to put them in an appropriate place and with sharp edges pointed down. Please do not leave tools lying around, as someone may injure themselves.
- Clean your equipment before you leave.
- If children are present, please watch them closely to be certain that they are not playing with dangerous or inappropriate items.

Opposite personalities can complement one another if they try to understand the other’s perspective. However, every project manager, at some point, will encounter clashing personalities. If you encounter this type of situation, try to remove the volunteer(s) from the situation and redirect them to another task that could better fit their personality.

In addition to juggling varying personalities, you will need to be able to balance the different skill levels of your volunteers. The Professional Skills Matrix tool is designed to provide structure in using those skills. It provides you examples of volunteer positions that align with volunteer skill level.

Safety

Ensuring the safety of life and property is critical. By reviewing your project for possible hazards and educating your volunteers about safety, you will decrease the risk of injury. Always have a first aid kit on hand and a phone to call 911 if necessary.

General Project Safety Information

The safety tips below may be useful while on site at an outdoors project. Please look through the list and advise your volunteers to take these precautions, if applicable:

- Wear sunscreen if outside.
- Drink plenty of water, even if you don’t feel thirsty. Remain hydrated!
- Where appropriate, wear gloves, goggles and dust masks (these last two items must be worn when scraping, sanding or spray painting), safety vests, and sturdy closed-toed shoes.
- Watch out for sharp or dangerous objects such as broken glass or needles. Be cautious around bio medical waste and do not touch it.

- If using a ladder, make sure that all of the rungs are intact. When on a ladder, have a spotter. Make sure you are going up the ladder on the right side, and do not stand on the top rung of the ladder.
- If using scaffolding, always have a spotter.
- Stay away from any electrical feeds.
- Do not intentionally inhale chemical fumes.
- Be on the lookout for poisonous insects, snakes or scorpions, and keep your distance from them.
- Turn rocks away from you, not toward you. (Critters like to hide under them!)
- Please do not wander away from the project, volunteer group, trail or work area.
- Please report all incidents immediately to the project or team leader.

7. Wrap-up your project

Overview

Now that you have undergone the majority of your project, it is time to think about concluding the project and wrapping up all loose ends. To make your project a success, you should finalize all logistical matters, as well as focus on clean-up, reflection, recognition and evaluation.

Goals

- Understand the necessary steps involved in post-project clean up.
- Learn how to recognize volunteers for their efforts.
- Discuss reflection and how to connect volunteers to the mission of the project.
- Understand the purpose and importance of evaluation.

At the end of the project, a number of logistical matters should be addressed:

- **Clean up:** Ask everyone do their part! Have project leaders lead volunteers in pitching in to make the site look better than it did when they arrived. All materials should be used or donated to the CSO. All tools should be returned to their respective areas.
- **Recognition:** Volunteer recognition is a must! You should make sure that volunteers feel appreciated, and you should invite them back to serve again. Visit www.PointsofLight.org for recognition tools and mdday.com for certificates of participation.
- **Reflection:** Reflection and community building provide volunteers an opportunity to reflect on the day's events. These activities help volunteers connect to the mission of the project.
- **Evaluation:** Evaluation and feedback are necessary for improving your projects. The information gathered through these forms will help your future projects better suit the needs of your volunteers and your community.

Clean Up

Spend adequate time cleaning up after the project is finished. You always want to leave the site cleaner than it was when you arrived. Here are some steps to follow:

- Collect and dispose of or recycle any food-related trash, including wrappers, empty water bottles or cups.

- Empty any unused, un-reusable products into proper containers and throw them away.
- Collect all stray plastic and paper products on the ground.
- Gather up the garbage, bag it and dispose of it properly.
- Break down the registration table and break area, if applicable. Store the table, chairs and other furniture in their proper places.
- Collect the sign-in sheets, volunteer waiver forms and any other signed forms for your documentation.
- Collect all of your safety items for re-use (if possible).
- Do a final walk-through of the site to make sure it is in the same or better condition in which you came.
- If you have engaged in a painting activity, make sure that all paint is removed from the floors and any other inappropriate places.

In addition to celebrating your volunteers throughout the project, take a moment at the end of it to lead your volunteers through a community building conversation. Spend about 10 minutes asking them to reflect on their experiences and thoughts about the project and how their work will affect the community they have served. Reflection and community building leads to more effective volunteerism; you are giving volunteers the opportunity to think of and discuss their experiences and the relationship of service to larger social concerns.

Reflection on Service Learning

Reflection is strongly encouraged after every service experience; this process is often referred to as service learning or community building. While volunteers think about their experiences independently, a conversation among all participating volunteers creates a stronger sense of accomplishment and establishes a deeper connection to the community. A group conversation provides structured time for volunteers to think and talk about what occurred during the project. This group conversation can often deepen volunteers' understanding of the social issue your project addresses and increase their commitment to service.

Summary

Reflection on Service Learning (continued)

Here are some sample reflection questions to help facilitate a discussion about the service project:

- What issue(s) was being addressed? What did you notice happening around you during the project? What were the results/outcome of the project?
- So what? What did you think about during the project activity? What effect do you think this activity has had on those intended to benefit from it? How has it affected you?
- Now what? What are the larger issues that caused the need for you to participate in this service activity? How did your efforts help? What more needs to be done to improve these problems? How will you apply what you have learned here in the future?

Evaluation and Feedback

Evaluation and feedback are different than reflection. Evaluation is about the actual project - the work, planning, coordination, delivery, implementation, logistics and management. Feedback is a gift - use it as an opportunity to reflect on the overall management and implementation of the project. If you never know what the volunteers and your community contacts think, you will never be able to adequately address future needs. Therefore, do not be hesitant to ask your project leaders, volunteers and CSO contacts for their feedback. Most people will be happy that you asked.

The Sample Evaluation Survey tool can help guide your evaluation process.

To get feedback, ask those involved to complete a feedback form at the end of the project before everyone leaves. You already have them there, the experience is fresh in their minds and you can get it from them quickly. Ask a volunteer (possibly the volunteer registrar) to pass out feedback forms. Do not ask volunteers to put their names on these forms; people are more comfortable giving anonymous feedback. Do not react or respond to the feedback while at the project site. If a volunteer gives you his or her name and contact information, you should call him or her to discuss it further shortly after the project.

If immediate feedback is not an option, you can mail or email participants a feedback form within a week of the project. You can attach a feedback form to the thank you letter or follow-up correspondence. If you are mailing the form, include a stamped return envelope; this increases the likelihood of getting a returned form.



Make A
Difference Day

Additional Resources

Listed below are several online resources on volunteerism and volunteer development:

- **Energize Inc.** www.energizeinc.com
- **HandsOn Network:** www.pointsoflight.org/handsonnetwork
- **Idealist.org: Action Without Borders** www.idealist.org
- **Independent Sector:** www.independentsector.org
- **National & Global Youth Service Day:** https://ysa.csod.com/catalog/CustomPage.aspx?id=20000482&tab_page_id=20000482&tab_id=20000480
- **National Service Resource Center:** <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources>



Project Planning Worksheet

Use this form to help you plan your service project.

Project Site:

Date:

Address:

Time:

Contacts

Community Organization or School

Name:

Phone:

Alt. Phone:

E-Mail:

Partner Organization

Name:

Phone:

Alt. Phone:

E-Mail:

Volunteer Leader

Name:

Phone:

Alt. Phone:

E-Mail:

Volunteer Leader

Name:

Phone:

Alt. Phone:

E-Mail:



Project Planning Worksheet

If you will be using project task leaders to lead smaller groups of volunteers during your project, note their contact information here:

Task Leader 1

Name:

Phone:

Alt. Phone:

E-Mail:

Task Leader 2

Name:

Phone:

Alt. Phone:

E-Mail:

Task Leader 3

Name:

Phone:

Alt. Phone:

E-Mail:

Task Leader 4

Name:

Phone:

Alt. Phone:

E-Mail:

Project Details

1. Briefly describe your project:

2. List the project(s) that have been identified at the site. How many volunteers are needed? What is the minimum age?

Project	# of Volunteers	Minimum Age

3. Is prep work needed prior to the day of service project?

- Yes No

If Yes, what is needed?



Project Details

4. Who will do the prep work?

5. Is this a one-day project?

Yes No

If No, when will it continue?

Contingency Plans

Use this space to briefly describe back-up project plans.

1. How can this project (or parts of the project) proceed in the event of inclement weather?

2. Are other events or projects occurring on-site that day?

Yes No

If yes, what impact will those activities have on this project?

3. What is the plan if you have a shortage of volunteers on the day of the project?



Project Details

4. What is the plan if more volunteers show up than expected?

Safety

Emergency Contact

Name:

Phone:

Alt. Phone:

E-Mail:

1. Briefly describe safety/emergency plan:

2. Are food and beverages provided?

Yes No

If Yes, who will provide?

3. Does the project site have restroom facilities?

Yes No

If No, describe the alternative:



Project Details

4. Is the project site accessible for persons with disabilities?

- Yes No

5. How will volunteers pre-register?

6. Whom should volunteers contact with questions before the event?

Name:

Phone:

Alt. Phone:

E-Mail:

7. Have you investigated driving and/or public transit directions to the project site?

- Yes No

8. How will you communicate these directions to your volunteers?

9. What time should volunteers arrive?

10. Where should volunteers park?

11. What should volunteers bring and or wear?

Pre-Project Checklist

If you plan your service event well beforehand, you can expect things to run pretty smoothly during the actual day of service. However, we all know that sometimes things don't go as expected. Here is a checklist to help you manage logistics for your service event:

- Do you know where the trash containers are located?
- Make sure there will be ample trash cans and recycling bins with bin liners.
- Have you thought about how you will create a fun environment?
- Are there questions and concerns that still need to be addressed?
- If you do not think a project/task is feasible or if you have questions or concerns, be sure to discuss any changes that you feel need to be made with your team and partners.
- Have you finalized the project plan?
- Have you shared the plan with all necessary parties? If necessary, make additional visits to the service site in order to finalize the task matrix and to ensure that you are prepared to run a successful project. Be sure to stay in contact with your partners about details for the project.
- Have you met with project leaders? Meet with the staff and volunteers who will be leading the project to make sure that everyone is comfortable with the scope of the project and understands the plan. Leaders should also be familiar with the layout of the site and emergency procedures. Utilize your leaders to delegate tasks within the groups.
- Have you started to implement a PR and media plan (if necessary)?
- If PR and media attention are important to the project, begin working with communications contacts early so that they can develop and implement a strategy to seek coverage for your project. You will want to make sure you've assigned a media spokesperson to be at the service site and that he/she is armed with media kits and talking points.

Pre-Project Checklist

- Have you addressed documentation of the event? Ask a staff person or volunteer to take pictures of the project. You should make a list of the types of pictures you want, such as close-up shots of people, volunteers in action or team photos.
- Did you confirm all tools and materials? Confirm that all tools and materials have been picked up and are on the site. Obtain any overlooked items. Make sure that you've thought through all of the cleaning supplies you might need. Extra work gloves and trash bags are always a good idea!
- Pack a kit with materials that you will need to facilitate the project, including: sign-in sheets, evaluations, pens, markers, tape, poster board, rope/bungee cords, paper, clipboards and nametags. You will need these things for registration, to take notes, to make signs (directions to water, bathrooms, etc.), to hang banners and to handle little details of the day. You may also want to bring handouts about the next volunteer opportunity.
- Don't leave anything to chance. It's better to confirm a detail twice than to assume that someone else will do it. Ask your project leaders to review details. If someone agrees to be responsible for any materials, follow up with an e-mail. Stay in touch with partners and donors who are providing financial or in-kind resources to make sure that you have everything you need before the day of the project.
- Meet with your project leaders to ensure that everyone is confident about all project details.
- Exchange cell phone numbers with all key contacts if you have not already done so. You may also want to secure walkie-talkies for the day of the project.
- Make any final calls to project-specific contacts, such as landscapers or media contacts.
- You want all volunteers to have a meaningful experience, so make sure that you have the language capabilities to communicate with each volunteer.
- Have you thought about how you will take care of VIPs if any are attending the project? Decide how you want to greet them and give them a tour of the site and the work taking place.

Scheduling

Do you have a printed schedule for the event, and have you reviewed it? Discuss the time the facility needs to be opened on the day of the event. If the facility isn't usually open on that day, get the name and contact information for the person who will give you access.

Have you assigned volunteers to serve as task leaders to work with specific parts of the event?

Has time been allotted for set up, breaks, lunch, proper clean up, reflection and evaluation?

Are volunteers aware of their scheduled volunteer time?



Pre-Project Checklist

Access to Event Site

1. Do volunteers have directions to the event?
2. Is the project site accessible to people with disabilities?
3. If the site is normally closed or secured, who will be available to provide access to the facilities?
4. Is there a place where can volunteers put personal belongings?
5. Do you know where volunteers should park?
6. Do you have a way to tell volunteers where to park (sign, other volunteers to direct traffic, etc.)?

Registration

1. Has an area been designated for volunteer check-in?
2. Have registration forms been created and printed?
3. Do you have pens or pencils?
4. Do you have volunteer nametags?
5. Do you have volunteers to manage registration?
6. Have they been trained on how to register the volunteers?
7. Do volunteers know whom to contact in case of a cancellation or emergency?

Weather and Attire

1. Have you made contingency plans in the event of bad weather?
2. Do volunteers know how to find out about a change in plan?
3. Do you have a way to contact volunteers in case of an emergency?

Pre-Project Details

Crafting A Volunteer Recruitment Message

Qualities of a good recruitment message:

1. The opening message should be interesting enough to entice people to volunteer for the organization.
2. The body of the message should present information in a logical order that makes volunteering more appealing.

Need: Is there a problem?

Solution: Can this job help solve it?

Fears and Questions: Can the prospective volunteer help with the job?

Benefits: What's in it for the prospective volunteer?

Day Of Project Timeline

1-3 hours before the project

1. Wear your project t-shirt (if you had them made).
2. Review the day's activities. Confirm your task and project priority list.
3. Deliver any final supplies and materials to the site.
4. Arrive at the project site at least one hour early to prepare. Volunteers often arrive early and may throw off your set-up plans!
5. Meet your contacts at the project site, and make sure that they are prepared to give a brief overview of their organization and how the project will benefit the organization and community.
6. Unpack supplies, and make sure that tools are available and ready.
7. Have all tools and materials ready and waiting at the location where a particular task will take place.
8. Take "before" photos.
9. Arrange any handouts, nametags, and volunteer sign-in sheets.
10. Post any necessary signs, such as those to welcome and direct volunteers.
11. Designate stations for tools, refreshments, and any other stations needed.
12. Start the project and welcome volunteers.
13. Ask volunteers to sign in, fill out any necessary forms (such as liability waivers) and take a nametag.
14. Gather volunteers together to thank them for participating and introduce yourself and project partners.
15. Welcome and introduce volunteers.
16. Give a brief orientation, including an overview of the project and its importance.
17. Ask the organization contact person to spend a few moments talking about the mission and history of the organization and how the project will affect the community, organization and the people you are serving.
18. Go over the agenda for the day, discussing the schedule and tasks and reminding volunteers that you will have a brief time for reflection and evaluation at the end of the project.

Day Of Project Timeline

1. Review safety procedures.
2. Set a goal for the first half of the project.
3. Assign tasks. Describe each task to be completed. Introduce the task leader (or assign leaders if necessary). Assign volunteers to the different work areas, making sure that each task has the correct number of people and that each volunteer feels comfortable and prepared to complete the task.
4. Distribute tools and supplies. Remind volunteers of the safety procedures.

Throughout the Project:

1. Be a leader!
2. Know your outcome, and convey it to the volunteers.
3. Be organized and delegate work to volunteers. Keep the project on schedule.
4. HAVE FUN and encourage volunteers to enjoy the service too.
5. Give positive reinforcement.
6. Be a public relations agent for your project with volunteers, the organization contact person and the community.
7. Take pictures.
8. If the volunteers take a lunch or refreshment break, encourage them to interact with each other, especially people they may not know. Take this time to give an update on the day's progress and go over the schedule for the rest of the day.
9. Thank volunteers.

Before the End of the Project

1. Be sure to start clean-up efforts at least 30 minutes before the scheduled end of the project. Encourage volunteers to help with cleaning up the area.
2. Lead a reflection activity or discussion with all volunteers. Encourage everyone to examine their service and what it meant to them personally.
3. Ask volunteers and partners to complete an evaluation.
4. Thank volunteers.
5. CELEBRATE!



Day Of Project Timeline

Before You Leave the Project Site

1. Take “after” photos.
2. Have a final debrief with the agency/school contact.
3. Survey the site to make sure you are leaving it better than you found it. Make sure that all of the trash is picked up, lights are turned off and the building is secured, if needed.
4. Assess any follow-up work that is needed.

Immediately after the Project:

1. Set a follow-up meeting with project leaders for the next week.
2. Assess the work completed.
3. Complete an evaluation as the volunteer leader.
4. Review results from the evaluations collected at the project.
5. Remember to gather and record any anecdotal evaluation (i.e., stories shared during reflection and observations made during the project).
6. Confirm project attendance and calculate total volunteer hours contributed.
7. Determine if the needs of the organization were met. If there are any unmet needs, discuss how and when they will be addressed.
8. Identify how to improve the project next time.
9. Send follow-up correspondence to volunteers or host a recognition event for them.

Day Of Project Checklist

Below are a few helpful hints on managing the execution of a volunteer project:

1. Verify that all materials and tasks are ready prior to volunteers arriving.
2. Welcome and register all volunteers.
3. Have volunteers sign waivers of liability.
4. Have nametags for all staff members and volunteers.
5. Present brief organization and project overview, including the impact of the project.
6. Motivate and manage volunteers; make sure each volunteer has a task to complete.
7. Manage the volunteers' time for effective service.
8. At the halfway point, ask if there is too much or not enough to do.
9. Prioritize tasks; complete the most important jobs first.
10. Have back-up projects available for extra work.
11. Monitor safety.
12. Don't get wrapped up in doing the work; be available for answering questions and troubleshooting.
13. If possible, take photos.
14. Clean up.
15. Reflect and evaluate.
16. Thank volunteers and inform them of future volunteer opportunities.

Sample Agenda

If you are conducting your service project in one day, this is one example of what your agenda could look like:

Time:	Activity:
8:30am - 9:00am	Arrive at your project site Perform necessary set up
9:30am - 9:45am	Greet volunteers Distribute nametags Have volunteers sign in Introduce agency contact Agency contact welcome and comments
9:45am - 12:00pm	Project coordinators and task leaders direct volunteers in project tasks
12:00pm - 12:45pm	Lunch break
12:45pm - 2:30pm	Lead and direct volunteers to completion of project
2:30pm - 3:00pm	Begin all clean-up tasks
3:00pm - 3:30pm	Lead a group reflection activity Have volunteers fill out evaluations
3:30pm - 5:00pm	Thank volunteers and celebrate!



Project Sign-In Sheet

Project Name:

Date:

In connection with my voluntary involvement in activities undertaken for, and with the participation and support of (organization name), I hereby agree, for myself, my heirs, assigns, executors and administrators to release and discharge (organization name), its officers and directors, employees, agents and volunteers from all claims, demands and actions for injuries sustained to my person and/or property as a result of my involvement in such activities, whether or not resulting from negligence, and I agree to release and hold (organization name), its officers and directors, employees, agents and volunteers harmless from any cause or action, claim or suit arising there from. I hereby attest that my attendance and involvement in such activities is voluntary, that I am participating at my own risk, and that I have read the foregoing terms and conditions of this release.

Name	Address (City, State, Zip)	Telephone	Email



Sample Final Report

Project Name:

Date:

Organization/Community Served:

Brief Description of Project:

Total Length of Time at Project:

Actual Outcome/Result/Benefit:



Sample Final Report

Quotes from Agency/Community/Volunteers:

Number of Volunteers:

Hours of Community Service:

Service:

Hours of Prep Time:

Total Number of Hours Donated to Community:

Total Monetary Value of Service Given to Community:
(e.g., Independent Sector rated the value of a volunteer hour in 2008 as \$20.25)

Total Monetary Value of In-Kind:

Total Monetary Value of Project:

Attachments (Photos From Events):

Service Project Evaluation

Please tell us about your volunteer experience today. You helped to create positive change in our community, and we want to hear about it. We will process this information and share the results of your team's hard work. Please complete this survey before you leave the project site and turn it in to your Volunteer Leader.

Rate the following statements on a scale of 1-5, where 1= Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree.

1. The project we completed made a positive impact on the community.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Participating in this project was a good way to meet and network with people in my community.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I feel a stronger connection to my community after participating in this project.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I have a greater sense of pride in my community after participating in this project.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I felt a sense of accomplishment at the end of the project.

1 2 3 4 5

6. The project was well organized.

1 2 3 4 5

7. This project motivated me to continue to volunteer.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I would like to lead a project in the future.

1 2 3 4 5



Service Project Evaluation

Share a memorable moment from the project (use the back of this sheet, if necessary):

How could we have improved this volunteer experience for you?

If you would like to share any other feedback, please list below.

Thank you!



Volunteer Incident Report

In the case that an accident or injury occurs during a volunteer project, it is important that the volunteer leader collect as much information as possible regarding the incident.

Project Name:

Date:

Project Location:

Volunteer Leader:

Volunteer Leader Phone:

Name of Injured Person:

Date & Approximate Time of Incident:

Describe the incident, including who was injured and/or what was damaged. (Use additional pages as necessary)

Name of individuals involved:

Address/location of incident:

The Injured Person is:

- Active employee
- Retired employee
- Employee/retiree family member
- Employee/retiree friend
- Community Service Organization staff
- Community Service Organization volunteer
- Community volunteer

Was EMS contacted? Yes No

Injured Person Signature:

Date:

Volunteer Leader Signature:

Date: