

Overview

Introduction

Welcome to ÉXITO EN EL NORTE/Success in the U.S! The ÉXITO video/DVD series grew from one service provider's experiences with Spanish-speaking immigrants moving to the United States. Each video addresses a topic vitally important to understanding and navigating daily life in the United States, highlighting commonly shared questions, concerns, and sometimes misconceptions. Spanish-speaking immigrants from across the United States identify and benefit from the information, tools and resources provided by ÉXITO EN EL NORTE.

The series represents a dynamic collaboration of several major partners, contributing organizations, and individuals. Details about the project's history, partners, and each title in the ÉXITO series may be located on the site's opening page:

<http://www.exitovideos.com>.

Purpose and goals

The ÉXITO EN EL NORTE series seeks to empower immigrants with knowledge and information to live successfully in the U.S. Each video is designed to:

- Help break through language and cultural barriers
- Offer tools for achieving independence and self-sufficiency
- Promote community involvement
- Provide resources and the means to access them
- Facilitate open communication between immigrants and service providers
- Reduce potential problems that result from misunderstanding and confusion

Each video in the ÉXITO series may be viewed alone, at home with family members, with friends, etc. However, the video series' effectiveness may be maximized even further by viewing the videos as part of a facilitated group. This setting offers further benefits:

- Reinforcing key concepts
- Exploring locally available Spanish information and services
- Sharing experiences with other Spanish-speakers
- Forging working relationships with service providers and other members of the community
- Working together as a group to advocate for positive change
- Fostering leadership and positive integration into the larger community

Discussion guides

The ÉXITO EN EL NORTE/Success in the U.S. discussion guides are designed to complement the video, and furnish facilitators with the tools they need to identify and accomplish the goals most crucial to the success of newcomers in their area. Each guide is presented in a similar format to facilitate effective discussion, and provide materials and resources that will assist facilitators as they prepare for a guided discussion utilizing one of the videos in the series.

Discussion guide format

Preparing to Facilitate: Outlines the session organization, with discussion and/or activity for each topic covered by the video. In addition, highlights needed materials and equipment, and suggested participant handouts.

Introduction and Transition: Gives suggestions for “ice breakers” to introduce the topic and give participants an opportunity to share experiences.

Video Segments: Provides suggestions on where to “break” and stop the video for discussion, in order to increase comprehension.

Facilitator’s Notes and Tips: Highlights facilitator’s tips, with suggestions and ideas to help the session run successfully. “*Facilitator tips*” focus on process and are in green color fonts. “*Facilitator notes*” alert the facilitator to points that are particularly important for the facilitator to know about the content or about the participants. The important notes are in khaki color.

Discussion and/or Activity: Furnishes ideas for discussion or activities that relate to a segment of the video.

Conclusion: Offers a space for participants to inquire about any unanswered questions, and discuss ways to potentially make a positive local impact on the way services are rendered in local communities.

Follow-up: Provides a place to plan follow-up activities as a group, distribute any materials, and provide local resources for further assistance.

Resources: Points to sources where facilitators may find pertinent information, and free or low-cost sources for materials.

Using the discussion guide

The main purpose of this guide is to offer a friendly and flexible tool that maximizes each video's effectiveness, equipping Spanish-speaking residents with essential information for living and working in the United States. The guide encourages the facilitator to adapt the delivery to local circumstances and interest. Multiple organizations and agency types will likely utilize these auxiliary materials, with varying connections to local Spanish-speaking communities. Local Hispanic centers that use these guides will most likely have a very strong, pre-established relationship with Spanish-speaking community members. Other organizations or agencies may have less-established ties, and some may be in the beginning stages of establishing outreach programming. Some of the suggestions given in this guide may therefore be of more assistance to one group than another. The "heart" or discussions offered in these guides, however, are intended to benefit all groups regardless of origin.

As group facilitator, you will be in the best position to determine the specific goals and intended outcomes for your area. Group needs vary depending on location, organizational goals, level of knowledge before discussion, amount of discussion time, availability of local service providers and Spanish assistance, etc. As the group's facilitator, you are the best person to judge your group's needs. With your own experience and input from the group you will be facilitating, you can select the discussion or activities, and focus on topics that best serve your own audience. You may also supplement suggested discussion questions and activities with those of your own. Please share your experiences, and offer suggestions for other facilitators and groups, on ÉXITO's website comment pages.

The next file, the Facilitator's Orientation, includes general information for organizing the discussion session and tips specific to facilitating discussions. If you have prior experience with these activities, you may choose to skim, or skip this section entirely.