

## Who Wants to be an Entrepreneur?

### Project Evaluation

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### Project outline

Who Wants to be an Entrepreneur was developed by Solomons Europe and Magic Club in early 2019 as a way to support the reach Solomons Europe (SE) Social Responsibility concept of Pay It Forward with young people.

The project seeks to support the aspiration and ability of young people to become entrepreneurial in their thinking and behaviour, and support them to understand the possibilities for their future. In turn, it is hoped that these young entrepreneurs will eventually 'Pay It Forward' for future generations.

Many young people have limited self-belief and have not had appropriate opportunity to discover their talents. The fundamentals of this programme are to provide a supported framework which builds children's belief and understanding of their unique innate abilities, providing positive role models and achievable yet appropriately challenging tasks.

### Initial Plan

- A series of 8 sessions, delivered with the Magic Club, which will support young people to effectively utilise seed funding to generate income for the Magic Club
- An investment of seed funding from Solomons Europe to enable a small group of 8 to 10 young people (age 8-14) to work together to meet a fundraising goal (£500)
- The fundraising raised is retained by the Magic Club to enable the young people to see their impact for their own community organisation
- The young people determine their own target
- A celebration event to complete the project

### Intended Outcomes

- Increase in social skills (including communication, team working, sharing space) which increase a sense of empathy with others, and help young people to express their individual needs
- Young people will be required to make decisions under (appropriate) pressure and problem solve, supporting the development of independence and show trust and respect from the fund holder -trusting a young person to spend money wisely demonstrates belief in their ability.
- The concept of the 'Power of Yet' (Carol Dweck) is an important outcome for the Pay It Forward programme. The programme aims to develop young people's resilience; their capacity to fail yet still move on. This is a vital skill for the entrepreneur, and any project will

- have a range of indicators of success, broader than amount of money fundraised
- Ultimately, success of the programme will be measured by observed behavior changes – including self-observed by the children, and by youth workers and family members.

### Monitoring Data

Number of development Sessions	9
Total number of young people	11
Average number of young people each session	7
Number of businesses developed	3
YP Fundraising income	£144.59
Staffing Hours	56

### Budget

	YP Business Budget	Organisational Costs
<b>Budget</b>	500.00	500.00
<b>Item Costs</b>	136.98	-
<b>Transport Costs</b>	-	-
<b>Celebration</b>	-	150.00*
<b>Evaluation / Resource Pack / Video</b>	-	152.32
<b>Remaining</b>	<b>363.02</b>	<b>197.68</b>

### Project Delivery

We delivered 9 sessions with our WWTBE cohort focusing on the following activities:

- What is an entrepreneur?
- Fundraising Goals
- Business Ideas
- Marketing
- Finance
- Business Planning
- Evaluation & Learning

We had originally timetabled 8 weeks to complete the programme, however, we knew we would need to be flexible and we ended up delivering the full programme over 5 months, with a break for Christmas and other school holidays.

We had a cohort of 11 young people who chose to attend the project, with a regular group of seven. Sessions were held outside of our normal delivery times, to eliminate distractions, included snacks (a must have!) and were supported by two members of staff.

Initially we had thought the young people would create and develop one business throughout the project, but they created three pop up's:

- A tuck shop (over one week on Club nights)
- A cake sale (at the local Co-op Store)
- A coffee morning (held at the Club with invites to parents/carers and the wider community)

It was really important that we went at a speed comfortable to the young people involved and that we collectively built on their ideas instead of coercing them into a pre-determined outcome. This way of working allowed our young people to take ownership of their businesses and learn how to take a project from concept to completion (ie washing up!).

We asked participants to create 'how to guides' at the end of each business, to help them reflect on their experience and consolidate their learning.

The project was a great success, our members gave us positive feedback at the end of every session and had some real learning moments.

There was an initial concern that mixing both our Junior and Senior members in one group, may result in the junior members struggling to keep up or the senior members eager to move on at pace. However, this concern was unwarranted, our senior members supported the junior members with tasks, which supported their own learning and soft skills as part of the process.

In total the young people raised £144.59 which they have allocated towards an Alexa, Board games and new arts and crafts items.

## Outcomes

- Increase in social skills; young people demonstrated increased communication and listening skills over the course of the project, they were able to better articulate their own ideas, make compromise and work as a team identifying their own skills and leadership roles
- Increased financial skills; young people developed their budgeting skills, learned about cost, mark ups and profit, gained an understanding of the 'value vs cost' of items
- Increase in other life skills; shopping on a budget, research, letter writing and creating social media content
- Participants took ownership over their businesses, supported each other to overcome challenges, and asked for help when it was required.
- Increased employment skills; experience of cash handling, customer service, merchandising, stock takes, sales records, marketing, working to budgets and leadership both individually and as a team

## Feedback

We had positive feedback from young people throughout the programme;

- "It was fun and helped me build up my teamwork and confidence"
- "I got better at customer service"
- "We learned how to work better as a team"
- "I wrote a letter to a business"
- "I like when we made money"

The most encouraging feedback was that all young people involved in the project would like to support the young people when we run it again.

## Challenges

A delayed start due to staffing constraints, meant we had a few breaks in project delivery due to school holidays, extending the project timescales and resulting in a few recaps on learning and plans.

Younger members were not always able to come to sessions, as they were not allowed to walk to the Club on their own and parents were not able to take them.

Our CEO took more of a direct role in delivery than anticipated due to staffing constraints.

Covid-19 changed our celebration plans. A celebration evening has now been rescheduled to September 2020, this will take place on a smaller scale with young people only, however we will share their journey and successes on social media and in local press.

## Recommendations

We are planning to run this programme each year, with peer-support roles for participants from the previous year. We will make some changes to the project to further increase the outcomes for young people:

- We will start with a lower budget, £500 was too much for our young people to grasp. We will allocate a £200 budget for future projects which may present an opportunity to discuss investing profits for further growth
- Schedule go-see's to local businesses with dynamic entrepreneurs with a story to inspire
- Similarly we will seek further involvement from business, who we will ask to attend sessions to answer questions and support with real life scenarios, these will need to be carefully managed so the content is not too difficult and thus demotivated the young people involved
- We will include feedback from customers during the business development and delivery so young people have the opportunity (or not) to inform changes and introduce them to the feedback loop
- Although a degree of flexibility will still be required in future projects, we will assign outcomes for individual sessions, as well as project outcomes, so we can better plan for learning and evaluate success
- We will create WWTBE Class of 202X T-shirts for each cohort (we all love a Tshirt here)
- A new staff project lead with appropriate expertise will be found for the project delivery and evaluation, to reduce CEO involvement