

Memorandum

To: Dr. Erika Paterson, Professor - ENGL301

From: Rodrigo Samayoa, Student – ENGL301

November 13, 2020

Subject: Formal Report Progress

Dear Dr. Paterson,

Please find below the detailed progress report for my report on member engagement for the Rockfish Climbing Co-op. I have included as much detail on the report as I have at the moment. If you have any questions about any part of it, don't hesitate to reach out.

Audience

The audience for this report will be the board of directors for the Rockfish Climbing Co-op. Most specifically, it will be handed over to the co-op president Benjamin Punnet for review.

Purpose

As stated in the report proposal, the co-op has struggled to engage potential co-op members outside of a small group of climbers. My goal for this report is to identify engagement strategies that can help expand and maintain the co-op member base. The report will include a set of recommendations of actions the co-op can take in this regard.

Significance of the report

Building a climbing gym is an expensive endeavour that requires a large user base to succeed. This is the reason why climbing gyms are mostly just found in large cities, unlike regular gyms or other recreational facilities.

At the moment, the co-op does not have enough members to justify the large expenditure to potential funders or the membership base to maintain the day to day operations. If the co-op is not able to attract more members, the gym may never open.

This report can help the co-op implement engagement strategies that will help grow the membership and make a gym in Prince Rupert financially viable.

Research Plan

This report will have to look into three main questions:

1. What are the challenges and barriers the co-op is facing for recruiting and maintaining members?
2. What engagement strategies have other successful co-ops and community groups implemented to attract membership?

3. How can these engagement strategies be applied to the context of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op?

To answer these questions, I plan on doing the following research

- Interview individuals in the co-op board of directors to learn about the co-op's history and the challenge it is facing. See Appendix 1 for the list of interview questions
- Interview existing co-op members to learn what inspired them to join the co-op and what their experience has been like. See Appendix 2 for the list of interview questions.
- Interview leadership members of the Powell River Climbing Co-op to learn more about their history and what their member growth and engagement strategies are. See Appendix 3 for interview questions.
- Interview a member of the Prince Rupert Ground Search and Rescue leadership team to learn how other groups in Prince Rupert with a focus on the outdoors are recruiting and maintaining members. See Appendix 4 for interview questions
- Perform a brief literature research online and on books on community organizing to identify community organizing strategies that can be applied to the work of the co-op.

Writing Schedule

- **November 18** - Contact interviewees to set up interview times.
- **November 27** - Complete research on engagement strategies from secondary sources.
- **November 30** - Complete all interviews by this date if it fits with their schedules.
- **December 1** - Complete first draft of report.
- **December 10** - Get a report draft reviewed by a team member.
- **December 17** - Finalize report.

Appendix 1 - Interview questions for Rockfish Climbing Co-op leadership

I am an undergraduate student at the University of British Columbia. As part of a technical writing project, I am writing a report on how the Rockfish Climbing Co-op can apply new engagement strategies to grow the membership base of the co-op. The purpose of this interview is to gather information about the history of the co-op and the barriers it faces for recruit and retain members.

The final report will be addressed to the executive board of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op and will include a series of recommendations to increase member engagement. The interview will not last longer than one hour, but will more likely take closer to 30-45 minutes.

While I am a member of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op, I am writing this report in my capacity as a student at the University of British Columbia and not as a member of the co-op. I do not represent or speak for the co-op in any way.

1. Can you please tell some of the history of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op?
 - a. Co-op couple years old
 - b. Came out of informal group that used the civic centre for climbing
 - c. Goal to build new climbing facility in prince rupert

- d. Original crew was Ben's family and friends who took up climbing
 - e. Initially only three to five people would go climb at civic centre
 - f. By year four group was growing
 - g. Things done to grow initial group
 - i. Revamp the wall - make it more user friendly
 - ii. Word of mouth promotion
2. Who is the target demographic for the co-op?
 3. How has the co-op recruited and engaged members in the past?
 - a. Not done much community growth
 - b. Facebook page and online presence has helped
 - c. Most new members are new people to prince rupert looking for things to do (KEY!!!!)
 - i. Majority of members came from online presence
 - d. Reel Rock screenings
 - e. Locals have had poor experience with civic centre so are hesitant to attend events there
 - i. Some people interested in there is a new wall
 4. In your opinion, what has been the level of success of the co-op when it comes to recruiting members?
 - a. Co-op hasn't done much, but climbing community overall has been successful at growing.
 - b. Existing wall gets consistently 15 people climbing ever climb night
 5. What barriers, if any, has the co-op faced in recruiting and retaining members?
 - a. Sport itself if considered an extreme sport
 - b. Limited hours of the existing facility
 - c. No control over existing facility and programming
 - d. Transient nature of community
 6. Have you considered implementing new engagement strategies to grow your member base? If so, which?
 7. How has COVID-19 and the associated restrictions affected the co-op's efforts to recruit new members?
 - a. Volunteer engagement dropped
 8. What is your membership goal?
 - a. 10 to 20 year passes to maintain the new wall
 - b. 36 drop ins per week (60% pass holders, 40% drop in)
 - c. Want to also incentivize volunteerism
 9. Targeted programs
 - a. Currently only civic centre can run programs, so it's hard to do them now
 - b. Ben has run intro to climbing for the High School almost every year
 - c. Hope to offer more programs in the new wall for people who may not have exposure to climbing

Appendix 2 - Interview questions for regular member or Rockfish Climbing Co-op

I am an undergraduate student at the University of British Columbia. As part of a technical writing project, I am writing a report on how the Rockfish Climbing Co-op can apply new engagement strategies to grow the membership base of the co-op. The purpose of this interview is to gather information about the experience of co-op members when it comes to the co-op's efforts to recruit and engage members.

The final report will be addressed to the executive board of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op and will include a series of recommendations to increase member engagement. The interview will not last longer than one hour, but will more likely take closer to 30-45 minutes.

While I am a member of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op, I am writing this report in my capacity as a student at the University of British Columbia and not as a member of the co-op. I do not represent or speak for the co-op in any way.

1. How did you become a member of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op?
2. What inspires you to take part in the co-op's events and activities?
3. What would you say is the biggest barrier for the co-op to attract new members?
4. What do you think the co-op can do to recruit and retain new members, both from within and outside the climbing community?

Appendix 3 - Interview questions for the Powell River Climbing Co-op leadership

I am an undergraduate student at the University of British Columbia. As part of a technical writing project, I am writing a report on how the Rockfish Climbing Co-op can apply new engagement strategies to grow the membership base of the co-op. The purpose of this interview is to gather information about the Powell River Climbing Co-op and what lessons it can offer the Rockfish Climbing Co-op when it comes to membership recruitment and retention.

The final report will be addressed to the executive board of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op and will include a series of recommendations to increase member engagement. The interview will not last longer than one hour, but will more likely take closer to 30-45 minutes.

While I am a member of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op, I am writing this report in my capacity as a student at the University of British Columbia and not as a member of the co-op. I do not represent or speak for the co-op in any way.

1. Can you please tell some of the history of the Powell River Climbing Co-op?
 - a. If you build it people will come
 - b. Hosted reel rock in coordination with high school group
 - c. Relied on word of mouth in early days
 - d. Did an open house when the wall frame was completed
2. Who is the target demographic for the co-op?
 - a. People who come isn't just climbers, but other community members looking for activities

- b. Older demographic is small town as well as more children. Less of the traditional 18 to 30 demo as in big cities
3. Has the co-op been successful at maintaining a member base large enough to sustain the operations of the gym?
 - a. 60 to 90 members depending on year and season
4. What have your member recruitment and retention strategies been in the past?
 - a. Lessons
 - b. Birthdays
 - c. Drop-ins
 - d. Promos and packages for new climbers
5. What barriers, if any, has the co-op faced in recruiting and retaining members?
 - a. Can't run outdoor climbing workshops due to liability
6. Have you considered implementing new engagement strategies to grow your member base? If so, which?
7. Do you have any advice for new budding co-operatives looking to build a new climbing gym?
8. How has COVID-19 and the associated restrictions affected the co-op's operations and member engagement?
9. How have you overcome these challenges that have come up from COVID-19

Other notes

- Route setting is voluntary
- Manager hoping to do ladies night
- Doing outreach to school district to work with outdoor education program
 - Had standing thursday program with them
- Reached out to local nation to try a program with them, but it hasn't come to anything
- Also tried to reach out to rehab program but it didn't work out
- Business outreach for fundraising - they have a 'sponsored by...' wall
 - Create packages for businesses and community groups and don't negotiate on a case by case basis

Appendix 4 - Interview questions for the Prince Rupert Ground Search and Rescue leadership

I am an undergraduate student at the University of British Columbia. As part of a technical writing project, I am writing a report on how the Rockfish Climbing Co-op can apply new engagement strategies to grow the membership base of the co-op. The purpose of this interview is to gather information about how the Prince Rupert Ground Search and Rescue recruits and retains members and how these strategies can be applied to the Rockfish Climbing Co-op.

The final report will be addressed to the executive board of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op and will include a series of recommendations to increase member engagement. The interview will not last longer than one hour, but will more likely take closer to 30-45 minutes.

While I am a member of the Rockfish Climbing Co-op, I am writing this report in my capacity as a student at the University of British Columbia and not as a member of the co-op. I do not represent or speak for the co-op in any way.

1. Can you please tell some of the history of the Prince Rupert Ground Search and Rescue?
2. How does the PRGSAR recruit and retain members to the team?
3. What barriers, if any, has the PRGSAR faced in recruiting and retaining members?
4. Have you considered implementing new engagement strategies to grow your member base? If so, which?
5. Do you have any advice for other Prince Rupert community groups looking to bring in new members into their community?