

Team Preparation

We encountered one team that was exceptionally prepared and asked them to share what they did to prepare their team. We encourage you to follow their example in as much as possible to have a smooth trip. The time spent in preparation has well paid rewards for all in the team, your coordinators, your missionaries and the people at the mission sight.

1. **They had a team leader.** The leader was in charge before, during traveling to and from the field. The leader must have before and during the trip the following information from each team member: full name, date of birth, emergency contact info (name, phone address, email), allergies, medical conditions. We also recommend having a contact person for the team back home. This person will communicate to the family members, friends, and church the whereabouts of the team. This would save in time, money and resources.
2. **The team had three meetings (each about 2-3 hours long) before leaving.** They had devotions and prayer time at each team meeting and encouraged each of the members to participate in those as times of preparation for the experience. Learn together – have fun together – watch some movies before you go, learn about your mission site, learn a little of the language, sight-see together while there, eat new foods, meet new people, learn about being a part of an effective team, about how to be open to being used by God in these situations, to let go and let God.
3. **They had a debriefing meeting as well after their return.**
4. **They draw names for their “buddy” on the trip.** They wanted each person to have a buddy for support and to make sure everyone was being looked after on a personal basis. This was also to make sure that if any problems were developing, the buddy could make the team leader aware of this and the problems could be dealt with. They encouraged the buddies to do small thoughtful things for each other both before the trip as well as during it. You will have three tangible supports: your roommate, your buddy and team leader.
5. **They developed a Statement of Purpose, which took one complete meeting.** They did not have any starting point except to talk about why each felt called to go on the trip. From that, they developed their statement, which had pieces of each of them in it. They reviewed it again while on the trip. It was a good tool to keep them focused and on track.
6. **They made a list of what to take/pack**
7. **They discussed the cultural differences.** They discussed how people respond differently to the same situation depending upon their cultural background. This was the basis of laying groundwork that “our” way is not the “right” way, it is simply our way. A huge emphasis was placed on the fact that they were coming as guests in another country and they were going with a servant mentality, to do what needed to be done regardless of whether they understood or agreed with it or not.
8. **Each person was asked to write out their testimony, trying to keep it to one page.** Theirs was to be used on whatever occasion might call for it, while on the trip. The written form was to make the translation easier. It also was to help the person reflect on and capture the essence of their Christian experience.

9. **Each person was asked to prepare a group devotional for one night while on the trip.** They were not given any limitations on subject matter but rather were told to do what they felt led to do.
10. **Roles were assigned to people in the team.**
 - a. **Financial person.** Each team member gave all their trip related (budgeted) money (except spending money) to this person before they left for the trip. For the purpose of clearing customs, each person would divide the sum among the team members before actually going through the customs and then get it back. Then whenever they needed to pay for meals, groceries, transportation, entrance fees to museums, etc, this person handled it for all of the team members. At the end, the remaining money was divided up evenly and returned to people. While some people would spend a little bit more or less if on their own, it was also a good learning sharing experience for everybody. It also saved a lot of time while traveling.
 - b. **Another person was in charge of having general medications for the team.** Headache remedies, medicine for diarrhea, first aid supplies, cold medicine, etc. This was the person to go to if you had some sort of medical problem.
 - c. **Another person was in charge of seeing that the people prepared their devotionals and scheduled them for the nights/days they were to be given.**
 - d. **Other people were charged with collecting certain items to bring.** They did not have to gather them all, but it was their responsibility to see that others were gathering them (SS classes, WMU groups, children's groups, etc.). They had a "packing night" at one of their houses a few nights before they left and packed all these supplies in the extra suitcases they were bringing. This generated a lot of excitement just days before they were to leave and served as good last minute gathering to clarify information and finalize last minute details.

May the mission statement of FBC Raleigh be a guidance and inspiration to your team: Being open to God's leadership to go to the uttermost parts of the world to serve, we commit to set self and uncertainties aside as with willing spirits, we follow the mystery of God's calling. As we seek to meet the perceived needs of our brothers and sisters in Kiev, we, in faith, anticipate God's transformation in our own lives.