



Best Buddies Ambassadors

How To Plan a Training & Facilitator Tips

So you want to have an Ambassador training? Here's everything you need to know!

One Month Before

- Secure a location!
Depending on the number of participants you're expecting, there are a number of locations you can look into using. Schools, hotel conference rooms, and public meetings spaces are all great choices. If those aren't available, get creative! Does your Best Buddies office have a conference room? Perfect! As long as a space has the capability to project PowerPoint (either with a built in projector or one you bring) and enough space for participants/speech coaches, you can make it work!
- Determine what type of training you'll have!
We have multiple types of ambassador trainings, each of which is geared toward a different skill. Determine what the current need may be for your participants and go from there!
- Recruit participants!
Participants with/without IDD are welcome to participate in an ambassador training, but they should all share some key characteristics. First, participants who are going to participate in an ambassador training should be excited to participate and want to be there! Make sure to explain the purpose of the training and expectations for the day so that participants know what to expect. Participants should show leadership potential and be excited to advocate for themselves and Best Buddies. Our ambassadors are more than just public speakers, they are the face of our mission. When recruiting, focus on quality over quantity.
- Recruit speech coaches!
Speech coaches are vital to the success of an ambassador training. You want to make sure participants feel comfortable and supported, especially since public speaking can be so daunting! A good speech coach is someone who is eager to help the participants do their best while having fun. Parents, Best Buddies volunteers, advisors, and peer buddies are all great people to reach out to.

Two Weeks Before

- Secure in-kind donations!
Lucky for us, an ambassador training doesn't require much! If you're looking to make the training as inexpensive as possible, secure some donations for water, snacks, and lunch. Reach out to local grocery stores, restaurants, etc. and see what you can get!
- Confirm and visit your location!
Make sure you confirm your location for your training. For example, the room number and what building you will be assigned if it is a school. Visit the location and make sure you know how to direct your participants and where to put signs on the day of the training to direct the participants to the correct room. Make sure the room has the equipment that you need for presenting and a place to serve food.



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Week Of

- Confirm your RSVPs!

In order to keep your count as accurate as possible, confirm the availability and interest of your expected participants and speech coaches. When confirming don't forget to be specific with directions to the training, including room number and building. Also, include a contact number in case the participants gets lost. Within your confirmation you should include an agenda and the speech coach information sheet (if applicable). This will help avoid any surprises the day of the event.

- Assign Speech Coaches & Ambassadors!

Now that you have your numbers confirmed, pair up your speech coaches and ambassadors together. Try to think of any icebreaker you could incorporate while introducing them to make the transition easier. Always have a backup plan if a speech coach or ambassador cancels.

- Have all materials ready!

Print all worksheets that correspond with the training you've chosen. Bring plenty of paper and pens for scrap paper. Pack note cards for the ambassadors who choose to present using those, rather than paper. Organize all the training materials for each ambassadors in individual folders. Go through the training materials one last time to ensure that there aren't any extras you may be forgetting!

- Print certificates for the Ambassadors!

If you do not already have the official ambassador certificate, please contact Ashley Simmens.

- Print out e-Buddies sign-up sheet!

At the end of your training when talking about advocating opportunities and ways to get involved in Best Buddies, remember to go over the e-Buddies sign-up sheet and encourage ambassadors and speech coaches to sign up for the program if they are interested. If you would like more information about the e-Buddies program there is a more detailed info sheet on BBSL.

- Set up food delivery/take out!

If you are ordering breakfast or lunch in, make sure you call the vendor to set up time for pick up or delivery.

- Equipment!

Make sure your computer and any other equipment you might need for the training is working properly. Keep in mind you will need someone to take pictures and videos of the speeches to enter into the ambassador tracking system on BBSL. Make sure you have a device/iphone that is working properly.



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Week After

- Thank you notes!
Send out thank you notes to the individuals or business that donated food or supplies to your training. Don't forget to send out thank you notes or emails to all the speech coaches include a group picture of the training or an individual picture of the speech coach and the ambassador.
- Get Feedback!
Send out a survey or a quick email to all participants if they have any feedback to improve the next training or what type of training they would like to see in the future.
- Ambassador Tracking!
Make sure to enter your training in the Ambassador Tracking section of the BBSL. Please contact Ashley Simmens if you need any assistance.

Tips for Facilitators:

- Some facilitators use a classroom on a local college campus and have a peer buddy from the college chapter book the room for free.
- If you have ambassadors attending the training that have an upcoming speaking event you can have them work on the particular speech. In addition, if you have upcoming speaking opportunities in the community or Best Buddies initiative you need speakers for you can assign specific ambassadors at the training specific speech topics to fulfill those speaking opportunities. Remember this will take prep time.
- To utilize the skills the ambassadors have learned in your trainings provide them with a list of upcoming events in the area. Have them pick three events that they might be interested in speaking at. This will allow your office to have a list of speakers you could use for upcoming events and give the ambassador ownership in their role as an ambassador.
- On the day of the training, don't forget to put up Best Buddies' signs with our recognizable logo directing participants to the room for the training.
- Name tags can be helpful to the ambassadors, speech coaches and even you, the facilitator.
- Having the audience give feedback to ambassadors after they present is helpful to the ambassador. A compliment sandwich is a great way to delivery feedback; one positive comment, one area for improvement, and another positive comment.