

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT



We must become the change we want to see.

Mahatma Gandhi

CLASS 28-30: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

By this time students should have completed their final projects. Use these remaining class sessions to finish any lessons and to begin organizing final project presentations. Remind the students that the presentations should use multimedia techniques in order to demonstrate their newly acquired technology skills.

AGENTS OF CHANGE PROJECT

This project should reflect a culmination of skills and knowledge concerning the process of leadership. It specifically involves the application of critical thinking, problem solving, the initiation of change, organizational skills, group work, and project planning and implementation.

Pick a project that will bring about a positive change in your community and implement it.

Preparation

This project requires that the class be divided into groups of 5 or 6 students. If groups have usually been assigned randomly, this would be a nice opportunity to allow students to pick their own groups. This project will last for two weeks of class time and requires that the groups meet at least five times outside of class time. Notes must be kept of all meetings and decisions throughout every phase of the project. A ten-fifteen page paper will be submitted at the end of the project.

Brainstorming

The purpose of this project is to make a positive change in your community. As a group, conduct a brainstorming session for at least one entire class period. The brainstorming stage of a project is simply a generation of ideas. No evaluation of any suggestions should occur. Be as creative as possible. Even the craziest and most ambitious ideas can be adjusted for an appropriate and realistic project. The purpose of this project is to benefit the community in some way. You will be asked to explain, in depth, how your project fulfills this requirement and why you think it is an important change.

Choosing Your Project

The next step is to narrow down the ideas you have developed through brainstorming. When you have narrowed down the choices, your group should decide on a process that is fair and effective in coming to a decision about which project you will choose. Decide if you will vote, acknowledging that majority wins or if you will discuss the issue until there is consensus, or agreement among all members. Whatever you choose, remember that a successful group chooses a topic that is interesting to all members. Once the decision is made, everyone in the group will be responsible for working wholeheartedly toward the completion of this project. One idea to ensure this is to have all group members sign a contract that promises attendance at all meetings, and so on.

Project Planning

The first step in project planning should be to make a list of all the things that need to be done before the project even begins. Order those steps according to what needs to be done first. Outline the schedule that your group will follow throughout the completion of the project and be sure to stick to your deadlines. Appropriate approval should be obtained during this stage. Ask the questions Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How. Planning is perhaps the most important step of your project - don't overlook it!

Project Implementation

Now it's time for you to carry out your plan! Stay flexible and be ready to make necessary adjustments. Recruit help if you need it. If you are committed, prepared, and have access to available resources- everything should go smoothly. Just in case, appoint someone as the troubleshooter to avoid problems before you run into them. Good luck!

Evaluation

We can't forget evaluation! Reflect on the success of the project and group process in a personal essay and a group write-up. You will be evaluated by your facilitator and your peers.

GROUP PROJECT

Leading Community or Organizational Change

Need:

1. Identify an area of need in the community that requires change.
2. Explain why there is a need for this change initiative (why is this an important issue or problem). To whom is this issue or problem important (i.e., who are you attempting to impact?)

Note: Conduct initial interviews with as many of the individuals or groups involved in questions #3-6.

3. Research this change initiative. What has the group or organization done to change the issue or problem that you identified (if anything)? Interview the appropriate individuals or group members who can help to answer this question.
4. Will your change initiative build on what has already been done, or will it be a new change? Interview the appropriate individuals or group members who can help answer this question.
5. Who are the stakeholders in this change process (i.e., the groups or individuals that your change will impact)? Who are the supports of this change process? Who are the opponents or individuals who have concerns or worries about this change process? Interview supporters and opponents and/or those with concerns.
6. What have groups or organizations in other areas or settings done to bring about a change similar to the one that your group is proposing? (Search the Internet and library resources). Interview individuals who have experience with these issues in person, by telephone, or e-mail.

Vision:

1. Develop a vision for this project

Values:

1. Identify the values that are most relevant to the change project and for the individuals or group involved.

Urgency:

1. Provide a compelling case for why this change is urgent. What are the implications for not changing? How will you convey this sense of urgency to the appropriate group or individuals?

Communication:

1. How will you communicate this change initiative to others and how will you attract them to the change project?

Vision Activists:

1. Which individuals and/or groups should be engaged in this change (give categories or titles not names of individuals)? Why were these individuals or groups identified? How can they help your project proceed?

Initiation and Planning:

1. How will you involve and empower others to implement this change?
2. What are your strategies for dealing with resistance to change and fear, or for overcoming apathy?
3. How will you promote risk taking?
4. How will the change be initiated and implemented? Develop a plan of action including: a) specific goals for six months, one year, and five years; b) strategies for implementation; and c) funding.

Analysis/Lessons:

1. How and when will you assess what has worked and what has not worked in the implementation of the change initiative?
2. What important lessons did your group learn (positive and negative) about implementing this kind of change?
3. How will you acknowledge or celebrate your accomplishments?

Continuation:

1. What steps will be taken to ensure that the change project continues even after the original change activists are gone? **Note: Identify the individual or group who will**

take over your change project as early as possible. This is a really critical component of the project in order to have your change make a real impact.