

Project Name:

Enlow Group

Team Members:

Phil Parker, Beth Russell, Lynnae Wilson, Luke Yaeger

Area of Focus:

- Building social capital by building social networks
- No group exists just to interact and engage members

SWOT Key Findings:

- *Strengths*
 - Capable, well-educated affiliates
 - Well-networked members
 - Passionate, well-intended affiliates
 - Flexible structure/seeking to adopt best practices
 - Clean slate/completely independent
 - Relies on no funding sources
- *Weaknesses*
 - Group lacks structure
 - Group lacks a precedent or “touchstone”
 - The group is very ambiguous
 - No funding in place; group requires independent effort
 - A lack of diversity currently exists in the Enlow Group/limited group represented
 - The group lacks experience and many of its members have never started a group like this
- *Opportunities*
 - The community easily facilitates involvement
 - This is a new group concept and a great opportunity for personal growth
 - We can begin to build a culture of diversity and inclusion
 - There is a plethora of potential ideas or issues to embrace
 - There is a strong philanthropic focus in this region
- *Threats*
 - The momentum might get lost or fizzle out
 - Turfism: personal ideas might be lost and/or result in animosity
 - Time commitments of members make it easy to lose them
 - The group may encounter polarizing ideas

Stakeholder Analysis:

- Stakeholders initially will be the group members and the groups we choose to use as our pilots
- Initially the members may not be very committed because they are not passionate about the pilot project
- The pilot groups should be committed as the Enlow Group is aiding their effort
- It is key that the Enlow Group effectively communicate that we are not competing with but intend to “hold up” the non-profits in the community
- We acknowledge up front that we don’t have the answers but we’re looking for systems to help people find the answers they’re looking for

SMART Statement: (Project definition)

By June 30, 2009, have in place a committed group of individuals who actively function in a unified effort to help foster closer, more productive links between overlapping civic groups in the Evansville tri-state region whose civic and entrepreneurial missions are similar.

Critical Thinking Assessment:

- Assumptions/aspects of the wheel we used/utilized

Project Name:

Keeping Green

Team Members:

Erika Myers-Bromwell, Rachel L. Rawlinson

Area of Focus:

- Lack of regional information about recycling

SWOT Key Findings:

- *Strengths*
 - Conserves our valuable natural resources
 - Recycling saves energy, saves clean air, clean water and landfill space
 - *Educational focus* – If children and young adults receive information about recycling they are more likely to recycle throughout their lives and encourage others to recycle as well. It is incredibly important to influence the youth on recycling as they are the future generation who will have to deal with what our generation and the ones before have left behind
 - *Universities* – Three higher education institutions in the immediate area that can be utilized as a resource. Open minded and “green-thinking” students and faculty that want to get involved. Educational opportunities available (i.e. Ivy Tech’s green building programs)
 - *Previous research and benchmarks* – The EPA research and recycling initiatives. State and local entities that provide a variety of statistics and data on current recycling activity. A plethora of recycling and environmental information available on the internet and through alternative media such as blogs and podcasts. Recent “green” movement and information on global climate change.
 - *Like minded organizations and non-profits* – Keep Evansville Beautiful; Vanderburgh Solid Waste District; Indiana Recycling Coalition; Department of Natural Resources
- *Weaknesses*
 - Lack of regional information on environmental issues
 - Lack of perceived time it takes to recycle
 - Not a money-making endeavor
 - Societal stigmas against individuals who advocate for recycling and environmental causes
 - Fear of global-warming causes inaction and may put many other issues on the “back-burner”

- *Opportunities*
 - *Surveys* – Surveys sent to local schools and businesses asking what people know about recycling, if and how often they utilize their local recycling facilities
 - *Community and national events* – Earth day is April 22nd; American Recycles Day is November 15th; Local and regional drop-off days
 - *Local media* – Send press releases to local media about project; contact local journalists about including recycling and environmental issues in their articles; advertise regional and national recycling events on event calendars
- *Threats*
 - *Landfills and garbage businesses* – Possible misperception that urging people to start their own recycling programs may take business away from profitable business; mobilization of customers for more recycling options might strain businesses
 - *Apathy* – Possible public perception that recycling does not save resources; demands of daily life limits the time people can put into taking recyclables to the drop-offs; disinterest of businesses who do not see recycling programs as profitable ventures
 - *Issue redundancy: Other groups doing the same thing* – perception from public of information overload about environmental issues such as recycling; local organizations competing for the same funds

Stakeholder Analysis:

- *Community members*
 - Need to be informed and motivated about recycling and the importance of protecting our environment
 - Can assist in increasing recycling programs in the tri-state
 - Their buy-in is needed to help spread the word
- *Non-Profits*
 - Have resources available that will be helpful for writing, producing and distributing newsletters
 - Their members may also have an interest in expanding their environmental involvement
- *Schools*
 - Are interested in education, science and progressive thought
 - Students will be key change-agents for recycling
- *Vanderburgh County Solid Waste District*
 - Is considered a resource for recycling information
 - will be a valuable partner and can serve as an endorsement for environmental concerns
 - manages drop-off locations – a key component for recycling programs

SMART Statement:

By July 2009, create and distribute a series of newsletters that raise awareness about recycling and recycling opportunities in Southern Indiana.

Project Name:

Our Youth: Health for Today, Wellness for Tomorrow

Team Members:

Gene Mattingly, Barbara Williams

Area of Focus:

- The youth of today are less healthy than in past generations.

SWOT Key Findings:

- *Strengths*
 - Resources – USI graduate students, experience and communication
- *Weaknesses*
 - Duplication of services
 - Financial resources
 - Time
- *Opportunities*
 - Influence changes in wellness behaviors
 - Combat increasing rate of obesity and overall declining health of nation's youth
 - Increase awareness/knowledge of health life styles
- *Threats*
 - Cooperation of schools and parents, acknowledgement of the need to address these issues

Stakeholder Analysis:

- +/- University of Southern Indiana – Faculty, graduate students and administration
- +/- Elementary Schools – School board, principals, teachers, students
- +/- Parents of participants
- +/- Health care facilities

SMART Statement:

By January 2009, develop and implement a health and wellness program for elementary school children by utilizing students at the University of Southern Indiana to start the pilot group.

Critical Thinking Assessment:

- Purpose of thinking
- Question at issue
- Assumptions
- Information
- Interpretation and inference
- Concepts
- Implications and consequences
- Points of view

Project Name:

Pike-Gibson Agricultural Tourism Project

Team Members:

Stephanie Gaskins-McGuire, Karen Thompson

Area of Focus:

- Azalea Trail Promotion Pike and Gibson Counties
 - Azalea Path and Arboretum Botanical Gardens are located in both Pike and Gibson counties
 - Promote highway trail of azaleas through Pike and Gibson counties, to encourage agricultural tourism throughout the counties and region
 - Apply for National Azalea City status for Petersburg, IN and Princeton, IN through the Azalea Society of America

SWOT Key Findings:

- *Strengths and Opportunities*
 - Established botanical gardens
 - Location is central between Pike and Gibson counties
 - Community pride
 - Good relationships with Pike and Gibson County chamber and tourism offices
- *Weaknesses and Threats*
 - Azalea Trail has the potential to be only a seasonal attraction
 - Community involvement in initial development of Azalea Trail
 - Continuation of trail maintenance long term
 - Cost of purchasing plants

Stakeholder Analysis:

- Park boards could be asset if we can get them on board
- Garden clubs could be helpful in all areas of our project
- Economic development could use the trail as a tool for attracting business
- Local garden retailers could benefit from the added awareness of community beautification
- Educational opportunities for high school horticulture classes and clubs

SMART Statement:

By April 2012, promote and establish Azalea Trail in Pike and Gibson counties. Also apply to the Azalea Society of America to designate Petersburg, IN and Princeton, IN as Azalea cities for the purpose of developing agricultural tourism within the region.

Critical Thinking Assessment:

- *Information* – Observed there was an opportunity to expand on an existing unique entity within Pike and Gibson Counties
- *Purpose* – Our goal is to establish and promote an Azalea Trail extending from the already established Arboretum Botanical Garden into Pike and Gibson Counties
- *Implications* – The trail will increase agricultural tourism as well as beautify and distinguish our areas as a tourism destination
- *Interpretation* – The community at large will be involved and view the project with a sense of ownership and pride

Project Name:

Safe Routes to School

Team Members:

Roxanne Heuring, Ruth Ann Sellers

Area of Focus:

- To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school
- To make biking and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age
- To facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic and fuel consumption

SWOT Key Findings:

- *Strengths and Opportunities*
 - Participation in a national organization “Safe Kids Vanderburgh Warrick Chapter”
 - Support of Chandler Town Council, Police Department, Evansville Metropolitan Planning Organization, Chandler Elementary School Administration, Parent Teachers Association, Local Civic Associations and Crossing Guards
 - Funding available through the Safe Routes to School Program, funded by Indiana Department of Transportation
 - Safety notice to give motorist a visual alert to warn them of school crossing ahead
 - Promoting school children to walk or bike to school advocating physical fitness and wellness
 - Building relationships with leaders in the community and organizations
- *Weaknesses and Threats*
 - Angry motorists forced to reduce speed
 - Counties competing for funding
 - INDOT’s lack of support for the project
 - Time constraint to submit grant application
 - Limited outreach to stakeholders
 - Moving current school crossing
 - Denial of previous proposed projects for crossing
 - Cost of additional school bus for in-town students

Stakeholder Analysis:

- Alerting motorists of school crossing with visual alert (yellow flashing lights), slowing down speed of vehicles and presence of school children
- To obtain funding to provide safety signs and lights
- Educating parents how the Safe Routes to School Programs offers their children opportunities to walk or bike to school
- Support of local law/police department to enforce proper vehicle speed limit in the area of the school crossing
- Partnering with civic and state organizations to educate the community on the Safe Route to School Programs
- Working with local government to build and repair sidewalks in the town of Chandler

SMART Statement:

By August 2009, obtain funding to provide safety signs and lights so motorists are aware of school children crossing Highway 62 in Chandler, Indiana.

Critical Thinking Assessment: (Learnings)

- Reaching out to the community
- Attended and spoke at the Town Council meeting
- Overcoming obstacles of governmental agencies
- Comprehensive nature of the SRTS activities – the “5 E’s”
- Connect with stakeholders to help understand possible implications and consequences
- \$740,000 Safe Route to School dollars awarded to Warrick, Pike and Perry counties

Project Name:

The Art of Environmental Solutions

Team Members:

Denise Astrike, Hilary Braysmith, July Litherland, Joe Wingo

Area of Focus:

- In Vanderburgh County we are among the worst 10% of US counties for toxic chemical released by factories, power plants and other industrial companies
- In Vanderburgh County we are among the top 10% of US counties for added cancer risks deriving from hazardous air pollutants
- Levels of fine particulate matter are increasing
- Energy consumption is rising and nearly all energy derives from fossil fuels
- Farmland and woodlands are dwindling
- Municipal waste generated per person is increasing but less than half (40%) of those with access to curbside recycling use it (10% below the national average)

SWOT Key Findings:

- **Strengths**
 - Access to intellectual capital at USI - Professors, students, volunteer USI
 - Possess diverse knowledge and skill-sets
 - Connections with government, schools, business, non-profits and community partners
- **Weakness**
 - New solution for urgent problem - uncharted water
 - Clearly articulating vision of the project to target audience, partners, and participants
- **Opportunities**
 - Timing – individuals are looking for ways to conserve and utilize resources efficiently “Going Green”
 - Empower citizens to choose and implement change
 - Project does not impose solution
 - Growing civic engagement among young adults
 - Government and business seeking “Green” solutions to problems
 - Grants promoting same result
 - Changes occurring in government policy
 - Changes occurring in school curricula
 - Bringing groups of diverse value systems together
 - Provide a community empowerment model

- *Threats*
 - Inability to clearly articulate vision to stakeholders
 - Lack of funding
 - Lack of regional vision – county lines must blur/blend to achieve regional outcome
 - Latest fad/“We haven’t done it that way before”
 - Civic apathy

Stakeholder Analysis:

- Project implementation at the “grass roots” level
 - Neighborhood associations
 - Schools
 - Churches
 - Civic organizations
 - Other non-profits
- Collaboration with city and county governments to meet environmental goals and objectives
- Collaboration with business sector, especially energy

SMART Statement:

By June 2009, we will complete and submit grant applications to fund projects that empower citizens to solve environmental problems at the neighborhood level by promoting environmental awareness and individual accountability.

We will design the project as a pilot in Vanderburgh (inner city) and then in Spencer (rural) counties.

Critical Thinking Assessment:

- Each team member has natural critical thinking strengths. The wheel reminds us to consider the components of critical thinking that do not come naturally to us
- The team needed time outside the Connect with Southern Indiana sessions to focus on presentation planning

Project Name:

Youth Entrepreneurship

Team Members:

Mike Cummings, Susanne Wilson

Area of Focus:

- *Current position:* There are few owned businesses and/or programs to develop young entrepreneurs (Junior Achievement)
- Key facts:
 - Small percentage of businesses owned by young people
 - In order for our regional economy to remain competitive, we must cultivate entrepreneurs
 - A vast majority of jobs are created by small to medium sized businesses
- Utilize boot camps “Building Entrepreneurship through Young Adults” conducted by Vicki Wiederkehr (supported by Wired and SINE)
- Recruit Young Entrepreneurs to attend training utilizing volunteers (tax consultants, mentors, marketing experts, etc.)

SWOT Key Findings:

- *Strength*
 - Ability to bridge education and economic development
 - Funding readily available
 - The program offers applied learning
 - We have access to our target audience
- *Weakness*
 - The program needs time to be developed. Lack of personnel, all volunteer
- *Opportunities*
 - Lack of similar offerings
 - Dovetails with existing programs
 - WIRED
 - LEDOs, chambers, schools, etc. are looking for entrepreneurship programs in middle and high school

- *Threats*
 - Stakeholders support
 - Funding opportunities could change
 - Supporting projects could fall apart

Stakeholder Analysis:

- Economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, and civic governments will see the project as a means to achieve their goals
- We must address parents' concerns about liabilities and responsibilities

Critical Thinking Assessment:

- Implications and consequences – SWOT, SA
- Points of view – SWOT, SA
- Purpose – used throughout as a grounding agent
- Question at issue – Stakeholders analysis
- Information – used at each phase to inform
- Interpretation and inference
- The critical ingredient is getting off your butt and doing something. It's as simple as that. A lot of people have ideas, but there are few who decide to do something about them now. Not tomorrow. Not next week. But today. The true entrepreneur is a doer, not a dreamer – Nolan Bushnell, founder of Atari and Chuck E. Cheese's

Project Name:

Women of the Rule

Team Members:

Darla S. Blazey, Barbara C. Schmitz, OSB

Area of Focus:

Exploring Women's Philanthropy and Giving Circles

SWOT Key Findings:

- *Strengths* – Donors pool their money and decide where the money goes. Within the circle donors educate themselves about community and philanthropic issues. Sister's mission is unique.
- *Weakness* – Sense of elitism due to level of giving. Lack of information to keep members involved. Competition with community foundations.
- *Opportunities* – Opportunity to give back to society in a new way. Wide scope and diversity of members of giving circle – regional approach. Education of participants both those giving and receiving.
- *Threats* – Keeping members of the group motivated and involved. The economy.

Stakeholders:

- Initial members of core group
- Women of the Rule regional and national involvement
- Sisters of St. Benedict
- Executive advisory boards of the sisters
- Ferdinand, local and regional communities
- Dubois County Community Foundation
- Guidance from Indiana School of Philanthropy

SMART Statement:

- By 2010, create a regional women's giving circle of 1,000 women who will contribute \$1,000 each to encourage women's philanthropy for the Sisters of St. Benedict to help them improve their ability to help others through their many ministries and to spread the richness of Benedictine Spirituality to women and to the world.

Critical Thinking Assessment:

- Critical thinking was important in defining the clear purpose of this project
- Critical thinking was essential in gathering facts of both the research and the history of giving circles
- It was important to get stakeholders on board for the success of this initiative
- The core group of women moving this initiative forward are invaluable and this project would not be possible without their support