



**THE BRIEF AND DEBRIEF  
SCRIPTS**

RW INSTITUTE  
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### HOW-TO GUIDE: THE BRIEF

About 10 minutes before the event starts (or as soon as most of the group has arrived) call everyone together to “brief” them about the event. In some cases, you may want to hold the brief to provide time for latecomers to arrive.

Ideally, a brief takes place alongside the nonprofit partner. The nonprofit partner gives an overview of their history, mission, and purpose while you (the volunteer lead) speaks to why their contribution to the event and the community is important.

#### 1. Position the opportunity

Position the opportunity and thank everyone for coming:

“Before we get started, I want to take a minute to thank all of you for coming today. Volunteers are agents of change and champions of important causes.

By taking part today, you can make a difference that is positive and create impactful changes in our communities, company and within those you work with. What is even better, is that you can make a change in yourself.”

#### 2. Explain why their contribution is important

Introduce the nonprofit and ask them to explain who they are and what they do in the community. At this point, you know the nonprofit cause very well, but use this information to build on when you speak to the group after the nonprofit representative:

“It’s a privilege for to partner with [nonprofit] because of the great work they do in the community – [recap nonprofit mission and purpose].

This is amazing work and we are lucky to be included in it, but I want to emphasize that one day of volunteer work is good, but continued service is something that may help change our organization and one day our community. What we are doing is taking a moment to step outside of ourselves to remember who we are and what is important on a larger scale.

Today is about being present to a need in our community and becoming better people by being just a little bit more conscious of what we receive when we give.

So, if you can, step back from “doing” today and take a look around. Look at who you’re with, observe the community needs that our work here represents and let it affect you. The work we do today is also an opportunity to broaden our perspectives and to take part in something outside of our usual realm of experience.”

At this point, it’s up to you to tell a story that creates proximity to the beneficiary. Refer to the training where you heard a story that demonstrated the difference between transactional and transformative events.

#### 3. Consider

- Who is benefitting from our work?

- Is there a story of an individual in your own life or in the community that you can share with the group?

This story enables people to think beyond their expectations and to connect the work to the life of an individual.

## **HOW-TO GUIDE: THE DEBRIEF**

The primary purpose of the debrief is to ask volunteers to critically reflect on their experience. If they are not asked, they will usually move on before the events of the day have had a chance to settle in – before they give the experience a chance to start shifting their attitudes or behaviors. It is important to get the volunteers to reflect on their experience soon after experiencing it, so that it sticks. In your own way, ask the group the following questions. This process does not have to be strict, just let the conversations flow naturally.

- **What did you experience?**
- **Was it what you expected?**

Not everyone needs to answer; the questions themselves enable volunteers to reflect throughout the week on the activity and how it has affected them.

In addition to providing time and space for volunteers to reflect, the debrief is a great opportunity to express appreciation to your volunteers and to reinforce the difference you just made in the lives of the people who are served by the organization.