

GO PREPARE SYSTEM

An outdoor leader must take into consideration the following planning components by answering the related questions in order to develop a quality plan:

GO (Goals and Objectives)

Content Required: a. List of group's goals and objectives for the trip

P = Participants (Who are the participants?)

Content Required: a. Brief description of participants in your group
b. Names and contact information
c. Health Information

R = Resources (What resources are available to support an expedition?)

Content Required: a. Budget

E = Equipment and Clothing (What equipment and clothing will be needed?)

Content Required: a. Personal Clothing List (Item and material make up – Use WISE Format)
b. Group Gear List

P = Plan (What is the itinerary and time control plan?)

Content Required: a. Time Control Plan (Daily hiking schedule, distance, time, etc.)
b. Copy of map with campsites

A = Access (How does the group obtain proper access?)

Content Required: a. Copy of permit or letter of permission
b. Rules and regulations of the area

R = Rationing (How will menu be determined and food packed?)

Content Required: a. Menu
b. Food List
c. Fuel Needs

E = Emergency Plan (What is the emergency plan?)

Content Required: a. Personal emergency contacts
b. Evacuation routes
c. Contact information for land agency, local emergency response, sheriff and RU

LOGSTICS

Content Required: a. Transportation plan
b. Route to the site that includes a map

Assignment: Each student is expected to submit a trip plan containing the above required content before our scheduled trips. Groups may work together to produce trip plan content. But remember, each student must turn in a trip plan in order to receive credit. The plan must be organized using the GO PREPARE System. The plan must be submitted as a packet, typed, neat, organized and professional.

Information Explaining the GO PREPARE System

Each aspect of the GO PREPARE system will be discussed at length so that the aspiring outdoor leader possesses the tools to design a comprehensive expedition plan. Finally, this chapter discusses the importance of trip logistics and their place in the planning process. All trips require some level of logistical support. Logistics include transportation to and from the program site. Food drops, equipment exchanges, shakedown and trip termination procedures. Smooth, well planned logistical support ensures that the trip plan is conducted in a competent manner.

Trip Purpose

The foundation of an effective trip plan revolves around well defined program goals and objectives. Outdoor leaders must understand organizational philosophy and program goals before attempting to develop a plan.

Organizational philosophy and program goals vary significantly among agencies within the outdoor recreation industry. A competent outdoor leader is able to operationalize philosophy and goals through the expedition plan. For our class, the primary purpose is educational.

Trip Goals and Objectives (G.O.)

Developing expedition goals requires the same thought process used when creating goals for any program or educational lesson. Goals represent broad, intended outcomes to be experienced by clients as a result of participation. Trip goals reflect larger program goals which are guided organizational philosophy. Therefore, expedition goals should reflect the purpose of the organization by putting the philosophy into operational terms. Goals provide direction for outdoor leaders and participants as they engage in a trip experience. Several objectives should be created to accompany each goal. Objectives represent specific, measurable outcomes related to each goal. Outdoor leaders are encouraged to use the SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound method of objective development. Objectives serve as targeted outcomes to assess goal accomplishment. Well developed goals and objectives create measurable criteria necessary for program evaluation. Trip success and improvement can be determined through well written goals and objectives. Outdoor leaders must take the time to craft quality goals and objectives when developing their trip plans. Well written goals and objectives serve the same purpose as a good map. Leaders are able to focus on a specific path or direction as they create and execute a trip. If leaders are forced to make tough programming decisions during the trip, goals and objectives will assist in the decision making process.

PREPARE System

Once the outdoor leader establishes trip goals and objectives, the leader must PREPARE for the expedition by engaging in a formal trip planning process. As learned earlier, a proper trip plan ensures safe, quality and environmentally sound experiences. It is recommended that an actual trip plan be compiled that addresses the following: participants, resources, equipment and clothing, a plan, access, rationing and an emergency plan. Addressing these issues will alleviate many potential problems during the expedition. These components are not listed in order of priority or importance. Seasoned leaders work on issues simultaneously to bring the entire plan together as information falls into place. In some cases, trip planning may require the leader to begin several years in advance. For example, obtaining a permit for a trip location can take years if a waiting system or permit lottery is in place. However, the planning process may only take several days if components of the PREPARE system are in place. For example, an outdoor leader working for an established wilderness camp may experience the benefit of administrative support and a well established tripping program. In this scenario, participant information, food, permits, routes and emergency procedures may already be in place. This wilderness leader simply needs to gather equipment and follow the standardized program format.

The amount of trip planning required varies in any situation. The competent outdoor leader fully understands the GO PREPARE system of planning and creates a trip planning document. The following seven sections encompass the PREPARE system of trip planning. Each of the seven components should be included in a comprehensive trip plan.

1. Participants

“Who are the participants?” Any outdoor leader involved in the planning process must ask this critical question. Many of the trip’s parameters hinge on this important question. The competent outdoor leader views this question on several levels. An analysis of participant characteristics includes the following factors: age, group size, gender, health, prior experience and motivational level. Careful consideration of these factors enables outdoor leaders to design the appropriate trip.

Age

Developmental level by age is a logical consideration. Experiences designed for teenagers will vary from experiences designed for older adults. For example, the outdoor leader might keep the itinerary very busy and packed with numerous activities in order to keep the teenager engaged. Older adults might appreciate a less defined schedule with more opportunity to control their own time and pace. An in-depth discussion human

development characteristics is beyond the scope of this chapter. Outdoor leaders without this knowledge would benefit from further research in this area.

Group Size

The number of participants represents a critical planning factor. Group size dictates equipment decisions, food amounts, permit restrictions, etc. Group size also influences environmental factors. Larger groups should not be led into environmentally sensitive areas to reduce issues such as vegetation trampling and perceptions of over crowding. Large groups (twenty or more) can be split into patrols to increase hiking efficiency. This technique requires more leaders and first aid kits. These issues would be considered during the planning process.

Gender

Gender characteristics of a group also influence trip planning decisions. Is the group all males, females or co-ed? Serving a co-ed group (especially youth) may require the leadership team to be co-ed. Co-ed groups influence risk management and equipment decisions. Leaders must consider tenting arrangements. Purchasing food for a group of teenage boys may vary from the quantity of food purchased for a group of adult women.

Health

Leaders must know the physical and mental condition of their participants. Medical and personal data forms collect this information. Leaders should have access to these forms during the trip planning process.

Information such as physical limitations, diet restrictions, medications and past medical history will influence all aspects of the trip plan. For example, if a participant has a documented physical restriction, the outdoor leader may have to adapt an activity or modify equipment to meet individual needs.

Prior Experience

Knowing a participant's prior experience allows the leader to make informed decisions in all aspects of planning. For example, a known group of experienced whitewater canoeists allows a leader to design a paddling trip at an advanced level. Beware; leaders must have an accurate screening system to predetermine experience. Participants who underestimate or overestimate their own ability provide poor information to design the perfect trip.

Motivational Level

Knowing or understanding a participant's motivational level also helps when designing a trip. Many leaders will ask participants well before the trip to describe their personal goals and reasons for participation. Trips can then be designed around personal needs. Many organizations institute an admissions or screening process. If a participant's goals and motivations are not congruent with trip goals, other experiences and organizations can be recommended.

2. Resources

In most cases, resource availability determines trip design. Creating and balancing a trip budget should be reflected in the trip plan. Minimally, competent leaders create a simple budget to account for anticipated expenditures. In addition to budgeting, creativity is also a handy skill needed to compile resources. Equipment may be borrowed, traded or rented to supplement trip resources. For example, some organizations do not have the resources to purchase specialized outdoor equipment. Therefore, agencies require participants to bring specialized equipment such as personal kayaks or mountaineering equipment. Or, one agency will trade specialized equipment with another agency such as vertical caving gear for snow shoes as opposed to investing and maintaining an inventory of both items. Outdoor leaders must take into consideration all possible resources in order to execute fiscally sound expeditions.

3. Equipment and Clothing

A quality trip plan includes a personal clothing list. Leaders should determine the appropriate clothing and equipment for any given trip and distribute a recommend personal clothing and equipment list to participants. The dress WISE layering system serves as the primary guideline for clothing selection:

W = Wicking Layer – the layer worn next to the skin to wick moisture away and to insulate. Long underwear, liner socks and gloves and stocking cap.

I = Insulation Layer – this layer traps warm air against the body to ensure adequate warmth. Wool or fleece pants, fleece jacket and gloves.

S = Shell Layer – this consists of a water/wind proof outer shell such as rain and wind gear made of treated nylons or breathable/water proof fabrics.

E = Extra Clothing – extra layers should be packed according to environmental conditions and types of activities.

Trip equipment falls into two categories: (1) Personal equipment and (2) Group equipment. A quality trip plan includes both equipment lists. The contents of these lists vary depending on organizational philosophy and resources. For example, some organizations believe standard gear should be issued to all participants to alleviate feelings of inequity. Feelings of inadequacy and classism are reduced if everyone has the same rain gear, sleeping bag and backpack for example. Some organizations maintain no equipment inventories and require participants to supply all equipment.

Outdoor leaders know that weather plays a major role in expedition planning. Leaders must research the historical weather patterns for a given area. This information is easily accessible by internet to discover record temperature highs, lows, wind speeds and averages. With this information, leaders anticipate the absolute worst and best case weather scenarios and prepare properly. A leader who plans a trip based on a current, long term forecast is asking for trouble. Leaders do not forget to check current environmental conditions too. Snow pack, water levels, fire hazard, etc. also affect equipment and clothing choices. For example neglecting to bring snowshoes and gaiters when needed could adversely affect the trip. The worst should always be anticipated.

4. Plan

A quality trip plan includes both an itinerary and a time control plan. Itineraries vary in detail and length. The leader's objective is to provide a basic overview of trip flow through these tools. Some leaders create a detailed, daily schedule delineated by a timeline of all activities. Others create a broad overview of activities on a daily basis without time constraints. A quality trip plan includes some form of schedule to guide everyone involved in the process such as leaders, participants, administrators, parents, emergency contacts, permit providers, etc.

The Time Control Plan (TCP) composes a critical component of the trip plan. The TCP involves map reading and understanding the details of a route. Quality TCPs provide insight into the amount of energy and time required to complete a specified route in a safe fashion. TCPs also provide opportunity to develop topographic map interpretation skills. A competent leader develops a TCP that matches the goals and ability level of the group. A well calculated TCP helps leaders chose the perfect challenge for their group. TCPs can be developed for any adventure travel mode such as canoeing, backpacking, mountain biking, etc. This chapter discusses TCPs in the context of foot travel only. Adaptations can be made based on the leader's expertise to create TCPs for other travel modes. TCP plans typically include:

- * Start time: the estimated time the group will start a hike

- * Estimated walking pace: the estimated number of miles to be covered in an hour. (This calculation reflects many factors such as the group's level of fitness, weight of packs, weather, experience, etc. Average hiking speeds for a group of beginners with moderate levels of fitness and pack weights range from 1 to 2 miles per hour.)

- * Linear miles to be covered: Route mileage is estimated using trip maps.

- * Elevation gain and loss over the hike: The total amount of elevation gained and lost over the length of the hike is calculated. As a general rule, one hour should be added to the total hiking time for every 1000 feet gained and ½ hour will be added for every 1,000 feet lost (Ford & Blanchard, 1993). By using this calculation, leaders take into account the amount of energy required to hike over rough terrain. The amount of energy used is interpreted

in energy miles. Another method used to determine actual energy miles states to add one mile for every 1,000 feet gained and ½ mile for every 1000 feet lost over the length of a hike. Note that high altitude conditions will affect this estimation and typically increase hiking time as groups gain altitude over 10,000 ft. See figure 17.4 for example applications of both formulas to calculate total hiking time.

- * Break time: estimate the average amount of break time expected per hour as well as additional breaks for food or other activities.
- * Potential camp sites: identify daily destinations with backup options along the way.
- * Identification of hazards and attractions
- * Ending time: calculating the anticipated ending time for the hike allows leaders to estimate the total amount of time required to accomplish the hike.

5. Access

An important piece of any trip plan includes legal access to the intended trip area. Appropriate permission must be gained to travel on public or private lands. Leaders are responsible for ensuring that legal access is obtained. This important task must occur far in advance to allow for adequate communication and administrative procedures. Fostering healthy relationships with land agencies and private land owners constitutes a critical leadership function. The following tips will help ensure excellent public relations with private and public land managers:

- * Personally call or meet appropriate representatives to inquire about access.
- * Complete all paperwork in ample time so not to inconvenience or pressure land administrators.
- * Pay appropriate fees and maintain copies of all permits and letters of permission.
- * Offer to send the agency or land owner a copy of your trip plan if not required.
- * Thank individuals for their time as opposed to arguing if permission cannot be obtained.
- * Strictly adhere to all regulations and wishes of the agency or land owner.
- * Follow up with a thank you note once the trip is complete.

6. Rationing

Planning and packing the appropriate food rations can dramatically affect the success of an expedition. Expedition participants typically burn many more calories compared to engagement in everyday life activities. Ensuring enough calories and nutritional balance maintains energy levels as well as positive attitudes. Well nourished expedition members consistently make better safety related decisions as opposed to chronically tired, hungry participants. Meal time with great tasting food promotes relaxation and community building. Great satisfaction comes when participants develop their culinary skills and share with others. A competent outdoor leader is able to develop an appropriate rationing system.

The amount of care taken to ensure proper ration planning should increase as trip length increases. Basic nutrition rules exist that an outdoor leader must keep in mind. The average person consumes 2,500 to 3,000 calories when participating in average outdoor activities such as moderate backpacking or canoeing. Strenuous activities such as difficult backpacking or snow camping require consumption of 3,000 to 3,700 per day. Very strenuous activities such as mountaineering or extended time spent in cold weather requires 3,700 to 5,000 calories per day. Leaders ensure nutritional needs by adhering to the following guidelines. The average intake per person per day should be (50-80%) in carbohydrates, (10-15%) in proteins and fats (30%) in fats of which only 10% should be saturated fats (Pearson, 1997). Two different rationing systems lend themselves to sound trip planning. Each system is described in the following sections.

Menu Planning

Most people tend to be familiar with menu planning. Leaders systematically plan the contents of each meal over the course of a trip. Advantages of the menu system include outlining all meals to avoid confusion, an organized guide to prepare each meal, and a convenient way to plan short trips (2-5 days). Leaders will discover that calculating calories and ensuring appropriate nutritional breakdown is more difficult when menu planning.

Bulk Rationing

Bulk rationing involves buying food in bulk based on the amount (weight) of food consumed per day. Food items purchased in bulk would include items such as pasta, beans, rice, flour, cereals, nuts, dried fruits, cheese, sugar, soup bases, spices, etc. found at a local grocery store or food co-op. Advantages of bulk rationing include avoiding extensive menus for long trips, allows for cooking creativity and caloric and nutritional calculations tend to be easier to compute. Using this system, participants consume anywhere from 1.5 to 2.5 pounds of food per person per day. Average activities require 1.5 to 2 pounds per person per day. Strenuous activities require from 2 to 2.25 pounds of food per person per day. Very strenuous activities range up to 2.5 pounds of food per person per day (Pearson, 1997). Bulk food must be repacked into clear plastic bags to reduce packaging and additional waste generated in the field. Repackaging consolidates food into a more manageable system of transport. A convenient way to ration plan using the bulk method requires the use of a spreadsheet (Drury & Holmlund, 1997).

A short discussion comparing freeze dried food and bulk rationing is merited when faced with the choice. Prepackaged freeze dried meals allow for quick preparation with minimal skills and time. These meals tend to be very expensive but very light if carried in a backpack. Beware that a prepackaged meal for four persons may satisfy only two hungry group members. The bulk rationing system is cheaper (\$3.00 to \$6.00 per person per day) Participants can get by with plenty of delicious food on \$3.00/day and eat extremely well on \$6.00/day. Bulk rationing tends to be more financially feasible for institutional budgets and participant pockets. Prepackaged freeze dried food will double or even triple food costs and tends not to be as nutritional.

Fuel

When using camp stoves, fuel calculations vary depending on climate, altitude, size of group, food type and stove type. Leaders should start by consulting with manufacturer's recommendations. For example, a group of six using one white gas stove at high altitude in the snow requires much more fuel usage as opposed to a summer backpacking trip in the Great Smoky Mountains. A general rule used for a typical white gas backpacking stove for a group of three in the summer is as follows: Pack ½ quart per day for a group of three people backpacking in the summer time under moderate conditions (Harvey, 1999).

7. Emergency Plan

Competent outdoor leaders include emergency protocol within a functional trip plan. Formalizing emergency procedures creates the framework for a quick, smooth response to any emergency situation. Of course, the best preparation for an emergency is prevention. Proper trip planning and quality leadership are two of the best defenses against emergencies. However, incidents do occur during outdoor expeditions. Leaders must have a formal plan to guide them through intense decision-making situations. Emergency protocol varies depending on the specifics of an organization's risk management plan. There are however fundamental components to an emergency plan. The following items are typically addressed in an emergency plan.

Emergency Contact List

Names, titles, primary phone numbers and alternative phone numbers for all potential must be compiled and carried during the trip at all times. Contacts to include; emergency rescue services for trip area, local sheriff, land management agency or land owner, organizational emergency contacts, support staff, contractors and nearest hospital or medical services. This list should be duplicated and waterproofed to be carried in the first aid kits and with the leaders.

Evacuation Procedures

If an evacuation is required, leaders must decide if outside assistance is needed or if self-evacuation is feasible. Protocol related to either decision must be developed before the trip. For assisted evacuations, protocol might reflect the process for landing a helicopter, how information is relayed over a phone or radio, how teams of runners/messengers are managed and how jobs are assigned to group members to assist. For self evacuations, protocol might reflect when to use a litter and how to protect other members of the group. It should be clear to

the leaders who will pay for an assisted evacuation. Knowing this up front will avoid confusion and allow the leader obtain the appropriate resources if he or she is responsible. For example, some organizations require participants to obtain additional insurance to cover costs of evacuations.

Evacuation Routes

At all times during a trip, leaders must be aware of the nearest evacuation route. Topographic maps, guide books and research will provide this information. Evacuation routes are documented by marking each location on a map.

Communications

Contingency plans must be made to contact appropriate authorities in the event of an emergency. Satellite and cell phones may not always work. Backup plans must be developed so that leaders are not totally dependent upon technology. Along with evacuation routes, knowing where the nearest land lines are remain important information to know.

First Aid Procedures

Competent outdoor leaders seek training in wilderness medicine. Wilderness First Aid, Wilderness First Responder or Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician make up one of three certifications most outdoor leaders possess. Outdoor leaders should follow the protocol learned during these trainings and provide first aid at the level dictated by their training. The number of first aid kits and their contents should reflect the type of trip, environmental conditions and caregiver's expertise. For example, a leader not trained to inject epinephrine for anaphylaxis shock should not carry syringes in her/his first aid kit.

Record Keeping Procedures

Accident reports must be maintained by trip leaders. These forms typically are carried in the first aid kits. These documents are designed to be used in a variety of ways as discussed in the risk management chapter of this text. Leaders are responsible for completing and maintaining these forms in the case of an emergency. In some cases, copies of these forms are sent out with runners during a self-evacuation to properly inform response teams of the emergency.

Additional Considerations

Emergencies will be handled in a smooth, efficient manner if leaders are aware of all emergency related protocol. As stated before, protocol will vary among agencies. Therefore, competent outdoor leaders have knowledge of the following issues: severe weather protocol, loss of life protocol, sexual harassment and dealing with misconduct or psychological evacuations. Copies of the trip plan should be left with the appropriate individuals back home so others have comprehensive information to assist when needed.

Logistics

Finally, GO PREPARE but don't forget about logistics! Once a leader establishes a quality trip plan based on the GO PREPARE system, trip logistics are required to carry that plan out. Logistics involve administrative issues, transportation, food drops, equipment transport as well as post trip procedures. A successful expedition relies on well planned logistical support. Leaders may be able to manage their own logistics during a shorter or less complex trip. Longer trips that integrate numerous adventure activities over a long period of time require more complex logistical support. Some organizations specifically hire staff to serve in a logistical role. Logistics staff duties may include purchasing and packing food, issuing and cleaning gear, transporting participants and equipment. Logistics staff sometimes conduct food drops during long expeditions. For example, a 30-day expedition may be divided into three different (10-day) food rations. Once the group nears the end of a ration period, logistics staff may horse pack food to a designated meeting point or meet the group at a convenient road head.

Leaders that arrange their own logistics must plan accordingly. If there are multiple ration drops for example, food can be hidden in a cache to be picked up along the route later. If leaders serve as transportation drivers, do secure places exist to leave vehicles and equipment at the roadhead? With no outside logistical support, leaders may have to design a trip so that the group loops back to vehicles. Private shuttle services can also be contracted to meet transportation needs. The point to be made is that leaders must design appropriate logistical support to execute trip plans. Goals and objectives, resources, routes choices, itineraries, equipment needs and other trip planning components affect logistical choices. For example, leaders may simplify a trip plan to minimize logistical costs. Transportation, food and equipment considerations compose three critical logistical concerns. The following considerations are stated in the form of questions. No exact answer will exist for each question. The leader must put each question into the context of her or his situation to arrive at an appropriate solution:

***Transportation**

1. What resources are available to transport participants and equipment? Do leaders have access to agency buses or vans? What is the vehicle carrying capacity and does this number affect group size? Does the option exist for participants to transport themselves to the trip area? Are trailers or other modes of transportation available to carry equipment?
2. Who will drive? Are specific qualifications and training required to drive vehicles? Is it possible for qualified participants to serve as drivers on long road trips? If a shuttle service is contracted, are they reputable and safe?
3. What will be the status of vehicle access and security? Will vehicles be parked at trailheads and be accessible during and after the trip? Will these vehicles be secure if left unattended for long periods of time? If vehicles are not left at trailheads, how will transportation be arranged?

***Equipment**

1. How are equipment needs to be met before the trip start? Who will inventory, organize and issue equipment before the trip? Who will ensure proper equipment functioning before equipment is taken into the field? Do leaders conduct a visual inspection of participant's personal gear before the trip start to ensure preparedness?
2. Who is responsible for equipment during the trip? Who will pay for damaged or lost equipment during the course of a trip? If the trip consists of numerous adventure activities, how will kayaks, caving gear, climbing gear and other specialized equipment be made available when needed? How will personal and group equipment be transported to the trip site? See figure 2 for sample group equipment check out form.
3. How will equipment be dealt with after the trip? Who will inventory, clean, repair and store equipment once the trip is over? How will lost or damaged equipment be replaced and made ready for the next trip?

***Food**

1. How will food acquisition and preparation be handled? Who conducts initial menu or bulk ration planning? Who purchases the food? Where is the best place to purchase needed items? Who will organize and repackage food? How will food be distributed to participants? If a long trip requires multiple rations, how will the food be divided, packaged and stored?
2. How will food issues be handled during the trip? Will the participants be divided into smaller cook groups or will cooking occur in one large group? How will the food be divided and carried during the trip? How will food drops be arranged during the trip if needed? What will be done with left over food at the end of a ration period or at the end of a trip?

Pre Trip Considerations

Beyond the major issues of transportation, equipment and food, other logistical concerns face the outdoor leader. Administrative functions influence logistical considerations. Leaders must obtain and review participant information as discussed in the PREPARE system. This information can be obtained from medical forms or from participant applications. Participant information and special needs influences logistical decisions. For example, a participant with special needs may require the leader to adapt or modify equipment in advance. Dietary restrictions will influence food planning. Leaders typically conduct some type of participant orientation before going into the field. Pre-trip meetings, telephone interviews and information packets are common orientation techniques. Once participants arrive, leaders should consider an inspection of participant's personal gear. Double checking the participants' clothing selection, sleeping system, hiking boots, etc. allows leaders to spot inappropriate or unsafe equipment. Arrangements for additional clothing or new gear can be made before entering the field.

Many programs will integrate a “shakedown” experience into the programming format before the actual trip begins. Shakedowns involve taking participants into the field for a short period (one to seven nights) to test gear, experiment with clothing and develop initial skills before embarking on a full-blown expedition. Leaders identify faulty or inappropriate equipment that will be exchanged while equipment remains accessible. Participants learn quickly if rain gear, footwear and other personal items are adequate. Participants also have the opportunity to experience the rations during a shakedown. Some organizations require the participants package their own rations after the shakedown. Exposure to the food during the shakedown allows the participants to make more informed decisions about food packing. Better decisions regarding food choices, quantities and packaging techniques can be made. Before starting a shakedown or trip, it should be made very clear who will be responsible for lost or damaged equipment. Leaders will prevent future misunderstandings if this issue is addressed up front. For example, some organizations check equipment out to individuals and hold them responsible for each issued item. Some allow groups to share in the cost of lost or damaged equipment. Other organizations absorb the costs based on budgeting techniques to account for damaged/lost equipment. Finally, do not forget to leave a copy of the trip plan with logistical support. The plan serves as a handy reference to meet deadlines and to problem solve when issues arise.

Post Trip Considerations

Finally, leaders need to account for logistical issues once the trip ends. How will the leaders handle final evaluations? For example, an organization requires that all participants complete a course and instructor evaluation. Leaders must arrange access to evaluation forms and schedule an appropriate amount of time for completion. Leaders must also consider the logistics of a closing ceremony and the supplies needed to conduct the ceremony. For example, certificates and patches may be awarded to the participants. How will leaders obtain these supplies and decide when and where the ceremony will be conducted. Leaders may want to consider a closing banquet. Whether it means visiting a restaurant or purchasing fresh food, these arrangements must be considered. Many times participants wish to have group member contact information upon trip completion. Leaders should consider facilitating this process so that participants can foster bonds developed during a trip.

Of course leftover food and equipment issues must be dealt with in order to support logistical planning for the next trip. Equipment must be inventoried, cleaned and stored properly. Adequate washing and drying space must be made available. Participants may or may not be part of the cleaning process. For example at the end of an outdoor leadership training experience, it would be an educational objective for students to have this important experience. At the end of a guided, commercial trip, equipment cleaning and repair would be the guide’s responsibility. Finally, if additional fees need to be collected for equipment damage, trip photographs, tee shirts, mugs, etc. this must be factored into the overall logistical process.

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