

A Facilitator's Guide for By the People



Corporation for National Service

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AmeriCorps, whose members serve with local and national organizations to meet community needs while earning education awards to help finance college or training;

Learn and Serve America, which helps link community service and learning objectives for youth from kindergarten through college as well as youth in community-based organizations; and

The National Senior Service Corps (Senior Corps), the network of programs that helps Americans age 55 and older use their skills and experience in service opportunities that address the needs of their communities. Senior Corps includes the Retired and Senior Volunteer Programs (RSVP), Foster Grandparent Program, and Senior Companion Program.

CHP International, Inc. (CHP), Oak Park IL, provides management, training and consulting expertise to projects in the United States and around the world. CHP collaborates closely with government, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions and training providers to assist in developing techniques, skills, knowledge and attitudes required to foster individual, organization and community development.

Content and materials for the Facilitator’s Guide were developed from a self-study guide entitled “*By The People*” edited by Henry C. Boyte, Co-Director, The Center for Democracy and Citizenship, 130 Humphrey Center, 301-19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

Upon request, this material will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities.

Draft publication June 2001

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Acknowledgements

The principal authors of *A Facilitator's Guide for By the People* are Peter Govert and June Plecan, CHP International, Inc. The source document used for this publication was *By the People*, edited by Henry Boyte, Co-Director, Center for Democracy and Citizenship.

Many individuals contributed to the development of this training curriculum. Lorraine E. Granieri served as principal editor. Staff of CHP International, Inc. and the Corporation for National Service provided project direction for content and editing.

Special thanks to the members and staff, John Holden and Veronica Westfort of the City SERVE! AmeriCorps program in Meriden, CT.

Editorial Guidelines, developed by the Corporation for National Service, served as a resource to ensure consistency with other national service publications.

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INTRODUCTION

The ten training sessions are based on the real activities of AmeriCorps members during their service.

During these sessions, AmeriCorps members will receive an introduction to ideas and skills which they will first practice in class and then bring to their current assignments. The materials should come alive in follow-up sessions when the members report their insights and give examples of how they applied the new ideas and skills in the field.

Purposes

The purposes of these sessions are to:

- Help AmeriCorps members better understand the full meaning of citizenship, including lifelong involvement in community service.
- Give AmeriCorps members information about civic skills and practice using these skills to enhance their current and future work in civic activities.
- Build within AmeriCorps members a framework and motivation for life-long community service through:
 - a) Volunteerism as an enriching, part-time addition to one's life, and/or
 - b) Pursuing a full-time career in professional community service, including teaching, human services, public or government service).

Four Themes

This training has four main themes that are introduced, repeated, and reinforced throughout the sessions. These themes are: full citizenship, self-knowledge, skill development, and empowerment.

1. FULL CITIZENSHIP.

"Full Citizenship" for an American means much more than voting and obeying the law. If we are truly a country "by the people," then we have an ongoing responsibility to continue to build our society. The picture of America is not a grainy black and white still print from years ago, but a vibrant, streaming color image from the present that will stretch into the future.

Full Citizenship can be realized in many ways, either through volunteer work or in a profession involved with community service.

2. SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

These training sessions reflect the idea that the most effective community service comes from involvement that reflects one's own interests, history, and unique characteristics. Throughout these sessions, exercises will lead members to a better understanding of themselves, their interests, their past connections with communities, and their current assignments.

These sessions end with the members' reflection on the meaning and value of their service. This then becomes the springboard to future community work.

3. SKILL DEVELOPMENT.

Learning and developing civic skills are necessary to maximize one's effectiveness. The skills that are introduced, practiced, and reinforced in this training are:

- a) Listening, Questioning, and Interviewing Skills
- b) Creating a Community Inventory
- c) Analyzing Problems, Planning Solutions
- d) Valuing Differences
- e) Managing Conflict
- f) Evaluating Accomplishments, Skills, and Knowledge
- g) Making Action Plans

4. EMPOWERMENT.

Although America's problems at times can seem overwhelming, this is not so. **One of the basic tenets of these sessions are that we have the power to break down any problem into manageable, doable parts.** Each step successfully taken, though small at first, is empowering and has infinitely greater impact than a grandiose scheme that starts big but fails because of its complexity.

By the end of these sessions, members should feel empowered. They should feel that they are already making a difference, and that they can continue to make a difference and "get things done" whether employed in the public sector or by choosing to pitch in as a volunteer at the local level.

OUTLINE OF SESSIONS

Session 1. Citizenship and You

New Content: (a) Introduction to the Training Sessions. (b) Self-knowledge, self-interest, and links to service. (c) Holland's Guide to Personality Types.

Field Assignment: Analyze the "fit" between personal characteristics and service.

Session 2. We Ask, We Listen, We Learn

Link to previous session: Discussion of the "fits" you found.

New Content: (a) Listening and questioning skills (b) Information interviews. (c) Reasons for an asset based community inventory.

Field Assignment: Create a community inventory by doing information interviews.

Session 3. You and Community-There's History

Link to previous session: Community inventory and benefits for your service. Lessons learned by doing the interviews.

New Content: (a) Self-history – links toward service. (b) Framework on citizenship – three aspects.

Field Assignment: Interview for different viewpoints.

Session 4. Valuing Differences

Link to previous session: Challenges of seeking different viewpoints and lessons learned this way.

New Content: (a) Reasons to seek out differences. (b) Difficulties inherent in seeking and valuing differences. (c) Factors that create differences.

Field Assignment: Understand your approaches to time, activity, and human relationships.

Session 5. Service as a Profession: Is It for You?

Link to previous session: Checking approaches to; time, activity, and human relationships.

New Content: Panel Discussion. (a) Self-interest as a key to professional community service. (b) Expanded opportunities for life long service. (c) Expanded community inventory.

Field Assignment: Informational interviews as a tool for finding the right community service for yourself.

Session 6. Analyzing Problems, Planning Solutions

Link to previous session: Lessons learned from the information interviews.

New Content: (a) The nature of problems. (b) Three problem-analysis tools. (c) A framework for planning solutions.

Field Assignment: Analyze a problem associated with your AmeriCorps service.

Session 7. Managing Conflict

Link to previous session: Lessons learned by analyzing a problem drawn from your service.

New Content: (a) Definition of conflict. (b) Five strategies for managing conflict. (c) Advantages and disadvantages of each strategy. (d) Practice using scenarios.

Field Assignment: Apply the “collaborative strategy” to a manageable conflict drawn from your AmeriCorps service.

Session 8. Development: Empowering People and Communities

Link to previous session: Discuss lesson learned by applying a collaborative style of conflict management.

New Content: (a) Understand the larger meaning of AmeriCorps’ work. (b) Characteristics of empowerment and development. (c) Analysis of the links between empowerment and action.

Field Assignment: Evaluate your service.

Session 9. Reflection and Evaluation

Link to Previous session: Evaluation of your service: accomplishments, skills, and lessons learned, and most important aspects.

New Content: (a) Group and individual reflection on AmeriCorps service. (b) Evaluation of service using evaluation tools and activities.

Field Assignment: Put it all together in a future action plan.

Session 10. Creating Your Citizenship Action Plan

Link to previous session: Putting it all together.

New Content: (a) Create a life-long action plan of future civic activities. (b) Sharing of resources to implement these plans. (c) Reflection on “likelihood of doing” as an indication of motivation.

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE #1

1. What you should accomplish:

Judge the “fit” between yourself, your AmeriCorps service assignment, and possible future civic service and explain why this fit is important.

2. What you have to work with:

- a. Holland’s Guide to Personality Types.
- b. Training materials linking self-knowledge with citizenship.
- c. Evaluation tools and reflection exercises.
- d. Orientation to a Time, Activity, and Human Relationships Framework.
- e. Career-oriented informational interview.

3. Question to ask yourself to see if you have succeeded in meeting this training objective:

Can I explain the links between what I have learned about myself in relation to my AmeriCorps service and my post-AmeriCorps action plan?

OBJECTIVE #2

1. What you should accomplish:

Conduct at least three formal interviews with community members which result in the information required.

2. What you have to do this:

- a. Training materials on listening and questioning skills.
- b. Training materials on effective informational interviewing techniques.
- c. Practice Interviews.

3. Questions to ask yourself to see if you have succeeded in meeting this training objective:

- a. Did I get the information I wanted from the interviews?
- b. Did I use the listening, questioning, and interviewing techniques presented in the session materials?

OBJECTIVE #3

1. What you should accomplish:
 - a. Develop an inventory of your community that is relevant to your AmeriCorps service.
 - b. Describe opportunities in professional and voluntary public and human service.
2. What you have to work with:
 - a. A community inventory framework and training materials.
 - b. A community inventory developed by the AmeriCorps group.
 - c. Information from a panel discussion with local community public servants and volunteers.
 - d. Assignments for information interviews.
3. Questions to ask yourself to see if you have succeeded in meeting this training objective:
 - a. Did I identify at least one new community resources that will be helpful in my AmeriCorps service?
 - b. Can I describe the future opportunities available to me in either paid or volunteer civic service?

OBJECTIVE #4

1. What you should accomplish:

Demonstrate your knowledge of citizenship by successfully categorizing citizenship behaviors in a framework.
2. What you have been given to do this:
 - a. A framework of citizenship behaviors.
 - b. An outline of your personal history with links to citizenship.
 - c. Practice categorizing citizenship behaviors.
3. Question to ask yourself to see if you have succeeded in meeting this training objective:

Can I successfully place different types of citizenship behaviors in their correct places in the citizenship framework?

OBJECTIVE #5

1. What you should accomplish:

Explain the importance of seeking out and including diverse viewpoints in some aspect of your AmeriCorps service.

2. What you have been given to work with:

- a. Orientation to a Time, Activity, and Human Relationships Framework.
- b. A view of some aspect of your AmeriCorps service different from your own, gained through a formal interview.
- c. Analysis of a case study.
- d. A list of factors that profoundly affect different viewpoints.
- e. A connection between self-knowledge and the ability to manage and appreciate different viewpoints.

3. Question to ask yourself to see if you have succeeded in meeting this training objective:

How can insights on the challenges and benefits of incorporating different viewpoints be used in my work as an AmeriCorps member?

OBJECTIVE #6

1. What you should accomplish:

- a. Break down a problem using a problem-analysis tool.
- b. Plan a solution using training materials and a planning framework.

2. What you have to work with:

- a. Demonstration of the "Problem Tree" tool.
- b. Practice with a case study.
- c. Training material on two other problem-analysis tools.
- d. A planning framework.

3. Question to ask yourself to see if you have succeeded in meeting this training objective:

Can I explain how to break down a problem drawn from my AmeriCorps service and plan steps toward a solution?

OBJECTIVE #7

1. What you should accomplish:

- a. Identify the positive and negative aspects of five different approaches to managing conflict.
- b. Analyze a conflict situation and develop a strategy for dealing with it that is better than the way it was originally handled.

2. What you have to work with:

- a. A definition of conflict.
- b. Analysis of skits.
- c. Five conflict-management approaches.
- d. A conflict situation drawn from your AmeriCorps experience.

3. Question to ask yourself to see if you have succeeded in meeting this training objective:

Can I explain to a fellow AmeriCorps group member the preferred approach for managing conflict and the reasons it is the preferred approach?

OBJECTIVE #8

1. What you should accomplish:

Explain the larger meaning of your AmeriCorps service in relationship to the concepts of development and empowerment.

2. What you have been given to work with:

- a. A case study and related materials.
- b. A set of readings from world leaders on development and empowerment.
- c. A list of characteristics of a group empowered for action.

3. Question to ask yourself to see if you have succeeded in meeting this training objective:

Can I identify an example from real life where empowerment led to action such that the viewpoint expressed about power and empowerment is similar to the viewpoint expressed in the case study and readings?

OBJECTIVE #9

1. What you should accomplish:

Develop and present a five-minute presentation entitled, "My Post-AmeriCorps Action Plan."

2. What you have to work with:

- a. Results from an evaluation exercise on your AmeriCorps service.
- b. Ideas from your group in a "barnraising" exercise.
- c. A letter written to yourself.
- d. A Worksheet.

3. Questions to ask yourself to see if you have succeeded in meeting this training objective:

- a. Does my action plan contain at least three behaviors that can be characterized as either civic, civic service, or civic-producer behaviors?
- b. Does my action plan contain a time frame?
- c. Does each of these civic behaviors include a "likelihood of doing" component?

FACILITATING THE TRAINING

Facilitator's Role

An important piece of advice for all who facilitate these sessions: **RELAX and ENJOY YOURSELF.**

The root of the word, "facilitator" is "facilis", which means "easy". So a "facilitator" is someone who makes learning easy. That is your primary role. You are not expected to be a content expert. The content in these sessions is conveyed through handouts and talking points noted in each session. Your role is to guide and encourage members through their learning experience.

The facilitator's greatest challenge will be to use these sessions to fuel commitment and enthusiasm for current and life-long service. Motivation is a key theme as you take members from theory, to practice, to action.

In the back of this Guide you will find a section on "Training Tips" (page 193) which provide guidance for improving your training skills.

Facilitator Benefits

While delivering this training will require effort on the facilitator's part, the benefits will be more than worth it. If you are an AmeriCorps program manager, your role can be strengthened and made easier as you gain a deeper understanding of your AmeriCorps members' communities, organizations, and service. As you and your members work together in a spirit of trust and respect, communication channels should open wider which, in turn, should lead to a more effective working environment.

Another benefit will be the learning, or the enhancement, of training management and facilitation skills. The training skills you hone through delivering these sessions will last a lifetime and are widely applicable in private and public organizations.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

General Information

Group Size. These ten sessions are designed for a group of six to 20 AmeriCorps members. If you have a larger group, refer to the "Training Tips" at the back of the Guide (page 193) for information on breaking into smaller groups.

Time Allotment. Each session is approximately two hours long. We have provided suggested time allotments for each activity as well as detailed notes and instructions. One 10-15 minute formal break and two to three mini (1-2 minute) stretch breaks per session are recommended.

Assignments. Members participate in one session each month during their service. After each session they have an assignment to complete that will be discussed in the following session. Time spent on these assignments can be counted toward service hours.

Order of Sessions. There are ten sessions with several activities within each session. The sessions and activities should be conducted in the order in which they appear in the Guide, as the material builds from one session to the next.

Instructions. The session designs are not meant to be picked up and read at the actual session. The Guide is written so that you will understand the procedures and the instructional intent. You may want to make your own notes on index cards or in the margins as you read through the sessions. Feel free to modify the questions and instructions to suit your own style.

Materials. All handouts and facilitator information are included in this Guide. Step-by-step instructions provide guidance for facilitating the training. You should: (a) carefully read all of the information and handouts; (b) follow the preparation directions for each session.

Participant Notebook. Each member's notes and handouts should be assembled in a three-ring binder. Prior to the first session, you will need to supply each member with a binder and hole-punched notepaper. You should also make sure that all handouts are hole-punched appropriately.

Facilitator Tips. Throughout the sessions, notes to facilitators are indicated in italics; in some places they are labeled "Facilitator Note." The last section of the Guide has general training ideas and suggestions for facilitators. You should read this section before beginning training.

Talking Points. Here and there in the sessions, you will see "Talking Points" that summarize ideas or information for you to relay to the members. If you wish, you may want to expand on these points by including additional information.

Understanding the Foundation of This Training

There are two important conceptual frameworks that you should understand before you deliver these sessions: The Experiential Learning Model and Adult Learning Theory. The Experiential Learning Model¹ is the blueprint for most of the session designs.

The model is a four-step process that facilitates learning from experience. An advantage of this model is that it supports the theory that people learn best from their experience, reflecting, looking for patterns, applying or experimenting.

Adult Learning Theory² emphasizes that adults are self-directed and learn from connecting their personal experiences to new knowledge. A climate of mutual trust and positive reinforcement to enhance learning is a critical component of this theory.

More detailed information on these concepts can be found in “Training Tips,” the last section of this Guide. (page 193)

¹ Adapted from *Non Formal Education Manual*, by Helen Fox. The Institute for Training and Development, Washington, D. C. 1989.

² Adapted from *Non Formal Education Manual*, by Helen Fox.