

# *Tools and Tactics for successful youth-led organizing*

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## **Organizing a Successful Workshop**

The key to successful events and projects is remembering four steps:  
**S-Select P-Plan I-Implement E-Evaluate**

It can be helpful to remember them by thinking of the four letters: **S-P-I-E**.

### **Step 1- SELECT**

The first step is selecting what type of workshop you want to offer. Define your goals. What do you want other young people to gain from participating in your workshop? For example, are you interested in “educating” them about issues of gender violence? Do you want them to “take action” on a particular aspect of gender violence? The goals of your workshop will affect everything from how long it will be, to how it will be structured.

After you have selected the goals for your workshop, the planning process can begin.

### **Step 2- PLAN**

There are many decisions that must be made as part of the planning process. These include:

- Date, time, and duration of the workshop
- Location
- Equipment and supplies needed
- Curriculum materials needed
- Anticipated number of participants
- Projected expenses and income (if applicable), and
- Transportation

Consider working with a local program, agency, or your school for this workshop. It is important to establish contact with the appropriate person as soon as possible and to make sure the arrangements are convenient for them before proceeding. It is also important to put your agreement in writing.

- After the decisions have been made on the details, then the job of making things happen begins. Planning far enough in advance is critical to success. Develop a planning timetable to assist you in monitoring progress. The planning timetable identifies all tasks that need to be completed, who is responsible for each one, when that task should be completed, and what the current status is (e.g., completed, rescheduled for later date).

Here are some questions to help you prepare for your workshop:

1. Where will I hold the workshop? Do people have a way to get there? Is the space accessible? Is it “neutral” territory or will some feel uncomfortable entering the building?
2. Would it help to have a second facilitator who’s different from me (a young man from a different high school or college, who’s of a different ethnicity or sexual orientation, etc.)?
3. Is the room comfortable? Are chairs set up so people can see one another? Can people hear each other?
4. How well do group members know each other? Do I need name tags? During introductions, besides names, what might people need to know about each other to help them feel comfortable? Do I know any icebreaker exercises that might make people feel more comfortable?
5. Is my group so big that some will feel too intimidated to speak? If so, have I planned some small-group or partner time as part of the discussion? Do I need to provide activities that are not discussion-based? Do I need to provide translators?
6. Does my discussion format give everyone a chance to be heard? What will I do if one or two people dominate the discussion? How will people take turns or indicate that they want to speak?
7. How will I help the group set ground rules that encourage open, productive dialogue?
8. Will people feel more comfortable if the group agrees to confidentiality? If so, how should I handle requests for press coverage and how do I record the proceedings?
9. Have I planned the event to leave enough time for discussing future action?

### **Step 3 Implement**

The implementation step refers to the period during which the event or project actually takes place. Prepare a checklist of everything that needs to be done on the day of the workshop. Divide the list into specific time blocks so you remember exactly when you have to do everything. Make no assumptions. Double check everything you are directly responsible for as well as tasks you have delegated to others. Think of problems that might occur and consider how you might solve them.

If you are prepared for potential problems, things will run more smoothly. With adequate preparation, you should be able to enjoy the event or project and focus all your attention on the participants involved. A sample checklist for an event might look like this:

- *Setup*. Includes everything that needs to be done before participants arrive.

**The following are examples:**

- Check the audiovisual equipment.
  - Fix the refreshments.
  - Set up the chairs and tables.
  - Prepare a sign-in sheet.
  - Make sure that all handouts are available.
- *The event outline*. Includes the "script" for the event, similar to an agenda for a meeting. This includes the order of activities, the time frame for each, the people involved in leadership roles, and the supplies and equipment needed.
  - *After the event* includes everything that needs to be done after participants leave.

**The following are examples:**

- Return the equipment.
- Clean the tables.
- Collect unused supplies.
- Lock the room.
- Send thank-you notes.

**Respectful Sharing During the Workshop**

1. Agree to discussion ground rules before you start. Examples: No one may interrupt someone who is speaking, and people should speak for themselves ("I think..."), not generalize ("All young people think that...").
2. Clearly state the purpose(s) of your workshop. If the discussion gets off track, remind the group of the purpose.
3. Remind participants that they may be talking about their neighbors or that they may be offering an opinion on the most important event in another person's life.
4. Talk about the difference between "debate," where participants try to convince others that they're right, and "dialogue," as in your workshop, where participants try to understand each other, really listen to each other, and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints.
5. Remind participants that who we are influences how we interpret what we see – 20 people in this workshop may have 20 different views, all of which may have some truth to it.

## **Step 4 Evaluate**

After your workshop, set aside time to evaluate it, whether formally or informally. Your approach to evaluation should be one of learning, not judgment. The purpose is not to label the event a failure or success, but to determine what was learned throughout the steps of selecting, planning, and implementing it. Discuss what went well and what should be done differently in the future.

The point to be made here is that there is always room for improvement. This does not mean that what was done before was bad. It means that to reach our potential, we must constantly work at challenging ourselves to be the best we can be.

## Visual Outline of Workshop and Event Planning

# What are the goals of your workshop?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Date</li><li>* Time</li><li>*Length of workshop</li><li>* Location</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Equipment &amp; Supplies Needed</li><li>*Curriculum Materials Needed</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Will you facilitate the workshop alone or with other people?</li><li>* What is the approximate number of participants?</li><li>* How much is your budget for the workshop?</li><li>* Are you planning to charge for the workshop?</li><li>* Transportation: Will you provide CTA passes for participants?</li></ul>
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## **A Checklist for the Day BEFORE Your Workshop or Event**

1. Verify Information
  - Facilities/room is reserved
  - Audio visual equipment will be available if needed
  - Estimated number of participants has been confirmed
  - Make sure that you have the telephone number of the janitor or contact person at the location
  - Have you recruited at least two volunteers to help you?
  - Will you have a notetaker or documenter at the event?
  
2. Collect and place all training supplies
  - Extra pen/pencils
  - Markers
  - Tape
  - Name tags
  - All “props” for all possible exercise which may be conducted
  - Extra note paper
  - Double check accurate delivery of all paperwork/publications (handouts-evaluations)
  - Extra participant materials (10%-20% additional handouts in case more people walk in then you expected)
  - Videotapes/DVD
  - Flipchart paper and markers
  - Post it notes (if needed)
  - Flip chart paper/Newsprint
  - Business cards
  - Camera to take photos
  - Garbage bags
  - Sponges or paper towels
  
3. Brainstorm answers to challenging questions
  - Think through potential objections/skepticism which may surface in each training/workshop.

## Day of Workshop Visual Outline

1

- Check AV Equipment (set up, turn on, and practice)
- Ensure all participants can see images
- Fix Refreshments
- Set Up Chairs & Tables

2

- Prepare a sign in sheet
- Make sure handouts are available
- Do you have a workshop agenda or event outline?
- Do you have an evaluation form?
- Do you have all of your supplies ready to go?

3

- Who will clean up the space?
- Do you need to send thank you notes or e-mails to anyone?
- Have you looked at the responses from the evaluation so that you can improve next time?

## WORKSHOP/EVENT PLANNING: CHEAT SHEET

<b>Workshop Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Workshop Length:</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Approx # of Participants:</b>	<b>Workshop Budget:</b>

<b>Room Set Up</b>	
<b>Equipment Needed</b>	For example: DVD/VCR, CD Player, Digital Camera, Overhead
<b>Supplies Needed</b>	For example: Handouts, Sign in sheets, evaluations, markers, flip chart, tape, pens, etc....
<b>Food/Refreshments</b>	
<b>Event Outline</b>	
<b>Transportation</b>	Will you provide CTA passes?
<b>Volunteers</b>	Have you recruited at least two? Do you have their cell phone numbers?
<b>Challenging Questions</b>	
<b>Contact person info</b>	Have telephone numbers
<b>Follow up</b>	Thank you notes, etc...

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<b>Workshop Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Workshop Length:</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Approx # of Participants:</b>	<b>Workshop Budget:</b>

<b>Room Set Up</b>	
<b>Equipment Needed</b>	
<b>Supplies Needed</b>	
<b>Food/Refreshments (include phone numbers of caterers)</b>	
<b>Event Outline</b>	
<b>Transportation</b>	
<b>Volunteers (include cell phone numbers)</b>	
<b>Challenging Questions</b>	
<b>Contact person info</b>	
<b>Follow up</b>	