

Service Learning

Organizational Proposal



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Jalen, Wyatt, Tenzin, and Nicole organizing the supplies needed for the hygiene bags.

OVERVIEW

The problem that we helped solve was shown to us while talking with Chief Russo, of the Cottonwood Heights Police Department. He told us about the treatment the snow removal crew receives. Taking a momentary break for food or



Tenzin, Wyatt, and Nicole filling bags for the snow plow crew.

the restroom gets them criticized by civilians who claim they aren't working. Their opinion is that if the road isn't snow free, then they aren't doing their job. He also expressed to us the need for hygiene bags for displaced kids in places like West Jordan and Kearns.

Our proposal solved the problem with Chief Russo's help we were given forfeited

funds to buy the crew water, juices, granola bars, gum, trail mix, slim jims and a bag of cookies. Ann Eatchel, our cities events coordinator, helped get us some lunch coolers to put everything in. Before creating the kits, we did research on what foods have the most protein and would be the most beneficial for the snow plow men's situation. For the hygiene bags, Walmart and Rite Aid were kind enough to donate some money to go toward our cause.

Putting everything together we created an assembly line. Everyone grabbed a bag and started putting in the food and water for the snack packs; and toothbrush, deodorant, toothpaste, hand sanitizer, etc. for the hygiene kits. To make things more interesting, we made it a competition of who could complete the most. The same was done with the hygiene bags, though putting everything into the bags was a little more difficult.

The value of our recommendation was we made these kits for the snow plow men so that they don't have to go all day without eating, they won't be ridiculed, and it can show them how much we appreciate their work. The hygiene bags will be great because there are many kids that the police officers of different cities encounter who could really use everything inside of these bags.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Purpose

Our purpose toward the snow removal crew was to say both “thank you” for all their work and to give them something healthy to eat while they work. Allowing them to stay hydrated and in good working condition. For the hygiene bags, our purpose was to create something for kids who really need it. The displaced kids are scared, receiving



Jaylen, Wyatt, Tenzin, and Nicole sorting out supplies for the hygiene.

something that shows you care is very meaningful for them. Due to the nature of both projects we set them up similarly; both having an assembly line to complete the job. For the snow removal crew we had a different station for the water, juice, and all the snacks. Allowing everyone to move around the table and fill the bag with one of every item.

Steps

Step one: we had everyone on our team grab the prescribed number of drinks and food. Step two: the team members were then to organize each item into a bag. Step three: Kathryn stood at the end of line, making sure everything in the bag was in order and there was the correct amount. Step four: After each bag was



Jalen modeling one of the finished snack bags for the snow plow men.

completed the team members were to place them in the living room. The hygiene kits were completed with the same process. These bags were a bit trickier in getting everything to fit. We used plastic bags for everything, and it took some work fitting everything into the bags. This slowed us down a little bit; because some people could do this easily while others struggles.

End Product

Our end product was better than we could have hoped. Our group was able to finish a total of 35 bags for the snow removal crew

and about 35 of the hygiene kits for the displaced children within our four hours. To complete the project we met twice; completing the snack bags for the snow plow men the first time and the hygiene bags the second time. We used all our supplies and even with a few setbacks, due to the hygiene kits, we finished within our projected time. There was a little trouble fitting it all into our car, to deliver to Chief Russo, but we managed get that problem solved quickly. When we delivered the snack bags the chief was very happy with the product.

GROUP ASSETS

Strengths

Our first strength was a meeting telling everyone what we need to get done so we could share one goal because, “unless they share a collective goal, they won’t collectively accomplish anything” (Adler, Elmhorst, & Lucas,



Jenaia and I filling little baggies full of bananas and peaches for the snow plow men’s bags.

McGraw Communication at Work 2013.p.186). The second strength was information power, information power is, “the ability of some members to influence a group because of the information they possess” (Adler, Elmhorst, &

Lucus, McGraw Communication at Work 2013.p. 196). These are two effective ways we communicated to our team.

Concept Contribution

When you work as a team you need to have the same goal so you all get to the same product. We held a meeting when everyone got there so we were all aware of what we wanted to accomplish. We gave everyone a direction we wanted to go in to get this project done and we all headed off in that direction. Prior to everyone getting there my partner and I laid all the supplies out so everything was well organized and we would keep everything moving. Without effective communication, we might not have had such a successful turn out.

What that means

The purpose for everyone to work toward the same goal is to unite the group to achieve that goal.

Working as a team is a faster and often more efficient way for people to get a large amount of work done.

This is also a way for everyone to feel like they are making a worthwhile contribution to accomplishing a big project. Everyone likes to feel like what they do is of good use to others.



Jalen, teaching us all an effective way of filling the bags.

Our team's communication was a factor for how we did, that's why we tried to keep it to only Nicole or Kathryn giving everyone directions on what to do. Nicole took over that role so Kathryn went to make sure that nothing was getting left out of each lunch bag. When we got close to the end of the snack packs we noticed that we ended up having extra items. We knew that there was going to be some extras but there were too many. But since Kathryn was looking in each cooler we found out where the extras were supposed to go to make sure that every cooler had the same amount of each snack item.

Group Brainstorm

When we were putting the snack bags together we did not have our group think we just told our group the way these things would fit in the bag and everyone just accepted it. They did not try to refute that the way we were telling them was one way but not the best way because we told them that the bags would be too heavy on one side if we did it any other way.

When we did the hygiene kits we did open it to group to help provide another solution because Nicole and Kathryn had not yet tried to fit the hygiene supplies into the plastic bags so the way we thought it would initially fit did not end up working. Some of the other group members did have a suggestion of a more

efficient way for them to fit in and so we tried a few ways that were suggested until we could get everything to fit in a perfect manner.

Group Limitations

Weaknesses

One of our group's limitations was the lack of clarifications. Because Nicole and Kathryn picked an activity that was not necessarily mind consuming it is believed that the team might not have been giving the leaders their full attention on



Box of food and drinks to put in the bags for the snowplow men.

how many of one item should be put in the snack bags. We think that they were using *mindless listening*, this listening is “when we react to others’ messages automatically and routinely, without much mental investment” (Adler, Elmhurst and Lucas, McGraw Communication at Work 2013.p. 205). With the possible lack attention this resulted to what happened were they thought we had extra items that we should not have had any extra.

The second limitation was time. Everyone that said they could come ended up making or having plans at the same time so we planned to start earlier but not everyone got there till later so we ended up starting at our originally planned time. We did carve out our four hours with everyone there with great

difficulty. The strength of a team comes from the time that they spend together, “a group that interacts over a period of time develops particular characteristics” (Adler, Elmhorst and Lucas, McGraw Communication at Work 2013.p.187).

What This Concept Means To Us

This was demonstrated in our group even though we only worked for four hours everyone developed their own distinct role to make sure we got everything done by the time everyone had to leave. It is important that a group has this interaction because people like to work with people. Even though we all work and see one another at company, we had never all been on a team together.

The Importance of Group Work

The reason this time together is so important is because together we all get a sense of the role each other takes and we all develop new characteristics. Also this gave us an opportunity to see what it would be like to be on team outside of company. You see a lot about a person when you take them out of the environment that you are in the most with them, also working on a team shows you a new side to a person who you thought you knew really well.

Examples

We all valued one another's view point because it was, "lets get this done so I can go to my other plans". We still made it though. Because everyone was in a hurry to get off to their other plans they all assumed easy and generic roles and were all willing to go along with what was told to them. That isn't necessarily a bad thing but it means that we didn't get their different opinion on how things could be done.

Recommendations

Proposal

To improve the teams work I would split the group up into two teams. This would eliminate some of the confusion and "traffic" we had when we were picking up the items that we put into the bags. With two groups, I would have liked to have



The group putting food and drinks into the bags for the snow plow men.

Nicole or Kathryn monitoring what people were taking and that they took the right amount of everything. I say this because in the end it seemed that we had more extra supplies that we didn't count on. Kathryn was monitoring what was being placed into the bags, so with the

extra we could find the correct placement of the items. Though we did know where the extra supplies belonged, this still became a minor setback that I had mentioned previously. Due to this setback it leaves us with the critique of needing better information power, this is “the ability of some members to influence a group because of the information they possess” (Adler, Elmhurst and Lucas, McGraw Communication at Work 2013.p. 196).

I might have changed a few of the team members if I did this again. We say this because when we went around asking if they could come at the time we asked, and they all said yes, there were time conflicts. Some had scheduled events/activities either right before our service project or right after. This either made them late, or gave them a constraint on how long they could stay for the project. Our team didn't seem to act like a team; they acted more like a group. “Each member was concerned with their own goal”(Adler, Elmhurst and Lucas, McGraw Communication at Work 2013. P. 188) and seeing who could get it done the fastest than working as a team.

Doing this project over again, we would pick something different. Both of us really did enjoy the project, and felt that we were helping the men working the snow plows; but we would change the project to something different. To do something different we probably would do more research and ask around to the people we know if they knew of any places/ people that could use our assistance.

Having organized this service project, and learning what we did from it, we can use these skills in other projects. For instance, we know the great value of listening. This may seem obvious, but very few people do it. Most often people subconsciously listen or talk with someone else during the instructions; this is when most mistakes happen. In the future when we participate in other events we will listen more carefully to the instructions and encourage others to do the same.

When we organize, anything, we will remember to be very clear and think of questions that participants might ask. It seemed that not a lot of our team mates were clear on what the task was, but didn't ask any questions. Clarification goes along with listening. Knowing what you are expected to do before you do it is the key to success in any group project.

When organizing another big group project, like this, instead of picking people we like and are friends with, we might think about their work ethic and how they work with other people. There wasn't any conflict between the team members, but some worked better than others; and some hold true to the time commitment better than others.

Everything we've learned from both being helping with the service projects and conducting one we will apply to other group projects in the future. If we are ever to do another service project down the road we will take what we learned and what Brad's brother said he did, into it. Brad's brother motivated people to come

join him with food. He said that if they came to help he would give them free pizza, and having already learned how to successfully execute a service project made his easy and effective. Hearing this and applying our knowledge, we can make easy projects in the future too.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we learned a lot of things about organizing a service project. We found things that we do well that made the project run well, areas that we are weak in, and what we would change the next time around.

What really helped our project was for my partner and I to communicate our common goal to the rest of the group. This helped everyone stay together all working for the same outcome. This was successful through the good communication my partner and I had. Our communication was good, but can always be improved.

Improving our communication would have helped limit the lack of clarification that a few of our team members seemed to have. This was possibly due to mindless listening. Another hiccup in our project was a few members lack of commitment. Some of them seemed to make plans around the service project, not giving them the time to stay as long as needed at one time.

Doing it over again I would have changed a few things. The structure of the team could have been made to be more effective and our team leadership could be

improved to reduce the number of mistakes. However, through this process we learned how to work with our team.

Conducting a service project is much more difficult than joining one; but the skills learned can be applied in every experience. Both of us will be able to apply these skills to future groups. What we learned in this project couldn't have been learned as well without going through this process.



Jalen, Connor, and Tenzin finishing off the hygiene bags.

Work Cited

Adler, Ronald B., Jeanne Marquardt Elmhorst and Kristen Lucas. *Communicating at Work: Strategies for Success in Business and the Professions*. Eleventh. New York City: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2013. Document. 7 February 2017.