

NASA Triad: Planning Before the Workshop

Investigations and Other Activities

- What are the concepts, skills and attitudes you expect your participants to acquire from your workshop? How will you communicate these to your participants (PPT, handout, advance email)?
- How will you find out what concepts, skills and attitudes they already have related to your topics?
- What investigations and other activities will move participants toward your expected outcomes for the workshop?
- What Earth science curricula/activities are your participants already using, and how can you patch into that?
- How will participants share their findings during the workshop? Will they use chart paper, transparencies, demonstrations, or PowerPoints?
- What form will you use to evaluate the workshop? Be sure to make copies of this in advance.

Workshop Site

- Where is the workshop and how long will it take you to get there?
- What is the physical space like in which you'll be conducting the workshop? Are their windows, tables, chairs, desks, water, electricity, access to the outdoors? Will you have tables for your materials?
- Who is your point of contact for the workshop? Will he or she be on site during the workshop? How early can you get in to set up?
- What Earth science resources will be on hand that you can use?

AV

- What AV media will you need for the workshop? Do you know how to use it? Where are extra bulbs and other backups?
- Will you need to bring your own laptop and projector, or does the workshop site have what you need?

Materials

- What kinds of resources (print materials, hands-on materials, sinks, windows, doors to outside) do you need for those activities? How many of each?
- How will the materials get to the workshop site?
- If materials are being shipped, think about sending them to your workshop site in care of a responsible person who will be on site during the workshop.
- What materials do you want participants to bring? How will you communicate that to them (e-mail, phone call, etc.)
- What materials can workshop participants keep? What must be returned?
- How can you organize your materials so that they are easy to distribute and collect (baggies, trays, materials table, etc.)?
- How will you dispose of waste (used water, trash, wet sand or soil)? Will you need buckets or heavy duty trash bags? How big are the trash bins in the workshop room?

Participants

- What is the Earth science background and teaching experience of your participants? How can you find that out?
- Do some participants have specific dietary, mobility, or other needs? How can you accommodate these?
- Where will participants find parking? Do they need permits?
- Where are some suggested spots to eat evening meals you can provide to participants from out of town?
- How should out of town participants get breakfast so that they can be at the workshop on time?

- What form of transportation should participants use to get from their lodging to workshop site?
- Are there special tours and/or other events that are available for participants to take advantage of during their off hours?
- How can participants keep in touch with their homes and workplaces? Where can they find telephones? Where can they access e-mail?
- If participants would like to use computer resources, where are they available?
- Make nametags or name tents for participants, if you know their names ahead of time. Provide them with folder with their nametags, the day's schedule and any other pertinent information they may need.

Getting Started

- Be at the workshop site well in advance. Allow at least two hours for set-up, moving tables and chairs (if you are having participants work in small groups) and testing AV. If possible, make sure that there are some refreshments on hand.
- Have nametags and folders available for participants as they come in. Greet all participants as they arrive.
- When you start the workshop, introduce yourself and thank participants for coming. Go over the goals and outcomes for the workshop briefly.
- Allow time for participants to introduce themselves and say where they are from. If you have a small group, it helps to ask participants to state what they hope to get out of the workshop.
- Acknowledge differences in background as a strength of the group and encourage participants to help each other.

Leading the Workshop

During the Workshop

- Model the kind of instruction that you would like your participants to use in the classroom. If group work is important, be sure that you organize the participants into small groups.
- Circulate during hands-on investigations to monitor participants' progress, ask questions and offer help.
- Be open-minded about your approach or activity; if something isn't working, acknowledge that and shift the plan.
- If you make mistakes, don't gloss over them, but don't dwell on them either-mistakes are part of any human system, and participants will generally understand.
- Avoid trying to entertain the group-spontaneous humor is genuinely appreciated, but forced humor can be seen as inappropriate, especially if it offends someone.
- Stay on time, especially at the end of the day. Stick to the schedule as much as possible, and tell (or, better, ask) the group if an alteration is needed so it does not seem careless.
- Don't make the workshop "about" you. Anecdotes are often more fun for the teller than the listener, and as much as possible attention should be turned to the participants, their actions, and their attempts to do things.
- Remember that everything you do should be geared toward conveying specific messages. Know your goals for the day and don't distract the participants through digressions.

Ending the Workshop

- Pull participants together at the end of the workshop and review the outcomes for the session. Discuss ways of achieving any outcomes that participants feel were not met.
 - Give participants enough time to clean up for the day and complete your evaluation form.
 - Thank everyone for coming and assure participants that you will follow up with them, if this is something you have promised to do during the session.
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