

## Global Partnerships Manual

### Team Meeting Agendas: A How-To

#### Introduction

GP seeks to equip students with a wide variety of skills both preceding, during, and after the trip. One of those skills is teambuilding and collaboration. Having a strong, cohesive team that is bonded together in amicability, friendship and respect is a critical component of any successful trip experience. Team meetings are extremely important in laying the foundation for the teams that are sent out into the world and to our partners. You, as the leader, should be seeking to achieve regular and productive team meetings which foster relationship-building and trust. Every trip and every team require different things and a talented trip leader is one who can best gauge the needs of their trip and team. Setting your agenda early and adapting it as you go is the most effective means of making the team meetings fruitful and foundational for the experiences to take place with our partners.

#### Meeting #1: Set the Tone

Your first team meeting should feel like syllabus week. Important things to do are as follows;

- Introduce yourself, the advisor, and introduce the GP staff
- Go into detail about the trip, these people have committed and want to know more
- Have everyone else introduce themselves
- Have everyone share *why* they want to go on the trip
- *\*\*\*\*if your trip is international it is imperative that you check in with everyone about their Passport. If a team member does not have a Passport then this process will need to begin immediately upon them joining the team. Remember that GP requires photocopies of all participant Passports so they will need to arrive well in advance of departure date. Passports can take up to six weeks to process so this needs to be a top priority at the beginning.*
- Go over all vaccinations required for the trip (*follow CDC guidelines*)

The reason why this meeting is called ‘set the tone’ is because this meeting will be the baseline for all the meetings to come. Your trip members need to know what they will be responsible for and what resources are available to them throughout the process.

#### Meeting #2: Where are you going?

Every place is distinct. All the trips GP runs require intentional sensitivity to the areas being served. Importance must be placed on the following questions:

- Where is the place geographically?
- What are the cultures and customs of the people you are serving?

- What languages will participants encounter?
- What is the historical context of your trip location?
- What are some similarities and differences between our context in Chicago and our site?
- What are some challenges participants should expect to encounter?

This meeting is about dedicating time and conversation to the spaces you will be occupying with your team and how everyone can go about navigating culture shock, expectation management, and cultural sensitivity. This is also a time to take an in-depth look into what has happened in the place prior to the trip so the team can better understand what factors have gone into creating the reality they will see firsthand.

### **Meeting #3: Fundraising**

Fundraising is vital in order for GP to function as a program. Additionally, the skills cultivated during fundraising have very tangible benefits in the professional world. Fundraising is the individual responsibility of each team member and all participants must be prepared for this. That being said, GP has many resources and expertise to assist the students that are motivated enough to utilize them. The first aspect of this meeting is to link up the participants with those resources.

- Go over fundraising letter-writing
  - Provide examples, offer help proof-reading etc...
- Help your team make a list of potential donors
- Encourage an early start
- Set goals and deadlines for the team
- Tell them the proper channels to go through for assistance

The process of fundraising can make participants uncomfortable, that's ok. Fundraising can feel intimidating and awkward. However, the skills required to be a successful fundraiser are the same skills that are critical in a host of careers and jobs.

- Look at fundraising not as asking for money, but asking for support
- Remind your team that many people are seeking to help, but don't know where to place their money
- Connect your donors to the message of the trip, let your donors see that you care

Additionally, **as a team**, you should all collaborate on fundraising ideas. Just because you are the leader it does not mean that you need to take the lead on all things fundraising. That being said bring what you can to the table. Everyone should do this. These events will bond you together and foster teamwork as well as bring in money for everyone. This may also be a good time to establish how the general fund will be distributed.

### **Meeting #4: Spirituality**

As part of University Ministries, Global Partnerships is a distinctly Christian program. That does not mean that every team member has to be Christian. It does mean that time needs to be set aside in team meetings to discuss and frame the kind of spiritual experiences GP is hoping to nourish and facilitate. In this meeting you should talk about the Biblical nature of missions in general and attach them to the specifics of your trip. It is also important to gauge where your team members are spiritually so you can properly prepare them for respectful interaction with our partners. Having some kind of devotional or bible study at this meeting is also important for establishing what these times will look like on the trip.

This is a nice, natural order for your first four meetings. Framing and context do the best work at the beginning and can inform a more passionate fundraising effort. After the first four meetings the remainder (except for the last two) are largely dependent on the needs of your trip and your team. If your team is having a harder time bonding perhaps dedicate a meeting to something fun like team dinner, bowling or whatever the kids are into these days. If your team is more spiritual maybe visit a church in Chicago that is frequented by people from the area of your trip. In addition, you'll likely need to dedicate either some meeting times or outside times for fundraising events. Communicate that attendance at those is also vital.

### **IMPORTANT REMINDER: Use your resources**

- Your team is full of people with different talents and skills. They probably have great ideas for team meetings, topics or skills that should be covered
- Think about designating a meeting or two to your faculty advisor. Their life experience and field of expertise are assets that can highly benefit your team
- Chicago is the third largest city in the US and has abundant resources to help your team. Take a field trip, reach out to a local organization, have community members from your trip destination come speak, think outside the box!

### **Second to last Meeting: Logistics**

This meeting is very important. This is the time for everything to get straightened out prior to departure. Things that should be addressed

- How everyone is getting to the airport
- If everyone has their vaccinations
- What should everyone pack (preparing a packing list for this meeting is a good idea)
- Go over the flight schedule, include flight numbers (parents will want those!)
- Check-in and see what the team needs

### **Last Meeting: Final Check-In**

In this meeting go over the logistics discussed in the previous meeting, make sure everyone is on the same page. This meeting is also a good time to complete the allocations for the general fund, decide prior to this meeting who gets what fund allotment. Think about what your team what your team needs from you and use this time to conclude the pre-trip phase and prepare them for what's ahead.