

A3a: Individual Component

Research Topic: Integration into a new community, observation of a community orientation.

Observation Summary

Upon examination of the field notes taken during the observation study, we can break down the initial groups into 3 groups of new members to the community, those with a relationship with members of the community already, those that are integrating with their own sub-group already established, and the isolated individuals. Of the three groups, it should be noted that there is generally mostly isolated individuals, followed by those with a sub-group, and finally there are very few who have a prior relationship with the community. Initial observations show that the individual members shows little desire to engage in social interaction, but will respond to external engagement. The other two groups show adequate levels of social interaction, however only among their pre-built groups. To encourage integration, every table has been assigned an established member of the community, all of whom attempt constant interaction with their table members.

The general structure of the orientation seems to be as follows: 4 activities all tables, with breaks in between to encourage inter-table interaction. A meal break, followed by another round of activities in the same structure as before.

Initial activities focus on introduction of new members, with a round of introductions following cues and examples by established members. This did not seem to encourage social interaction, but allowed members to learn names. The second activity was a form of trivia, with the tables set up as competing groups. The third activity was a game of themed charades, with the tables competing once again as a team. The fourth activity was a scavenger hunt around the campus. This activity seems to also have the purpose of allowing food preparations as well as encouraging new members to learn both the campus layout for first years, and inter-group interaction and communication.

By the designated meal break, every table seems to be comfortable enough that there are plenty of conversations. Following the break, There were only 2 more activities. Once again these activities seem to be focused on intergroup cooperation. Members at each table are very comfortable with engaging with interacting with each other.

By the end of the orientation, all new members appear to have integrated among their table, with the occasional interaction between tables. Integration was successful, and the social interactions between members, both new and old, is much higher than the start of the orientation. With promise of future activities, the orientation is concluded. The general trend of activities seems to favor focusing on each table as a smaller group and encouraging interaction and integration with each other through cooperation. By including an established member at each table, the new members have a interaction point with the community and it helps establish a feeling of belonging.

Background Research

From background research, integration into a new community there are important barriers that must be overcome. For both the community and the potential new member, both sides must possess a willing attitude to allow for integration. Understanding of a member's skill and knowledge level is also a must, and is ideally the new member should be acknowledged by the community. Another barrier is availability, as the community must have space available, and the potential member be available in order for any integration to occur. Ideally to allow integration, the feeling of contribution to the community is an efficient method to encourage integration of new members to the community. By participating in activities and observing established members, new members can learn unspoken rules of the community and absorb the communal culture. Patience is also another requirement for proper integration, as the rate of integration will differ from person to person, it is important to both allow for opportunity to integrate, as well as encourage participation. The greatest requirement for integration is for both parties to have the correct attitude towards integration.

Conclusions and Insights

The observed orientation does indeed meet the requirement of both parties having the correct attitude, as the hosting community clearly displays a desire to welcome new members, and the new members themselves have attended the orientation and thus show the desire to integrate. The general focus of the orientation seems to be the subdivision of new members into smaller groups, and attaching facets of the community into each subgroup to interact with. The activities are focused on integration through cooperation with the community and competition to motivate new members to display their skills and knowledge. By allowing multiple opportunities for each subgroup to interact with each other, and most importantly to interact with the community member they have been assigned, contributions feel like a communal benefit and the integration process becomes much smoother, both with other new and established members. The biggest issue with the observed methods appears to be that outside of each subgroup, communication and interactions still remain somewhat weak. A possible solution would be to allow for the reformation of groups or the shuffling of members to encourage new social connections to be made. Furthermore, total integration does not appear to have been successful, as the only facet of integration into the community was through a single community member, leaving executives and other members of the established community lacking of a strong connection to the new members. While the orientation successfully allowed for introduction and integration of new members to the community, the level of integration seems to be fairly weak for many of the new members, as the focus of all the activities were too narrow to allow for a thorough integration. This may leave some members feeling alienated and hesitant to continue their integration through future participation with the community.

Citation: Integrating into a new community. (Jun 6 2017) Retrieved from: <https://www.currencyuk.co.uk/blog/fx-news/expat-resources/integrating-into-a-new-community/>

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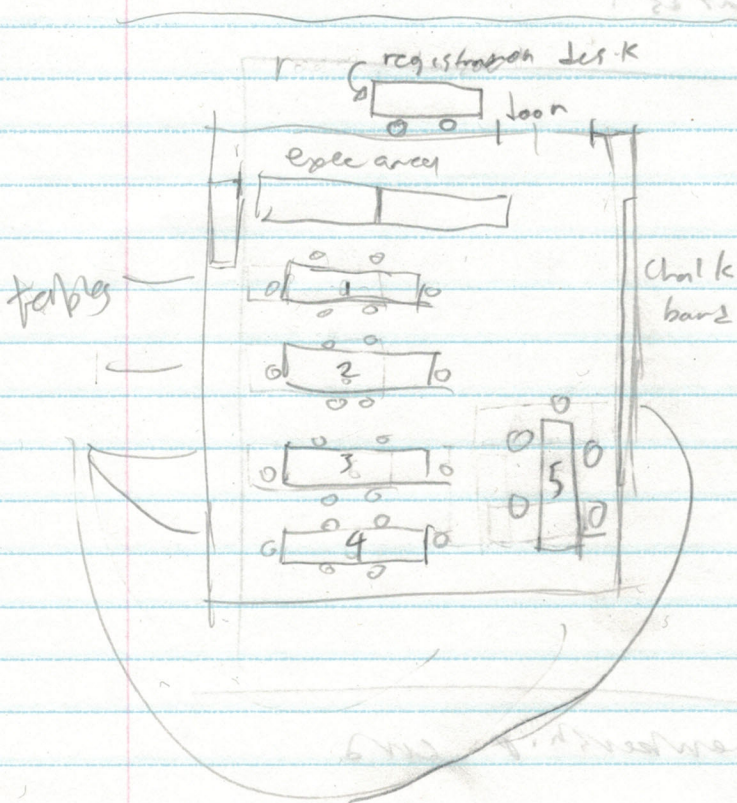
Field notes

Orientation observation

1/28/2019

- 3:30 arrival. Orientation Setting up. Some new members arrived as well. Registration desk is pretty friendly. Engages in conversation where possible. Some conversations, most likely between friends, based on arrival time. no pre-reg'd members here of own volition, opens at 4:00

- 4:13 Orientation started. Seated @ tables. 5-6 per 5 tables. Table leader is from community. mostly quiet. people hear execs chatting with execs.



every one else either chatting with friends from elsewhere, or with each other. Some people on phones or playing a game. Service, 3DS or Switch really.

- Welcome speech by execs. going to have every one introduce themselves. format: name, year, program, favorite anime series.

some people giving funny answers, mostly from established community members. seems to be going well for now.

-4:30 intros complete. 15 min break.

Table leader trying conversations with ppl @ table. Room is a little noisier, introduction seems to work a little. Still have some people on phones or such, maybe 1/2 people still isolated, not really much control between tables.

-4:45 First activity, group trivia (groupby?) teams from table competing, promise of reward to winning team, extra stamps. Stamp card for end of semester remarks?



Stamp / membership card

Way to encourage active participation perhaps? Not a bad idea. Tables seem to be enjoying trivia (sitting @ table 3) applause from everyone. Tables looking much better. Team work seems to help.

5:15 activity over. Table 4 won. 15 min break before next activity. Game leads of communication, mostly inter-table only. Table leaders being a little more passive. No game systems out, still some phones, but mostly to show off things. Current table seems to be running quite nicely; interaction seems to be working out good.

5:30 next activity, scavenger hunt go out on campus and find checkpoints and some next checkpoint location. Groups by table again.

First checkpoint in student center, Exec waiting at table in caf. Table 1 is here too. Different checkpoints for all tables? Challenge is for 20 jumping jacks. Final challenge? Exec says that this event should take 45 mins ideally, ground floor of buildings only.

Second checkpoint in humanities wing, inside class room. 10 pushups, met with Group 4 as we left. Looks like they got lost. Mostly 1st years starting this semester. Good exercise in campus layout?

Third checkpoint at Science wing, another class room. Dance for 5 mins. Quite embarrassing. No other groups arrived with us. Only 1 more checkpoint (according to exec at this checkpoint)

- fourth checkpoint in AA building.
answer a few questions to pass,
mostly basic math and some trivia,
apparently we finished a bit soon,
going back to orientation room.

- (6:14) Back to orientation room,

- First group back. Group seems quite
close after the scavenger hunt. Every-
one still bringing in food. Nice use of
activity, looks like it's just pizza
and some drinks, looks like event
is supposed to end at 6:30. All
leaders will bring back groups regardless.
reward for finishing is priority to get
food.

- 6:30 near break. All tables have
some conversations. Not too much
cross talk between tables however. No
still some places here and there,
Occasional person not engaged, but
otherwise much better. Everyone seems
comfortable within their tables.
Cheese or pepperoni pizza only 2 slices per,

- some sort of candy trade between
our table and table 2. Similar
for other tables. Interactions are
mostly reserved, 2 or 3 people
really trying to cross table converse.

7:00 Next activity is another trivia game, "name that song" or where it comes from. projector is being used. Grouped again by table. Maybe consider jumble shuffle? Activity seems decently well received much debate within tables.

7:25 Activity ended. 10 min break. mostly lingering conversations. At least 10 min tables, proper connection, made. Overheard some trading of fb details.

7:35 Last activity, Skit acting, within table, act out given scene, then rated by execs. 10 min prep time, once per table only.

- Table 1 had to act out "a romantic confession gone wrong". Some laughs from other tables.
- Table 2 acted "a road trip to another world". Parodied running straight forward
- Table 3 acted out "a fight scene". Imitated a fight between ninjas. Was not well planned.
- Table 4 did "a family of animals at dinner". Was quite funny, laughs from other tables.
- Table 5 did "the start of a journey" straight forward, very passionate. *Helroy*

- Concluded with table 1 winning.
mostly still within table conversations.
Integration with community seems
fairly complete,

- 8:00 Orientation end. 2 hours
over what I expected. Expecting
closing speech. Announces a club outing
next month. Everyone seems eager to leave.
Generally, everyone had a good time
emphasizes on teamwork based activities
helped. I think.

End of observation.