

HOW TO PLAN YOUR OWN

Swap!

1 // CAST THE VISION

On the surface, we are bringing in valuable, gently-used clothing to allow someone else in our city to enjoy it. This is a chance to invite women to a place where they are seen, valued, and where we can help meet their tangible need. However, this is not about clothes; it's about people.

There are a lot of different stories within The Grove Swap. One is 'clothes for people'. Another one of the stories is, 'We're doing what we can do for anybody.' We're asking, "What's in your hand?", "What do you have to give away?" We're giving away clothes, but that's not the point. The point is that we're all giving away something, so the vision begs the question of anyone involved: "What are you giving away?"

p.s. People are going to love this vision and can help make it better. As your vision is cast and people share your excitement, **build a great team**; partners to help own and lead each step to follow. You can't do this alone!

2 // GIVE A HEALTHY DROP-OFF PERIOD

Some will respond right away to your question, "What are you giving away?". Others will forget and need to see a drop-off area for multiple weeks at a familiar spot before they remember to bring their contribution.

During this lengthy drop-off period, help yourself out by pre-sorting items at the drop-off area. This is the time to set the tone for the whole experience: give it the appearance of your favorite store to shop at, not the cheapest one. Involve volunteers who are champions of the vision. Stir excitement and anticipation for what's to come!

3 // CREATE A SYSTEM FOR SORTING

Our system is based on item type, color, and size.

Again, get as many hands involved as possible. Truly, many hands make light work!

Commit to your standard for the quality of clothing you want participants to receive. Donate items that don't fit the overall quality of the experience to other organizations that will still get great use out of every item you receive.

Don't do it all in one night. Do a little bit each day for weeks. Pace yourself and your team!





4 // DESIGN THE “SWAP” EXPERIENCE

Ask stores for donated racks, watch for liquidation sales, etc.
Bring in a couple guys to make free mocktails.
Have great music and have the volume up.
Walk the experience yourself to be sure the flow of your swap is helpful and not overwhelming to participants.

Create teams of volunteers to be stylists, check-out operators, hospitality coordinators, dressing room attendants, restock specialists, etc. Once again, there's more than one story here: Yes, these volunteers have jobs, but they're also the face and heart of your event. Remind your volunteers: This is about people! Each woman who comes through the door should be looked in the eye, spoken to, valued, and helped. That's what we're here to do.

Have a token system that allows each woman to pick out a quantity of items to take home for free (i.e. divide the number of items received by the expected attendance, and give that many tokens to each woman as they enter. Allow them to give extras to each other. Be liberal with tokens to the extent that everyone who comes can participate).

Have an extremely clear queue to get in and 'check out'. Yes, everything is free, but when you pair one participant with one 'check-out' volunteer to greet and thank women for coming, this is your one guaranteed personal touch of the night. We also use this opportunity to retrieve nice wooden hangers we use at the event and put women's selections in a bag to help them get home.

5 // FILTER EVERY ASPECT OF THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE THROUGH ONE GOAL: ENCOURAGEMENT.

From beginning to end, the goal is to lift the eyes of everyone woman involved; from the ones who are in the deepest need to those who feel they need nothing. Women should leave feeling blessed, valued, celebrated, and joyful!

Put it all through the filter of love.