

Youth Entrepreneurship Focus Groups

Conducted for
The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

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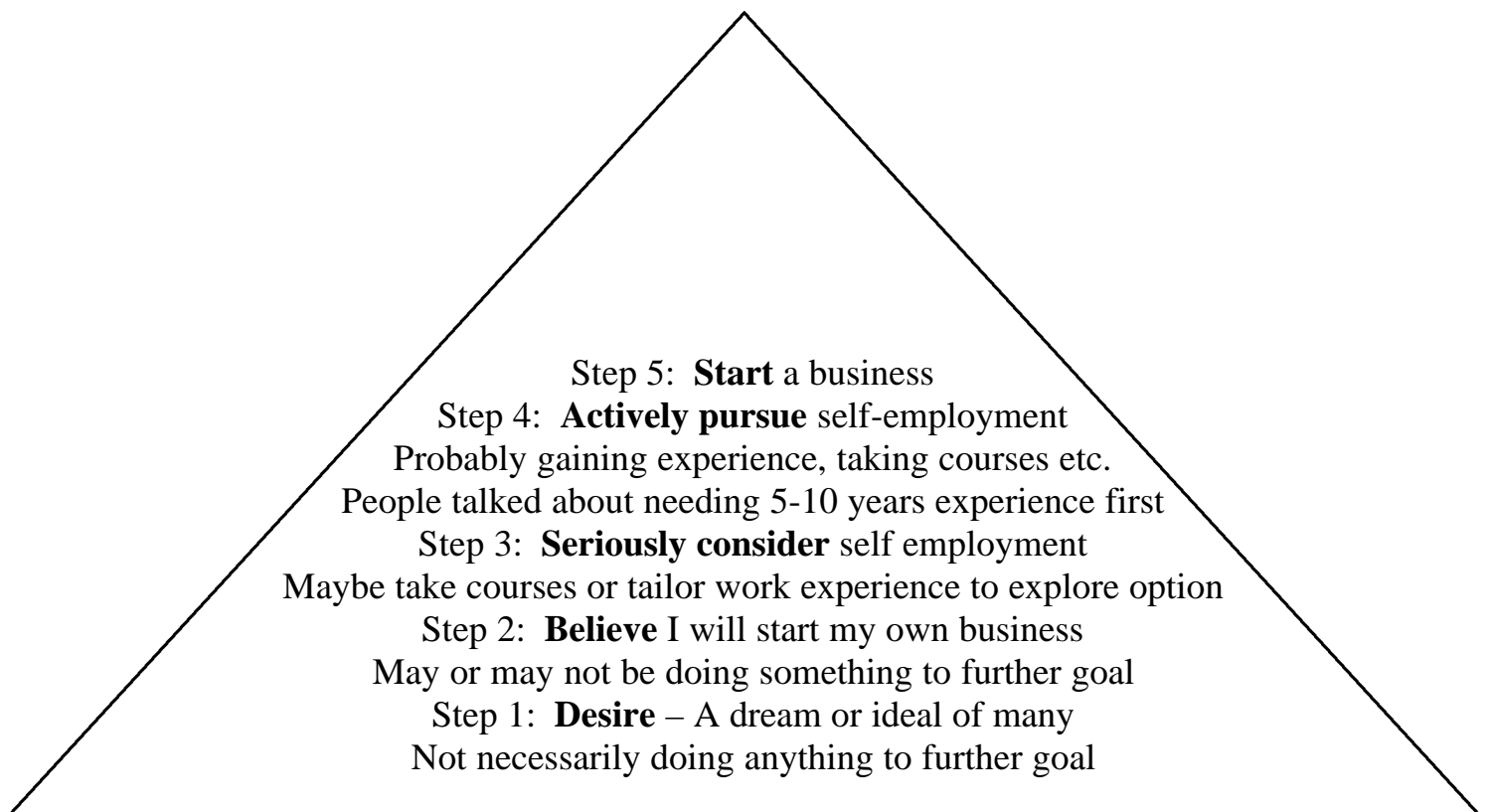
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Conclusions and Recommendations

These findings are based on eight focus groups conducted throughout Atlantic Canada with a selection of young adults (sessions of high school students and sessions with people aged 20 – 28). The sessions were used to discuss a wide range of topics concerning entrepreneurship – interest in the option, likelihood of pursuing, influences on those decisions and evaluations of various materials.

Virtually everyone in all of the sessions indicated they would like to start their own business and approximately half felt they would. Even though focus groups are not a quantitative technique, when one considers the number of people who actually do start a business, these proportions are unrealistically high and many of these people will not start a business.

It is helpful to think of these people using the following diagram. There are many more people at the bottom and we progressively lose people as we move up.



The first two stages really do not take much effort from people and many probably never progress beyond this point. However, the role for ACOA at these stages is to present entrepreneurship as a viable alternative and to offer encouragement. This can be done in a number of ways, but should be started at the High School level or a little earlier.

As we move up through the steps, the commitment level from the potential entrepreneur is greater, the experience becomes more realistic and, presumably, the activities or interventions from ACOA need to be more “concrete” and specific. The people in the later stages are moving from a thought process to an action process and will need more guidance as they do so. Therefore, there seems to be a need for several interventions over time to increase the probability that self-employment would actually happen at some point. Without these interventions, it seemed that many of these plans would remain just good intentions.

At the high school level (and perhaps a little earlier), people need to know that self employment is a viable alternative and they need to start to acquire the skills they will need to run their own business. Some of this is simply communications in that they need to make the link between summer businesses and paper routes etc. and self-employment. Information in the schools, speakers and regular appearances at career days are recommended. Many of the same activities are suggested as people move to post-secondary schools. However, the emphasis needs to shift to encouraging more “hands-on” experiences.

Identification and mentoring of potential candidates is suggested. Finding ways to allow people to “dabble” in self-employment should help in the long run. One of the large time gaps in the steps that were outlined earlier is the time after people have graduated and as they are gaining the job experience they feel they need. Most people talked in terms of 5 to 10 years and they are in widely dispersed environments outside of normal school systems. In fact, the widespread perception that people have to go “away” from Atlantic Canada to get the working experience they need would seem to make this even harder. The people who might open a business in Atlantic Canada when they are 30 or 35 might well be outside the region getting work experience. Continuing to reach and encourage these people would seem to be one of the more difficult tasks faced by ACOA. It suggests a strong need for intervention before people graduate and then ways to “keep in touch.” This might include mailing lists for publications or web sites.

People currently seem to think of government as only a place for financial assistance and need to be encouraged to think of it as a place for more general business help. A long-term strategy of intervention should start to change these attitudes in that people will see ACOA providing different kinds of assistance over an extended period of time.

One objective of this research was to see if there were different reactions based on geography, gender or other variables. Again, focus groups are a qualitative research technique and we would only be able to comment on dramatic differences (and even in those cases, we would not be able to project them to the population in general).

However, what was most striking about this research was the similarity between groups rather than the differences. In particular, there seemed to be little difference between males and females in interest in starting a business and in feeling they really would.

There were some minor geographical differences, but not in terms of wanting to start a business. Participants in all groups tended to think of businesses or services that would be for their local market and of course, those from more rural and smaller communities tended to conclude their task would be more difficult. It appeared that both a concern about the size of the local market and real experiences of seeing other businesses fail had more or a discouraging effect on people from these smaller areas. Perhaps these people (more than those from larger areas) need to be thinking about businesses and services that have potential beyond their own areas, but would be still operated from those areas.

Other findings from the sessions are included below under appropriate headings.

Entrepreneurship:

- While virtually everyone understood the word entrepreneurship and used it freely in the sessions, it is clear the word does not mean the same thing as self-employed or starting your own business. Entrepreneurship suggests an element of originality – creating something that did not exist in that market or recognizing a new market. Entrepreneurship also suggests a level of risk taking that is much higher than “just starting a business.” While French participants were quite comfortable with the word entrepreneur, most English-speaking participants would never refer to themselves as an entrepreneur.
- Participants were all quite realistic about the demands of self-employment. They generally knew it was stressful, would involve long hours, the fear of failure, but would offer a great sense of self-accomplishment. Their greatest fear was the fear of financial failure, but it was interesting that most people wanted to be “more established” before they took the risk. Ways to help lessen the financial risk might encourage more people to move to self-employment.

- Participants had learned about self-employment from a variety of sources, but many had observed “first-hand” from close family members. This was particularly prevalent in PEI. There was no evidence that parents (or anyone else for that matter) discouraged people from pursuing self employment as a career option. Several of the younger participants had taken an entrepreneurship or enterprise course in high school and were generally quite positive about it.
- Interestingly, as many as two or three people in each session would have had some “taste” of entrepreneurship in the past through summer jobs, current freelancing or even paper routes. However, it was quite rare for anyone to think of these activities as entrepreneurship or self-employment. There is a clear need to make a stronger link between these experiences and future self-employment. These links will probably, also, reduce the perceived level of risk.

Getting Started:

- It appeared that while most people would like to start a business and others really thought they would, only two or three in each session seemed likely to follow through with their plans. In some cases people were reminiscent of the “Old Man” creative that was developed for ACOA several years ago – there would always be something that needed to come first. In other cases though, people really did not know what to do. They might have an idea and not know what to do first or they might not even have an idea. These people all needed real guidance to bring the idea of starting a business to fruition.
- When asked what obstacles they anticipated, capital or financing was always the first thing that was mentioned. There was little indication that people felt they might need any assistance other than financial.
- When specifically asked where they would go for assistance, there was a dramatic difference between the responses of the high school students and those who were older. The older people were much more likely to think of government as a “first place” to stop for help, but it was clear they would only do that as they were ready to start their business. The younger participants were much more likely to think in terms of going to a bank. Only a few people were aware of ACOA and they tended to be the older participants.

Ways to Reach Young Entrepreneurs:

- A variety of ways to reach these people was discussed in each session. Perhaps the biggest surprise was the overall, relatively low Internet usage exhibited except in Caraqueet. While almost everyone had relatively easy access to the Internet and most did use it, they used it for very specific needs. There was little in the way of surfing or chatting, but there was a recognition that the Internet would be more common in the near future.
- Speakers (young entrepreneurs) in a school or classroom setting were seen favourably in all sessions. They tend to inspire and provide real life examples of positive and negative points. Schools were generally seen as a very appropriate means of distributing and disseminating information.
- Television and radio, as means of communication, were discussed as well; and while television was initially thought to work well, upon further discussion it was often discounted as not being as effective as other vehicles.
- A variety of materials were actually shown in the sessions for comments. Reaction was generally quite consistent across all the groups as follows:
 - **Videos:** good as a second step once some interest has been shown – probably in a school setting. The jacket on the video that was shown was not liked as it suggested wildlife sounds/nature.
 - **CD ROMS:** again a second step, but less interesting than videos because of the equipment needed to access the information. Schools were suggested again.
 - **Audio Tapes:** generally disliked.
 - **Small Pamphlets:** liked in a couple of groups to present basic information without a lot of detail. These were often criticized for not providing enough detail; but the purple Ontario Young Entrepreneurs caught several eyes because of its colour and because it had “five steps to get started” listed inside.
 - **Larger Publications:** several seemed to perform better than the others – **Realm**, **New Shoes** and the **Denim “dared to try”** publication. Participants seemed to react favourably to publications that were more readable as they presented information in a more entertaining way. Participants were particularly interested in profiles, business plans and both positive and negative experiences.

- As has already been noted, entrepreneurship may not be the “right” word to attract the desired audience. Youth is another word that carries negative intonation. It seems to always suggest someone who is several years younger. If I am 18, youth is 12 or 13. If I am in my 20’s, youth is 18. Young or young adult was preferred.
- Participants were generally in favour of having programs specifically directed to young adults.
- Distributing materials such as small pamphlets through areas such as doctor’s offices (where people will have to wait) was suggested in most sessions.

Introduction

This report is based on eight focus groups that were completed in December of 1999. Two sessions were held in each of the four Atlantic Provinces - St. John's and Carbonear, Sydney and Halifax, Charlottetown (2), Moncton and Caraquet. Four of the sessions were held with high school students and four were held with people aged 20 to 28. Those in the "older" sessions included a mix of people who were still in an educational institution (university, community college, private college etc.) and those who had graduated and were working as well as some who had graduated and were not working. Each person was pre-screened to ensure they were not strongly opposed to starting their own business. In this way, there was an attempt to include people with a variety of life experiences.

The sessions were all well-recruited and attended. A copy of the discussion guide that was used is included as Appendix A to this report. Each session began with a discussion of career options and when people started to think seriously about the type of work they would do. Influencing factors for these decisions were discussed in detail and several specific examples of communication methods were presented and evaluated. There was a tendency in all the sessions (but particularly in the younger ones), for the sessions to be dominated by those who were considering self-employment. This did not particularly affect the sessions and might have been expected given the topics being discussed.

Each session included eight or more qualified participants. The real advantage of using focus groups for this work is the depth of understanding that is possible from the ability to probe and discuss in detail.

Hobbies and Interests

Before the discussion moved to future work plans, a little time was spent discussing the general activities and interests of these participants. There was great consistency across all the groups with a fairly short list of activities such as:

- talking on the phone
- listening to music
- shooting pool, and
- sports.

As might be expected, the older participants were more likely to have families and to be quite involved with them (particularly the females with families). Starting a business with a young family was really not seen as a realistic alternative. The fear of failure and the added responsibility of family just did not fit together. In Moncton, most participants were specifically delaying the starting of families until they were more established.

One surprise from this part of the discussion was the lack of time being spent on the Internet. Stereotypically, these people were all from the generation that is supposed to be “on-line” all the time. Only in the Caraquet session was a significant amount of free time being spent on the Internet. Almost everyone in all of the other sessions had relatively easy access to the Internet and they used this source for academic searches primarily. There was very little evidence of “chatting” and several people specifically noted they did not like using computers or the Internet.

“No, I don’t like the Internet. I would rather talk to someone.”
“Surfing. That’s just a waste of time.”

As many as two or three of the students in the sessions also had part-time jobs. These seemed to add to an overall level of “busy”ness.

One interesting point coming from these discussions was the barrier that seems to be created by a relatively small geographic distance. Those from Carbonear, which was only a little more than an hour’s drive outside of St. John’s, were not even all that likely to go to St. John’s for shopping with much regularity. This was also quite true in Caraquet.

Career Plans

Much of the early discussion in each session was about future work or career plans. Participants were asked to write down a short description of their plans; and if those plans included more education, to also write a few words on their plans after education. While these plans differed considerably from person to person, there were at least two common themes.

Firstly and more noticeable at the high school level, some participants in each session had their plans relatively well thought out and others really had little or no plan at all. Secondly, even those with a plan were only thinking over the next two to four years (with a less concrete plan for later) and they were generally still fairly open to changes. As might be expected, those in high school were generally thinking about further education whereas the older participants were thinking about jobs. It was also more common for those still in high school to not have made any plans yet and to have only set their sights on finishing high school. A few of these people felt they would travel or drift for a couple of years before making up their minds on what to do for the rest of their lives.

“I just want to take it one day at a time.”

“What I said about banking there, I could forget that in a year or two.”

“My plans could change, but I hope not.”

Most people agreed they start to seriously think about their working futures when they are in high school and approaching graduation rather than when they began high school. This suggests a need to present self-employment as a realistic alternative at this point or even earlier. The French participants indicated that most of the options that are presented to them in a school setting are traditional careers – doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc. Most, also, agreed they do spend a lot of time thinking about their futures. Several felt it even generated a considerable amount of stress.

“There is not much out there and it is stressful and depressing.”

“Stress is a constant during the school year because it (career) reflects your grades.”

“I am just worried about my marks.”

Most of the people in all of the sessions expressed a desire to start their own business, but this was clearly just a dream for several people per group. However, approximately half or a little less felt they might actually start their own business some day. Interestingly

though, whether a person was planning to start their own business or not, there was a very common perception that “people had to go away” to get a good job or the kind of experience they wanted. Although to a lesser degree, this perception was true even in the Halifax session (and arguably, in comparison to the other areas where groups were held, there is probably less need to leave). It is important to note that most people did not really want to leave, but they felt they had to. It is also important to note that most people wanted to return “home at some point.

“People can’t stay in Carbonear. This is not a good place for opening a business.”
“Have to go away and get a real, professional job.”
“People leave for experience in their field.”
“Most people go away and get used to the job market, and then they save money to come back.”
“I would like to stay here, but that is pretty far-fetched.”

Participants in most of the sessions were quite familiar with friends or acquaintances who had moved away for jobs. Their destinations tended to be “out west” – British Columbia or Alberta, or in central Canada – Toronto or Ottawa. A few people mentioned American destinations, but these were not nearly as common as Canadian locations. The perceived need to move is also true in Caraquet, but there seems to be an added “wrinkle” for francophones in that they want to go to a larger community that still has a French community. For many of these people, Moncton offered what they were looking for

“Friends have moved to BC and Toronto.”
“We got the best of everything (in Newfoundland) except the job market.”

When people are thinking about starting their own business, they tend to be highly focussed on the market that is right around them and servicing the needs of that market. It was quite common to think in terms of retail services or an extension of their trade/professional service. For example, a hairdresser could build up a clientele and open their own salon. In several of these cases, people would be relying on their friends and family as their first customers. While there is undoubtedly some comfort in this, it is one of the factors that keeps people from considering an area a little further afield. There is almost a sense that you somehow “know the market better” if you live there. In some cases though, this reasoning prevents people from acting, particularly in small population areas. They are only comfortable starting a business in their hometown, but they observe over a period of years that many businesses fail and they know intuitively there are not many people to buy from them.

For the most part, the desire to start one's own business is a choice – in some cases it is almost an ideal. Necessity or “desperation” was certainly part of the choice, but seemed to be a relatively small part. In other words, starting a business is something that a lot of the participants wanted to do – they may have to be convinced that it is realistic, but they do not need to be convinced it is a good thing to do.

Perhaps necessity is making people consider self-employment more seriously than they did in the past. As one university student in Halifax noted, “you used to have lots of employers coming on campus to interview, but not anymore.” Technology is also a contributing factor as was noted, “it is just easier to work out of your home these days.”

The choice of self-employment has many influencers, but the key one seems to be family or friends who have run their own businesses. The desire to start and run a business seemed to be highest in PEI and that was also the area where people seemed to have more direct exposure to family and relatives running businesses. As one participant noted, “PEI is built on small business.” Other sources of influence included teachers (particularly the ones who teach Enterprise or Entrepreneurship courses), friends and simply people they see in their communities who have been successful with businesses. In some areas like hairdressing, another influence might be the existing clients. Another interesting source of influence seems to be dissatisfaction in working for someone else for a period of time. “It is time to start your own business when you think you know more than the person you are working for.”

Positive and Negative Parts of Entrepreneurship

The discussions of the appeal and drawbacks to entrepreneurship were quite consistent across all the groups and it appeared that people were quite realistic in both their positive and negative expectations. Interestingly, those who were not really interested in entrepreneurship were just as realistic in their expectations – they cited the same negatives for not setting up their own business.

There were several positive points that were mentioned in virtually every session. There was a desire to be the boss – not in a negative sense, but in the sense of “calling the shots” or deciding what to do. There would be a great sense of accomplishment if one were successful and the sense that “their hand was in it.” There is also the flexibility they see in self-employment – the type of work that is done and the hours that are worked.

“Just the sense of starting a business and knowing you are the one who got it going.”
“It is like a child, you want to see it grow.”
“You own the business and know exactly what is going on.”
“Something to be proud of.”

At the same time, people seemed to be quite aware of the downside. They realized they would probably have long hours and that it might be years (or never) before they saw any profits. They realized there would be a lot more responsibility and they had seen examples of the resultant stress that can be caused.

“Something you enjoyed doing and it sucks the life right out of you.”
“Lots of hours. You are taking the risk.”
“Even though you put all this time into it, you might end up shutting down.”
“I don’t think it is relaxed. My dad still stays up all night three times a week.”
“What if you are on holiday and they send out some shoddy work..”
“Could go bankrupt and then you would have to go back to work under someone else.”

The need to have some experience before starting a business seems to be quite strong as is evidenced by these participants. Nobody was thinking about starting a business as they finished school. Instead, everyone talked in terms of working for five or even ten years before they started. In most cases, people simply believed they needed real work experience or they would not really know what they were doing. In other cases, people planned to work in the same or a related industry and were actively trying to build up a

customer base and the specific knowledge they would need. In still other cases, they felt they just needed more experience and age before they would be treated seriously.

“If I am 22 and just out of school and going to start my own business, people are going to laugh at me.”

“If you are younger, you may have to go to greater lengths to prove yourself.”

The “Right” Word

A very interesting discussion took place in each group on what to call someone who runs their own business. While virtually everyone was familiar with the word entrepreneur and used it as the moderator did, it was clear they would not normally use the word. In the English sessions, they would not use “entrepreneur” to describe themselves as it connotes a level of pretentiousness. Entrepreneur implies the following:

- a level of creativity – being the first person to think of something or developing something new;
- a high level of risk-taking – much higher than being self-employed; and
- a measure of success – a person seems to be an entrepreneur only after they have been quite successful.

“Stuff that nobody else had tried. She made up the idea, something original.”
“If you brought up the idea, it would not be entrepreneurial anyway because it is your idea.”
“A guy who knew Hibernia was going up and he put up 150 houses.”
“I would not call myself one [an entrepreneur]. I just own it.”
“Imagine a rich person in a big suit.”

In fact, owning and operating certain businesses definitely did not qualify as entrepreneurship for most of these participants. For example, operating a Subway Shop, an Esso Gas Station (or anyone else’s for that matter) or any other business that already exists was not considered entrepreneurship. Such a person might be referred to as a business owner or as a franchisee.

Participants were much more comfortable with “owning their own business/business owner” or being “self-employed” as ways to describe someone who owned their own business. These words are not meant as negatives in any way – participants still felt these people would have ambition, and be motivated etc., but these words just seemed more practical or realistic than entrepreneur.

The issues with the word entrepreneurship were not present in the French sessions. In both Moncton and Caraquet entrepreneurship and self-employment were used quite interchangeably.

Another word that was discussed in several of the sessions was “youth.” Like entrepreneur, it is not a word that is used by many people and it seems to imply someone

who is always a few years younger. If I am 20 and I see something for “youth,” I assume it is for teenagers – if I am in high school, youth are in junior high. A more acceptable phrase seems to be “young adult.”

Obstacles to Starting a Business

Since it was a desire of most of the people in the sessions to open their own business one-day, some time was spent discussing activities participants were currently engaged in that would further that goal and in discussions of the obstacles of starting a business.

There seemed to be much more mention of doing something to prepare for possible self-employment from the people who were in high school. There were as many as two or three people in each of these younger sessions who had taken/were going to take an Enterprise course or had a co-op option at school that allowed them to gain some job experience. These people often tailored this experience to gain related work experience and/or to see if their plan was really what they wanted to do.

“I am working with a social worker now.”

“You don’t have to do the Enterprise course, but you are better off in it.”

“I arranged my co-op in banking.”

“Did a course and had to open a haunted house for a night.”

With the older participants, there was little or no mention of school factors (perhaps they were not available when these people were in High School), but there was some mention of free-lancing. This was from people who were either studying in a particular field (say photography) or already working (a trade or hair dressing).

There seems to be a “discounting” of experience when people start talking about starting their own business. As an example, one participant in Newfoundland had started a summer hockey school when he was younger. He and two or three other people developed the idea, advertised it and then successfully ran the school as their summer job. He said he did not consider it entrepreneurship because “nobody really ran it” and there did not seem to be any carryover to doing something else. People who had run a small business as part of an Enterprise course described it as “only for a night” or “something we did at the end of the course.”

As we moved into the specific obstacles that would be the most troublesome as people were about to start their own business, financing was mentioned first and most strongly in each group.

“The cost”

“Financing.”

When asked where people might go to get assistance, banks tended to be mentioned first, but they were often discounted once people considered about them for a few minutes. Some of this was because banks would want collateral and some of it was just from a sense that “banks will rip you off.”

There was general awareness that help could be obtained from government, but most people did not know specifically where they would go. In addition, people really only thought of approaching government for financial assistance. ACOA was not known by name in any of the High School groups, but at least 2 or 3 knew in most of the older sessions.

“Government wants to promote economic growth, so you would go there.”
“There are so many grants from the government now.”
“They can look at your idea and if they like it, give you some money to help you get on your way.”

An interesting, alternative source of help or information about starting a business was consistently mentioned in most of the sessions. A few people per session felt they would ask for guidance and other assistance from someone in an existing (possibly similar) business. This theme is repeated later on, but there seems to be a preference to learn by example or at least through the real experiences of others.

“I would go to people in the business who have experience first.”
“You have to look at both sides of the picture, you don’t just want the successes.”

While finance was the barrier that was mentioned most often when asked what the obstacles to start-up were, there were two other points that were mentioned by a significant minority of the participants. As many as two people in each of the sessions noted they might have an idea and be willing to start a business, but really did not know what to do – they did not know what the first step was and the certainly did not know the subsequent steps. A variation on this point came from one or two others in most sessions and this related to being willing to start a business, but not feeling like there was a good idea of what to start.

It was interesting what was left out of the discussions of obstacles to starting a business. It may suggest a certain “naiveté” on the part of the participants or the fact that most of them had not thought the self-employment option through completely, but they generally felt they would only have financial problems and were not generally thinking about the array of skills they would need to successfully run a business.

Communication Materials

Echoing the comments noted in the last section about the appeal of personal contact, when the topic of who should talk about entrepreneurship and how they should do it, there was positive feedback on personal options as well. Most of these seemed to be centered around schools. Several people who had taken Enterprise courses commented on the guest speakers they had heard – in particular when these speakers were relatively close to their age and they had started a business the students were familiar with. Participants were quick to point out they were looking for both positive and negative experiences, or at least a realistic picture of what the speaker had experienced.

“You really need to have a meeting.”

“Someone needs to come and talk to you.”

“People who have started a business talking to us – our own age is better.”

School kept coming up through these discussions. Participants were quite positive about Enterprise courses as electives even if they had not taken them. They, also, noted that most have some form of career day and that would be a good place to be represented. In fact, the people in Caraquet were critical of their own Career Day because it did not bring in many entrepreneurs.

In general, the kinds of information that people seem to react most positively to are:

- profiles of entrepreneurs;
- the positive and negative experiences of these people; and
- tips and suggestions of how to get started.

A number of specific items were circulated in each session for a brief evaluation – videos, CD ROMS, smaller pamphlets, larger pamphlets, magazine-style publications and audio-tapes. Television, radio and the Internet were also discussed without any specific materials being used. None of these were evaluated in any great detail, but there was some consistent feedback throughout the sessions.

Television (in the form of advertising) was often mentioned in these sessions and the initial reaction was usually positive and everyone certainly watched television. As one participant said, “if it was on television, I would sit and watch the grass grow.” However, upon further discussion, this choice was usually discounted because it was generally felt it would not make much impact. Radio was even more strongly dismissed – participants felt they really did not get many messages from it – instead listening to music.

The Internet has already been discussed somewhat, but it is a dilemma at this point. It was widely seen as the “way of the future,” but most participants were only using it for very specific information requirements. Certainly, if the Internet is to be used, people will have to be directed to the site or sites using more traditional methods of communication to advertise the site.

The materials that were shown divided fairly neatly into two groups. One group would be useful to provide small amounts of information and generally move people to more detailed pieces. The smaller brochures or pamphlets best represent this category, but the publications that are more like magazines can also fit into this category. Most of the other materials really fall into another category – they are more appropriate when someone has expressed a level of interest – the more detailed publications, the videos and CD ROMS are really a second step.

There was some mixed reaction to most of the materials that were shown, but there were several that tended to be noticed more than others. Both the **Realm** and **New Shoes** style publications were generally liked because they were easier to read and because of the content of the publications. There was some criticism of **Realm** because the picture on the cover looked too much like a “teen” magazine and of **New Shoes** because it looked like a catalogue (CD’s) and because people did not “get” the subtle reference in the title.

“I liked it [Realm], but it looked like a teen magazine.”

The “blue denim” publication was liked because it profiled entrepreneurs and because of its title. Participants reacted favourably to the “who dared to try” line. The denim background was not strongly criticized, but it appeared as something designed by adults. It was trying “too hard” to be directed at younger people and was looking dated.

In the French sessions, most people wanted a small, direct-to-the-point pamphlet without a lot of colour. In the English sessions, the purple, Ontario “Young Entrepreneur’s” publication was liked because it was short and to the point.

Appendix A

Discussion Guide

Draft Discussion Guide

ACOA – Youth Entrepreneurship

1. Introduction

- Explain the purpose of the group, the audiotaping and the presence of the client (when we are in facilities).
- Get a brief introduction from each participant that includes their first name, interests/hobbies and whether they are in school (where/what?) or working etc.
- What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? Where do you shop?

2. Career Options

- I would like to start with the plans you and your friends have for when you have finished school. What kinds of work/careers are you thinking about?
- Are people thinking about working in the area, or are you going to go somewhere else? Do you want to go somewhere else, or do you feel you have to? Would you prefer to work here, or come back here at some point? If you are not home now, do you want to go home?
- When do people really start thinking about their options for work? Who tends to influence which options you think of? Explore role of friends, family, teachers etc.?

3. Entrepreneurship/Working for Yourself

- How seriously do people think about entrepreneurship or working for yourself? Is it really an option that is considered? Why and why not? What does entrepreneurship mean to you? Is it the right word?
- If it is considered, when and what do you start to do anything about it? Are there courses that you think of? Are there experiences you try to get? Would you do that right away, or would you work at something else for some time? Has anyone started a business during the summer? Would they? Is it a last resort?
- Is entrepreneurship something that you would really want to do – would it be preferred, or is it more of a fallback option?
- What are the positive points about entrepreneurship and what are the drawbacks?

4. Concerns about Entrepreneurship

- We have just been talking about the good and bad points of entrepreneurship. Let's assume for a moment that you do want to start your own business. What do you think your biggest problems are going to be? Has anyone actually gone through any of the steps? What are their experiences? Were you treated well?
- Where would you go for help? Where would you start? Explore the role of ACOA and CBSC's if they come up. Let's assume you start a business, what are your expectations - working time, money, etc.

5. Communicating

- How has entrepreneurship been communicated to you in the past? What has been their early exposure to entrepreneurship?
- If someone wanted to talk to you about entrepreneurship, how would I do it? Would I go through schools? Magazines? Television? How would people feel about a half-hour show? Internet? Radio? Parents? Probe? CD ROM/Games? Videos? For television and magazines etc. – what types of shows and stations?
- What kind of things should I be talking about? What type of person should be talking to you?
- Let me show you some examples of possible ways to communicate. We would have several examples here – it does not matter if the topics are correct, we just want to formats.
- Would you look at these? Which ones would you read or listen to? Why?

6. Conclusion

- Thank participants and identify the client.