

Handout A continued

repainted in an attractive color. The art teacher was very excited about purchasing glass display cases and display boards for the foyer to fill with the children's best artwork. The principal suggested buying a large signboard to announce upcoming school events. A few people still thought that there were more pressing problems that required action, but eventually most of these people voiced their support. In the end, there was a clear majority interested in a project to improve the school entrance.

Maria still had her doubts about the importance of the project and wondered if she should redirect the group's ideas.

In view of all the problems at the school, she wondered to herself, is this beautification project the most important project this group could do, at this time?

Handout B

The Group Decides

Maria put aside her own doubts about the importance of the beautification project and agreed with the group to make it the theme of the Fair. The art teacher had students make a large, colorful display of ideas for making the school entrance more beautiful. Another teacher had his class make a banner that announced the beautification project. A parent, who had never been involved before, decided to have a booth at the Fair to sign up volunteers to help with landscaping the entrance. The school principal contacted a local contractor to come up with different designs for a permanent school sign that parents and students could vote for at the Fair.

A number of factors influenced the group's decision to support the beautification project. Parents and community members were hesitant to commit the proceeds from the Fair to projects that they perceived as complex or having little chance for success. Other than planning the Fair, their involvement with school management had been minimal. This was from a lack of leadership, knowledge, and skills necessary to plan and implement a larger, more complex school initiative. The fact that the school was beset by so many problems had exacerbated the situation. People felt powerless to even begin.

The beautification project was this beginning. Considering their experience and resources, the group knew that the school beautification project was "doable". Group members were able to feel ownership of the project. They felt confident that with this project they would be able to make decisions that they could follow through on. It was vital that leadership respect their choice.

In addition, they knew that a professional and upgraded entrance to the school would build pride. A renewed sense of pride in the school would lead to other improvements.

At this time, the beautification project was the most important project in which this group could invest money and effort.

Handout C

What is Development?

Go in search of people
Learn from them
Plan with them
Begin with what they have
Build on what they know.

But, the best leaders when their task is accomplished and their work is done. The people all remark, 'we have done it ourselves.'

- Lao Tse, (China), 16th century B.C.

"We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain... that the government of the people, **by the people**, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.'

- Abraham Lincoln, (Gettysburg, USA), 1863.

"I often wonder whether or not education is fulfilling its purpose...education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society. The most dangerous person may be the man gifted with reason but with no morals. We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education."

- Martin Luther King, Jr. , (USA), 1960s.

Handout C continued

"What progress do people want to make?... They want security, enough to eat, good health, a steady job, more say in how their lives are run. They want the chance of a better education. In a word, what they want is more. They want more to do. They want to know more, and have more, because what they really want is to be more."

- Pope Paul VI , *"Development is the New Name for Peace"*, (Europe), 1960s.

"Education should have as one of its main tasks to invite people to believe in themselves."

- Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, (Brazil), 1970.

"Development brings freedom, provided it is development of people. But, people cannot be developed, they can only develop themselves. Pride and self-confidence... people have to create in themselves by their own actions. They develop themselves by what they do; They develop themselves by making their own decisions, by increasing their own knowledge and ability and by their own full participation - as equals - in the life of the community they live in."

- Dr. Julius Nyerere, *Freedom and Development*, (Tanzania, East Africa), 1974.

"In America, footpaths and meeting houses, fields and forests and dams, libraries and voluntary fire departments and schools -- most of our public legacy - have been built through the energy and spirit of ordinary people. As people helped create the commonwealth, they become the commonwealth. They gained ownership and a stake in their communities and the country. They became responsible citizens."

- Henry Boyte, ed. *By the People*, (USA), 1997.

Handout D

Field Assignment #8 - Evaluating your Service

Evaluation involves reflecting on the “big picture” of what difference our work makes. For you, as AmeriCorps members, evaluation requires that you think about what you’ve done, what you are doing, and what you have learned about what you need to do next. It is a critical step in making sense of your AmeriCorps service and in deciding on future service.

The Center for Democracy and Citizenship has developed four sets of questions that are especially helpful for evaluating the big picture of public work.¹

Before the next session, you will need to reflect on your service and write answers to the following sets of questions. You may find it helpful to discuss these questions with other AmeriCorps members or your supervisor. Your answers can be written in bulleted or in paragraph form.

¹ Evaluation taken from *By The People*, ed. Henry Boyte.

Handout D continued

Evaluation Questions

1) Public work draws attention to products and what is actually created through this work. Products can include tangible things such as parks and buildings, and less tangible things such as community learning programs. Both raise the question of lasting impact.

- What valuable things are we creating (or did we create) for the community or the country?

- How widely available are the things that we are creating (or did create)?
Will these things be used or valued by the community for years to come?
Why or why not?

Handout D continued

2) Public work can bring to the surface a variety of civic and community talents and resources. There are the formal civic organizations but also less formal resources such as senior citizens who have knowledge and time, or local businesses that may be interested in helping and improving the community.

- What civic and other resources did you tap? Who worked with you on this project?

Handout D continued

3) Public work teaches new skills for working with different kinds of people on public tasks. It also develops people's capacity for thinking about the larger meaning of their work.

- What new skills have you or the group developed since your service began? Do these skills help make you a better citizen? Why?

Handout D continued

4) Public work often results in lessons learned about civic renewal and the commonwealth that have the potential to educate the larger community and produce healthy change.

- What important lessons have you or the group learned because of this service? Are you passing on these lessons to others in the community? If so, how?

Handout E

The Learning Store, Session 8

In order to help us better serve your learning needs, and to help you reinforce your own learning, please take a few minutes and thoughtfully answer the following questions about today's session. Please give this completed form to your facilitator. Thanks very much for your input.

Name:

1. Please list at least three things you learned or relearned today that you think will come in handy.
2. What did you find the most useful in the Field Assignment?
3. Was there anything you found less useful in today's session? If so, what was it?
4. What did you especially like about today's session?
5. What aspect(s) of this session could be changed to make it better in the future?