

Dream it. Do it.

Best Practices for Engaging Youth in the DiDi Workshop

Different Icebreakers

- 1. Linking:** Circle the group. The presenter begins by stating something that they like - "I like chips." The next person in the circle repeats this statement, then adds something they like as well - "I like chips...and I like butterfiles." This continues around the circle, each person repeating the like of the person before them - "I like butterflies...and I like football." and so on. Eventually everyone is connected to someone, demonstrating the power of networking and the idea that anyone could have something in common with you.
- 2. Bead exercise:** Hand out string and beads and ask students to use each bead to represent a passion. Go around the room sharing (all or one or two depending on size). This is a good way to collect passions and works well for youth 12-15 or so.
- 3. Guess the Leader:** Have one person leave the room and choose one person in the room to make a gesture, dance or movement which everyone else then copies. When the outside person returns they have to guess the leader. Do this several times. This demonstrates the power youth have to create change and shows that if there is a leader there will be followers.
- 4. Video:** Use a Youth Venture video as an icebreaker. Watch the video, then create a set of questions to enforce the ideas that you will cover in the Dream it, Do it.
- 5. Involvement:** When doing introductions ask youth about what they are doing in the community, places they volunteer for, clubs they belong to, most of the time they are already engaged in some way.
- 6. For more ice-breakers please visit:**
 - <http://www.lso.umich.edu/lresources/icebreakers.pdf>
 - <http://wilderdom.com/games/>
 - <http://www.freechild.org/gamesguide.htm>

DIDI – Best Practices

- Using the Youth Venture Global Video for more sophisticated youth, and the Youthpreneurs Video with urban youth. It has been observed that urban youth don't connect to the Global Video.
- When discussing social entrepreneurs, give a famous example such as Florence Nightingale so youth connect the idea to a person and an image already in their minds.
- Place activities right after a large section of talking. Make sure to include a lot of movement and interaction in your presentation, as you can lose their interest if you talk too much.
- Bring little toys for youth to fiddle with such as candy or play doh, little squishy balls etc. Just make sure this isn't too distracting.
- When discussing stereotypes ask the youth to stereotype you! Its fun and gets them talking.
- For passions section of DIDI, have the youth write down 3-4 passions on a big piece of paper and tape it to their back. Then have everyone walk around in silence checking out other people's passions. Gets people moving and shows that others have similar interests. Youth can then be grouped according to interest for the rest of the DIDI.
- Incorporate breaks into longer DIDIs
- Bring surprise prizes of money or candy for those people that were really interactive. This rewards them at the end and helps condition the others to be more proactive/interactive in the future.

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Best Practices continued...

Follow up

- Send tools such as the action plan and pens with a personal, handwritten letter. Mail directly to Venturers to get them excited.
- Get phone numbers and give Venturers a call. Tell them about some update with Youth Venture when we are checking up on them, for instance let them know about the global tour.
- Passing out Youth Venture postcards to collect potential Venturer information, rather than a standard sign up sheet. Then send them out, with a note to remind them about Youth Venture. You could also use this (or a notecard) to have youth record one specific Action step that they are going to take toward a Venture or using a passion, becoming involved etc.
- Having business mentoring partnerships. In New York for example, right after their Selection Panels several teams worked with Ernst and Young employees during an Ernst and Young event and went through their suggestions and conditions from Selection Panel. The teams were partnered up with 2-3 staff and got to practice marketing and troubleshooting their Venture.
- The New York Team is also tossing around some follow up ideas such as taking pictures of the teams “created” during the DIDI and having the partner or school hang the pictures somewhere. We would have to make sure that these pictures weren’t used for marketing in any way. They are also trying to think of good incentives for contests wherein, for instance, the 10 people who get a profile on genv.net before the first follow-up meeting (usually 1-2 weeks later) get a prize.
- Creating a directory of Venture Teams written by Venturers including 3 paragraphs- a Venture Team description, their vision, and their inspiration and a picture. Great for recruiting, networking, and making people feel like part of the movement.
- Giving material out to partners- for instance one of MN partners has a series of bus trips and camps and they have included Youth Venture materials in all of their information for these events.
- Try to plan a time where youth can reach you for follow up shortly after meeting with you as a group. For instance, right before Tu Voz deadlines, the California team did a DIDI and then met with the youth at lunch about 30 minutes later to check in with those that are interested and help them fill out their Action Plan. They also came back 2 days later and again the next day. And they got 2 teams!

Recruitment

The California Team tried emailing teachers directly about Youth Venture by entering the school databases which then link to teachers and their personal information. It was the last week of classes so no DIDs resulted, but about half of the teachers responded and said they were interested for next year.

Creating “champions” in the school systems and partner organizations. New Hampshire is able to do this through United Way and the school system, but in MN we have also taken a few people who “really get it” and work in say, 4 alternative schools, to recruit people to YV that they think will be interested. Then we meet with everyone at once for a DIDI.