



Agents of Change Report

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Agents of Change Report



Executive Summary

Agents of Change has been a pilot educational program designed to provide participants with tools and techniques for thinking and problem solving. In two years, with limited resources, Agents of Change, has worked with 38 students, trained 34 educators, and worked with 5 camp counselors. The program aims to provide participants with the tools and techniques to be better problem-solvers, have thought-provoking dialogue, increase their capacity for in-depth synthesis and critical thinking.

After having considerable success, the program's biggest challenges are going to be:

- finding a way to scale, while maintaining its current quality
- making the program year round, versus one off summer workshops
- training more facilitators who can implement the program
- improving participant recruitment
- securing funding for impact evaluation or continuous evaluation.

Introduction

This report seeks to give an overview of the Agents of Change experience of 2013. This year we embarked on two different camps, one titled a "Train the Trainers" camp and the other a youth camp. Each experience was unique and equally rewarding. The following report will provide a overview of the objectives of both camps, along with recognized areas for improvement. It will also outline our projections and suggestions for growth over the next year and beyond.

Focus of Agents of Change

Agents of Change is an educational program designed to provide participants with tools and techniques for thinking and problem solving. We provide participants with as much information as possible so they feel empowered to share or teach the tools and techniques taught in the program. The program is designed to create of community of problem solvers and thinkers.

Program Outcomes

Year	Students Impacted	Tutors Trained	Camp Counselors Trained
1	18	2	0
2	20	33	3

Program Outcomes for the Youth Program

The objective of the Agents of Change youth program is to provide participants with the tools and techniques to be better problem-solvers, have thought-provoking dialogue, increase their capacity for in-depth synthesis and critical thinking. At the end of the program participants should:

- Understand that they are part of a community and as such have an effect on the success of the community
- Approach civic problems from a holistic view
- Be able to analyze situations in a framework that is empowering and leads to increased personal responsibility.
- Have experienced increased levels of self-awareness and self-development
- Participants should be inspired to become Leaders, Entrepreneurs and ChangeMakers within their community.
- Have been introduced to diverse topics like mental models, confirmation bias, cause and effect, techniques for empathizing with friends, family and other members of their communities.
- Provide a space that encourages peer-to-peer exchanges, access to adult allies and relevant knowledge, information and opportunities.

Program Outcomes for the Educators Program

The objective of the Agents of Change facilitator program is to provide Educators and Teachers with tools and techniques that help their students learn how to be better problem-solvers, have thought-provoking dialogue, and an increased capacity for in-depth synthesis and critical thinking.

A secondary objective of the program is to provide Educators and Teachers with knowledge, skills and tools to increase their own capacity for problem-solving, thought-provoking dialogue,

in-depth synthesis and critical thinking. Teachers, Educators and Facilitators who use these tools in their classroom, workshops, or training, find many benefits. Some of them include:

- increased participant engagement that fosters a learner-centered environment
- enhanced educational environments that are cooperative, interdisciplinary, and relevant
- easier facilitation and integration of rigorous thinking in instruction, which is key to achieving proficiency
- provides structure for social and emotional development, leading to a decrease in disciplinary problems
- provides a common language and a set of tools that facilitate collaborative problem-solving
- helps to determine high-leverage actions and solutions to problems

Areas for improvement

- More targeted marketing to ensure increased diversity of participants
- Earlier start to marketing
- Increased social media presence throughout the year to keep the wider public aware of AOC and build interest
- Greater clarity on teaching outcomes for facilitators to ensure that objectives are met
- Need to improve on post- camp communication with participants in an attempt to build a learning/sharing community and leverage participants for use in future camps/workshops
- Need to start researching local case studies/ examples for use within teaching curriculum
- Need to develop a mechanism for determining the short, medium and long term impact of the program.

Conclusions

AOC has had its second iteration and touched the lives of 70 persons. From the 2012 camp we have had 2 successful mentoring situations. Additionally 3 boys from 2012 camp chose to give up 2 weeks of their vacation to participate in the “Train the Trainers” Camp and serve as “Camp Counsellors” for the 2013 student camp.

In preparation for 2013, Chevonne Agana, Keita Demming and Dennise Demming attended the 1-week Systems Thinking workshop hosted by the Waters Foundation in St. Louis, Missouri.

While the feedback from participants indicate that AOC has been a game changer for them, we have not been able to identify the specific ways in which they have become game changers.

Recommendations

1. Scale up this camp to 4 per year as follows:
(2 youth camps in August targeted at 13-15 year olds),
(1 Train the Trainers aimed at Educators, July)
(1 youth camp aimed at 16-19 years to be held during the Easter break)
2. Top off the group size at 20 persons.
3. Continue the 6-day format.
4. Expand the facilitation team to 9.
5. Partner with the Water’s Foundation to stage a “Train the Trainers” in Trinidad and therefore be able to target 30 Trainers.
6. Have program graduates meet bi-monthly or monthly.

Challenges

1. Convincing corporate T&T of the benefit of the programme.
2. Convincing parents to pay the real cost of the camp.
3. Creating an opportunity to pilot this programme in our equivalent of k-12.
4. Training more facilitators who can implement the program.
5. Scaling the program while maintaining quality.
6. Determining the impact of the program.