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| **2014 Long-Term Project Guide** |
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**Timeline for Long-Term Project Work**

The long-term project begins with stating your topic choice and stating what you expect to accomplish, that is, what the result of this will be. Set a goal for this work. Then, list activities that will be done, dates you plan to do them, and people/meetings/activities that will be part of this.

Think about what you will do when you run into barriers or when plans don't work out. You must be able to adjust your plans and make changes as needed.

**February:** Identify your goal, talk to others about this, identify objectives, get approval from program facilitators

**March:** Submit title and description of your project

**April-August:** Conduct all activities for each objective (complete the work)

**August**: Write up the project report, outcomes, barriers and your thoughts on effectiveness of your work. Develop your presentation

**September**: present your report to the group

***Develop a project that will result in systems change that will improve the lives of people with disabilities and their families***

* Set goals, develop strategies, and follow though; address barriers and be able to change or adjust as needed
* Some projects may be the first step in a longer goal
* Not all projects get finished and that’s okay, but it’s important to have a goal

**Network of People to Contact**

As you think through how to start your long term project, you should begin to make a list of all the people you may need to contact for your project. Make sure to consider:

* People who may be knowledgeable about your topic and who may be able to advise or help you. These can be professionals, consumers, or participants; anyone whose perspective contributes to your work. For example, if you wanted to improve MetroAccess, you might find out how to talk to other people who use this service or to people who work for MetroAccess, or someone at Metro headquarters. You might also talk to an expert who works to improve transportation accessibility for people with disabilities.
* People who may want to be involved in your work, including people from other organizations who are interested, people who use these services or facilities, and individuals or friends and family of individuals who will benefit from your work.
* Decision-makers who will need to be consulted. This may include people who need to give you permission to do some aspect of this work. For example, if you want to interview people at the adapted swim class at the recreation center you will need to clear this in advance, or if you want to contact parents of school children you will need to have someone else send out your letters/messages.
* People who may help publicize your work and spread the word, if that is part of your goal.
* People who may want to support you or whose help you may need, such as someone who will video tape something for you or take care of your children while you are doing this work.

**Tips for Long-Term Project Work**

It seems like a long time until September, but time will pass by quickly. Much of this work will be in the planning. Here are some things you should do to stay on track:

1. Have a section in your notebook where you will keep all your records, plans, and assignments for your long term project work. If you need an additional notebook, please let us know and we can provide you with one.
2. In your notebook, plan, schedule, and keep lists.
3. Keep a list of everyone you have talked to, contacted, read about, or researched. Make sure to include the dates you talked to them and their contact information.
4. Keep copies of all emails or letters you have sent and write down notes about phone or personal conversations so you remember what was said, what was promised, and what you may have agreed to do.
5. Hold onto business cards, brochures, or even photos you take of a meeting or event. You may need to refer to these things later, or choose to use them in your display or as part of your final presentation.

**Remember**: Change is okay and part of the process. If changes happen, you can update or change your lists and plans to show these changes.

Things may change, some plans may work fine, others may not work well, and you may get new ideas as you get into this project. You have your vision and a goal in mind to help you as you move toward accomplishing your goal.

Sherri, Dana and Suzanne are available to answer questions and provide guidance. Call or email us.

**Sample Topics for Long-Term Projects**

* Organize an inclusive social group, e.g. bowling team, book club, cooking group, etc. Show how you advertise it and a schedule of events.
* Develop a disability platform for a local political candidate and become a member of his team
* Develop a relationship with a specific legislator who is on a committee of interest to you.  Have a plan for how you can work with him/her. Develop a guide on citizen involvement with DC policymakers.
* Create a video on Youtube on school inclusion (or other inclusion)
* Get yourself on a board or committee involved in education of students with disabilities, employment or other areas of importance to people with disabilities.
* Map all accessible recreation opportunities, adult literacy programs, (or other area of interest) in DC and post on DC Advocacy Partners website
* Educate school on best practices on transition by finding models and explaining what the problem is with current system
* Work to make local playground accessible, or daycare provider, or apartment complex, or church.
* Design an outreach plan for a blog on disability topic of your choice – maybe a Partner’s blog