



PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The basics

Your program may be developed along any format you choose:

- Community Service
- Field Trip
- Group Study
- Hands-on Activities
- Panel Discussion
- Question and Answer
- Speakers Forum
- Other

Interaction between participants and speakers is encouraged. Let your imagination run free. **BE CREATIVE!** In the past, the typical program has lasted between four and five hours. It is suggested that your group limit itself to this timeframe. If additional time is needed, the request should be referred to the Curriculum Committee. Start and end your program on time.

Focus on and communicate logistics such as location, props, cost, notification of all interested parties and thank-you letters. Follow up with guest speakers.

Any expenses, such as breaks, breakfast, lunch, printing, transportation, etc., will need to be raised by the team. This is your group's responsibility. Remember to acknowledge such gifts during and after your programs. **Only Roanoke Regional Chamber members should be used to provide support for your program. Reimbursements will not be given for goods or services purchased from non-members without prior authorization from the Chamber liaison.**

Handouts and reading materials, such as speaker's bios, are all great for future reference. As you educate your fellow participants about your program topic and call to action, materials are useful for handout purposes. Materials kept are excellent resources for future participation.

The Roanoke region is the stage for your program. Select your location creatively from the list of Chamber members found on the Chamber's website directory. Your advisor will be sharing updates on locations and speakers chosen monthly to prevent duplication of program sites and speakers.

Your sponsor should be invited to attend your program, so it is a great opportunity to share your LRV experience and learnings.

What makes a good program?

1. Programs should **identify, probe and explore** regional hot topics.

Considerations:

- Any necessary background information (e.g., on the topic, speakers) may be distributed in advance.
- Find the areas of controversy and see that various points of view are represented.
- Identify the range of realistic alternatives to solving problems.

2. **Goals and objectives** should be determined by each participant group. Establishing goals and objectives will assist in focusing the group's energies into the key issues.

Considerations:

- Who are the opinion leaders in this region?
- What are the most pressing issues in this region?
- What is the knowledge level of the participants?
- How much material may realistically be covered in the time allotted?
- What insights do you want the participants to gain?
- What is the issue today?
- What are the implications for tomorrow?

3. The **ideal learning event is difficult to determine**. Remember that opening and closing exercises are

important. It is recommended that:

- An "ice breaking" exercise start the day to allow for continued interpersonal growth.
- At least one-half hour be allotted at the end of the day for a "closing" exercise allowing for a wrap-up, pulling together and airing feelings. Programs may be scheduled in the morning, afternoon or for the entire day depending on what your group is trying to accomplish.
- Plan breaks as needed for program length.

4. When designing the program, **consider a variety of formats** to ensure reaching the program's objectives:

- How can we best demonstrate a point, convey opinions and impart knowledge?
- Who and what would be our best resources?
- Where and in what setting can we best impart this knowledge?
- What types of technology might help us accomplish our objectives?
- It is meaningful for LRV participants to visit as many areas of Roanoke as possible throughout the year. Locations are limited only by the issue(s) being developed, the weather, travel time and Chamber membership. BE CREATIVE!

5. Generally, programs are most successful when the **creativity and imagination** of the participants become an integral part of the overall program design. Provide an opportunity for participants to speak with someone or do something that they would not be able to do under normal circumstances.

6. The planning group may wish to **bring in an outside facilitator**. The facilitator would attend the entire program and lead the closing exercise. Advisors can help identify people who have been particularly effective in this role. It is suggested that your group identify all outside speakers, panel members and facilitators as early as possible. Try not to utilize individuals who are part of another LRV program. Your advisors should be kept informed of potential outside speakers to ensure no duplication occurs.

7. **Planning early is important** because program topics and guest speakers often cross topics with multiple groups vying for the same guest speakers. Avoiding repetition is desirable. Finally, planning early will help to assure you of the guest speakers of your choice. These individuals tend to have very full schedules and must be booked as early as possible. Remember, guest speakers may need to cancel so have backups for everyone.

8. **Media is not allowed at LRV activities.**

9. Words of Wisdom (Gained from experience)

- Start on time even if participants are missing.
- Consider giving participants some choices by having concurrent sessions.
- Explain the day's objectives as part of the session's introduction.
- Consider the length of time needed to travel from one location to another and use that time creatively, e.g., games, icebreakers.

- Allow plenty of time for getting organized on program day and be certain you can get in the building.
- Beware! Some VIP's do not know as much as their staff.
- Avoid having a passive audience. Even when there is a speaker, prepare the audience for active listening. Lecture formats can be dull.
- Work in subgroups as often as feasible throughout the day.
- Often the richest resources reside in the LRV participants themselves. Simulation exercises, role playing and problem-solving activities draw on participants' experiences.
- Recognize underwriters and financial supporters of your program.
- Beware of panels after lunch. (Typically naptime)
- Check and double check. Confirm final plans with all involved right before the day.
- Narrow your focus early to give your group time to plan and less time brainstorming.
- Pick a topic about which the entire group is excited. This will increase the level of participation.
- Always try to mingle with all participants at each program and feature networking opportunities.
- Reach outside of your comfort zone. Do not choose a topic because it is easy.
- BE CREATIVE! Find methods to involve all LRV participants in each step of your program.

Program Logistics

Participant groups should provide an appropriate flow and transition from one section of the program or location to another. In addition, there are speaker, material and contingency factors that must be considered.

1. Guest speakers

- Who is responsible for each person?
- How does this person fit into the program?
- Aim high - go after the BEST possible presenters
- Get commitments from guest speakers early
- Get commitments from backup speakers for each speaker
- Collect speaker biographies
- Each guest should be given the necessary information in writing about Leadership Roanoke Valley, the day's agenda, the location and the expectation of them as a participant. (It is a good idea to share this information with each speaker in advance to so they have context for their comments. Refer to page three for language to explain the LRV program.)

2. Materials

- Audio-visual equipment in place and tested
- Easels, flipcharts, markers, pads, pencils as necessary
- Provision for breaks and meals

3. Location

- Remember that the entire Roanoke Valley (Botetourt, Franklin and Roanoke counties, and cities of Roanoke and Salem) is your classroom! Try to choose a location that is appropriate to the subject matter and one that may represent a new experience for most participants. A location cannot be used twice in the same program year. Visit the location prior to the session to ascertain:
 - Size of meeting rooms
 - Lighting, acoustics, climate/environment
 - Appropriateness for program subject matter
 - Adequate break-out rooms
 - Facilities for service of meals
 - Adequate electrical accessories (extension cord, electrical outlet)
 - Make allowances for adequate transition time from room to room or from location to location

4. Contingency Considerations

- Murphy's Law - **give yourself some alternatives**
- Think about how your program could get off schedule and how to prevent it

5. Thank You Letters

- Write thank you letters to **every guest speaker and sponsors**
- Remember to recognize and thank each speaker and sponsor during the program

6. Mailings

- Each planning group is responsible for their program's clerical and invitation/announcement design work. All written materials must be approved in advance by Chamber liaison to ensure that everyone follows an approved Chamber format and uses correct LRV/Chamber logo.

Program Financing

The Chamber **does not** provide funds for your group's program. Your group will be responsible for raising any funds needed to present your program. This may include: refreshments, meals, transportation, speaker fees and/or gifts, parking, venue fees, postage and other direct expenses.

If funds are raised but not spent by the group, they will be allocated to the following years LRV class for the LRV Scholarship Fund. They are **not** to be used for social activities for your group or given as donations to local organizations.

In planning for program expenses, sponsors should be solicited by the group. Please be sure to recognize donations, contributions and in-kind gifts from your program sponsors. The Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce Foundation is a 501(c) 6 **not-for-profit organization and therefore is tax-exempt**. Please provide all sponsors and vendors with the W-9 shared by the Chamber liaison.

All monetary contributions are to be made to the **Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce Foundation** with a notation about the specific LRV program to which it applies, including the name of your team and the name and address of the sponsor or vendor. All disbursements of funds will be the responsibility of the Chamber. A check request form, with an invoice or receipt attached, is required for all disbursements.

Plan at least five business days to receive the check. Do not promise a vendor payment on the day of service unless a check request form has been submitted well in advance and verified by Chamber staff.

Countdown Checklist

Each planning group should prepare their own program checklist, one that is unique to their needs and goals.

Two weeks prior to the program date, have you...?

1. _____ Sent an electronic invitation reminder to the Chamber liaison with time, place, location and parking directions. Maps are often necessary. Suggestions on appropriate attire for the session may be helpful.
2. _____ Visited and arranged all details of the meeting place.
3. _____ Considered all the physical requirements for the day:
 - _____ Seating arrangements
 - _____ Furniture - podium, microphone, tables
 - _____ Drinking water and cups for presenters
 - _____ Refreshments
 - _____ Coat racks
 - _____ Ventilation, heating and lighting
 - _____ Audio-visual equipment
 - _____ Chalkboard, flip chart, easel, chalk, markers, pencils, etc.
4. _____ Prepared and secured necessary aids/equipment:
 - _____ Visuals
 - _____ Handouts
 - _____ Films, videos, slides
 - _____ Film, camera
 - _____ Name tags, place names
5. _____ Checked to be certain equipment is in working order.
6. _____ Planned to rehearse/review the total design together before the day of the event.
7. _____ Confirmed/reconfirmed with all guest speakers and outside participants in writing.
8. _____ Prepared an evaluation form (See Sample Evaluation Form).
9. Immediately after the program, have you...?
 - _____ Written thank you letters to all guest speakers and sponsors.
 - _____ Completed your final report (See Sample Final Report).