



Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
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August 2009

<p>Dear Jennifer,</p>	<p>Quick Links</p>
<p>Welcome to eVOLve: technical assistance for leveraging volunteers. In this electronic technical assistance (eTA) brief, you will find tips and tools to help you leverage volunteers in your community. It is sponsored by HandsOn Network, a training and technical assistance provider for the Corporation for National and Community Service.</p>	<p>The Resource Center CNCS HandsOn Network Points of Light Institute</p> <p>Join Our Mailing List!</p>
<p>This Month's Quote</p>	<p>Ask Us</p>
<p>"Most true happiness comes from one's inner life, from the disposition of the mind and soul. Admittedly, a good inner life is difficult to achieve, especially in these trying times. It takes reflection and contemplation and self-discipline."</p> <p>William L Shirer</p>	<p>Do you have a question about working with volunteers or a suggestion for a future issue of eVOLve? Send it to HandsOn Network:</p> <p>training@handsonnetwork.org</p>
<p>Dear HandsOn,</p>	
<p>What is the most effective approach to leading an effective reflection exercise?</p>	
<p>The Answer Corner</p>	
<p>In last month's eVOLve issue, we discussed effective ways to make reflection the cornerstone of volunteerism in your organization. This month, to support our upcoming webinar, the Many Faces of Reflection, we will determine the most effective approach to leading an effective reflection exercise. Reflection exercises should be a standard practice for your volunteer projects.</p>	
<p>The most common, and some say the most effective approach is to gather everyone</p>	

together for group discussion. While volunteers think about their experiences independently, a conversation among all participating volunteers creates a stronger sense of accomplishment, a deeper connection to the community, and allows for peer to peer learning. At specific breaks in the project or at the end of the project, gather your volunteers together to reflect upon:

- What was approached today?
- What impact will it have on the community or the larger social issue?
- What else might we do to contribute to the social issue locally, nationally, and globally?

If you do not have the opportunity to meet as a group at the end of your project for reflection, you can still incorporate reflection into your project. If you have assigned your volunteers to task groups and their work is calm and quiet (like mural or wall painting, gardening, or putting something together) then you can introduce reflection there. Have the team discuss the questions above as they work on their task. You will need to facilitate the conversation or at least get it started. But once you begin, the conversation should flow smoothly. If your volunteers are running about from task to task or your tasks are labor-intensive (drilling, knocking out cabinets, laying carpet) you may not be able to stimulate an effective conversation. In order to do so you will have to be creative, but volunteer reflection can still occur.

Tips for Starting a Reflection Conversation

- Introduce yourself. Be sure the participants know who you are, and establish yourself in the role of facilitator.
- Explain the purpose/structure of the conversation. If you want open participation, let the participants know from the beginning.
- Do not ask yes/no questions. Be sure the participants have to give you more than a one-word answer.
- If you notice that one participant seems to be running the conversation, take a comment they make, turn it into a question, and ask another quieter participant directly.
- Be sure to make eye contact with the participants and listen to their answers.
- Relax! Just let the conversation flow, and don't feel too pressured to keep the structure rigid.
- If you feel the conversation gets off track, but you think the comments are useful, then let the conversation continue in that way. Don't feel pressured to stick to a script/plan.
- If the conversation gets off track, but the comments are not useful, then use some portion of the comments to get back to your original questions/purpose.
- Give the participants something to think about, the conversation doesn't have to end that day.
- Thank everyone for participating.

Always include reflection exercises in your volunteer projects. Volunteers learn about critical issues in their communities and gain a greater connection to the issues as a result of their service. As volunteer leaders, help your volunteers make the connection as often as possible during projects- mobilize and connect!

Resources

The Resource Center offers tools and resources such as the resources listed below. Go directly to the [Resource Center](#), click on the search icon, and enter reflection in the search box. You will find information such as service reflection tool kit and best practices.

[Reflection ToolKit](#)

[Reflection Resources from EnCorps](#)

[Reflection: A Tool in Your Toolbox](#)

[Effective Practices - Leveraging Volunteers](#)

Visit the the Resource Center to review [archive eVOLve briefs](#).

HandsOn Network Training Opportunities

Please join us for our webinar session on The Many Faces of Reflection facilitated by Ann Saylor and Susan Ragsdale. HON will conduct the webinar on **Thursday, July 30, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. Eastern**. During this session, participants will explore the creative facets of reflection and why it should be a cornerstone of your volunteer program. You will experience reflection activities that will interest multiple learning styles and give you options beyond the norm of journaling and conversation starters. Don't expect to sit quietly during this webinar. You're guaranteed to stay active AND leave the workshop with new ideas to energize your reflection time.

Click [here](#) to register for this free webinar. You will enter the Points of Light Web Ex website. You will enter the Points of Light Web Ex website. Click on the upcoming tab. Then, click on the session title to register for the webinar session. You do not need a password to register. After registering, you will receive an e-mail with log-in information for the session.

If you have any questions, please [contact us](#).



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