



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Creating Entrepreneurial Communities: Effectiveness of Coaching

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Creating Entrepreneurial Communities

Program Basics

- Extension → Research
- “Jazz” vs. “classical” approach to helping communities become more entrepreneur-ready
- Program coach started April 4, 2010
- Program application process
- First community meeting: Sept. 2010
- Quarterly virtual “meet-ups”
- Newsletter/Profiles
- Coaching visits



Creating Entrepreneurial Communities Hallmarks

- Social networks
- Resources
- Culture
- Policy



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Multi-pronged Research Approach

- Econometric:
 - Determinants of “entrepreneurial culture”
 - Determinants of program demand
- Qualitative Exploration of Coaching
 - How to work with teams of different “personalities”
 - How teams decide on priorities
 - Where and why teams succeed/break down
 - Gender issues in local ED teams



Research Outcomes

- “Culture” paper (with Miller & Grad Students Komarek & Satiamanon):
 - Findings
 - High level of support for HS based entrepreneurship curriculum
 - Lower level of “encouraging” a young person to start of business
 - Regional differences in cultural attitudes, especially with City of Detroit, where HS curriculum reform is not as strongly desired.
 - Paper presented at conference; also shared with state policy makers. In review at *Papers in Regional Science*.



Research Outcomes: Program Demand

- Determinants of Demand Paper (with Grad Student Suljevic)
 - Econometric assessment of factors associated with county-level uptake of CEC program.
 - Presented at:
 - “What Works” Economic development conference in Philadelphia
 - Invited lecture, Kalamazoo College.
 - Findings:
 - POS: % foreign born, innovation index, FTE Extension CD Educator.
 - NEG: Population density & attitude towards locally owned businesses
 - Not** SIG: Social capital index, and county political leaning
 - Submitted for review – conference proceedings.



Research Outcomes: Coaching Techniques

- Virtual focus group on coaching techniques (with Nawyn and Grad Student Szymecko)
 - Convened national discussion with experienced local economic development extension professionals
 - Findings:
 - Common group types include “Kingmaker”, “Consensus Builder” and “Weak Power Leader”
 - Coaching techniques focus on “closure” with consensus builder and weak power leader. With Kingmaker, more focus on behind-the-scenes work to widen circle of inclusion.
 - Target Journal: Gateways: *Int. J. of Community Research and Engagement*



Research Outcomes: Goals Paper

- Community-Driven Entrepreneurship Goals Paper (with Grad Student Szymecko, & Fails, Madle and Nawyn)
 - Community Strategies under a “jazz” approach:
 - Teams established between 6 and 17 goals.
 - A total of 22 goals were adopted across the eight communities; six were unique, while the others were adopted in some form by at least two communities.



Goals Paper continued

- 10 month mark: % of goals with at least some aspects implemented ranged from 33 to 69%
 - Most common goals implemented: regular meetings; branding
 - Teams desired but struggled to implement social media tools.
 - Teams that adopted mentorship strategies were able to implement
- Most commonly adopted goals fell into two hallmark categories:
 - Resources
 - Culture
- Only a few focused on social networks and almost none in the policy category.
- Target Journal: *Economic Development Quarterly*



Example Local CEC Team Initiatives

- 101 Conversations program (biz needs survey)
- Tribal youth entrepreneurship program
- Entrepreneur speakers bureau
- Incubator feasibility study
- Business idea contest
- Expanded role for local library as business resource center
- Business awards banquet



Next Steps

- Finish coding transcribed interviews.
- Analysis of interviews for:
 - Sources of conflict
 - Coaching interventions
 - Group dynamics
 - Group turnover/renewal
 - Gender/age dimensions of all of the above

