

Reimagining & Revitalizing Service Committees

Session Materials:

- Note sheets with discussion questions
- Large sheets of paper for each table and for the front of the room and markers
- Brainstorming/Groundrules
- Facilitators' Instructions/Vision for NA Service

Session Goals:

- Discuss changes and innovations in local service bodies
- Help participants understand the practice of scanning and planning
- Raise awareness of this opportunity for positive change

[Instructions for facilitators are contained in these brackets]

Introduction

5 minutes

[Facilitators introduce themselves and welcome everyone]

Slide: IDTs for the 2023-2026 cycle

For this conference cycle, the Fellowship prioritized four Issue Discussion Topics (known as IDTs):

1. Dealing with disruptive and predatory behavior
2. Gender-neutral and inclusive language in NA literature
3. Reimagining and revitalizing service committees
4. DRT/MAT as it relates to NA

Material for these can be found at www.na.org/idt.

This workshop, Reimagining and Revitalizing Service Committees, reflects the challenges and opportunities that many NA communities are encountering. NA, like the rest of the world, was permanently altered by the pandemic. Some communities are still struggling to rebuild services, while others are exploring new ways to carry the message. We're going to talk today about what's happening in our local services.

Slide: Discussions about NA services

A number of conversations about change in NA service are already happening:

- The Future of the World Service Conference project is discussing ways to make the conference more productive and valuable
- Regions and zones are involved in the creation of the NAWs strategic plan that will shape new projects in the future
- The New and Revised Service Tools project is focusing on virtual services, H&I, PR, and group business meetings

Slide: Previous discussions about NA services

We have talked as a Fellowship about improvements to NA services many times and in many ways in recent years, but have struggled to put ideas into action. Today we want to focus on a process that could lead to concrete changes.

Some of those discussion topics can be found here www.na.org/idt and include:

- Attracting Members to Service
- Atmosphere of Recovery in Service
- Collaboration
- Building Communication
- Who is Missing

Slide: Ideas for change

The IDT was worded this way in the 2023 *CAR* survey:

“Reimagining and revitalizing service committees (to further the reach of the NA message, improve communication, provide mentorship and training, and make service more attractive and accessible, learning from our experience the past few years)”

None of us would disagree with these aims, but how do we get there?

Slide: Taking an inventory

One approach we are all familiar with is to begin by taking an inventory to see more clearly what is and is not working. That can be just as helpful in NA service as in our personal recovery. As a large group, we want to look at the factors that affect our groups and the ways we provide service. In the last several years, we have all experienced huge changes to the ways we provide and participate in service – but in many cases, our structures have not caught up with these changes. We can be prisoners of our own guidelines, and the ways we define and think about service positions might be very different from how they actually work—or how they could work more effectively, given what we have learned.

Slide: What’s changed?

Let’s begin by asking these questions:

- What changes have made service more attractive or accessible, and improved our efforts to carry the message?
- What changes have made service delivery more difficult or less accessible?

[Provide this example if needed: An area now meets virtually. The literature chair, who previously would distribute lit from a table in the back of the room, now has to take orders in advance and meet group members somewhere in order to get them their literature. The requirements for the position have changed, and so have best practices.]

[Make notes at the front of the room on two large sheets of paper—one for things that have improved service delivery and one for the things that have made it more difficult. Avoid debate on the individual points – simply add them to the list. Review the responses with the large group.]

Shortly, we’ll break up into smaller groups and discuss some solutions to these challenges. Before we do that, we’re going to prioritize the challenges to identify which are the most important ones to address first. This is a necessary step because a service body can only address a limited number of issues at the same time. Some members may wish to move tables if there is a particular challenge they have experience with.

[Lead the large group in voting for their top three challenges – giving each member three votes. Voting can be by a show of hands, or placing dots or marks next to each challenge. Identify the top three challenges and make sure everyone is clear on them.]

Slide: small group set-up

In a moment we will break into small groups to discuss ideas to address the challenges. You will need a facilitator and someone to take notes. We have scheduled 30 minutes for your small group discussions to allow enough time to build ideas. You will be asked to capture one of those ideas on the Post-it sheets.

[Divide the prioritized challenges evenly amongst the small groups, depending on the size of the workshop. Some members may wish to move tables if there is a particular challenge that they have experience with.]

Remind everyone to review the groundrules, brainstorming guidelines, and facilitator’s instructions on the tables, and to write clearly!]

Small Group Discussion

25 minutes

[Remind the small groups of the time periodically so that they get to each part of the process.]

Slide: small group discussions

The first step is to define an objective. This is the end result that we are aiming for. For example, if the problem is a lack of trusted servants, the objective would be to have trusted servant positions filled. This may seem redundant, but experience has shown that it helps to focus the discussion about solutions. If multiple objectives are identified, prioritize the top one or two. This part of the process should only take a few minutes.

Having identified the objective, discuss ideas for reaching it. These should be practical and achievable solutions, given the available resources. Solutions are a path to achieving our objectives—how we intend to reach our goals. The following questions may help this part of the conversation.

- What concrete actions would make it easier to reach our objective?
 - Do we need to make structural changes?
 - Do we need to redefine some of our trusted servants’ roles and responsibilities?
 - Do we need any additional resources to help us reach this goal?

Save the last few minutes to prioritize one solution for how to reach the objective and record the main points on the large sheet of paper.

[During the discussions, walk the room and help to keep the discussions moving if needed. Remind everyone to make clear notes on the large sheets of paper so everyone can read it in the next part of the workshop.]

[Put each sheet of paper on the wall when they are completed]

Large Group Discussion: Creating a plan for action

25 minutes

Slide: Large group discussions

The final step for today’s workshop is to create a plan of action to make the solution a reality. We’re going to choose just one of these solutions to demonstrate this part of the process.

[Lead the group in choosing one of the solutions (by a vote if needed.) If clarity on anything is needed, ask questions.]

To create a viable plan, the resources that will be needed to make it happen must be defined. These are some questions for us to consider:

- What is our *specific* objective? What is the prioritized solution?
- What exactly needs to be done to bring the prioritized solution into reality? That is your project plan.
- Break the project plan into steps if necessary
- How long will this take?
- What trusted servants or committees need to be involved?
- How much will it cost? Where does it fit into the budget?
 - [for example, if it’s a PR project, will the PR budget cover it, or do we need to collaborate with Events to raise funds? Does that change our original plan calendar?]

[It may be helpful to prepare a large sheet of paper in advance with each of these questions written on it, along with space to write in the chosen idea and the answers to each of the questions. Briefly review the plan once it is complete.]

This kind of project planning can be undertaken by a smaller group of trusted servants—for example, the PR subcommittee might do this for a PR focused project, or your service body might have a planning workgroup—and then brought back to the entire body for approval.

Slide: Large group question

As we close this session, we invite you to reflect on how these ideas can live beyond today’s discussion. Whether your service body is thriving, struggling, or somewhere in between, the conversations we’ve had can be a starting point for meaningful change.

We know that IDTs are sometimes explored in gatherings where the challenges discussed may not be specific to one service body. Even so, we encourage you to consider:

“What is one change we could explore or commit to when we return to our service body?”

Let’s hear from a couple of people. What’s one idea from this session that feels relevant—or even exciting—for your local service context?

[Pause for 2–3 shares.]

Wrap-up

5 minutes

Slide: Thanks, and website link for IDT materials

Thanks to all of you for your participation. We hope you can use the work we did today to grow and refresh your service bodies. There is an online input form posted on the IDT webpage that you are encouraged to use to share the results of your discussions with the World Board, and please also remind members in your communities that all the materials for the other IDTs are posted at www.na.org/idt.