

Learning in the Little Moments

Training beyond the training

Learning doesn't end at the conclusion of a training. In fact, the vast majority of learning happens outside of a formal training setting. Solidifying lessons learned after an event, meeting, conversation with a partner organization, online training, etc. ensures that learning happens in the little moments of our work– which elevates our work across the board and keeps our volunteers coming back.

We use debriefs as a tool to crystalize lessons learned.

Effective debriefs don't need to be long or formal or ask specific questions– *they just need to happen*. A quick conversation that connects the action taken by a volunteer with the result of that action is all it takes!

Use the guide below to inform your debriefs with volunteers after every action they complete. These debriefs will encourage them to connect the dots between the action they took, its outcome, and how they can improve for next time.

What?

“What” questions recap a person’s experience and the results. These questions seem simple, but they open up the conversation. Example “what” questions include:

- What did you do during the event today?
- What were the results of the meeting?
- What did you expect during your conversation with the partner organization today? How did that differ from what happened?

So what?

“So what” questions connect the action taken with its importance. These questions prompt reflection and evaluation of an action. Example “so what” questions include:

- Did you learn a new skill or best practice?
- What was the best part of your favorite part of the event? Your least favorite?
- What did you do that seemed to be effective? Ineffective?
- What surprised you about your meeting today?

Now what?

“Now what” questions connect the action just completed with future action. These questions prompt changes in behavior by prompting the action taker to link what they just learned with what they will do during their next shift. Example “now what” questions include:

- How will you take what you learned today and apply it during your next conversation with a partner organization?
- What is one thing you learned today that you will be sure to do/not do during your next event?