

DAY OF ACTION

Great leaders do more than just make a plan—they know how to adjust when things don't go as expected. A well-organized schedule keeps events running smoothly, but no plan is foolproof. When unexpected challenges arise, strong leaders don't freeze—they stay calm, think fast, and adapt. This activity will help you practice creating effective schedules while also learning how to handle last-minute changes like a pro!.



Conversation Starter: What if you planned a 60-minute service project, but volunteers finish in just 25 minutes? How would you adjust to keep everyone engaged and productive? What challenges might arise from finishing too early?

CREATING A SCHEDULE: PLANNING FOR THE UNEXPECTED

Instructions:

Small Group Planning Challenge

- Divide participants into small groups.
- Provide each group with:
 - A 'Day of Action: Service Schedule and Checklist' worksheet.
 - A 'Scenario Card' detailing the 'Community Garden Revitalization' project.

Task each group to

- Create a detailed schedule for the “Community Garden Revitalization” service project, encompassing:
 - Pre-Service: Preparation steps before the event.
 - Service Experience: Tasks volunteers will complete during the event.
 - Post-Service: Reflection and follow-up after the event.
- Utilize the checklist to identify tasks relevant for this service project.
- Upon completion, share with the whole group 2-3 key points from their schedule.
- Discuss one challenge they addressed during planning.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Create and adjust schedules to manage time effectively.
- Practice adapting to unexpected changes in a plan.
- Understand the balance between structure and flexibility in leadership.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Day of Action: Service Schedule and Checklist (Worksheet 6 - Day of Action)
- Scenario cards (unexpected challenges that impact the schedule)
- Optional: Whiteboard, chart paper, or markers for brainstorming

FACILITATION TIPS

- Remind participants that no schedule is perfect
 - building in extra time for transitions and unexpected delays makes a plan stronger, not weaker.
- Help participants recognize which tasks must happen at a specific time and which can be flexible when things don't go as planned.

REFLECTION

- How did your group decide what tasks needed the most time?
- Did you modify the checklist? Why or why not?
- What strategies allow you to adjust your schedule when things didn't go as planned?

APPLICATION

- Why is it important to build flexibility into a schedule?
- What strategies can you use to stay calm and problem-solve when plans change?
- How can good time management help leaders stay organized and productive?
- Dive Deeper: What's the difference between a well-organized event and one that's over-scheduled? How can too much structure actually cause problems?

CHECK UNDERSTANDING

Did participants recognize the importance of both structure and flexibility in leadership? Did the discussion questions help them connect scheduling skills to real-world leadership situations?

KEY TAKEAWAY: Effective leaders balance structure with adaptability. A solid schedule keeps things on track, but the ability to adjust when needed ensures that challenges don't derail progress.



SCENARIO CARD

Your team will need:

- Pencil/pen
- Paper
- Day of Action: Service Schedule and Checklist

Scenario: Community Garden Revitalization

A local community garden has been neglected and needs a refresh before the spring growing season. Your group, along with 50+ volunteers, will work together to clean up debris, plant new flowers and vegetables, and build raised beds. The project will last approximately 3 hours and will involve collaboration with a local gardening club and a neighborhood association to ensure it meets the community's needs.

Challenge:

1. Develop a schedule that includes Pre-Service, Service Experience, and Post-Service.
2. Use the checklist to identify relevant tasks. (Feel free to add/remove items as needed.)
3. Upon completion, share with the whole group 2-3 key points from their schedule.

Additional Considerations for the Schedule:

- Team Assignments: With 50+ volunteers, organize clear teams for weeding, planting, and building.
- Safety & Tool Use Orientation: Plan a brief training session to ensure proper use of gardening tools.

Time Management: Ensure all activities fit within the 3-hour window while allowing for flexibility.

