1. **Know and understand the goals** for service-learning in your course. What does your instructor hope you will get out of your experience?

2. **Carefully select your service site.** Factors to consider:
   - what community issue(s) interest you
   - what project would provide you the greatest learning opportunity (go outside your box!)
   - what is your availability (evenings, days, weekends)
   - what are your location and transportation needs
   - what skills/talents do you have to share and which would you like to develop

3. **Do not procrastinate.** Plan your service hours ahead of time, schedule your hours like you would a job or class time. Be consistent and honor your commitments.

4. **Be persistent.** Initiative is important! Do not expect immediate responses, but contact SL staff if you do not receive a response is 3 working days.

5. **Be open-minded** and open to the experience. Examine your own preconceptions and stereotypes and take responsibility for them. You might encounter people who have a different life experiences and perspectives then you. Try to set aside your personal judgments for the moment and really listen to people.

6. **Expand your understanding of the community issue(s)** your agency partner is working to address, such as homelessness, elderly, immigration/refugees, veterans, etc.

7. **Understand that nonprofits have a unique culture** with their own strengths and weaknesses. Learn more about the [Unique Nature and Struggles of Traditional Small Nonprofits](#).

8. **Maintain personal boundaries.** Be clear about your availability and goals for your service hours with your supervisor. Do not share your personal information with clients. Your focus should be on the agency and serving the clients.

9. Read this important advice on staying safe.

10. **Reflect and critically analyze your experience.**