



# ACC GLOBAL COMMUNITY SERVICE MONTH

---

RESOURCE GUIDE FOR CHAPTERS



## **Incorporating Community Service into Your Chapter's Member Development Plan**

This handbook seeks to renew the ethic of civic responsibility and the spirit of community service through the involvement of the membership in the Association of Corporate Counsel. Community Service connects the fundamental human values found in the concepts of liberty, responsibility and freedom. The handbook recommends that Chapters incorporate community service training and activities into their member development plan in order to provide members with a better understanding of the vital role they play as lawyers in improving the world around them. Chapters should develop training and activities suitable to their specific program needs by using this handbook as a resource for expanding the meaning of community service among its members.

### **Overview**

This Community Service Handbook covers the basics of how to conduct a successful community service project. The first two sections deal with building a team and developing a service project. The third section contains examples and ideas for service projects. The final sections cover such nuts and bolts topics as managing volunteers; forming committees; budgeting and fundraising; publicizing a project; and legal issues. At the end of the book, you will find general volunteer and safety guidelines.

# Table of Contents

---

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>All Together Now: Building a Team</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| Why Participate?   | 3         |
| Why Teamwork?  | 3         |
| Who Does What?   | 4         |
| <b>So You Want to Serve: Developing a Project</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| You've Decided You Want to do Community Service. The question is, What Kind of Activity? | 5         |
| Here are Some Other Things to Keep in Mind   | 5         |
| VIQs (Very Important Questions)  | 6         |
| <b>Service Project Examples</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| Project Ideas  | 7         |
| What Others have Done  | 9         |
| Tips From Other Chapters   | 10        |
| <b>Pulling it All Together</b>   | <b>11</b> |
| Volunteer Management 101: Tapping People's Talents                                       | 11        |
| Managing Dos and Don'ts  | 11        |
| Forming Committees   | 11        |
| Delegating Responsibilities to Team Members or Committee Heads                           | 12        |
| Managing Conflicts   | 13        |
| The Week Before the Big Day: Your To-Do-List   | 14        |
| Money Matters: Budgeting and Fundraising   | 14        |
| Beware: Projects can Have "Hidden" Costs   | 15        |
| Get the Word Out: Publicizing Your Project   | 15        |
| Media Relations  | 16        |
| Preventing Injury, Lawsuits and Harm   | 16        |
| General Volunteer Guidelines   | 17        |
| Safety Tips and Guidelines for Construction Projects                                     | 18        |
| Remember the Basics  | 18        |
| <b>Project Timetable</b>   | <b>19</b> |
| 90-120 Days Before the Event   | 19        |
| 75 Days Before the Event: Choose a Project   | 19        |
| 60 Days Before the Event: Spread the Word  | 19        |
| 45 Days Before the Event: Recruit Volunteers   | 19        |
| 30 Days Before the Event: Nail Down the Details  | 19        |
| Final Checklist  | 19        |
| Day of the Event   | 19        |

## **All Together Now: Building a Team**

### **Why Participate?**

Consider the benefits of an ACC Chapter Community Service project:

#### **Chapter and Member Benefits**

- Improve your community.
- Enhance your chapter's image.
- Distinguish your chapter by associating with a national or global cause.
- Boost membership loyalty by giving members a new reason to support you.
- Improve member retention and attract new members.
- Garner positive media attention.
- Provide your family with an opportunity to engage with your association.
- Enhance communication, organization, time management skills and accountability.
- Develop leadership skills among your members.
- Increase your business networking skills.
- Increase members' understanding and respect for diversity and other cultures.

*“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”*

*-Helen Keller*

### **Why Teamwork?**

*ACC's Community Service Handbook takes a team approach to community service and highlights service as an especially powerful tool for effecting change. Why?*

**Teams Get Big Results.** Volunteers working in groups can have a bigger and more immediate impact than one person working alone. A team of fifteen volunteers, for example, can paint an entire community center in a day, while it would probably take one person ten weekends to finish the same project.

**Teams Build Unity.** By uniting people from all segments of society, team service fosters a spirit of community, a feeling of “I’m part of something bigger than myself.” And it demonstrates that people, pulling together, can make change happen.

**Teams Promote Equality.** Team service is an equal-opportunity activity, crossing age, race, ethnic, social, religious, and economic lines. It provides a level playing field, where every player is equal because everyone has something to contribute.



## All Together Now: Building a Team

### Who Does What?

*A team is usually made up of team volunteers and a project leader. Although specific responsibilities will vary from team to team, here are some general “job descriptions”:*

**Team volunteers:** Volunteers are the backbone of the team, the people who make a project happen. Their responsibilities can range from gathering supplies, to locating a place to hold an event, to painting a house for a senior citizen. More than just “free labor,” volunteers contribute invaluable talents, skills, ideas, and experiences to a project.

**Project leader:** A project leader serves as the key coordinator for a team’s project before, during, and after the day of the event. He or she plans and organizes the group’s activities with the help of volunteers and possibly with a local nonprofit organization. The project leader also monitors the project from beginning to end.



**Other Players:** Many service projects also involve other project partners. One such partner may be a community-based organization (CBO), otherwise known as a nonprofit. CBOs can be homeless shelters, hunger relief organizations, youth centers, advocacy and outreach groups, hospitals, and schools, among other types of organizations. There are thousands of nonprofits across the globe that are on the front lines of change. Many of them could use your help.

If your team does not have time to create your own service project, you should think about volunteering for one of the many ongoing service programs organized by nonprofits; for example, schools often administer Saturday programs for neighborhood children. Otherwise, you can hook up with a nonprofit to get a new project off the ground. If you do so, keep in mind that it may take a few brainstorming sessions to come up with a project that works for both groups. Even if your team does not form a partnership with a CBO, these organizations can provide valuable guidance and support.

Local businesses can also be project partners. More and more law firms and companies are recognizing the value of community service, and many would be more than happy to donate lunch, supplies, manpower, and/or funds for your service project. If you do approach a law firm or business in your area, be flexible. Although a company may be tapped out for monetary contributions for the year, it may be willing to coordinate a company-wide drive to collect pencils, books, and paper for your educational day camp or something else of the like.

## **So You Want to Serve: Developing a Project**

### **You've Decided You Want to do Community Service. The Question is, What Kind of Activity?**

Your team might already have a certain project in mind; or, you might already know that you want to work with a certain group of people, such as senior citizens. But if you are starting with a blank slate, there are several places to turn to for ideas on how you can best serve your community. Resources include the mayor's office, your city or province's human services administration, your local volunteer center, area places of worship, and, as mentioned earlier, community nonprofits. To get you thinking, we have included several project ideas in this book that you can tailor to your community.

When it comes to planning projects, there are no hard and fast rules. Be creative. Use your judgment. And remember: There are no small projects. A service activity does not have to be elaborate to be effective. Your team can do as much good by taking children living in a homeless shelter to a local park as you can by putting on a carnival for them.

#### **Here are Some Other Things to Keep in Mind:**

**#1: Be inclusive.** Think along the lines of working with people rather than for people. If you want to clean up a youth center, get the local teens who use it involved. If you want to develop a project for nursing home residents, get their input. The best projects are those that draw upon the insights and experiences of community residents.

**#2: Recognize what each person has to offer.** When it comes to service, no one is better or more important than anyone else. Every person brings to the table special skills and personal characteristics, all of which enhance the project.

**#3: Know the mission of your project.** Be clear about what you want to accomplish before you start planning project details. If you do not have a set goal in mind—and if you do not stay focused on that goal—you and your volunteers will only be spinning your wheels.

**#4: Be hands-on.** Try to develop a project that puts you in the middle of the community and that gives you something concrete to show for at the end of the day. It's best to steer clear of projects that involve a lot of paper-pushing or data entry; although important, these types of volunteer activities are usually undertaken by individual volunteers in an office.

**#5: Meet real needs.** Your group may be asked to do an activity that, although "nice," does not meet the community's needs or group's mission. Take direction from the community. Do not "impose service"—create it in partnership with the community. Planting daffodils might be a lovely thing to do, but is it what the community wants? Is it something that volunteers will learn from?

## **So You Want to Serve: Developing a Project**

### **VIQs (Very Important Questions)**

As you plan your project, ask yourself the following questions:

*What impact do you want your project to have?*

- Will the project meet real needs? Will the effects of your project last, or will it need to be conducted on an ongoing basis for its impact to be felt?
- Will the volunteers learn something from their experience? Will they want to continue to volunteer after the project is finished? If you are working with a nonprofit, will volunteers be motivated to keep up their volunteer work for that organization?

*Is your project right for your team?*

- Does the project “fit” with the ages and abilities of the people in your group? Are team members up to the job, physically and emotionally?
- Is any training necessary for the volunteers, either before or during your project? Can you provide that training? Can you recruit volunteers with the additional skills your group needs?
- Is your group big enough to accomplish the project? Is it too big? Can you manage a group of its size? Is there something for everyone to do during the entire length of the project—or do you need to split the team into two or more service activities?

*How much, if anything, will the project cost?*

- Have you thought about such costs as admissions, supplies, meals, transportation? Ensure that you have adequate chapter financial resources to accomplish your project.
- Can your group ask local law firms or businesses to help out by donating food, supplies, equipment, office space, and/or manpower?
- If you are working with a nonprofit, can it help with the project cost?

*Have you covered all safety bases?*

- Is there enough parking for volunteers in a well-lit area?
- Can you meet at a central location and carpool?
- Is there public transportation available to and from the site?
- If you are working with any tools, are they in good working order? Do you know how to use them? Can you get items such as safety goggles and work gloves for each volunteer? Will you be able to recruit knowledgeable supervisors? Can you provide adequate training for volunteers?
- Do your team members or any other people you will be working with have special medical needs that might compromise their safety?
- Have you thought about any accidents that might happen, and how to deal with them?

## Service Project Examples

### Project Ideas

The following project ideas will give you a sense of all the different kinds of volunteer needs that exist in communities all over the world. They are designed to get you thinking—to give you a jumpstart on planning a service project.

Many of the projects in this book are modeled after volunteer activities that have already proved to be successful. Some are specifically designed as one-day or half-day projects; others are geared for the long term. All of them can be adapted to meet the specific needs of your chapter. Feel free to use any of these ideas. But if you want to develop your own project, by all means do it.

- Volunteers did home repairs for elderly and disabled citizens who were getting ready for winter, and cleaned up parks and roadways.
- Volunteers renovated a refuge shelter for homeless and abused women and kids; donated food for the needy; picked up litter; painted and insulated a house for Habitat for Humanity; and entertained nursing home residents.
- Volunteers panted 200 liriopie plants and shored up a wheelchair path at a recreational therapy camp for the mentally and physically challenged.
- Volunteers helped to pick up the slack when a domestic violence shelter’s funding was cut. They brought two van loads of clothes to the Interim House, then paint, cut paper dolls and did various arts and crafts with the shelter kids, made lunch and did yard work. They later bought gifts for 17 mothers and 31 children for the holidays.
- Volunteers came together to clean and paint buildings and a ball field around town, as well as fill five trucks with food for a food pantry and install fire detectors in low-income residents’ homes.
- Volunteers treated 75 abused kids, ages 2-12, to a “Day on the Farm,” complete with hay rides, treats, a rodeo clown and an opportunity to get up close with horses, hawks and llamas.



Read more about ACC Southern California’s *Hop On The Bus Project* [HERE!](#)





# Service Project Examples



Read more about ACC New York City's work with NYLAG and The Girl Scouts of America [HERE!](#)





## Service Project Examples

### What Others Have Done...

*One ACC Chapter refurbished a playground and day center for children so they would have a safe place to play while their parents attended "life skills" training as they were leaving government assistance.*

*A chapter took some inner-city children to an American Indian reservation for the day and taught them about diversity, cultural issues and ecology.*

*One Chapter organized a backpack stuffing event to support young children in need. Members and their families were invited to participate in the event.*

*Hurricane relief efforts were organized with the American Red Cross and 22,000 meals were cooked for relief workers and homeless families over one weekend.*

*One Chapter had an "Engineer for a Day" program where they mentored elementary school children and helped them build a robot!*



## Service Project Examples

### Tips From Other Chapters

There's no need to reinvent the wheel! Take some tips from other ACC Chapters. If you'd like to engage more with other volunteers and be added to the Community Service Listserv, please email the Chapters Team ([chapters@acc.com](mailto:chapters@acc.com)).

#### Invite Your Families!

Invite your families to participate in the event! Community service is about coming together and making positive changes in your communities. Why not involve your family in such an experience?



#### Have T-Shirts Made

T-shirts are a great way to bring people together. They show anyone on the outside looking in that this group of people is working together towards the same common goal. T-shirts also act as great mementos from your community service day projects.

#### Involve your Sponsors

Find creative ways to involve your sponsors. Have a conversation and see what options are available. Some sponsors have provided lunches, t-shirts, and other co-branded materials.



## **Pulling it All Together**

### **Volunteer Management 101: Tapping People's Talents**

Tons of books have been written on effective volunteer management; however, they all come down to the same thing: Treat your volunteers as you would like to be treated. That may sound pretty obvious, but some people can forget that basic rule when things start heating up.

Volunteers are like anyone else—they want to be listened to, and they want to know their ideas count. As a project leader, ask your volunteers what they would like to contribute to your project. Find out what they think the project needs to be successful. And get their feedback after the service has been completed.

#### **Managing Dos and Don'ts**

##### **Tips for working with Volunteers**

- Try to place them in a job which best suits their talents or experience.
- Give them specific job descriptions.
- Tell them where they fit in the overall project.
- Treat them as equal, vital members of your team.
- Be open with them about problems and challenges. Don't try to spare them details—they will hear about them anyway.
- Don't make unrealistic demands on their time; if they said they can give you four hours, don't assume they can really give you eight.
- Listen for lame excuses of why work is not done. It may be way of saying "get me out of this job." If that is the case, try assigning that person to a different task.
- Give positive feedback when it is deserved.
- Encourage humor.
- Accept their different reasons for participating.

### **Forming Committees**

If you plan your project right, most of the advance work will be accomplished by committees. However, it's perfectly OK if some people only want to show up on the day of your project. Possible committees for your team include:

- Publicity
- Fundraising, if needed
- Project partners
- In-kind donations (donations of goods or services versus funds)
- Logistics
- Volunteer recruitment



## Pulling it All Together

**Note:** Committees do not all have to be the same size. Some committees may only need two or three people; others may need eight. A few points on working with committees include:

- Make sure the committee has a real purpose for being, and that your group members understand that purpose.
- Assign people to the committee to which they are best suited.
- Schedule meetings in a relaxed atmosphere.
- Allow some social time before and after the meeting.
- Do not hold meetings without a clear reason, and be sure to give advance notice of meetings.
- Provide a list of topics (in advance, if possible) to be discussed at each meeting.
- Encourage everyone to participate during the meeting. Discourage members who monopolize the discussion.
- Try to steer team members away from statements like “This is the way I (we) did it.”
- Make sure to set aside enough time to discuss each issue on your agenda, beginning with the most important items first. Stay focused and do not re-discuss, and re-discuss, and re-discuss each issue.
- Double-check for agreement on important issues.
- End each meeting with a summary of what is to be done, by whom, and by when.



### Delegating Responsibilities to Team Members or Committee Heads

- Use the “one-person, one-job” method of delegation.
- Be clear about the job, the authority it carries, the outcome you want, and the deadline for completion.
- Establish a “check-in” system with volunteers to get up-to-date on their progress.
- Delegate both “good” work and “bad” work to each team member.
- Do not use your position to dump disasters on others.
- Inform others of the authority you have delegated.
- Recommend sources of help and support when delegating jobs.
- Adjust the volunteer’s workload to include any new responsibilities.
- Do not over supervise.

## Pulling it All Together

### Managing Conflicts

As with any other type of group activity, team service can spawn conflicts. Remember: Not everyone is cut out for every volunteer activity. Sometimes people volunteer with the best of intentions, only to find that their needs or talents are not well-suited to a certain task or project. Also, some people might just “cop an attitude.” One negative volunteer can have a huge impact on the rest of your team, so if you sense a problem, talk to that person before the situation worsens. Also, see if you can resolve the issue by assigning the volunteer to a different job.

The following tips for dealing with project conflict can also be applied to any problems that may arise with a project partner:

- Clarify what the problem is.
- Determine common goals and areas of agreement.
- Keep conversations focused on issues, not personalities.
- Use simple wording to explain your position.
- Keep a positive attitude. Do your best to recall positive results.
- Do not discuss the situation with others.
- Set a limit on what you will put up with, and stick with it.
- Keep in mind that the best-case scenario may be arranging a tolerable working relationship.

Volunteers are like anyone else—they want to be listened to, and they want to know their ideas count.



## **Pulling it All Together**

### **The Week Before the Big Day: Your To-Do-List**

As with any special event that involves many people, there are always details that cannot be taken care of until the last minute. But to help your team be as organized as possible, here is a checklist for you to use the week before your event:

- Call volunteers to make sure they are coming. You will more than likely have at least one person cancel due to unforeseen circumstances.
- Make sure each volunteer understands the five W's: where they should go, when they should be there, who they should report to, what they are expected to do and bring, and why their role is important.
- Send each volunteer a written "confirmation" and a map to the project site.
- Set a project agenda and a timeline, if you have not already done so.
- Create an equipment check-off list.
- Reconnect with your project partner(s). Send them a copy of your project schedule, as well as confirmation of their role in the project.
- Check lunch arrangements. Make sure you have enough beverages or snacks for your volunteers during the day, as well as enough plates, utensils, and clean-up supplies. If a project partner is supplying food or beverages, you need adequate storage facilities for those items. (Note: If you are providing a meal for a nonprofit's clients, keep it simple and plan the food around what they like. You may not find peanut butter and jelly sandwiches particularly appetizing, but many little kids think they are the ultimate.)
- Confirm transportation arrangements. If possible, have your team meet at a convenient spot and travel together, preferably by public transportation. If you are providing transportation via private car for children or anyone other than your volunteers (and we recommend that you do not), at the very least make sure all volunteers have insurance coverage in the event of an accident.
- Create an emergency plan in case of bad weather. Though you may already be working inside, bad weather may affect your plans; for example, if it rains, paint may take too long to dry.

### **Money Matters: Budgeting and Fundraising**

At some point, probably fairly early on in the project-planning process, you will need to come up with a budget for your project. Keep in mind, however, that your ideal project should cost little or nothing to implement. If you find yourself and your team having to come up with lots of cash to make the project a reality, then the activity should probably be modified.

## **Pulling it All Together**

### **Beware: Projects Can Have “Hidden” Costs**

If you are planning on volunteers splitting expenses, you need to factor in such items as lunch, transportation costs, and admissions. If volunteers are providing lunch for the event, that can be costly. Remember: the point of service is to give time, not money. *You should not have to be wealthy to volunteer.*

Once you and your team have decided on a project, list all the expenses required. Do not forget to add in any supplies you might need. If you are working with a nonprofit, it's a good idea to develop the budget together. That organization might be able to absorb some of the project's costs.



### **Get the Word Out: Publicizing Your Project**

Publicizing a service project has many benefits. It can serve as a volunteer recruitment tool, as well as a member recruitment tool. Remember, everyone wants to join a successful member organization that is making a difference! It can generate widespread awareness of community problems and potential solutions. And it can inspire further action. All ACC publicity efforts should follow the standard [logo usage guidelines](#) that are available from the ACC Headquarters.

There are lots of different publicity techniques you can use to get people on board your project, including:

- Send out broadcast emails to your membership.
- Advertise in chapter newsletters.
- Highlight your event in the *ACC Docket*.
- Placing an advertisement or notice in nonprofit newsletters.
- Ask local and province government officials to participate on your project to “create news” in the community.
- Develop a public service announcement.
- Get a local celebrity to participate.



## **Pulling it All Together**

### **Media Relations**

One of the best ways to let people know about your event—and to get others to take up the torch of community service—is to get your message out to the media, including local newspapers, radio stations, television stations, and social media. Though you may be tempted to nix a media relations effort because of all the other things you have to do, think twice: the power of the press is enormous. Getting media coverage of your project can help you draw people to your event, lend credibility to your cause, create good will in the community, and start people thinking: “I should be out there doing something, too.”

A media relations campaign can include:

- Distributing a calendar announcement to the calendar section of your local newspaper to let people know your event is taking place. Check with the newspaper to see how far in advance you need to submit the announcement.
- Sending out a press release or “media alert” to newspapers and television stations prior to your event; they may want to send a reporter or camera crew to the project site to do interviews with participants.
- Contacting the photo desk of a local newspaper to invite a photographer to snap some pictures of volunteers in action.
- Submitting a public service announcement to your local radio stations.
- Contacting radio stations to see if they would like to interview your project leader or nonprofit partner about what you are doing.

### **Preventing Injury, Lawsuits and Harm**

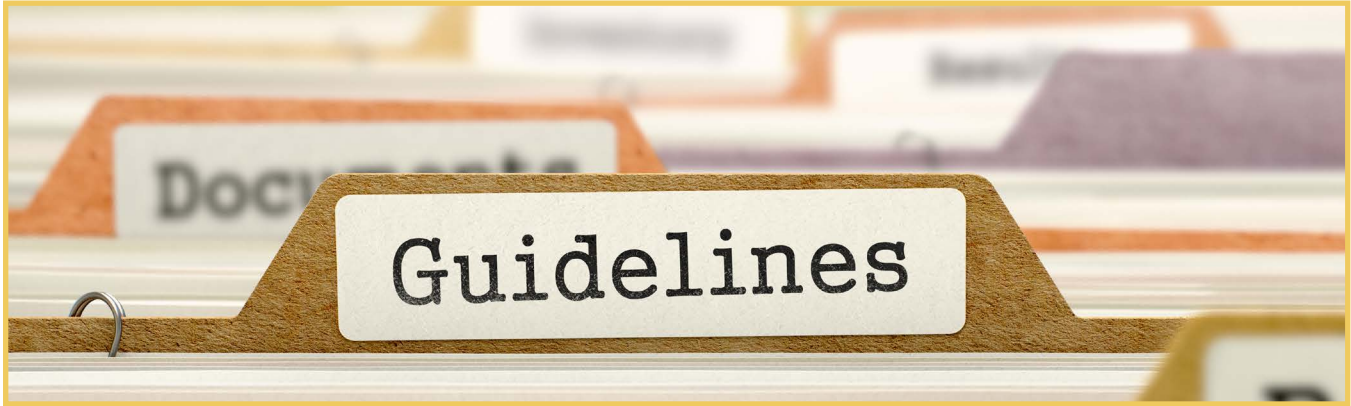
Fear of lawsuits can drive away volunteers. You can reduce that fear with the facts. Lawsuits against volunteers are rare, and actual liability is even less common. Moreover, insurance ordinarily can take care of a volunteer’s legal defense and pay a claim if necessary so that personal property and savings are not at risk. In any situation, however, the possibility of a lawsuit is real. Hurting another person, damaging property, or violating someone’s rights can lead to liability.

One purpose of lawsuits is to cause you to think carefully about risks and precautions, and to plan projects so that the desire to help does not result in more harm than good. You can do a great deal to reduce the likelihood of an accident or improper action. Common sense can prevent or minimize most claims.

To reduce lawsuits even when things go wrong, volunteer programs may use several risk management tools. First, participants can be required to sign waivers. Aside from waivers, a good participation form is a valuable means of obtaining informed consent. Having volunteers read and sign a participation form that describes the activity and the expected risks provides a defense if the participant later claims he or she would not have participated if the dangers had been explained.

For more information about liability and current ACC insurance policy coverage, contact ACC Headquarters at (202)-791-3530.

## Pulling it All Together



### General Volunteer Guidelines

You may want to adapt these guidelines to suit your project and distribute them to your team.

- Please be punctual. Late volunteers delay the entire team. If you are not at the meeting place on time and you miss the team, you have missed the project.
- If you are taking public transportation, stay with members of your group on the same bus or in the same subway car.
- If you need to travel by car, carpool with other volunteers to the project if possible. Make sure every driver can provide proof of insurance and every passenger has a seatbelt.
- When you arrive at the project, park your car with other cars, take your keys and lock your car. Do not carry unnecessary valuables on your person, and do not leave them inside the car.
- Do not stop en route from one destination to another.
- Make an effort to introduce yourself to the project leader and other members of your team, including any agency representative.
- If you are participating in a project requiring specific skills (i.e., construction) which you do not possess, ask the project leader and/or agency personnel for training or ask to be placed in an assignment more suited to your skill level. Do not participate in a project which you feel puts you in a risky or dangerous situation.
- When you are at the project site, stay in designated common areas.
- Let the team leader know of any problems as they arise. If an accident or problem occurs at your project, call 911 immediately.
- Follow all rules—even if you do not agree with them. You will set a good example for the people with whom you are working, particularly the children.
- When you leave the project, leave with the other volunteers. Unless there are compelling circumstances, all volunteers should stay till the end of the project
- Define specific tasks to be completed, time requirements and deadlines (see timetable).
- Determine the logistics: locations, supplies needed, transportation.
- Match skills of volunteers to particular aspects of the project.
- Develop a short orientation or information session for volunteers.
- Be sure to express appreciation to everyone involved as the project wraps up.

## Pulling it All Together

### Safety Tips and Guidelines for Construction Projects

- As project leader, your ongoing responsibility is to keep an eye out for safety risks. Are lighting and ventilation adequate? Are floors and ceilings secure? Does everyone have the proper safety equipment? When the work requires it, make sure to provide volunteers with protective eyewear, gloves, dust masks, and hard hats.
- Always wear long pants and long sleeves. Thick-soled shoes or work boots (not sneakers) should be worn. Every volunteer should also wear heavy work gloves.
- Provide an orientation for team members before the work begins. Delegate work assignments for the day, and make sure that all volunteers are comfortable with these assignments. Volunteers should be encouraged to discontinue work they find too difficult: lifting heavy items, working on a tar roof under a hot sun, climbing high ladders.
- Plan a break time for all volunteers, particularly if they are working on multiple sites. Each site should have a co-project leader.
- When working under dusty conditions, or with insulation, paints, or glues, take frequent breaks away from the offending substances. Fiberglass, such as that used in insulation, should never touch the skin.

### Remember the Basics...

Once the logistics have been worked out, you are almost ready. But do not forget a few essentials:

- Be sure the supplies you need are available before you begin.
- Make sure you have enough work for all of your volunteers.
- Give volunteers clear instructions.
- Alert local media and public officials to what your members are planning.
- Plan a recognition event for your volunteers. Highlight volunteers in your annual report, internal newsletter, or plan a special luncheon. Distribute certificates of appreciation.
- Evaluate your “Make a Difference Day” project. Does the project’s success warrant a formal employee volunteer program and/or a larger project next year?

Be  
creative  
and  
Have  
fun

*Reaching out toward the community makes everyone feel good, and provides the satisfaction of working with others toward a shared goal. As your chapter’s project develops, be creative and open to all ideas. Some of the best projects have originated from seemingly casual remarks and observations. Give everyone a chance to brainstorm.*

## **Project Timetable**

### **90 - 120 Days Before the Event...**

- Start a Chapter Community Service Committee. Ask the president of the chapter to designate a committee leader, who should then select members from different corporate legal departments. A diverse committee can recruit volunteers throughout the community.

### **75 Days Before the Event: Choose a Project**

- Consider volunteer interests and skills, community needs, your company's products and services and any existing community service commitments that could be expanded.

### **60 Days Before the Event: Spread the Word**

- Week 1:** Start announcing the event and issue a SAVE THE DATE email to members and ask for volunteers. [See example HERE.](#)
- Week 2:** Distribute a memo from the chapter president encouraging participation. Get informal leaders—chapter administrators and your chapter committee members—to recruit volunteers.
- Week 3:** Schedule a meeting or teleconference with a distributed agenda in order to describe the project for members and sign up helpers for specific tasks.
- Week 4:** Contact the media and distribute press releases detailing your project and its impact on the community.

### **45 Days Before the Event: Recruit Volunteers**

- Hold an all-hands meeting to explain the project and the skills needed.
- Sign up volunteers for specific tasks.
- Consider projects that encourage family participation and include tasks for all skill levels.
- Approach members one-on-one. People who are asked are more likely to volunteer as those who are not, and most who are asked to volunteer say yes.

### **30 Days Before the Event: Nail Down the Details**

- Define specific tasks to be completed, time requirements and deadlines.
- Determine logistics: locations, supplies, transportation.
- Match employee skills to particular aspects of the project.
- Develop a brief orientation or information session for volunteers.
- Express appreciation to everyone involved as the project wraps up.

### **Final Checklist**

- Verify that needed supplies are available.
- Make sure you have enough work for all volunteers.
- Give volunteers clear instructions.
- Have a bad-weather alternative plan, if appropriate.
- Plan a recognition event. Highlight volunteers in your annual report, chapter newsletter or at a special luncheon. Distribute certificates of appreciation.

### **Day of Event... ENJOY!**



