

TALK OF AGES TEACHING BRIEF

Hometown Relocation Agency Activity

Contributed by:

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Activity Description - In this activity, students are asked to try on the hat of a professional working in an emerging career area. The activity aims to give students an opportunity to explore a range of issues not only about individual older adults, but also their families and local communities. The activity description and clients may be adapted to reflect locations more familiar to your students and to reflect particular personal aging issues.

In my Aging in America class of 25 students, small teams (2-3 students) are formed to serve as agency teams. Two different client scenarios are used (see below), with half of the teams assigned to one client. These teams then serve as the family for the other client.

Agency Teams A: Agency Teams for Client Eve Bender, Montero Client/Family

Agency Teams B: Agency Teams for Client Maria and Paul Montero, Bender Client/Family

Teams are given the following instructions.

You have just launched your own hometown relocation agency and you want new business!

Working with your partner(s), develop a PowerPoint prospectus for your client and family which includes 2 new, alternative housing recommendations.

Consider all options before deciding on your recommendation, including purchasing a new home, renovating a family home, renting, moving to an independent retirement community, assisted living, or other living arrangements. Describe both the aspects of each recommendation you think the client will find appealing (e.g., tangible or intangible benefits including estimated costs, demographic information, local attractions, services, conveniences, living environment, and other amenities you think are of use and importance to consider), as well as any drawbacks to consider.

Teams will each have 10 minutes to make their pitches and address questions from the client – so be concise, yet informative. And, consider that the style of your presentation and *your professional manner* is as important as your actual recommendation – so pay attention to details (e.g., formatting, spelling, engaging visuals, prepared script, timing). And, have fun preparing...it will spark your investigative skills and creativity!

Following the presentations for each client, the client and family members will meet to determine which relocation agency they will continue to work with to find new housing.

Here is one source to get you started...use your own creative and investigative skills to find others. <http://www.epodunk.com/cgi-bin/nonprofitInfo.php?locIndex=2869>

Advice to Instructors

- I like to use this activity early in the class when I discuss changing demographics, as students find it engaging and it gets them thinking about a broad range of issues.
- I like to keep teams small, no larger than 3, to encourage attention to detail in developing the “pitch”. I also try to refer to team members as “partners” to encourage collaboration.
- I devote a full class period to presentations. After each presentation, the families are given time to ask the team questions. Following all team presentations for one client, families are given time to discuss which housing option they would like to pursue. When they identify their choice, they are asked to describe why they selected it.
- The activity often reveals a number of preconceptions/stereotypes about aging and older adults, and affords an opportunity to talk about these views and their implications in light of changing demographics.

Examples of Hometown Relocation Agency Clients

Eve Bender

Client Profile: Eve Bender is a 78 year old woman who recently lost her husband of 45 years. She was born in Albany, NY and has lived there since. She and her husband owned a two-family home close to the center of town, the upper level of which she rented to several young families. Her parents were born in Rome, Italy and immigrated to the U.S. shortly before her birth. She is in generally good health and loves to walk, garden, cook, and socialize with friends. She is an avid reader of murder mysteries and fan of Hollywood movie thrillers. In recent years, she has developed Type 2 diabetes and requires routine medical check-ups to monitor her treatment. Because of changes in her eye sight, she has stopped driving. Eve is considering moving to the Newton area so that he can be closer to her son and his family, who live on Cheswick Road across from the admission office of Lasell College.

Maria and Paul Montero

Client Profile: Maria Montero is a 75 year old woman who lives with her 78 year old husband, Paul. They have lived in the suburbs of Harrisburg, PA since they were married. They owned their own single-family home which had 2 acres of surrounding land, a good portion of which they used for organic vegetable gardening. In addition to raising a family, Maria was a school teacher and Paul was an accountant. Maria is generally good health, and loves to walk, garden, cook, and volunteer with local school programs. Paul has arthritis which somewhat limits his mobility, however, he is in good mental health and loves to read, take classes, and participate in city government. Both still drive. Maria and Paul are considering moving to the Waltham area so they can be closer to their daughter and her family, who live on Ash Street off of Moody Street in Waltham.