

Tool Kit for Land Trust Stars

Guidelines & Helpful Hints for Creating Fun, Interactive Events

1. Check the latitude of your attitude.



What's my attitude? Am I feeling good? What's the staff's energy level? Do we need a boost? Do people need water/food/bathroom break/time outside? How can we make this meeting more fun and relaxing?

Meet basic human needs for food, safety, and connection, then creativity is easily welcomed to the table.

2. Be a good neighbor.

Include your neighbors in your events. Neighborhoods change; people move, check in to see if there are new folks or organizations around.

Who are our neighbors?

Can we co-create an event with and for them?

How could our programs be more inclusive?

What groups might be a natural fit? What groups might not be as obvious at first?



3. Play more and have fun during the process.

Weave play into the planning and preparations while organizing the event. Play is creative, resource-full and revitalizing for you, your colleagues, members, board and volunteers.

Play is different for different folks, so consider a variety of options:



Storytelling: Coffee Klatch, Corny Joke or Funny Story Time, sharing photos

Active: Walk, hike, run, wander about and enjoy the trees, wildflowers, go birding, pull out some invasive plants

Name that Moment—for example “Scrambled Eggs”— This fun descriptor names that oh-so-busy last hour or so where you and your colleagues are running around doing final event preparations.

4. To Host a Party with a Purpose, You need a Plan with a Purpose

Use the five Ws and how to help you create a simple plan for your event. I recommend answering your why question first. Once you can answer these questions well, you'll be well on your way. ☺

Why are we hosting this event? What's the purpose behind it?

Who is our audience? (The more focused, the easier it is to plan for them.)

What do you want the people to experience? What good things will happen for the environment?

When is the best time for the event? (This includes the best time of year and the best time of day.)

Where is this event being held? (On land we hold in trust, someone else's place, virtual event)

How will this event work? What are the logistics we need to understand? budget, place, & people

5. Play to Your Strengths

a. What are our strengths?

What are my strengths? Our staff's strengths? Our Board & volunteers?

Let's use those strengths to make our events even better. How can we do that?

Do we have introverts who love to do great research, and are excellent at logistics? Or are we full of extroverts who are happy to greet new members and donors?

How do we invite people do the things that they enjoy?

b. Streeeeetch!

How can we stretch just outside of our comfort zones to make this event even better? Who else can we include?

You may notice that you feel a bit

uncomfortable. Then you're on the right track. (Not crazy super-duper uncomfortable, but just outside of your zone.) What's something new we can try? What would that look like?



c. Cross-Pollinate

You're part of Gathering Waters, part of a larger community of folks who do this work. Find out how someone else created a way to do the thing you're working on.



Call up a friend or a colleague who you do not know so well and say hey, we'd love to chat about how you changed this. We're running into this puzzle, and wonder if you have thoughts. Share your good stuff with each other; there are always more ideas and creativity where that came from.

Completion and Celebration

1. *Completion*: Create milestones of things you will achieve, parts of the whole that will be completed, as you work through a big project. These mini-goals or milestones are things you can celebrate with staff and volunteers. Establish the mini-goals and stick to them. Do not "Move the Goalposts." Imagine pro-football players and suddenly, mid-game, the goal post got moved 30 yards. Do you think they'd be happy? Nope. Keep your milestones, and celebrate them when you reach them!
2. *Celebration*: You've achieved the milestone, now use that milestone moment as a reason to celebrate! This is very motivating to staff, volunteers, and members.

You are marking that milestone as an important achievement. This can be as elaborate as a

Volunteer Appreciation Party or as simple as pizza for lunch or marshmallows around a campfire. Get creative and have fun!

