Track 2: Leadership and Teamwork

SESSION 2: PLANNING AND COMMUNICATION

Overview: In this session, youth learn how to organize ideas, assign roles, and communicate clearly to achieve shared goals. Through hands-on activities and group challenges, participants explore the importance of listening, giving clear instructions, and adapting plans when things change. Whether preparing for an outdoor adventure or coordinating a service project, these skills help youth become confident, collaborative leaders in any setting.

Objectives

- Understand the key components of effective planning.
- Practice clear and respectful communication in a team setting.
- Identify common planning pitfalls and how to avoid them.
- Collaborate to create a basic plan for a group activity.

Supplies

- Planning worksheet or template
- Scenario cards (for example, event planning, trip coordination)
- Whiteboard or flip chart
- Markers
- Timer or stopwatch
- Optional: sticky notes, index cards, and projector/slides

Advisor Notes

- This session emphasizes practical skills — keep the tone hands-on and collaborative.
- Encourage youth to think through logistics, roles, and communication methods.
- Watch for dominant voices and help quieter youth contribute.
- Reinforce that good planning includes listening, adapting, and clear communication.
- If time allows, let teams revise their plans after feedback to reinforce learning.
- Use real-world examples to show how planning and communication affect outcomes (for example, a successful campout vs. a chaotic one).

SESSION OUTLINE

Welcome and Icebreaker Activity: Lost in the Woods (10-15 min)

- Teams must plan how to survive with limited supplies.
- Goal: Highlight the importance of planning and communication under pressure.

Safety Moment: Clear Communication Prevents Accidents (3-5 min)

- Misunderstandings can lead to injuries, especially during outdoor games, hikes, or hands-on projects.
- Practice giving clear instructions and repeating back what you heard to confirm understanding.
- Ask: "Why is listening carefully important when someone is explaining safety rules?"
- Reinforce that asking questions is a sign of responsibility, not weakness.

Planning Basics (15-20 min)

- Introduce the five W's of planning: Who, What, When, Where, Why (+ How).
- Discussion: What makes a plan successful? What causes plans to fail?
- Handout: Planning Template

Communication Skills: Silent Build (15-20 min)

- One person gives instructions while others build something (for example, a structure with blocks or cards).
- Debrief: What made communication hard? What helped?
- Tips: Active listening, asking clarifying questions, using respectful language

Team Planning Challenge (20-30 min)

- Teams receive a scenario (for example, planning a hike, service project, or club event).
- Use the planning template to create a basic plan.
- Present plans to the group.
- Debrief: What worked well? What could be improved?

REFLECTION SECTION

Advisor note: These are sample questions. They are designed to help the participants apply what they have learned to their own interests. You are welcome to use these questions or develop your own questions.

Focusing Questions

- What did your team plan today?
- What role did you play in the planning process?
- How did your team communicate?

Analysis Questions

- What challenges did your team face while planning?
- How did communication affect your team's ability to plan effectively?
- What strategies helped your team stay organized?

Generalization Questions

- How can you use planning and communication skills in school or other activities?
- What's one thing you'll do differently next time you're part of a planning team?
- Why is it important to listen to others when working on a team?

Optional Extensions

- Invite a guest speaker (for example, event planner, camp director) to share planning tips.
- Have youth plan a real upcoming club activity using today's tools.

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PRINTABLE HANDOUT: LOST IN THE WOODS

Objective: To help youth experience the importance of planning and communication in a high-stakes scenario by working together to prioritize survival items and make group decisions.

Setup:

- Divide participants into small teams (3–6 members).
- Provide each team with a list of 15 survival items.
- Give them a scenario: "You are lost in the woods during a weekend hike. You have limited supplies and need to survive until help arrives."
- Each team must choose 5 items they believe are most essential for survival.
- Allow 10–15 minutes for discussion and decision-making.

Sample Survival Items List:

1. Flashlight
2. Map
3. Compass
4. First aid kit
5. Matches
6. Knife
7. Rope
8. Blanket
9. Water bottle
10. Canned food
11. Whistle
12. Cell phone (low battery, no signal)
13. Hatchet
14. Extra clothes

Instructions

1. Distribute the item list and read the scenario aloud.
2. Teams must discuss and agree on the top 5 items they would take.
3. Encourage teams to assign roles (e.g., facilitator, recorder, presenter).
4. After time is up, each team shares their choices and explains their reasoning.
5. Lead a brief discussion on:
    - How decisions were made
    - What communication strategies worked

Debrief Questions

- What was your team's strategy for choosing items?
- Did everyone agree on the choices? How did you resolve disagreements?
- How did communication affect your team's ability to plan?
- What would you do differently next time?

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Sample Survival Items List

1. Flashlight
2. Map
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6. Knife
7. Rope
8. Blanket
9. Water bottle
10. Canned food
11. Whistle
12. Cell phone (low battery, no signal)
13. Hatchet
14. Extra clothes
15. Notebook and pencil

Our Top Five:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

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PRINTABLE HANDOUT: PLANNING SCENARIOS

Plan a Hike: Your team is organizing a half-day hike for the club. Choose a location, plan the route, decide what supplies are needed, and assign roles.

Organize a Fundraiser: Your team is planning a fundraiser to support a local cause. Decide what type of event to host, how to promote it, and what roles are needed.

Host a Game Night: Your team is in charge of planning a fun game night for club members. Choose games, set up the space, and create a schedule.

Coordinate a Service Project: Your team is organizing a service project to help the community. Choose a project, gather supplies, and plan how to involve others.

Prepare a Campfire Program: Your team is planning a campfire program for an upcoming trip. Decide on songs, skits, and the order of events. Assign roles for each part.

Plan a Club Open House: Your team is hosting an open house to welcome new members. Plan activities, create a welcome message, and organize volunteers.

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PRINTABLE HANDOUT: PLANNING TEMPLATE

Instructions: Use this template to plan your team activity. For each section below, discuss with your group and write down your ideas.

WHO: List the people involved in the activity. Who is responsible for what?
WHAT: Describe the activity you are planning. What will happen?
WHEN: Decide on the date and time. When will the activity take place?
WHERE: Choose the location. Where will the activity be held?
WHY: Explain the purpose. Why are you doing this activity?
HOW: Outline the steps. How will you make it happen?

Use the checklist on the following page to make sure you've assigned roles, listed needed supplies, and chosen how your team will communicate.

Who:

When:

Why:

What:

Where:

How:

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Planning Checklist

Roles:

- Leader
- Organizer
- Communicator
- Problem-Solver
- Supporter

Supplies Needed:

Communication Methods:

- Group chat
- Email
- In-person meetings
- Other: _____