

## A Case Study: The Importance of Ownership

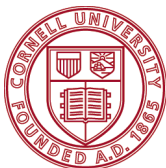
Answer these questions after reading the two scenarios below:

- In which scenario do more people have a sense of ownership?
- In which will the children feel that the garden is theirs?
- Which will have an easier time getting people to help with summer maintenance?
- Which will local businesses want to donate to?
- Which has a lesser chance of being vandalized?

**Scenario 1:** The planning committee has carefully thought out the school garden program and designed a beautiful plan. Each step of the way, they've included the participants and other partners, and have worked hard to be sensitive to the particular needs of the students and teachers. Now, it's time to build the raised beds. Four planning committee members work from dawn to dusk on Saturday to get them build and filled with soil. So why are they disheartened when Monday arrives and no one even notices the new beds? What did they do wrong? And, the groundskeeper has the nerve to grumble about the "dirt" they have spilled across the parking lot. They all have a lousy day, feeling unappreciated and resentful.

**Scenario 2:** Several weeks before the same Saturday, the committee beings to get people psyched up for the big "bed-building." A newspaper article appears, talking about how the school children are going to be "making their beds," and welcoming the community to join them. The committee invites the primary school children to come to the bed-building with their parents, and request that people bring along their garden tools and sandwiches. They encourage the community service groups and garden clubs to join them in the excitement as well. Friday comes, and the planning committee carefully marks out the garden design with a large bag of white flour, and cross their fingers it doesn't rain. Saturday arrives. The local donut shops have donated all their day-old donuts to the cause, and PTA members fix coffee and juice in the cafeteria, bringing trays of donuts and drinks out to the workers.

While one group mixes topsoil, compost, fertilizer, and lime in a large pile, others remove sod in the whimsical, curvy design that the children developed. They carefully edge the beds, and get the stepping stones ready. Another group is building a small archway. Children are racing around from the bed-building to the playground nearby. The groundskeeper and principal are working alongside the parents and the teachers. When the soil mix is ready, and the sod has been stripped, it would be easy to dump the topsoil/compost in the beds with a few wheelbarrows—but instead, the committee has arranged in advance to have about 75 buckets at hand, so everyone lines up in a "Bucket Brigade." The buckets are filled with topsoil, and passed down the line until the new beds are heaped with the healthy mix. Others stand by to work the topsoil mix

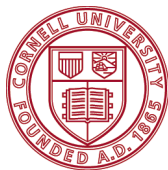


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into the new beds.

The local television crew films this event for the six o'clock evening news (which, of course, the whole community will eagerly watch). Afterward, everyone helps to clean up. A volunteer sends thank yous to each organization that helped out, and puts a big THANK YOU in the school newsletter.



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