

Service to Go

Tips & Planning for Groups

Project Planning

1. **Pick a project** using the list provided and the FAQs. Consider your group's interests, skills, funds, availability, and number of volunteers. Invite others to bring their ideas, creativity, and enthusiasm to picking a project.
2. **Set a goal** that is both challenging and achievable.
3. **Decide on when** you want to complete the project and plan an appropriate amount of time. Refer to the [Cost](#) and [Time](#) Breakdowns, and consider your number of volunteers, your budget, and the number of items you are assembling. A few examples could be:
 - a. One day for 2-3 hours, as an "all hands on deck" project
 - b. One day for 3-5 hours as a "drop-in" project
 - c. Multiple days for 1-3 hours as a "drop-in" project

Tip: "All hands on deck" is great for teambuilding and reflection, while "drop in" is great for people with demanding schedules who are only able to drop in for 20 minutes.

Tip: Your group may likely move quicker than you planned. Be prepared for this situation and consider having a secondary project or back-up plan.
4. **Secure a location** to complete the project. This could be a place you meet regularly, a conference room, someone's home, etc. Be sure the space is appropriate for your project. For example, if you are assembling kits, you will need table space or window ledges to form an assembly line. If you are creating kits or crafts, you may need tables and chairs.

Tip: If you have multiple sites, consider having a point person at each location.

Get Ready

1. **Purchase or gather** your supplies and materials. Be sure to remember boxes, containers, or bags to store and transport the completed projects.

Tip: You may consider asking others for supplies, as they may have materials lying around.
2. **If you're collecting items** from volunteers through a donation drive, make it easy for them to give by providing collection boxes in visible or high traffic locations throughout your facility or facilities.
 - a. *Tip: Offer incentives to volunteers to give, such as coupons for free lunches or gift certificates for the team that brings in the most donations.*

3. **Motivate and recruit** volunteers to participate in the project, and have others help you spread the word. Share information about the project's impact.
Tip: Recruitment tools could include sending an email or text message; using an online sign-up tool like SignUpGenius.com; posting reminders on the group facebook page, intranet, or forum; placing a sign-up sheet in a high trafficked space; making an announcement at a meeting; one on one conversations; or even planning for the project to take place at your next team meeting or event. These are just a few ideas to help spread the word, but you know your group best.
4. **Notify United Way of Larimer County** about your project and ask for further tips, ideas, or guidance.
5. **Update volunteers** along the way to maintain enthusiasm and encourage participation.
6. **Notify volunteers** with the details of the project for the day-of.
Tip: Include additional information such as what to bring, what will be provided, and a description of the project.
7. **Bring a check in-and-out sheet** for your volunteers, so you can gather the volunteer information including names, emails, and volunteer hours.
8. **Bring name tags** (if applicable) and liability/photo release forms for check-in.
9. **Print out instructions** for your volunteers, or have them written in a visible place for everyone to see, such as a white board.
Tip: Have an example of a completed project item for your volunteers to have a reference. This can be a picture or an actual item.

Day of Project

1. **Welcome volunteers** and ask them to sign-in.
2. **Collect liability forms/photo release forms.**
3. **Using the toolkit, introduce the project** by relaying what the project is, why it's important and who it's helping, and where the completed project items will be distributed. Ask the volunteers if they are familiar with United Way of Larimer County, the programs United Way runs, or the nonprofits United Way partners with and supports.
Tip: Consider inviting a United Way of Larimer County staff to introduce the project, explain the impact, or conduct a reflection afterwards with the group. The United Way staff can answer questions before or after the project and collect the completed items.
4. **Take pictures.**
5. **Have fun!**
6. **Conduct a reflection** once the project is over and ask volunteers for their feedback.
Tip: Do this as a group or individually to help facilitate the "what, so what, now what" components of the project and help volunteers to think critically about its importance. The reflection sheet is attached at the end of every project and should be turned into United Way upon completion.
7. **Thank volunteers** for all of their hard work and for making a powerful difference.

After Project

1. **Contact a staff person at United Way of Larimer County** and schedule a time to drop off the project.
2. **Provide the reflection sheet(s) and volunteer information to United Way:**
 - a. Name(s), email(s), name of project, number completed, date(s) of project, total hours to complete the project, number of participants, and age or age range of participant(s).
 - b. Send photos to United Way of Larimer County if you have them.
3. **Communicate final results and express thanks** to all volunteers, and recognize them in an internal newsletter, intranet, or visible space. Be sure to include photos from the project.
4. **Let volunteers know** how they can get involved in the future.