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Report for Team dynamics and tools

USC is participating in a movement challenge with other universities in the region. The office of Students Affairs is looking for innovative ideas on how to encourage students to participate in the challenge. Your team has been hired as a consultant to assist the office of Students Affairs.

- Use at least two of the methods discussed in this session to generate novel ideas
- Identify top 3 ideas using at least two decision making techniques (discussed earlier in the course).
- Evaluate the creativity of your team
- Prepare a report for this activity and submit it using this link. .

I. Two Creative Tools We Implemented

A. Random Word Generation

As a start, each member of our team generated one idea individually using the random word generation method, described below. Each person chooses a random word to conduct the activity. Here are some of the selection methods:

- Random generator and books: Ginny uses a random number generator that first returns 4 from 1 to 7, and then returns 319 from 1 to 734. She selects a random word by dropping a pin on page 319 of the fourth book of the Harry Potter series, *The Goblet Of Fire*. Matt has also taken a word out from his book through a similar method, and Eddie has gone straight to a random word generator website that returned the word “Voltmeter.”
- Siri is doing online shopping when she starts thinking about the challenge, so she puts down the first word she sees in the fashion promotion.
- Shaina and Yman put the first words they read while the decision to use the random word method was made. For Shaina, it is “social media” because she was scanning Facebook and Instagram and Yman puts down “tofu” while making dinner.

Once the random word is selected, each person tries to associate that word with the central idea of “participating in fitness challenge”. These random words created unusual connections back to the central idea and resulted in some good ideas. For example, Ginny’s random word “butterbeer” lead to “alcohol” and then lead to “parties,” and ultimately derived the idea “holding a party at the start or the end of this challenge with burgers and alcohol.” Each team member logs down the random word, how the random word is generated, and the idea(s) derived

from this word, onto a table in a shared Excel sheet. This way we have at least six different ideas in total. In the end, we generated eight ideas, and coincidentally, they all fit into the five genres we come up with when exercising “brainwriting.”

- Free T-shirts for participants: this idea is disregarded in later phases of decision making
- App: create an app in which people can post and share workouts accessible by students at same school or other participating school, to track progress and compare to how friends at other schools are doing.
- Incentives: provide voltmeters to all the winners of the competition
- Group activities:
 - Have a cookout at the end of the event featuring different meals from each participant.
 - Competition using a treadmill to see how much electricity could be generated by someone (or a team) running; measuring the output on the voltmeter
- Hashtag: Start a social media hashtag to promote different activities -- this idea is also disregarded in later phases

B. Brainwriting

We selected brainwriting as one of our idea generation methods because it fit the dispersed nature of this team. By conducting our brainwriting experiment through google docs we were still able to build off each other’s ideas despite not being around each other. Additionally, brainwriting’s requirement to generate three ideas each for the sake of the activity provided the team with a good amount of diverse ideas, which helped since a lot of our member’s first and second ideas were similar. Our procedure was as follows:

- i. Set up a simple excel sheet the entire team could access
- ii. Each person was able to add their own three ideas over a two day time gap. This allowed people who got their first to add their ideas as normal, and any others to see what others had put and use the ideas to build upon.
- iii. Once all ideas were in we read through all suggestions as a group in a meeting.
- iv. Separated the ideas suggested into categories and set up some simple keywords to indicate the categories and then we could proceed to evaluate which ideas were our best.

This method generated three ideas per member for a total of eighteen ideas as a team. This left a lot to be evaluated so we moved into the next phase, identification.

II. Identifying Top Three Ideas

A. Overview of Our Ideas

As mentioned in the section above, we used two creativity tools to generate our ideas: brainwriting and random word association. Through brainwriting we generated a total of eighteen ideas. Some of these ideas ranged from using apps to track progress and compare with students at other schools, utilizing social media to create a large campaign, offering incentives for participants who reach a certain level or goal through the Movement Challenge, and hosting group activities that get entire schools involved in the challenge. For the random word association, we each came up with at least one idea. While some of these ideas were similar to the brainwriting ideas, our group was still able to create some unique ideas.

1. Our Top 3 Ideas

After using the creativity tools to gather our ideas, we had to narrow them down to select our top three choices. First, we grouped similar ideas into bigger categories to get a smaller subset to choose from. We were able to focus our ideas into five main categories: 1) utilizing an app to track progress, post workouts, and share and compare workouts across schools, 2) creating a social media hashtag for people to use when they post their workouts, 3) offering prizes and incentives like scholarships, concert tickets, or electronics for students who perform in the top percent of the challenge, 4) creating group activities like hikes, marathons, rock climbing, and obstacle courses for students to gather together to be fit, and 5) creating a t-shirt at each school to hand out to all students to encourage everyone to be active and participate in the movement. After we narrowed all of our ideas into these five major ideas, we voted for our top three ideas. Ultimately, our decision-making methods concluded with the fitness app, incentives for challenge winners, and the group activities as our top three ideas.

B. Consensus

Once we generated ideas, narrowing them down was a collaborative process that required gaining a consensus with the team. To do that successfully,

we needed to have a clear understanding of each other's thoughts, so we went through each idea together and discussed them. We were able to exchange what we liked and didn't like about each one. If it wasn't clear the author of the idea would elaborate on it.

From the random word exercise, we used consensus to pick the top 3 ideas to compare against ideas selected from brainwriting. We chose: 1) the incentive idea because we felt strongly that this would be effective in attracting students, 2) the app idea because it stood out as an interactive tool to track different fitness activities, and 3) group activities to encourage widespread participation. Although the other ideas were interesting, we agreed they would be a little harder to execute and may not reach as many people.

Similar to the random word process, for brainwriting we went through each of the ideas together. This time we started to see some overlap with ideas that we had discussed in the random word exercise and between members. Because of the similar and repeating ideas, we agreed the ones that were the most popular would be grouped and part of our top ideas, for example there were 4 ideas referencing an app for fitness activities and there were 4 ideas referencing giveaways to incentivize the event. We used consensus to identify which ideas were unique enough to warrant their own category and those that could be grouped into another idea for being similar. This led to our top 5 ideas that we would eventually narrow down even more.

C. Voting

After using consensus to narrow our ideas into categories, we utilized voting to determine which ideas were best. We listed all of our top ideas and words in an excel sheet. After each category was discussed one last time, we listed the five top ideas in a chart for each member rank them 1-5, with 1 being the highest rank and 5 being the worst. The voting itself was done without discussion so we could all rank the ideas by preference and not be swayed by a teammate's opinion. After voting, we observed the objects with the lowest point values, meaning they had been ranked higher, and those became our final selections.

III. Evaluating our Creativity

A. Evaluation Method

Our team used the three matrices for evaluation, namely Fluency, Flexibility and Originality. Fluency is calculated by the total number of ideas

generated by each team member in both the brain writing and random word generation technique, regardless of ideas that overlapped between members. Flexibility is calculated by counting the number of unique ideas generated by each team member. Originality is counted the number of unique ideas generated by the whole team in total, once each idea was separated into our decided categories.

B. Explanation

After the two-day period in which each team member performed their brainwriting and random word idea generation activities, we reconvene in a group call. During this meeting, our ideas were organized and filtered into categories. We were then able to go back over the original ideas and calculate the below metrics based on each idea. Using excel we could all concurrently see each idea and as a whole analyze and determine the team's originality.

| Evaluation of Creativity | Siri | Ginny | Matt | Eddie | Shaina | Yman | Total |
|--------------------------|------|-------|------|-------|--------|------|-------|
| Fluency | 4 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 24 |
| Flexibility | 4 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 17 |
| Originality (team) | | | | | | | 5 |

The originality of the team for these decision-making techniques was 5. That's to say, as a team we generated five unique categories of ideas that could help the fitness challenge.