



MISSION: Day by Day™

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Image: Light shines in the holy darkness of the grotto at Lourdes, France - LFP Archives

Creating Reflections for the Workplace: A Step by Step Guide

In a workplace setting, the purposeful use of shared reflection serves to ground us more deeply in our mission and values. A thoughtfully prepared reflective process creates an environment in which together we can encounter and draw inspiration from the sacred. Use the following guide to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the reflections you offer within your ministry. *For more simple reflections, adjust your preparation -- i.e. let these section titles serve as prompts.*

Planning the Reflection

1. Prepare with Reverence

- Hold reverence in your heart and mind for those whom you will serve and the opportunity to serve them in this way. Recognize the sacred nature of leading reflection and the privilege of being part of some thing that connects you to the rich spiritual heritage of Catholic health care.

- Schedule time to prepare. Allow yourself the gift of time to enjoy the creative process.
- If you are a prayerful person, invite the Spirit of God to the work of preparing your reflection.

2. Consider the Context

- Understand your purpose. Ask, who are the people gathering/meeting? What is the focus/topic of the gathering/meeting?
- Notice what is unfolding on that day: e.g. an upcoming secular or religious holiday, a transition, a changing season. Pay close attention to what is happening organizationally: e.g. the budget cycle, a new hire, an anticipated new partnership.

3. Ground the Reflection

- Choose a reflection that connects the work of the gathering/meeting with a deeper meaning and purpose: e.g. enlivening the mission and values, finding the sacred, bringing courage and creativity to work, etc.
- Explore thoughts or ideas which you are passionate about and which connect with the realities of the group for whom you are preparing the reflection.

4. Consider the Outcome

- Pause to visualize the best outcome from the reflection for the group: e.g., to be open for a discussion, to be prepared to make a decision, to increase creativity, to manage a transition, etc...
- Be mindful of what you have experienced in the past that worked or didn't work, with this group and others, and make adjustments that can help.

5. Create a Reflective Environment

- Attend to the shape of the space, with furniture arrangement or lighting, to set the tone for this reflection. Consider all the senses. Sounds, images, and scents can suggest something special or unique is about to happen. Even the simplest of conference rooms can be transformed to a reflective space.
- Consider creating a focal point that to prompt reflection. Ideas include: pictures, religious articles, items from nature such as stones, shells, water or oil, a print-out of the mission statement, or a powerful word for attention.

6. Select Content for the Reflection

- Peruse books for reflection. Google a theme or topic of interest. Bring your unique perspective to the creative process – your stories, struggles, special interests, talents, favorite artists, poetry – anything that can serve to inspire and deepen a connection to what matters most in your shared work. Select and edit poetry, other reflections, etc., to align with the context and outcome.



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- Think about how you can structure the reflection for full participation, inviting interaction by all gathered. Some ideas include: using a litany (i.e., a list or series of words that is read by a leader, followed by a pause, and then a brief response by all gathered); having participants take turns reading verses or paragraphs; providing an opportunity for each participant to offer a few words or phrases

from their own thoughts, lives, or work experience. Create copies of any text that will be read aloud.

- Be attentive to diversity and strive to be welcoming in your approach. Be sensitive to the fact that some people may be uncomfortable with reflection, depending on their different traditions, spirituality, religious beliefs and experience, or lack thereof.
- Consider adding a question or two for personal reflection, building in time for people to pause and reflect individually. If you ask participants to share responses, you may choose to have them talk in pairs or invite them to offer a word or phrase that summarizes their reflection. (This helps to keep the sharing brief.)
- Plan for silence. Silence may, at first, be uncomfortable for the group, but with practice, it can become an important part of your reflections.

7. Rehearse the Reflection

- Practice aloud privately to listen for the best rhythm, cadence and pronunciation of words. Consider rehearsing in front of a mirror at home.
- Practice wording for important transition moments, including introduction, conclusion and any directions for discussion or silence within the reflection.
- Proofread any handout that will accompany the reflection.

Facilitating the Reflection

1. Prepare Yourself

- Again, hold reverence in your heart and mind for those who you will serve and the opportunity to serve them.
- Show reverence toward yourself in some manner. Take a deep breath. Stretch. Bless yourself or your materials with a smile or sacred gesture. Give yourself time to enjoy the experience of reflective leadership. If you are a prayerful person, invite the Spirit of God to inspire your leadership.

2. Introduce the Reflection

- Ensure that sufficient time is on the agenda for the reflection.
- Introduce yourself, others and the reflection, as needed.

- Set the mood by reviewing the reflection process. To avoid surprises, share any expectations for the group that require individual reading or spoken participation.
- To help them be present in the moment, invite participants to pause, to take several slow, deep breaths, and be comfortable in their posture.
- Invite participants to set aside distractions, as they are able, in order to enter fully into the reflection.

3. Share the Reflection

- Pause after the introduction.
- Pay attention to pacing. Remember the importance of rhythm, cadence, and pronunciation. Intentionally and deliberately read or offer the reflection. If another person has a part in leading the reflection, be a model of participation, giving your full attention to the leader.
- When you have the urge to rush, take a deep breath and allow for a needed pause.

4. Invite Silence

- Although moments of silence can be uncomfortable for some, they can be powerful if used in an intentional way, making room for insights to emerge.
- Note where you will invite silence so people can anticipate it and participate comfortably in it, instead of waiting uncomfortably for what comes next.
- Encourage continued slow breathing when silence occurs.

5. Close the Reflection

- Let participants know by words and body posture that the reflection is coming to a close and that they can now turn attention to the next steps in the work of the gathering/meeting.

We hope this resource helps increase your competence and confidence in leading reflection in your ministry. Reach out with questions, feedback or ideas to info@missiondaybdays.com

For More Information: Mission: Day by Day™ is an innovative and affordable ministry leadership formation program for established or emerging leaders from all levels of your organization who demonstrate a lived commitment to your organization's mission and values. Suitable for foundational and ongoing formation, this program is designed to help you expand formation efforts deeper into your organization.

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