

**LCBB4002**

**BA BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

**ASSESSMENT 2 – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**2000 WORDS REFLECTION**

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## Introduction

Community engagement can be described as the method of collaborative working among community members to facilitate the betterment of society (Bristol, 2023). Reflection plays an important role in explaining personal ideas and improving the understanding of the reader. In this reflection, I will shed light on the discussion of the community engagement project that I want to run in future. Taking learning from the community engagement program of "The London School of Economics", I will develop a community engagement program named ***"Helping Hands"*** that will focus on emphasizing the role of mental health in the workplace. It has been observed that within the UK, the value imparted by employees with mental health problems at the workplace accounts for £225 billion per year (Mental Health Foundation, 2023). This comprises 12.1% of the total GDP of the UK. A number of issues such as discrimination, bias and others at the workplace contribute to increasing mental health problems. In this regard, it is of utmost importance to focus on this issue and take proper initiative to address this and support the employees working in an organisation. In this context, the future community engagement program would focus on increasing awareness among people regarding the mental health issues faced by the employees. Moreover, increasing awareness would also help in breaking the taboo (CIPD, 2023). This in turn would be beneficial in building an open and inclusive culture within the organisation. In this assessment, I will focus on taking learning from the LSE project and incorporating it into future projects. I will also reflect on the differences between both projects for better understanding. In addition to this, I will determine the best practices adopted in community engagement programs and the effectiveness of each program. I will also demonstrate the practices that I will adopt in my future-led community engagement program "Helping Hands".

## The Body

**"Difference between strategies used in the live project used in Assignment 1 and my future project, comparing, analysing, and evaluating the best practices on their community engagement approaches"**

The community engagement program facilitated by LSE adopts a number of strategies in order to improve the effectiveness of the community engagement program. I have analysed that in this program LSE focuses on the development of teamwork and collaboration capabilities among the volunteers. Moreover, on research, I have also evaluated that LSE adopts a strategy to improve the social skills of the volunteers. This is done by providing volunteers with the opportunity to make social encounters by interacting with new individuals (Bristol, 2023). This

helps the volunteers gain professional skills and strengthen their expertise in the desired field. The engagement principles have been applied in the above-stated community engagement programs. On the other hand, in the future developed project named ***“Helping Hands”***, I will not only focus on the engagement principles but I will also focus on incorporating adaptability skills within the volunteers. This would be done by providing the opportunities to interact and spend one day with individuals having mental health issues at the workplace. ***“Helping Hands”*** would emphasise providing practical and experiential learning experiences to the volunteers. Facilitating experiential learning would help in incorporating adaptability skills within the volunteers. Moreover while conducting meetings for ***“Helping Hands”*** emphasis would be given to facilitating active listening. I will focus on determining the perspective and experiences of volunteers to increase knowledge of the group. This would help in promoting a collaborative stance with the developed community engagement programs.

The community engagement program of LSE uses telecommunication networks in order to communicate effectively. However, it fails to present diversified content to the public and the volunteers. In comparison to this, within ***“Helping Hands”***, I will focus on the inclusion of social media platforms to enhance the extent of communication and reach to the audience. It would allow the volunteers to expand their reach to the individuals requiring support. As opined by Abbas *et al.* (2021), the use of social media can be done to inform the public about the important issues within the community and help them engage with the program. Finally, LSE promotes ethical collaboration of stakeholders and appreciates their participation as well as involvement within the program. In comparison to this, ***“Helping Hands”***, would focus on promoting ethical collaboration as well as ethical leadership within the community engagement program. This would also help in facilitating the engagement of people in the decision-making process of the community engagement process.

**“Reflecting on what could have been done differently and why. Considering the best practices, models, techniques, approaches, principles, and standards”**

From my perspective, I can say that the practices, models, techniques, approaches, principles, and standards adopted by LSE have helped it improve the outcome of the community program. I have evaluated that LSE focuses on adopting the practice of ethical collaboration and social encounters ***[Refer to component 1]***. This has helped in embedding professionalism and teamwork among the volunteers. Moreover, the engagement principle has been applied in this program that help in building cohesive communities and elevating the outcome of the project. In addition to this, LSE has adopted the standard of planning, inclusion, working together and communication. According to me, these adopted strategies have helped in elevating the

efficiency of the community engagement program. I think that these adopted techniques and standards have helped to improve the learning experiences of the volunteers. On the other hand, within this program, the approach of adopting a telecommunication network can be observed. This has been done to facilitate effective communication among the volunteers and with the audience.

The practices and approaches taken by LSE have helped in facilitating better outcomes of the community engagement program. However, I think the use of other practices such as social media and others can help in enhancing the efficiency of the project. In my opinion, the use of LSE would have helped LSE to strengthen its communication aspect. The use of social media would have helped in providing the audience with diversified content and engaging them with the issues of the program. I think that the use of social media platforms would have provided an opportunity for the volunteers to gain feedback and determine the perspective of the audience in regard to the issues. According to me, the use of this platform would have helped in facilitating two-way communication between the volunteers and the audience. As stated by Tsoy *et al.* (2021), social media platform assists the audience in experiencing their views and opinion. This helps in creating an online community having shared goals. Thus, I think that the use of these tactics would have helped to improve the outcome of the study.

**“Discussing what differences active consultation, effective communication, stakeholders’ participation, and inclusion can make in community engagement”**

Determining the inefficiency of the community engagement program of LSE, my future project **“Helping Hands”** would focus on different parameters to improve the outcome of the community engagement program. I will conduct my research with the help of an interview. The use of interviews would help me in determining the perspective of different individuals. This would also help me in performing active consultation with the participants. This would also benefit me in determining the views and opinions of the participants. In order to enhance stakeholder participation, I will make use of the community mapping method. In order to facilitate this method I will first focus on gathering my stakeholders such as volunteers and employees suffering from mental health. This would be followed by building relationships with stakeholders and establishing parameters such as providing psychosocial services and vocational training services (Bettercarenetwork, 2020). I will then assess my fit and create a community mapping worksheet to engage the participants.

It is known that effective communication is of utmost importance in order to increase awareness in community engagement programs (Han *et al.* 2021). In **“Helping Hands”**, I will make use of different social media platforms, to engage the community as well as the volunteers. The

use of social media platforms would allow me to widen my reach to the audience and increase awareness about mental health with the help of diversified content. This would help me in facilitating continuous interaction with the community. I will also be able to gain perspective and feedback from the community. Insightful feedback from the community members would help me address the inefficiencies of the project and improve the outcome of the study. This in turn would help me strengthen my decision-making process by incorporating the feedback received from the community. In order to promote active participation in the community with ***“Helping Hands”***, I will ensure mitigating language barriers in meetings. Effective communication among the participants would be facilitated in order to foster better collaboration among the volunteers. It can be justified from the narration of Steffens *et al.* (2020), that social media platforms assist in reinforcing positive communication and better collaboration among the community. However, inclusion within ***“Helping Hands”*** would be facilitated with the help of ethical leadership. The use of ethical leadership would help in fostering trust, integrity and respect in the developed community engagement process (Indeed, 2022). The use of ethical leadership would promote the participation of stakeholders in the program. It would also help in fostering an inclusive environment with the community engagement program.

The evaluation of the practices within this community engagement program would be done with the help of feedback obtained from the audience and the community members. The use of this feedback would be done to evaluate the views and opinions of the participants. This would help in including the community within the decision-making process and fostering a sense of belonging in them. This would encourage the participation of participants within the organisation. The use of a participant tracking rate would be done in order to analyse the participation of participants and their active engagement with the organisation. I will make use of validated tools and scales in order to analyse the data. I will further document my findings within the report for better analysis and evaluation of findings.

## **Conclusion**

It can be concluded from this assessment that community engagement programs play a vital role in addressing the fueling issues in the organisation. This reflection has helped me in evaluating the best practices for community engagement and determining the manner this can be implemented in a live project. I have discussed the central idea of the community engagement project, ***“Helping Hands”*** that I will run in future. This project will focus on engaging the community to increase awareness regarding mental health problems in the

workplace in the UK. It has been identified that this problem has resulted in putting immense pressure on the economy and degrading the productivity of the organisation. In this regard, I have imparted my focus on developing a community engagement program for raising awareness of mental health problems within the UK workplace. I have used the essence of component one to describe the community engagement program used in LSE. This has helped me in understanding the process of community engagement. The practices and approaches used by LSE have guided me in structuring my community engagement program.

This reflective assessment has helped me understand that active communication plays an important role in the community engagement process. I have learned that effective communication helps foster active participation in the community. Moreover, this assessment has also helped me to evaluate the importance of social media in the community engagement process. I have learned that the use of social media platforms assists in facilitating community engagement. I have understood the manner in which ethical collaboration and social encounters are crucial. Social encounters assist in sharing knowledge with new people and gaining expertise in the desired field. Lastly, I have learned the manner of conducting community mapping and the manner it helps in identifying the potential stakeholders. I have also learned about the most effective practices that can help in improving the community engagement program. Thus, this reflective assessment has helped me understand the flow of the community engagement program and determine the necessities as well as best practices for the community engagement program.

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