

Facilitating a Post-Service Reflection

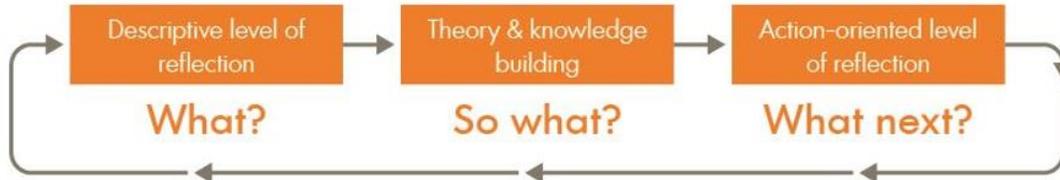
Understand the Impact of Service on Your Members!

Why is Reflection Important?

- Reflection unites the service experience with a learning process--> members can connect their knowledge pre-service, their education and development through their student organization with the experience of the service project
- It also deepens students' understanding of the social issue and allows them to explore the role they play as a member of the community as it relates to that issue

How to Facilitate a Post-Service Reflection after your Organization Participates in Service:

Take 10-30 minutes at the end of your service project to reflect and discuss the importance and impact of your service with the volunteers. We think using the "What? "So What?" and "Now What?" model is a great way to frame questions to student organization members and can lead to some rich conversations.



1. Discuss how the project went: what were some challenges, what went well, what are some goals for next time etc. Some questions you can ask are:

- What happened?
- What did you do today?
- What feelings came up for you during the experience?

2. Discuss why your service matters: *What did your project address and why was it a need? Why is it important to serve this need or population? What are some implications for the future? What are some further steps you could take to address this issue?* Some questions you can ask are:

- What is/was the significance of your service with/for the agency/organization?
- What difference does that make to you?
- What difference does the service make to the community?

3. Discuss what you can do next, as a student organization or as individuals. Some questions you can ask are:

- Do you think you will volunteer with this organization or elsewhere in the future?
- How does this experience influence you moving forward?

Helpful Tips for Reflections

1. Bring out opinions: encourage expression of various viewpoints, ask that people speak for themselves and be specific; call attention to strong disagreements as when directly addressed, difference can lead to growth
2. Encourage everyone to participate: Discussion in pairs or small groups is effective, consider using writing or drawing activities to highlight different strengths and learning styles
3. Keep the role of the facilitator neutral: Aim to be free from bias, refrain from sharing personal opinions, when in doubt defer facilitator role to another
4. Keep discussion relevant: As a group, create clear goals and objectives; point out when discussion is drifting off topic or becoming trivial, cut off discussion when repetition occurs or when people become weary
5. Encourage ideas and be challenging: Question assumptions and statements, encourage further reflection by asking, “why?”; pose questions to the group that you are genuinely challenged by (including ones you don’t have an answer for)
6. Be aware of nonverbal behavior: Keep an eye on people’s emotions during discussion and be sensitive to challenges that individuals may be keeping to themselves (goal is to avoid a fight or free-for-all)

Ideas for Reflection Activities

- Individual Goal Setting (Small Groups): Goal setting allows us to think critically about what we want to challenge ourselves to try or do throughout the week. The goals can be personal, group, community or globally related. Provide each participant with a cutout star and have him or her write his or her goals on the five points. Each person’s goals will be as individual as they are. After you have provided five minutes for people to write their goals, ask them to mark one that they would like to share with the group. Go around and have people share one goal they have, why it is important, and how they are going to challenge themselves to make it happen (should take about 15 min. at most – approx. one minute per person).
- All around the world: This a group activity that needs an even number of more than four. This is a “how did your day go”? There are a couple questions that the narrator should already have in place, such as: what did you learn today, what was a challenge you had to overcome, did you see something that made you think, what did it feel like to be with people from this area and what did you like and dislike? When a question is brought to the table and the pair talking about

it, they must be timed, and after that is done they move over to the left or right a certain amount of spaces. This arrangement can be two start lines or a circle.