

To: Rosine Hage-Moussa, Junior Achievement Marketing and Communications Manager

From: Ruth Lin, ENGL 301 Student

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Subject: *Proposal for raising awareness of volunteer opportunities at Junior Achievement at UBC*

Introduction:

Academic studies at UBC have taught students a myriad of important topics in their field of study but have not provided an opportunity for students to improve on their soft skills like ability to lead or public speak. Although students can gain those skills through their part time job or extracurricular clubs, these often require prior experience or an executive role in order for students to gain leadership experience. Therefore, there is an alternative option through Junior Achievement that allow student volunteers to gain hands on classroom experience, preparing and teaching students basic business skills to motivate and inspire them. The opportunity to volunteer as a business educator at Junior Achievement is an incredibly valuable and rewarding learning experience because students are able to improve on their preparation, leadership and public speaking skills in a safe environment. Junior achievement also provides great classroom hours for students seeking to enter a teaching career after graduation.

Statement of Problem:

There is an increasing demand from Vancouver schools for Junior Achievement business programs; at present there are not enough volunteers to fill the demands for facilitating the program and teaching the courses. Many qualified university students are under the misconception that you need to have a business background in order to volunteer at Junior Achievement. However, as long as a student can meet the time commitments and are comfortable speaking in front of a classroom, they're excellent candidates for the volunteer positions. Another aspect contributing the problem is that Junior Achievement currently has volunteer postings only on their website and job search aggregators. Therefore, many students at UBC are unaware of volunteer opportunities at Junior Achievement!

Proposed Solution:

One possible solution would be to connect Junior Achievement with UBC's community based learning initiatives under the Trek placements. Students that are already seeking to engage with their community are able to see Junior Achievement as a possible opportunity under the website. Therefore, Junior Achievement postings can also be added at the bottom of the UBC FYI newsletter all students receive. Another way to raise awareness is to start a Junior Achievement club at UBC where students interested in gaining hands on classroom experience will likely

apply. UBC clubs week at the beginning of the year in September garner quite a bit of attention so having a club that brings like-minded individuals together is a good recommendation.

Scope:

This research study primarily focuses on raising awareness of the Junior Achievement volunteer postings, so I plan to ask the following questions:

- 1) How are the majority of Junior Achievement volunteers recruited?
- 2) How interested and suitable are UBC students for JA volunteer positions?
- 3) How do UBC students discover volunteer opportunities?

Method:

The primary method for investigation will be conducted through online surveys multiple choice questions with the option of providing comments. The comments section provide a basis for qualitative analysis whereby we can gauge how suitable and relevant Junior Achievement volunteer postings would be to students at UBC. The multiple choice questions help gather numerical data to find trends and patterns to see which method of recruitment yields the best results. In addition, I will consult with the program manager Irene Phan at Junior Achievement to question how past volunteers were recruited and which marketing method was most effective.

My qualifications:

I've volunteered as a Junior Achievement business educator before and successfully facilitated teaching three classrooms basic business concepts. One of the classes I taught developed a "Funcil", a pencil with Christmas designs attached to the eraser tip, raising over \$320 in less than 10 minutes to purchase school supplies for underprivileged children in rural China.

Conclusion

There are rewarding volunteer opportunities at Junior Achievement that not many students are aware of. Junior Achievement provides students with no experience the opportunity to gain leadership skills and make a difference in their community. Community engagement is important learning experience students can't gain through academic classrooms. In addition, Junior Achievement is quite convenient as they provide a list of volunteer opportunities near the student's area of preference and a low time commitment (once every week for up to 5 weeks). Therefore, it's incredibly important to raise awareness of the volunteer opportunities present at Junior Achievement to students at UBC.