

EcoEvent Planning Guide



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Introduction

The *EcoEvent Planning Guide* and the accompanying *Activity Guide* are designed to support EcoSchools teams in developing their facilitation and event planning skills. These skills are especially useful when delivering peer-led dynamic environmental programming that is especially suitable for Earth Week or any other EcoSchools event. In addition to fostering student leadership skills, these activities will also strengthen the knowledge of ecological literacy for both middle school students and their peers by...

1. Learning about ecosystems and environmental issues

"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

- Jane Goodall

Learning about ecosystems and environmental issues allows us to understand the importance of developing protective and sustainable relationships with nature and the environmental systems that are affected by our daily activities.

2. Engaging in cooperative activities

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead

It is easier for students to relate to peers in their age group, and for this reason, it is important that the eco-event is facilitated by peers. Observing another student as a role model can be motivating for students, and make them believe they can be an agent for change.

3. Identifying and connecting with their place on the planet

"Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together ... all things connect."

- Chief Seattle

Seeing the interactions between humans and nature helps us understand some of the causes and consequences of our human impact on the environment, and the impact of the environment on us.

4. Getting outside

"Children have become disengaged from nature and we need to reintroduce them to the pleasure that it brings. If we do that they will care for it."

- Dame Judi Dench

Educating students in the environment allows them to make connections to their local environment, and indirectly and directly learn about how nature and humans live together.

EcoEvent Planning: At a Glance

6 Weeks Prior - Brainstorm

This is the most important stage in executing a **successful environmental event**. Before promoting your event, it is important to brainstorm with your planning committee about logistics and main objectives. Brainstorming helps to reduce or eliminate any mishaps from occurring. Depending on how well you complete this stage determines how well you execute your event.

Brainstorm for the Event:

- Determine the purpose or goal of the event.
- Brainstorm themes, ideas, possibilities, audience, and venues.
- Set the theme, location, date, and time of the event. Get your Principal's approval.
- Determine if you need money, resources, and volunteers.
- Complete the EcoEvent Planning Template and/or the Detailed EcoEvent Planning Template.

4 Weeks Prior - Promote

By this point, you should have already made arrangements for the event space, checked your proposed date for major conflicts, and know your target audience. It is also time to develop promotional materials for the event. Don't be afraid to try something new and creative. It catches people's attention.

Promote the Event:

- Develop promotional materials and publicize the event through various mediums, e.g., posters, announcements, social media, assemblies, newsletters.
- Create a backup plan for weather or low attendance.
- Create or develop materials for your event if they are needed (decorations, signs, banners, displays, etc.).
- Recruit and organize volunteers for the event.
- Refer to your planning template to ensure that everyone is on track.

2 Weeks Prior - Rehearse

Your event is fast approaching so start **rehearsing your roles**. During a team meeting, practice your part in front of others so that the team can provide immediate feedback. This can help reduce nervousness on the day of the event. It is also a great time to check in on the progress that you have made, and determine what has been done so far and what still needs to be done?

Rehearsing for the Event:

- Practice your lines and roles so that you are comfortable and confident in your position on the day of the event.
- Provide constructive feedback on how each other did during rehearsal.
- Complete promotional materials and decorations.
- Make sure you have the resources needed for the event.

1 Week Prior - Review

Review the details for the day of the event. during a team meeting to ensure everyone is prepared and know how they will be contributing. It is also a great time to identify and troubleshoot last minute issues and remind the community about the event.

Going Over Details for the Event:

- Remind participants and guests about the event.
- Go over the details of the event or the agenda for the day, e.g., who will demonstrate the activity, who will setup the space.
- Troubleshoot any issues or challenges that arise.

Day of Event - Facilitate

The big day has arrived!

You've worked hard in planning for a successful event. Be confident in your abilities. **Tip:** Remember to maintain enthusiasm throughout the duration of the event, this helps to ensure participants stay engaged and excited.

Facilitating the Event:

- Depending on the scope of your event, setup a few hours to an hour before.
- Check to see if you have everything in place, e.g., props, notes, tables, posters, by reviewing the EcoEvent Planning Template and/or the Detailed EcoEvent Planning Template.
- Record the number of people who participated in the event, and any comments or feedback you received.
- Stay focused and on schedule. Be aware of your participants' time by starting and ending the event on time.

1 Week After - Reflect

Some time has passed since your event.

Meet with the team to reflect on the event. Discuss what went well and what did not. What would you do differently? Did you meet your objective? Discuss any feedback received. **Tip:** Send thank you notes or acknowledge those who have contributed to the success of the event. Lastly, don't forget to celebrate!

Reflecting on the Event:

- Discuss the questions in the adjacent box.
- Discuss positive and negative feedback received since the event.
- Extend your appreciation to those who have attended or participated in the event via e-mail, newsletter, phone call, announcement, etc.
- Follow-up with thank you notes.
- Celebrate!

"Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now."

- Alan Lakein

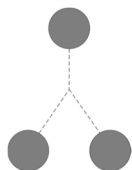
Planning Committee

The planning committee is made up of a group of students and teachers planning an event together. The success of the event is greatly increased by the dedication and enthusiasm of these members. Review the following for tips on recruiting members for your planning committee, and figure out what committee structure works best for your event.

Recruiting

- Recruit members through announcements, posters, word-of-mouth, classroom visits etc. Give prospective members approximately a week and a half to respond and inquire about the event.
- Recruit enough members so that no one feels overwhelmed by the workload.
- Recruit members with a variety of skills, e.g., public speaking, organization, marketing, and media literacy.

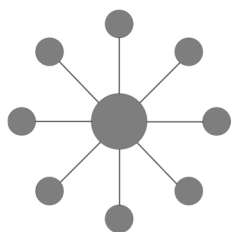
Types of Committees



Small Planning Committee

6 or less members

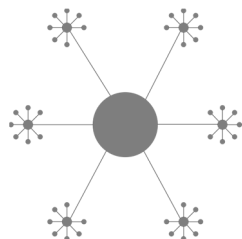
To ensure members are not overwhelmed or isolated in their role, it works best when a smaller planning committee equally and collaboratively work together on all aspects of the event.



Medium-sized Planning Committee

7 to 10 members

Depending on the scope of the event, committee members can take on multiple roles. For example, the event leader can also present the activities/games, and members responsible for creating promotional materials can also gather materials needed for the day of the event, e.g., tables, and chairs.



Large Planning Committee

11 or more members

A structured approach works best when managing a larger planning committee. The committee can be divided into subcommittees where there is a Chairperson, Promotions Committee, Production Committee, Presentation Committee, and/or Volunteer Committee.

Roles, Skills, and Responsibilities

Whether your committee is small, medium or large, there are specific skills, roles, and responsibilities involved when planning an event. Review the following roles for guidance when recruiting members, assigning responsibilities, and establishing subcommittees. **Roles you may consider include a Chair, Promotion Coordinator, Production Coordinator, Presentation Coordinator, and Volunteer Coordinator.**

Chair

1-2 people

The Chair is the event leader(s). They provide leadership in coordinating the entire event planning process.

Core Skills:

- *Be organized* to ensure all committees are on track with their tasks.
- *Problem solve* to troubleshoot issues or challenges by identifying the best course of action that does not negatively affect the event or the planning process.
- *Foster positive relationships* that promote a welcoming and caring environment for community members.

Responsibilities:

- Develops meeting schedule and task timelines.
- Fills out and reviews the EcoEvent Planning Template and/or the Detailed EcoEvent Planning Template on an ongoing basis.
- Develops written materials needed on the day of the event, e.g., sign-in sheet, and speaking notes.
- Leads all planning committee meetings.
- Acts as a liaison between school administrative staff, community organizations, and the event planning committee.
- Ensures that objectives are met by communicating responsibilities and debriefing with other committee members.
- Recruits and manages the volunteer committee.
- Responsible for all final decisions.

"Leadership is not about a title or a designation. It's about impact, influence and inspiration. Impact involves getting results, influence is about spreading the passion you have for your work, and you have to inspire team-mates and customers."

- Robin S. Sharma

Promotion Committee

3-4 people

The Promotion Committee works creatively and collaboratively to promote the event by developing creative marketing tools. In turn, this will ensure a great turnout. Choose one or two coordinators from your Promotion Committee members to report to the Chair.

Core Skills:

- *Develop visually appealing materials* and/or innovative ways of reaching out to your target audience.
- *Practice strong verbal and written communication* to develop legible and error-free advertising materials.
- *Network comfortably with others* and rally interest among prospective event participants.

Responsibilities:

- Develops promotional materials, e.g., posters, announcement scripts, and newsletter articles.
- Develops and sources décor items for the event.
- Liaises with the school administrative staff to include a promotional article in the newsletter and school website, engages teachers and caretakers during staff meetings, uses the public announcement system, etc.
- Posts events on social media, e.g., Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.
- Rallies additional support by speaking directly with prospective participants, e.g., information booths, and classroom visits.
- Adheres to timelines and liaise with the Chair on an ongoing basis.

Production Committee

3-6 people

The Production Committee oversees the setup, operational procedures, and cleanup of the event. Choose one or two coordinators from your Promotion Committee members to report to the Chair.

Core Skills:

- *Simultaneously execute more than one task* especially during the event.
- *Coordinate resources while balancing deadlines* and achieving event objectives.
- *Be flexible and problem-solve* to troubleshoot issues/challenges and alter commitments due to unforeseen circumstances.

Responsibilities:

- Liaises with the Promotion Committee to ensure décor materials are completed by the deadline.
- Seeks items and materials needed for the event, e.g., tables, chairs, and clipboards.
- Selects event space based on availability, accessibility, and capacity.
- Sets up before, and cleans up after the event.
- Manages ticket sales and/or classroom rotation schedules.

Presentation Committee

3-6 people

The Presentation Committee members are the spokespersons on the day of the event. They will be introducing the activities and demonstrating how to participate in the activities. Choose one or two coordinators from your presentation committee members to report to the chair.

Core Skills:

- *Comfortably and clearly communicate* to large groups of people.
- *Coordinate and guide* individuals and groups through activities.
- *Create an enthusiastic and welcoming environment* for event participants.

Responsibilities:

- Rehearses lines and roles for the day of the event.
- Meets regularly with all committee members to analyze and finalize details about the day of the event.

Volunteer Committee

4-5 people

The Volunteer Committee members are generalists. They help other committees fulfill their tasks and act as substitutes (they learn another committee member's role to act as a replacement if that member cannot fulfill their duties due to unforeseen circumstances). Choose one coordinator from your volunteer committee to report to the chair.

Core Skills:

- *Creatively assist with developing promotional materials* for the event.
- *Simultaneously work with multiple committees* to fulfill their tasks.
- *Be organized* to stay on track of tasks and meetings.
- *Work collaboratively with other committees* and interact with the school community.

Responsibilities:

- Attends volunteer meetings and other committee meetings.
- Fulfills tasks assigned by committee members (duties should be approved by the Chair).
- Learns the applicable role where they are acting as a substitute.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

- Mahatma Gandhi

Sample Rotation Schedules

When planning an event, remember to give sufficient time between rotations to accommodate for movement, tardiness, introductions, and/or debriefing. Review the sample rotation schedules for ideas of how you can organize your day (times are an approximation).

Option 1: Class Event

This option is most appropriate for a class event. This rotation schedule shows how an event can fit into a 50 minute class period.

Classroom Rotation Schedule	
10 minute	Introduction
30 minute	Experiential activities
10 minute	Wrap up

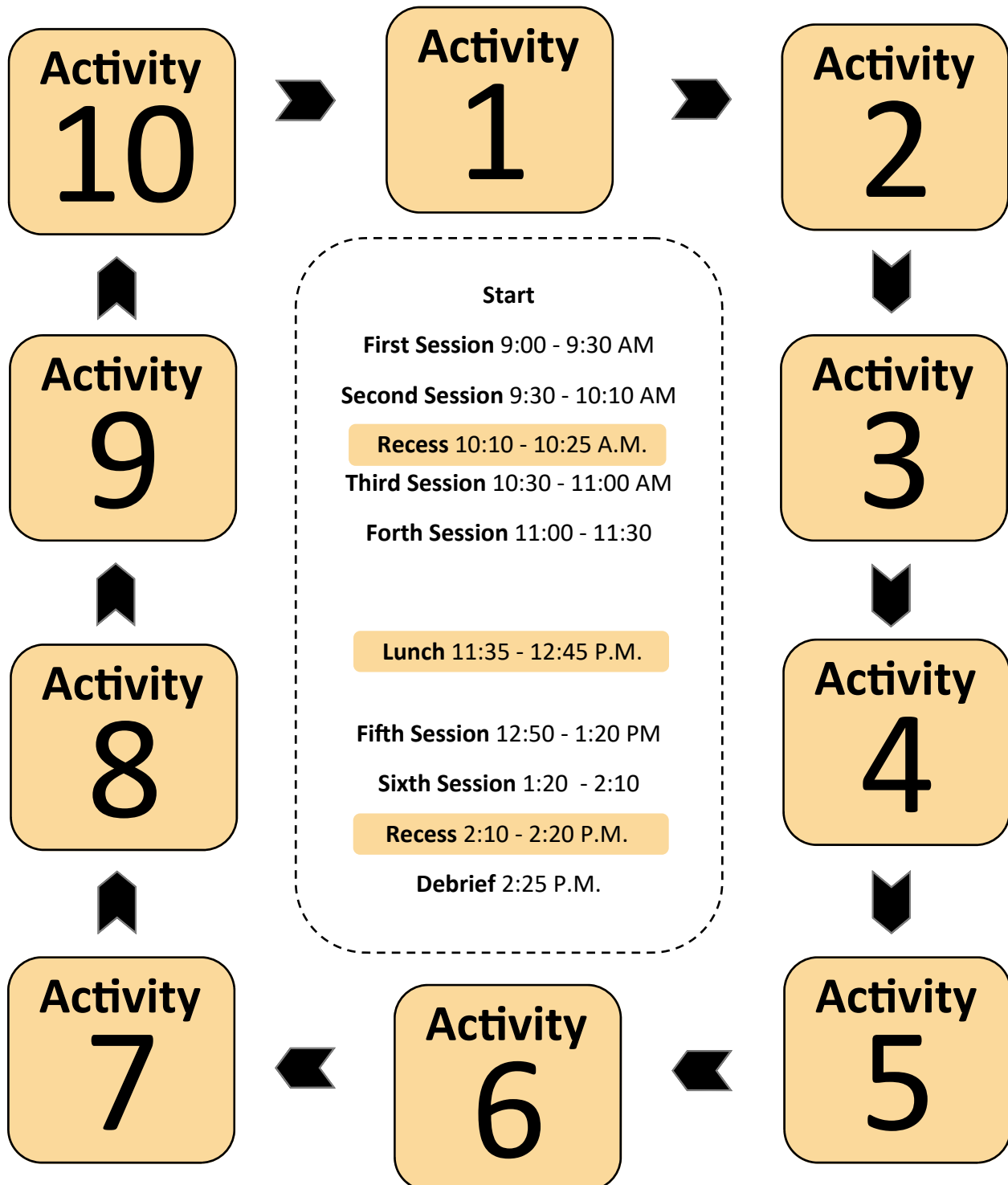
Option 2: Half-Day Event

This option is most appropriate for a medium-sized event. It allows up to 9 classes and as few as 2 classes to take part in at least 2 activities by rotating through the assigned activity stations.

Half-Day Rotation Schedule			
Time	Station 1	Station 2	Station 3
	Two presenters needed for each station		
8:55-9:05 A.M.	Large Group A - Entry & Introductions		
9:05-10:05 A.M.	Group A1	Group A2	Group A3
	Rotate at least once (two stations; approximately 30 minutes each)		
10:10-10:25 A.M.	Recess		
10:30-10:40 A.M.	Large Group B - Entry & Introductions		
10:40-11:40 A.M.	Group B1	Group B2	Group B3
	Rotate at least once (two stations; approximately 30 minutes each)		
11:45 A.M.	Lunch		

Option 3: Full-Day Event

This option is most appropriate for a large outdoor event so that participant groups can move freely and not disrupt working classrooms. Also, this option can accommodate a large participant crowd and a large planning committee where members are stationed at each game/activity. In this example, each classroom/group is assigned a station and they rotate clockwise until as many as intended stations are complete.



Facilitation

Facilitate means ‘to make easier’ or ‘to help bring about.’ Facilitators are responsible for managing the activities of the event by ensuring they are efficiently carried out, and participant knowledge is increased.

Role of the Facilitator

- **Maintain focus:** It is important that you are keeping participants focused on the task at hand.
- **Enhance participation:** Encourage participants to be actively engaged in the learning process. If they are not, find out if there are barriers to participation that you can remove.
- **Maintain a positive environment:** Create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere that fosters learning.
- **Be respectful:** Make sure that you are treating all participants with respect and be aware of what each requires or needs to participate fully.
- **Offer encouragement:** Be supportive of participants and encourage them to engage and contribute to the activity/event.

Connecting with your Audience

- **Know your audience:** You may have to tweak parts of your discussion or your behaviours during the facilitation process due to the specific characteristics of your audience. For example, students in a kindergarten classroom may not be able to understand specific concepts of the discussion and/or may need more one on one interactions. Speak to the classroom teacher to see if there is anything that you should be made aware of when facilitating.
- **Refer to audience members by name:** In most instances, refer to your audience members by name; especially if someone asks a question or shared a great comment. This will make the conversation more personal and engaging.
- **Have a sense of humour:** It is natural for students to get bored and/or let their minds wander during a discussion. Adding a small joke in your discussion refocuses their attention.
- **Use compassion and empathy:** It is ok to embrace subtle emotions. This is a great indicator that you have made a connection with your audience. So the next time an audience member makes you smile, embrace it!

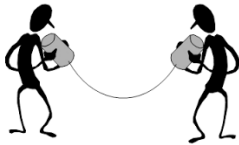
“The principle goal of education in the schools should be creating individuals who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done.”

- Jean Piaget

Tips for Effective Facilitation



Capture the audience: State an impressive fact, share or read a story, cite a quotation that relates to what you are doing, and/or make a forceful/impactful statement.



Communicate effectively: By using the effective verbal and non-verbal signals, you can put both yourself and the audience at ease.

- **Verbal:** calm but varying tone, enthusiasm
- **Non-verbal:** smiling, making eye contact, good posture, moving around the space, appearing excited/interested in the task at hand



Preview the topic: It is good practice to provide the participants with a preview or explanation about what you are going to cover in the presentation. It helps the participants understand the message that you are trying to convey to them.



State the significance: By stating the importance of the topic you are addressing, it helps participants to realize that you value their time, and also that you are trying to expand their existing knowledge.



Don't be negative: In order to be taken seriously and convey your message effectively, it is important to avoid being negative. It may increase your chances of rejection and non-acceptance from the participants.



Be concise: To be concise means to say anything in 'a few words.' Whenever possible, communicate your ideas and message in as few words as you can. It helps the participants stay attentive, and also helps make the message you are trying to send clear.

"Effective Facilitation", n.d.)

We cannot teach people anything; we can only help them discover it within themselves."

- Galileo Galilei

Frontloading Activities

Frontloading is starting an activity by clearly explaining instructions and purpose. To ensure you are frontloading an activity effectively, remember the acronym **NOISE**. NOISE stands for Name, Objective, Instructions, Safety, and Experience (Diaz, n.d.).

Name: Start off all activities/games by stating its name. This will ensure your audience remembers the activity if you refer to it at a later date.

Objective After stating the name of the activity/game, provide your audience with an objective. The objective explains the purpose of the activity/game, e.g., the purpose of the game is to learn why biodiversity is important, or to provide the audience with basic survival skills.

Instructions After you provided the audience with the objective, give clear Instructions on how to participate in the activity or play the game.

Safety Safety is the most important part in the frontload. It is important to explain all safety concerns to avoid minor to severe injury and/or other undesirable outcomes. Therefore, provide an overview of the risks involved and what your audience should do to avoid those risks. Also, it is a great idea to establish safety protocols in the event that someone feels unsafe or needs assistance.

Experience After thoroughly reviewing the safety risks involved, it is time to let your audience experience the activity/game.

Debriefing: making meaning from the experience

Facilitators are responsible for encouraging participants to engage with one another and learn from the activity by reflecting on their experience. One way to encourage this discussion between participants is to ask them follow-up or probing questions. The questions can allow people to describe **what happened, what they learned and how might they apply the learning to other situations**. It is important that most of the questions are open-ended (not “yes” or “no” questions) so that participants can share their thinking.

Probing questions might include:

- What was one of your highlights from this activity?
- What happened? What can we learn from this? Why is this important?
- How did you feel while you did the activity? What was it like playing the role of ____?
- What was one of the challenges of doing this activity?
- What was one positive thing that happened during the challenge?
- How can you apply what you just learned to other situations?
- What could we do as individuals to build on this learning? As a group?
- What could we stop doing, be cautious about doing, or what things do we want to go for?

Managing Nerves/Anxiety

It is normal for you to feel nervous or anxious before you present. Try to manage your nerves so that you can concentrate your efforts into facilitating a successful event. Here are some tips for managing your nerves before, during, and after your event:

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be realistic! The event does not have to be perfect for it to be successful. • Rehearse enough to know the material (both the content and the agenda for the day). • Try to memorize your introduction. It will ensure a strong start. • Get feedback from your team, adult advisors, parents, etc. • Get a good night sleep. • Arrive early to ensure that you are not rushing to set up. • Stretch, take a deep breath, and relax. Having a positive outlook on the event will help you succeed! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breathe deeply, smile and think positively! • Have cue cards, not a script. Trust that you know what you are talking about. • Focus on the message you want people to take away, not on yourself. • Interact with the participants. • Speak slower than you would in a normal conversation, and take longer pauses to give participants time to process what you are saying. • Move around slowly when you talk. Staying in one place allows for your nerves to build up. • If you are nervous, do not apologize for it. Chances are, no one else can notice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the workshop and be realistic. • Give and receive constructive feedback to and from your team. • Discuss your goals for next time. • Look for more opportunities to practice.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. Education is the key to eliminating gender inequality, to reducing poverty, to creating a sustainable planet, to preventing needless deaths and illness, and to fostering peace.”

- Nelson Mandela

Managing Distracting Behaviour

Occasionally managing a group can be difficult. In some cases, a student's behaviour can be distracting to both you and other participants. As the facilitator, it is your responsibility to manage these situations:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>The latecomer is constantly late after break, and may disrupt concentration, participant focus, and overall flow of the event.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start on time. This will keep the event on schedule.• If it is a group of students who consistently arrive late, acknowledge their presence, e.g., "I'm glad you can make it," or "welcome." This will put them on the spot and they will hopefully try not to be late again. |
| <p>The preoccupied is often distracted by other events outside.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form new groups for every activity. Having new people to interact with helps engage group members.• Ask open ended questions that stimulate thinking and encourages participation.• Plan activities that are interactive or insert a quick game, e.g., Simon Says to re-engage or energize participants. |
| <p>The introvert may not be as inclined to participate as other members of the group.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make eye contact with quiet participants and watch for signs that indicate they might want to contribute to the discussion. Delay others if necessary.• Make sure to positively comment on their performance or interaction with others. This will help boost their self-esteem.• Ask which role they prefer rather than volunteering them for a specific role. |
| <p>The socializer instigates side conversations and can become a distraction to both you and the participants.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide question and answer periods or time to share.• Ask the socializer a question, or ask if they need clarification on what was discussed. You may help answer questions they asked to others or help them realize they are being distracting.• Standing beside the socializer can encourage the participant to listen. |
| <p>The domineering interrupts group discussions with either relevant or irrelevant points.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If interruptions occur, be sure to re-engage other members of the group with questions like "who else has a different point-of-view?" or "what do those on the other side of the group think about this?" Then, provide ways for the whole group to answer, e.g., thumbs up (agree), thumbs down (disagree), thumbs sideways (neutral or not sure). |

(Pike & Arch, 1997)

*"The capacity to learn is a gift; the ability to learn is a skill;
the willingness to learn is a choice."*

- Brian Herbert

Glossary

ACCESSIBILITY

To provide an inclusive event where persons with disabilities, whether physical, cognitive or otherwise can participate fully in the activities, the planning committee should plan with accessibility in mind. This means critically analyzing each decision to ensure that it does not exclude certain individuals if they are disabled.

BACKUP PLAN

Even though you carefully planned the event with every detail in mind, unexpected surprises may arise. Therefore, it is important to have a back-up plan.

Here are suggestions for creating an accessible and inclusive event:

- Incorporate a statement in promotional materials that asks individuals with disabilities to notify the planning committee of the accommodations they require. This way, the event planning team can plan accordingly.
- Use large print for written promotional materials.
- Make sure the space is wheelchair accessible and with minimal to no barriers, e.g., tight spaces, and/or items blocking entrances and exits.
- Speak to individuals with disabilities and the educators working with classes of students with disabilities. Ask which ways work best to promote and communicate the event. Staff may be able to provide specific supports regarding various forms of communication, e.g., braille writing and sign language.
- Train the event planning team and volunteers how to respectfully assist and treat people with disabilities.
- Make sure the activities planned for the event are inclusive*.

Here are a few back-up plans for the given scenario:

- **It's a rainy day, and you planned to host your event outside.**

Make advance plans to host the event in the gym/auditorium in case of inclement weather. Develop a sketch of what the setup will look like, and be sure to communicate the change of plans to the school community via announcements and/or directional signs.

- **One or few members on your planning committee can no longer commit to or participate in the event due to unforeseen circumstances.**

When recruiting for participants to help out with the event, recruit a few more individuals than what you actually need (volunteers). These individuals will have a major duty, e.g., assist with promotional materials, décor, and/or administration, and a minor duty (they will be the substitute for a specific role should you have a last minute cancellation). Be sure to include them in all your meetings.

- **It's a snowy day and school is closed.**

When selecting your date for the event, also select a back-up date in case the event cannot be held on your preferred date. Do not communicate this date on your promotional materials because this will confuse your participants. This date should only be communicated to the school administrative staff and planning committee.

**These ideas are further explained in the Glossary.*

BRAINSTORM

The goal of the brainstorming process is to create an environment where each member of the planning committee feels supported, where everyone can offer ideas, opinions, feedback on some of the most important decisions, and develop a clear vision of what the event will look like.

Items to discuss in the brainstorming process are as follows:

- **Explain the purpose of the meeting and event**
 - Set goals and objectives for the event, e.g., is the event intended to be a celebration, a fundraiser, or an awareness builder?
- **Map out what the event will look like**
 - Determine if it will be a half-day or full-day event.
 - Determine what type of activities will be involved, e.g., are the activities accessible for individuals with physical, visual, audible, and mental impairments?
- **Establish rules and set parameters**
 - Explain that only constructive feedback will be permitted.
 - Establish meeting duration.
- **Select a theme for the event**
 - Select a theme for the event that aligns with your event's purpose, e.g., biodiversity, or water conservation.
- **Develop a meeting schedule**
 - Try to schedule up to five meetings with the entire planning committee and a few in between with the subcommittees.
 - Determine location, date, and time for each meeting.
- **Identify roles and responsibilities**
 - Assign roles and responsibilities based on the strengths of each person.
- **Select location, time, and date for the event**
 - Make sure it is not conflicting with exams or other school events.
- **Determine how you will evaluate your event***
 - Would this be through word-of-mouth or survey?
- **Determine if you need money or resources***
- **Develop a back-up plan***
- **Prepare a communication strategy***

**These ideas are further explained in the Glossary.*

CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

One of the critical skills of being an effective leader is the ability to provide constructive feedback. Constructive feedback is an evaluation of another person's actions that does not discourage them but encourages them to improve and provide an opportunity for personal growth.

EVALUATION & REFLECTION

To help your team reflect on the event and the process leading up to the event, it is suggested you develop an evaluation strategy in advance to gauge the overall effectiveness of the event. This strategy encompasses participant feedback and personal experience.

ECOEVENT

In this context, an event is a gathering of people for purposes of fostering awareness, educating, or taking action around an environmental issue. An event can be as small as working with just one classroom or it can be as big as working with the whole school community.

Five tips for giving constructive feedback:

- **Do not attack the character of the individual:** The feedback should be focused on the work that was produced. Make suggestions on how the action can be improved.
- **Be specific:** Do not generalize or give vague comments. Use concrete examples so that the individual knows what you are referring to and how they can improve.
- **Do not make comparisons to others:** You can compare the person's past actions to their current action or to a success criterion.
- **Use positive language:** Avoid using demanding or negative phrases and words such as, you must, you should, horrible, or bad.
- **Suggest positive change:** Make recommendations that coincide with the goals and objectives of the planning committee and the event.

Ideas you can use to include in your evaluation strategy:

- **Conduct a survey or a questionnaire** after the event
 - Take 1 to 2 minutes before the students leave or wait a few days after the event.
- While planning the event, **document challenges and successes you experience** so that you can review them with the team during the reflection and evaluation stage.
- **Use the EcoEvent Planning Template and/or the Detailed EcoEvent Planning Template** to identify areas of concern, strengths, and opportunities for improvement.

There are many opportunities in organizing a successful event. Depending on the scope, you can plan for a class, half-day, or full-day event. Whatever you decide to do, please be cognizant of time, and class schedules.

- **Class Event:** Presenters visit one class and facilitate one or two activities during the time given.
- **Half-Day Event:** A selected number of classes rotate through various stations during the time available.
- **Full-Day Event:** All classes in the school participate. Classes take turns coming down to the event area.

ECOEVENT PLANNING

TEMPLATE and the DETAILED ECOEVENT PLANNING TEMPLATE

These templates are used to plan and organize your event. They outline roles and responsibilities when an item is scheduled for completion, and/or resources needed. They will serve as a roadmap for the event and are very useful in helping the planning committee stay on track.

- In order to maximize the usefulness of the EcoEvent Planning Template and the Detailed EcoEvent Planning Template, it is suggested that the Chair or planning committee fill out the template(s) during the first team meeting and bring them to all subsequent meetings. Refer to the prompts on the template(s) to ensure you stay on track. Keep them in a safe and secure place where it cannot be misplaced.
- Alternately, create a Google document and share the file electronically for everyone to have access.

INCLUSION

Being inclusive is ensuring that all games, activities and lessons can be enjoyed by all participants. This includes creating a safe environment where all participants feel respected.

- Being inclusive begins before your game/activity. Plan ahead to make sure that your instructions can be understood by everyone participating. This may mean altering the dialect, e.g., having a sign language interpreter or ensuring that the instructions are provided at a comprehension level that all participants can understand.
- When reviewing your activities take some time to think about how that game/activity could be altered for someone that was differently abled, e.g., hard of hearing, visually impaired, and mobility challenged.
- Remember to always consult the individual when coming up with your game/activity's adaptations to make sure that they are comfortable with the changes you are making and that they believe that the changes will have a positive impact on their participation in the game/activity.
- Before your event, have a discussion with your team about inclusive behaviour and attitudes that you expect them to practice. In most cases, this will simply be showing respect towards team members and participants, e.g., using gender inclusive terms.

PROMOTE

In order for the school community to hear about your event, promote it well. In other words, develop a promotional strategy during the brainstorming process that would reach out to your intended audience. This way, people will show up to participate.

REHEARSE

It is important that a week before the event, the Presentation Sub-committee practice their lines and roles. This will ensure they are comfortable with their roles and they can guide teachers and students through the activities.

RESOURCES

These are items/materials you need to run your event. This includes chairs, tables, and/or money.

Your plan should answer the following questions:

1. Who is your target audience?
2. What is the best way to reach your target audience?
3. What resources do you need to promote the event? Is it realistic and available?
4. Who will be in charge of developing and/or overseeing marketing materials?
5. What will you do if attendance is low? Is there a backup plan?

Consider using these marketing tools:

- Posters
- Newsletter article
- Public announcements
- Email
- School's website
- School's Twitter feed
- Personalized letter or invitation
- Telephone
- Promotion through internal groups (e.g., teacher in the DD classroom)

Note: If you are planning to photograph students to promote future events by posting it online or in the school newsletter, you will need media releases. Please speak to your teacher and/or principal about your intentions and they will guide you through the correct procedures.

Here are suggestions for rehearsing your roles:

- Practice saying your lines aloud in front of a mirror, so you know how you are communicating non-verbally.
- Practice in front of an audience so you can get immediate feedback.
- Practicing the entire EcoEvent all the way through will provide you with an estimate for how long the activities are going to take, and help you determine if your schedule for the day needs tweaking.
- Do not memorize lines word for word. This is often not effective. Instead, try to increase your understanding for the role you have been given and the activity that you will be demonstrating/explaining. This way, the words come naturally and you will suddenly feel more comfortable.
- Do not be afraid to improvise a little when you forget your lines or what to do next. Your event participants will not know the difference. If they do, people are forgiving and will overlook these mistakes.

Allocating resources requires consulting with teachers, caretaking staff, and/or school administration to find out what is available in the school. During your team meeting, develop a list of items needed. Let staff know what you need so they can assist you. Do not take anything without asking.

Acknowledgements

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<https://www.facebook.com/shorelinecleanup/photos/a.412253237578/10156834806342579/?type=3&theater>

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EcoSchools EcoEvent Planning Guide 2016/17

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EcoEvent Tracking Form

After hosting your ecoevent, complete this tracking form. Please submit the completed form to Pam Miller (Pam.Miller@tdsb.on.ca) at EcoSchools. Keep a copy for your EcoSchools portfolio (section 1 or 6).

School Information

School: _____

Contact Person Name/Email: _____

Participant Information

EcoEvent Name: _____

Activities Used: _____

Participant Group* Contact Name: _____

Time & Date: _____ # of Participants: _____ Grade(s): _____

Participant Group* Contact Comments: _____

Your Comments (e.g., How did it go? What will you do next time?):

***Participant group** refers to the ecoevent audience (e.g. class, student group).