

Team Orientation Session

It's exciting that you've got to this point of your trip preparations. This guide should help you successfully navigate through leading an Orientation Day that prepares your team for what's ahead.

Whilst you have hopefully been meeting regularly as a team in the lead-up to this, an Orientation Day is vital to help the team prepare themselves for all that they will experience during the trip. It is important to acknowledge that people may come to this day with lots of different emotions. Assuring them that this is OK at this stage is key. Hopefully by the end of the day they will feel less nervous and reassured about their trip.

It is anticipated that this orientation session would need a day to unpack fully. Below is a proposed timetable. This can be adapted to the needs of your group but do ensure you give enough time to explore each of the sections. You will also need to edit and use the accompanying PowerPoint presentation throughout the day.

Please note: slides with highlighted text will need editing before the day. Create and use a separate PowerPoint slideshow for the worship section or the slide references will be out of sync.

10.00-10.30 – WELCOME

5 mins	Outline of the day
15 mins	Worship
10 mins	Icebreaker

10.30-12.00 – TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

10 mins	Keep Healthy
10 mins	Stay Safe
10 mins	Try the Food
10 mins	Your Wellbeing
20 mins	The Itinerary
30 mins	Note to Self

12.00-1.00 – LUNCH

1.00-1.10 – ENERGISER

1.10-2.00 – NO 'I' IN TEAM

15 mins	What makes a good team?
---------	-------------------------



International
Development
UK

[GLIMPSE]

20 mins Love Languages
15 mins Code of Conduct
2.00-2.15 – BREAK

2.15-2.45 – FINAL CHECKS

15 mins Go over any final details and checks
15 mins Questions
15 mins Closing prayer

2.45-3.00 – PRAYER TIME

The majority of this has been structured with notes to help you steer your group through the day. At certain points throughout the session, a script is provided to help ensure the key information gets across to the group. This information is presented in italics.

Welcome (Slide 02)

Outline for the Day (Slide 03)

Welcome the group to the Orientation Day.

Explain to them that there are three parts to the day:

1. Take care of yourself
2. A few words of advice
3. No 'I' in team

These relate to the corresponding section of the Participant Journal (PJ). To make the most of the day, you should make sure everyone has a copy of this to reinforce the points you will be covering.

Take them through the plan and timings for the day so they know what to expect.

Take Care of Yourself (Slide 05 | J.45)

So you are heading off to a new and unfamiliar environment miles away from home. This section will look at how to best take care of yourself whilst overseas.

Run through the list of Do's and Don'ts to always keep in mind throughout the trip.



International
Development
UK

[GLIMPSE]

All of this information is also included in the Journal, but it is helpful to go through at this stage to ensure that the group know all the things to be aware of.

Worship (Slide 06)

* Create and use a separate PowerPoint slideshow or the slide references will be out of sync.*

Begin with a time of worship together to thank God for bringing you here, for preparing the way for your trip and for all that you will learn and discover during your travels. If your group is comfortable, you may wish to begin with a period of sung worship.

Ask everyone to turn to Psalm 84 (or distribute printouts of the passage) and read this psalm quietly to themselves. Then ask people to read out a verse or section which resonates with them ahead of this trip. It doesn't need to be in order and it's OK for verses to be repeated. Allow the space for people to claim these verses for themselves and on behalf of the group.

Finish this time by praying for your group; for all that you will each see of God today and throughout your trip.

Icebreakers (Slide 07)

Icebreakers are a great way of getting to know people better. Whether the group are already familiar with each other or not, during your trip you're going to get to know each other a whole lot more, so it's good to get the group bonding straight away. Here are a few different options to get you started – pick one or two from the list below that you didn't use on the previous Team Training Day or use one of your own:

- Getting to know you: Split the group into pairs and get them to tell each other their name, where they are from and three interesting facts about themselves. Then ask each pair to introduce each other to the group.
- Silent Order: Ask the group to stand side by side in a line facing you. Then ask them, in silence, to arrange themselves into height order. Then get them to re-order themselves into the following (each of these should get progressively harder to do in silence): alphabetical order of their first name, their birthdays, how far away they live from today's venue.



- **Question Web:** Throw a spool of string around the group, asking for someone to share something common about themselves (something that at least one other person in the group shares, but not everyone!). Then, unravelling enough string to keep hold of, they throw the ball/spool to another person who shares that characteristic/experience. Then ask them to share something else about themselves and repeat the process. Encourage people to be creative (no repetition please) and keep going until everyone is holding the string. This will help show the group how much they have in common despite all their different situations, tastes and experiences.
- **Packing List:** Get into a circle and ask them to go round and say the phrase 'I'm going on a trip to X and I'm going to bring ...', each adding a new item to their list. The next person then repeats the list so far, adding their own item at the end. Doing this in alphabetical order may help make it easier to remember, but the items don't necessarily have to be useful things for the trip (and will probably be funnier if they're not!). Keep going until you get to the end of the alphabet, or until it becomes too difficult to remember.

Keep Healthy (Slide 08 | J.46)

Travel Vaccinations

By this stage everyone in the group should have visited their GP surgery and received or arranged to receive all the necessary vaccinations for the location you are visiting.

It is also strongly encouraged that people follow all the advice and guidance given at your GP surgery. However, do be aware that the advice given can vary between doctors and practices. If there is different advice given, always err on the side of caution.

Malaria

It is important for people to carry out preventative measures such as sleeping under a treated mosquito net rather than only relying on anti-malarial medication, as this is not 100% effective. You should encourage every member of the group to take their own net with them, as even if your accommodation provides nets, these may not be treated and may have holes in. It's better to be prepared!

Other prevention methods include using insect-repellent spray (the most effective repellents contain DEET) and keeping your arms and legs covered, especially at the beginning and the end of the day when mosquitos are particularly active. Ensure you are reapplying any insect repellents as recommended.



You should also try and keep the doors and windows of the room you are staying in closed as much as possible, unless these are covered by a mesh or screen.

It is important that the group take their prescribed anti-malarial medication as instructed by their doctor as it is often difficult to completely avoid being bitten during your trip. Most anti-malarials need to be taken daily. As a group try and agree a time (eg after breakfast) to all take your tablets, as then you are less likely to forget.

Water

You may want to use our Water is Life video here to introduce this section:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BAY4owJPoU> – requires sign-in.

We are privileged in the UK to be able to drink straight from the tap anywhere in the country. However in many countries, and most likely the one you will be visiting, this won't be the case. Please check with local people what's safe for you. Even if the water is clean, it will be different from what you are used to and could make you sick.

The best advice is always to drink bottled water during the trip, unless otherwise advised. If you take refillable water bottles with you, then you can buy big bottles of water in bulk and share this amongst the group. If bottled water isn't available, make sure you boil water and allow to cool before drinking.

Sun

If you are visiting somewhere hot, then you will also need to protect yourself from sunburn. Tell the group not to get tempted by the thought of a tan as there is unlikely to be much time for sunbathing!

Instead encourage the group to bring along a high-factor suncream, after-sun cream (just in case) and a suitable hat to shade themselves from the sun. Also try to avoid being out in the sun during the hottest parts of the day and ensure you're drinking water to keep hydrated and cool.

Personal Medical Kit

Every individual should bring their own travel essentials. We recommend each person brings along common items such as paracetamol, diarrhoea relief tablets, rehydration sachets, plasters, sun cream, antiseptic wipes and any personal medication.

Make sure any group participant takes an extra week or two weeks' worth of any personal medication in the event of an emergency or a delay.



They should also ensure they have sufficient medicines in their hand luggage (providing this complies with airport security restrictions).

Ongoing Medical Conditions

Inform the group that if anyone has any ongoing medical conditions that they have not already declared, encourage them to do so to you today. This just means that in the event of a medical emergency, you as the team leader will have all the relevant information.

Stay Safe (Slide 09)

As well as staying healthy, it is also important that you avoid unwanted attention and ensure you stay safe throughout your trip.

Encourage the group to abide by the following safety advice. This could be a group commitment that you make as part of the team rules you create later in the session.

Avoid displaying wealth

Encourage the group to leave valuable items at home. Avoid taking any items you would be upset about losing. Expensive jewellery pieces can attract unnecessary attention to you whilst in materially poorer countries. Taking electronic items such as laptops, tablets, smartphones and big headphones should be discouraged where possible.

Dress culturally appropriately

As a group it will be difficult to completely avoid attention being drawn towards you. However, you can avoid some of this attention by being culturally sensitive and dressing appropriately for your setting.

Generally it is advisable to keep your shoulders covered and to wear clothing that is longer than your knees, including when seated. Even in warmer countries, people will often dress conservatively. As a woman it is usually a good idea to pack a scarf that can be used as a headscarf if required and to show no cleavage.

You should try and make sure you have also received specific information about this from your partners to share with your group so they can pack appropriately.

Take care of your belongings

It's important to keep all your personal belongings safe. Where possible, lock personal items away. If there is not provision for this, then keep them with you at



all times, but beware of pickpockets. It is advisable to keep important documentation (Passport/Visas etc) and money in a travel money belt under your clothing.

Avoid carrying lots of money

This may seem like an obvious one, but only carry the money needed for that day. Team members are unlikely to need much in the way of cash, apart from for souvenirs, additional drinks/snacks and to pay for any optional excursions/activities programmed into the trip.

LISTEN to the advice of local people

They are likely to tell you these last two points: avoid poorly lit areas and do not go out alone. The advice of local people is crucial; they know the most about their local cities and towns, so be sure to listen to them carefully.

QUESTION: Any other travel tips and hacks? Ask the group (especially any more experienced travellers) to share any other tips they may have for staying healthy and safe while overseas.

Try the Food (Slide 10 | J.47)

If you want to break up the session, the following short video could be used to help introduce the next section: https://youtu.be/EcOgjrRWx_Q

QUESTION: What's your favourite food? Ask for suggestions from the group.

Food is a big part of most cultures. While the group's favourite foods may not be on the menu, your host country will be keen to offer its finest cuisine to you and the group.

Here are a few pointers to share with your group:

Taste the local cuisine

People will want to cook for you. Do communicate and let your partners know of any dietary restrictions or allergies. Embrace the hospitality and try as much of the food as possible.

Take something to share

It's always good to take a gift for your host if you are invited to dinner with local people, such as individually wrapped sweets, chocolates, or a local delicacy from your area.



Ensure these food items are stored away properly. People living in material poverty are often very generous and it can be embarrassing not to bring anything.

Don't refuse food

Local people may have spent hours preparing food for you and the group. Refusing food could be considered offensive to the cook. Obviously if you are sick or have specific dietary restrictions, you can politely explain this and excuse yourself from eating.

Be aware of local customs

This is a good thing to get guidance on from your hosts beforehand to share here, as well as the following ...

Be observant during your trip and follow the lead of those you are sharing food with. Don't expect to have cutlery available. It may be that you should only eat with your right hand. So do ask to avoid unnecessary offence.

Allergic to certain foods?

That's OK, it's important to take care of yourself. But do make sure this is effectively communicated to your hosts.

As leader, be sure to gather this information as early as possible so this can be communicated to your hosts prior to the trip.

Be Wise

Food from street vendors is sadly a no-go. It may look very tempting; however, you can never be sure how it's been prepared. So for this reason, give it a miss. Salad in restaurants should also be avoided as it is hard to know if the water that was used to wash this is safe. You should also ask for any meat ordered to be well done.

Wash Your Hands

Ensure you wash your hands before eating. You will often be asked by your hosts to wash them before sharing a meal. You should also take hand sanitiser / anti-bacterial gel with you everywhere in case clean water or soap is not available.



QUESTION: Ask the group to share their thoughts on the food they will be eating. Are they excited, apprehensive, intrigued?

You will probably have a range of responses. That's OK – just encourage the group to always be respectful to your hosts and be willing to try. If they don't, they'll be missing a key part of the experience (and probably get quite hungry!)

Your Wellbeing (Slide 12 | J.48)

Overseas trips can be intense, so prepare to be challenged and stretched in lots of ways. Share these ideas with the group as ways they can take care of themselves whilst on the trip:

Take a break

Your trip is likely to be very busy and you will need to work together as a team. But if you are finding things too much, let someone know and then maybe consider taking 30 minutes out at an appropriate time to stop and breathe.

Talk to each other

This can be a really helpful thing to do whilst on your trip together. Other people may be feeling the same way as you. Talking about things can remind you that you are not alone in this.

Be aware of your emotions and feelings

During your trip you will see, hear and experience many things. Some of these may feel overwhelming and difficult to understand and process. If you feel overwhelmed or have days when you feel particularly emotional, make sure you tell me as the team leader so I'm aware.

Journal

Maybe talking isn't your thing. Journaling can be another great tool for processing an experience and also capturing those important moments that you want to reflect on after the trip. You can use the pages within your Journal to keep a daily record of the trip – this will help you process what you have been doing and give you something to look back on after the trip to remember what you did, and how you felt.



The Itinerary and Packing list (Slide 13 | J.50-51)

At this point take some time to talk through the itinerary for your trip. The best thing is to go through day by day and talk through each of the key activities and prepare the group for what they should expect.

Make sure you stress that this is meant as a guide only. The plans will change and a degree of flexibility will be required. The best thing for people to do is to hold on to the itinerary lightly and go with the flow.

It's also worth drawing attention to the packing list in the Journal and check whether anyone has any questions on this. If there is anything different or additional related to your destination, then make sure this is clearly communicated and the group add these items to the list.

Note to Self (Slide 14 | J.52)

Take a couple of minutes at this point to get everyone to stop and reflect on what you have been speaking about. Use the following activity to help the group consider all that they have learnt so far:

Ask everyone to write a letter to their post-trip self, using the page in their Journal. You could use the following questions as a prompt:

- *What do I want to learn?*
- *What do I want to give?*
- *What do I want to gain?*
- *What do I want to do?*
- *Who do I want to be?*
- *How will I allow this to change me?*
- *What do I want to see change about my life as a result?*
- *What do I want God to do in my life?*
- *What do I want to say to myself?*

Allow a good amount of time for people to do this. If the setting is suitable, encourage people to go out and find somewhere to sit and write, letting them know when to meet back together.

Alternatively, you may want to give separate sheets of paper and provide envelopes for this activity. Once these are complete, ask them to place the letters in a named envelope, seal and give to you. Explain that these will be returned during the debrief session after the trip.

LUNCH (Slide 15)



No 'I' in TEAM (Slide 16)

This part of the session looks at how your team can work well together during your time overseas.

Energiser (Slide 17)

Choose one or two team-building games from the options below or pick other fun group games or activities. This will then set up the group for the next part of the day.

- **Balloon:** give the group a balloon to keep gently hitting to each other. The aim is to not allow the balloon to touch the floor. See how long they can do this for. You might want to split the group into two teams to make it more competitive.
- **Charades or Pictionary:** Divide the group into two teams and have a player from each team draw or act out a word or phrase inspired by what's already been covered in the Team Orientation Day or from the Team Training Day, eg sun cream, paracetamol, iceberg, culture shock etc. Both players drawing/acting out the word or phrase are competing against each other; whichever team guesses the answer first wins a point. Go for as many rounds as you want.
- **Glimpse quiz:** gather some interesting general facts that is related to your trip. This could include population statistics, most popular local dish, places of interest, historical facts and so on. You could present these as multiple choice questions (up to three answer options per question, up to 10 questions) on another PowerPoint slideshow and have teams make note of their answer choices. Whoever gets the most correct answers wins.
- **The floor is lava:** split the group into two teams and challenge them to move from one side of the room to the other without touching the floor before the other team. Ensure everyone works together and plays this safely.

What makes a good TEAM? (Slide 18)

ACTIVITY: Start this section by asking the group what they think makes a good team. Write down all the answers on a piece of flipchart paper.

Some answers you may want to feed into the discussion are:

- Listening to others
- Respecting one another's opinions
- Treating others as you'd like to be treated
- Playing to the strengths of each team member
- Good communication
- Encouraging one another
- Being gracious



Remember you will be spending such a concentrated amount of time together that there is likely to be moments of tension and irritation. This makes it even more important to be gracious to each other and to respect the different ways people respond in situations.

Love Languages (Slide 19 | J.49)

When you are overseas in a team it's often helpful to know how each other receives love. This can be valuable when knowing how to encourage someone or just to remind them they are an important part of the team. For instance, if someone is feeling homesick and you know that one of their love languages is acts of service, then simply making them a cup of tea could make them feel really loved and valued.

Gary Chapman suggests that there are five different ways we receive love as humans¹. These are:

1. Words of Affirmation
2. Acts of Service
3. Receiving Gifts
4. Quality Time
5. Physical Touch

Ask the group each to complete the questionnaire to find out what their preferred love languages are. They may have already done this before, but if it was a few years ago they may want to do this again to see if their results have changed. The questionnaire can be done online or by printing off a PDF version from www.5lovelanguages.com.

Go round and share the results with each other, discussing whether these fit with people's experiences or not.

As with all these types of surveys, you shouldn't accept the results as 100 per cent accurate and final, but hopefully it will give you an indication of each person's preferences.

Code of Conduct (Slide 20 | J.111 – Appendix 2)

We recommend getting each member of your group to read the code of conduct (Appendix 2) carefully so they fully understand why they are being asked to adhere to this, and then ask them to sign it.

¹ *The 5 Love Languages* by Gary Chapman



Explain to the group that there isn't a code of conduct to make the trip boring, but to ensure that everyone is safe, that The Salvation Army United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland is represented well, and that the team can get the most out of their trip.

You could then go on to create a list of team rules. These should be focused around how to care, support and respect each other throughout the trip.

Write these up on a flipchart and then ask each person to sign as a symbol of their shared commitment to each other.

Remind the group that they can refer back to the 12 Tips found throughout the Journal (also highlighted in the Leader's Guide) and go over them together if you have some time in the session.

Commissioning Prayer (Slide 21)

Finish the day together by spending some time praying for each other before you embark on this adventure together.

Remind the group of Joshua 1:9 (NIRV):

'Here is what I am commanding you to do. Be strong and brave. Do not be afraid. Do not lose hope. I am the Lord your God. I will be with you everywhere you go.'

God promises that he will be with us everywhere we go, so we are not doing any of this in our own strength.

Encourage the group to continue upholding people in prayer before you leave and throughout your trip too.

