

Stepping Up to Service...Getting Started

Leadership Toolbox

Podcast Transcript

Centennial Student Union & Student Activities

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Greetings!

Welcome to Minnesota State University, Mankato and our Student Activities Leadership Toolbox. This is a podcast dedicated to exploring service, service-learning, volunteerism and how getting involved in service benefits you and the broader community.

I am going to spend some time reviewing the benefits of service and service-learning before we move into this segment entitled Stepping up to Service...Getting Started.

In our first podcast (Service Learning...), which can still be reviewed through our Student Activities Leadership Toolbox, we reviewed service-learning and the benefits of service. In review, some of those benefits are:

- Reinforces understanding of the class topics Increased understanding of classroom topics
- Gain hands-on experience possibly leading to an internship or job Opportunity to explore values and beliefs
- Extends opportunity to act on what you believe is right
- Develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills

- Inspires growth in your understanding of diverse cultures and communities
- Promotes deeper learning about social issues, their causes and how to affect change
- Helps you identify strengths, skills and talents while applying them in real world settings
- Develops and enhances communication, collaboration, and leadership skills
- Tests your skills, interests, and values in a potential career path, or learn more about a field that interests you
- Connects you with professionals and community members with whom you will learn
- Helps to cultivate a professional network of people you might connect with again later for jobs or internships
- Satisfies your urge toward public service or civic participation

With these benefits in mind, and since you have landed on this podcast, chances are the time has come to step up to service! Perhaps a professor has included a service component in one of your classes or your schedule is allowing you time to consider ways to enhance your academic experience. Where should you begin? The expression “seize the moment” or “there is no time like the present” will carry you far as you weave service into your daily routine. After listening to this podcast, you will have insight into how to pro-actively design your experience and set the stage to optimize personal and professional growth through service!

Whether you are incorporating service into your schedule to meet course requirements or for personal reasons, you will be giving your valuable time to a vital cause. For this reason it is recommended that you implement a Personal Resource Inventory. It is recommended that you implement a Personal Resource Inventory. This simple and focused activity will clarify what skills, talents, and other resources you have to bring to a service site and tailor your search to fit your needs and interests. Take some time to ask yourself:

- What time parameters or deadlines do I need to consider?
- When do I have time in my schedule to participate in service?
- What system do I need to pull together to promote reliable transportation?
- What skills do I have to bring to a service experience?
- What are my interests and talents?
- What environments and organizations would be a good fit for my skills and interests?
- What do I ultimately want to gain from this experience?

Implementing a Resource Inventory will assist you in:

- Making decisions about your service experience.
- Shaping the environment you hope to work in.
- Developing a time line that will support goal attainment.
- Preparing you for an interview with service site coordinating staff.
- Presenting a professional image that maximizes networking potential.

The most important benefit of implementing a Resource Inventory is that it will take the stress out of managing your plan for service. It will

allow you to be proactive, focused, and professional and set the stage for a fulfilling service experience!

Now that you know what you hope to achieve and know how you will introduce yourself to potential service sites, you may wonder...what next? Now is the time to familiarize yourself with the numerous resources that are available to streamline your service site search! Some of the resources that are available to you with a click of a mouse or a phone call include:

On campus support includes:

- The Office of Community Engagement www.mnsu.edu/engagement
- Career Development Center www.mnsu.edu/cdc
- Registered Student Organizations www.mnsu.edu/atpz/rso

These sites allow online access to organization mission and scope and give direction to viewers on how to get connected to service. Staff and organization members are also available to talk about your Personal Resource Inventory and make suggestions based on your time, interests, and needs.

Some of our off campus service site partners include:

- Council of Local Organizations for Volunteer Enhancement www.volunteermankto.org
- Mankato Area Public Schools www.isd77.k12.mn.us

Keep in mind that this is but a snap shot of what is available to you throughout the Mankato area and that service opportunity evolves as system and human need evolves. The most valuable resource you have

available to you...is YOU! Your enthusiasm, interest level, professionalism and level of commitment to service will assist you in shaping your service opportunity, add to your skill, insight, and perceptiveness and pave the way to strengthen community through service!

This podcast was presented by Student Activities at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Please visit the Leadership Toolbox website for others topics that benefit you. Thank you!