

# Coaching as a Community Development Strategy

## *An Evaluation of the Creating Entrepreneurial Communities Pilot Project*

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# Executive Summary

In 2007, the MSU Extension (MSUE) Economic Development Area of Expertise team initiated Creating Entrepreneurial Communities (CEC), a one-year program to provide community teams with assistance, tools, and resources to develop environments supportive of entrepreneurs. The ultimate goal of the CEC initiative was to improve the Michigan economy by growing and supporting entrepreneurs. Nine community teams were selected through an application process to participate in the program. Teams were provided with two primary supports: (a) an intensive four-day training on the development of entrepreneurial communities (Energizing Entrepreneurs, or E<sup>2</sup>), and one year of coaching support designed to provide resources and facilitate the development and implementation of action plans.

The evaluation of CEC was initially designed to assess impact on entrepreneurial community development. However, because of the limited amount of time available for the program and the gradual pace at which the type of change targeted was likely to unfold, the evaluation was modified to focus on an earlier step in the process: factors that contribute to team sustainability, with the assumption that stable teams were more likely to be able to effect eventual change. Based on the literature on entrepreneurial development, economic/community development, and team processes, we developed a model incorporating five areas proposed to contribute to success: (a) CEC programming (E<sup>2</sup> training and coaching); (b) community characteristics; (c) team characteristics, such as team composition and resource availability; (d) team goals and activities; and (e) team processes, such as teamwork, team organization and management, external influences, and leadership). Multiple data sources were used to collect information on the potential predictive factors, and team sustainability was assessed through team interviews conducted one year after the program had ended.

One year following the program end, five teams reported that they were continuing to work as a team on their goals and strategies, while four teams were not. The following characteristics tended to differentiate sustained and not sustained teams:

- 1. Community size.** Sustained teams tended to be located in *small geographical areas* (i.e., small cities, townships), while not sustained teams covered larger regions such as counties or multiple communities. We recommend selecting teams that represent smaller areas; teams representing larger regions often encountered difficulties in working toward common goals and developing a cohesive, effective team at least in part due to challenges in coping with disparate issues and concerns that encompass a wide area.
- 2. Collaboration with local government.** Sustained teams tended to either have effective partnerships with local government from the beginning or to have developed collaborative relationships with local government over time. In some cases, non-sustained teams had local government representation from on the original team, but reported that ideas developed by the CEC were subsequently appropriated by local government. Thus, not only representation by local government, but true collaboration was necessary for team sustainability. We recommend encouraging core teams to have local government representation, but to also be mindful of the degree of real partnership that exists in that relationship. Training on ways to incorporate government into the team and pitfalls that can occur may be helpful. In cases where relationships with local government need to be built, using coaches to assist teams to ensure effective links with local government may be a better course than simply requiring local government membership from the outset.
- 3. Team composition and resource availability.** Sustained teams tended to have fewer members than not sustained teams. This is not surprising; smaller teams are less likely to have conflict and differences of opinion that may lead a team to disband. However, small teams also may also lack a variety of perspectives, diversified knowledge, larger networks, and distributed effort that may contribute to greater community impact beyond simple team sustainability. Team size should be guided by team goals; if networking is a primary goal, teams may benefit from more team members; if specific program

development and implementation is a primary goal, fewer team members may be necessary. During this pilot project, most teams were building their initial capacities to work together on entrepreneurial development, so small team size was not necessarily a major liability. Resource availability was also an issue; we recommend that teams have at least some members with officially contributed paid time and experience in economic development, as well as the use of office/meeting space and basic administrative functions such as copying.

4. **Team processes.** Sustained teams were higher in *confidence, cohesion, communication, coordination, skills, and influence* than not sustained teams. In selecting team members, teams should carefully consider their history together—whether they have worked together before, how well they have coordinated and shared responsibilities in the past, and simply whether they like one another. Train coaches or make sure coaches are experienced in conflict resolution and facilitation of team processes in addition to content-based entrepreneurial community development.
5. **Coaching.** Coaches of sustained teams were more likely than coaches of non-sustained teams to have clear facilitating roles. Both coaches of and team members from non-sustained teams often reported confusion about the coach's role, with possibilities ranging from secretary to team leader. We recommend training coaches in their roles and responsibilities prior to beginning coaching and revisiting and reinforcing core concepts over the course of the program. We also recommend assigning one coach to each team prior to the initial training to permit them to learn with the team, build relationships with team members, and be part of initial planning. Additionally, we recommend assigning coaches who are not already part of the community in order to provide alternative perspectives and avoid existing power issues and personality/community dynamics.

# Introduction

In 2007, the MSU Extension (MSUE) Economic Development Area of Expertise team initiated Creating Entrepreneurial Communities, a one-year program to provide community teams with assistance, tools and resources to develop environments supportive of entrepreneurs. The ultimate goal of the CEC initiative was to improve the Michigan economy by growing and supporting entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial development has been proposed as a promising strategy for small and rural communities to build greater economic viability. Creating a community that provides a supportive entrepreneurial system is challenging, requiring commitment from community leaders, and the implementation of programs that can be sustained over time. The CEC program was designed to facilitate the process of “growing your own” entrepreneurs by providing training through the Energizing Entrepreneurs (E<sup>2</sup>) program. The training was intended to equip the community teams with foundational knowledge, skills, and team-building at the start of the program. Besides the initial training, the CEC program also provided one year of coaching services, and networking support to teams representing multiple public and private sectors.

## *Why Entrepreneurial Communities?*

Traditional economic development strategies—namely, efforts to attract industry or large business—encourage dependence on forces outside of the community (Loveridge, 1996). Although developers assume this will create jobs, employment rates typically do not improve or do so only slightly (Humphrey et al., 1988; Mitchell, 2007), and resulting profits are often distributed outside the community rather than invested locally (Emery et al., 2004; Shuman, 2000; Shuman, 2007). The community has little control over whether companies choose to move on and may allow them to control local policies as an incentive (Humphrey et al., 1988). For rural communities, even this approach toward economic viability is frequently not an option as industrial recruitment becomes ever more competitive (Kauffman, 2002; Muske & Woods, 2004) and targets metro and core regions (Sharp & Flora, 1999).

One alternative that has received increasing attention is the development of entrepreneurial business (Lyons, 2002; Hammell & Denhart, 2007). Compared to business attraction strategies, entrepreneurial development promotes sustainability because entrepreneurs tend to be more committed to their communities, increase local business diversity, promote local growth, and become civic leaders (Lichtenstein et al., 2004; Woods, 2000; Rightmyre, Johnson, & Chatman, 2004). Moreover, small business is a significant economic engine, surpassing large business in numbers employed, net job creation, and innovation and invention (Kauffman, 2002; Shuman, 2007). Jobs created through entrepreneurship also tend to have higher salaries than those developed by attracting outside industry (Green et al., 1990). In 2007, Michigan ranked 27th—that is, about average—in entrepreneurial activity (Fairlie, 2007), a substantial increase from the ranking of 41<sup>st</sup> reported in 2005 (Kaufman Foundation, 2007). These numbers suggest both great opportunity and much room for improvement in increasing the entrepreneurial focus in Michigan.

Ideally, entrepreneurs live and work within an environment that values entrepreneurship, encourages risk-taking, and provides the infrastructure necessary for business development—in other words, an entrepreneurial community (Lichtenstein et al., 2004). Loveridge (2007) has identified 41 assets of entrepreneurial communities. Communities looking to build entrepreneurship are advised to conduct a community capacity assessment to evaluate their existing ability to develop entrepreneurs and to identify avenues for strategic intervention (Emery et al., 2004; Loveridge, 2007; Flora, Flora, & Fey, 2004).

Significant challenges await communities that attempt entrepreneurial development, including lack of knowledge about business management among aspiring entrepreneurs, inflexible approaches that do not

address needs unique to particular communities, leadership mindsets geared towards industrial (not entrepreneurial) development, brain drain of talented individuals away from small communities, and lack of entrepreneurial support resources (Emery et al., 2004; Gilchrist, 2004; Lumsdaine & Binks, 2007; Carr & Kefalas, 2009; Pigg & Bradshaw, 2003). The CEC program was developed to help communities design strategies that meet the needs of their specific communities and provide continuous assistance during the process of implementing those strategies. This report describes the implementation and impacts of the CEC program that ran from 2007-2008.

## The CEC Program

CEC was an outgrowth of the activities of the MSU Extension (MSUE) Economic Development Area of Expertise team, which was granted funds from MSUE, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the MSU Product Center, and MSU University Outreach and Engagement. It received additional in-kind support from the MI Department of History, Arts, and Libraries, the MI Small Business Technology and Development Center (Mi-SBTDC), the MSU Museum, and the Edward Lowe Foundation.

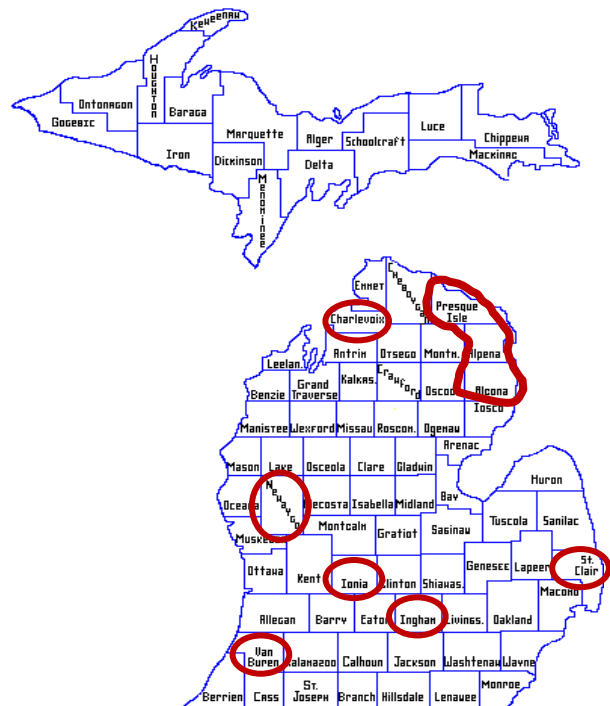
### Team Selection

In October 2006, the team launched a statewide conference on the topic of community-supported entrepreneurship attended by over 200 community leaders, with a keynote address by Dr. Tom Lyons, a leader on the development of entrepreneurial communities. Conference participants were offered the opportunity to form local community-based teams and submit applications for a competitive review process to be selected as one of CEC’s pilot community teams.

Out of 14 applications, 9 pilot teams, initially consisting of 8 to 10 core team members, were selected to participate based on their interest in entrepreneurial development, existing community capacity, inclusion of team members from multiple sectors, and community commitment of \$5,000 to support participation. The pilot teams, displayed in Figure 1, were:

- Boyne City
- Greater South Haven
- Ionia County
- Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG; the counties of Alcona, Alpena, and Presque Isle)
- Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (NLEA; East Jordan, Charlevoix)
- Marine City
- Meridian Township
- Newaygo County
- St. Clair County

The teams were geographically distributed across the Lower Peninsula and were predominantly rural or suburban; no urban communities applied to participate. Team members were from business, arts and culture, education, government, community services, and business support organizations and agencies.





Three small cities, one township, and three counties, and two regional groups participated in the program. The regional groups included one three-county region and one region covering two small cities. In keeping with the range of community types, geographical areas covered by the teams varied widely, ranging from 2 to 1,900 square miles. Five communities showed evidence of negative population migration (Census, 2000). As of 2000, median household income in the communities ranged from \$31,362 to \$55,203, while poverty rates ranged from 3.7% to 9.1% (Census, 2000). In six communities, manufacturing was the prime industry, whereas in two others, education was the prime industry. Self-employment rates ranged from 4.7% to 12.3%.

## **Program Activities**

The CEC program had two primary components: (a) an intensive four-day training around the development of entrepreneurial communities (E<sup>2</sup>), and (b) one year of coaching support designed to provide resources and facilitate the development and implementation of action plans. In addition to the primary activities, networking activities, such as conference calls and a conference at the end of the programming year, were also implemented.

### ***Energizing Entrepreneurs (E<sup>2</sup>) Training***

In 2007, the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship at Rural Policy Research Institute offered the four-day Energizing Entrepreneurs (E<sup>2</sup>) to provide the nine CEC teams and coaches with foundational knowledge and skills in economic gardening and identifying and developing community assets. Based on RUPRI's research and field experience across the country, the training featured case studies, educational materials, a network of resource people, and practical techniques for building effective community-based entrepreneurship programs. The training was also intended to function as a team-building forum. Thirty-five team members attended all or part of the training, with team representation ranging from two to five members. In addition, seven coaches attended all or part of the training.

### ***Coaches***

Each team was assigned a coach to provide resources and facilitate the development and implementation of strategies. A head coach oversaw the work of all coaches<sup>1</sup>. Coaches were identified through MSUE and the networks of the overall CEC programming team. Eight of the 10 coaches were employees of Michigan State University, including six Michigan State University Extension staff (including the head coach); one was Outreach Specialist within the MSU Museum, and another was from the Rural Entrepreneurship program. Another coach was from Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG), and the final coach was from the Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, a four-county nonprofit dedicated to community and economic development.

Two coaches alternated between two teams located in the same county. Six coaches were part of the community of the team that they were coaching and three were not part of the community. Most coaches worked in the area of economic development but did not have specific experience with the development of entrepreneurial communities. Coaches were directed to provide teams with specific connections and resources to support their work and to facilitate team processes, such as development of a vision and goals, communication, and action planning. While coaches were directed to be facilitators, not leaders, two coaches ended up also functioning as core team members, with one acting as the team leader.

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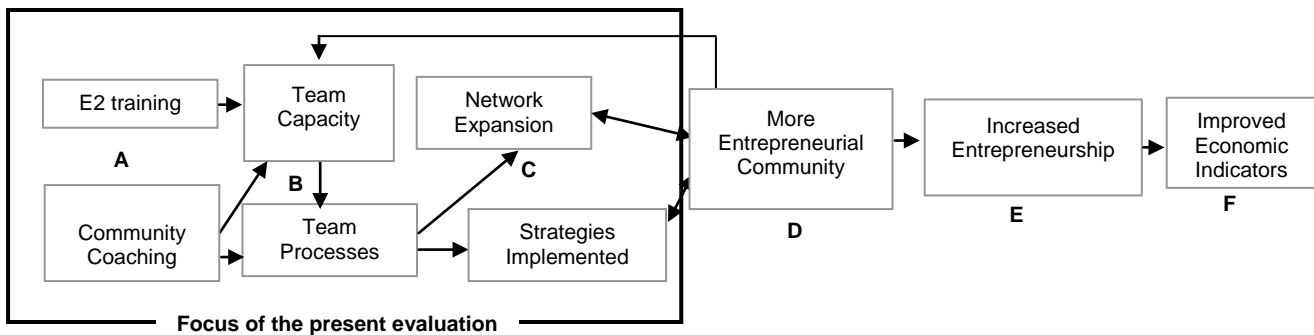
<sup>1</sup> In this study, when we refer to 10 coaches, the head coach is included.

# CEC Impact Model

The process through which CEC was expected to have an impact is outlined in Figure 1. Because (A) the E<sup>2</sup> training and coaching was designed to build (B) team capacity and facilitate team processes, team characteristics mediated the relationship between the intervention and subsequent impacts (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). Thus, more effective team characteristics such as coordination, cohesion, and shared mental models were expected to result in (C) successful implementation of strategies and expansion of networks of (i) entrepreneurs, (ii) the team and larger coalition, and (iii) resources. These direct outcomes of the teams' work were theorized to develop the assets that characterize (D) an entrepreneurial community, resulting in increases in entrepreneur-friendly normative structures, resources, regulations, and operations (Foster-Fishman, 2006). Ultimately, it was expected that this would lead to (E) increases in entrepreneurship and produce (F) improved economic indicators such as more jobs and better wages. Clearly, however, the model proposed that if the pilot teams were unable to function effectively, the process would break down and no impact evidenced.

In the current study, we proposed to examine the model up to (D), the effectiveness of the program on creating a more entrepreneurial community. However, in the process of conducting this study, we learned that the community teams did not have the capacity to measure this outcome effectively. In addition, it is unlikely that most teams could significantly change their communities to become more entrepreneurial within the one-year intervention period. This report, therefore, addresses the appropriateness of the first half of the model, from (A) to (C). It should be noted that this evaluation study does *not* examine the ways in which teams collaborated with community partners to advance entrepreneurship or the impact of the teams' entrepreneurial efforts in their respective communities.

Figure 1. CEC Impact Model



# Methods

## *Data Sources*

Below, we describe the data sources with their respective samples as well as the analytic approach used to evaluate CEC's effectiveness.

## **Team Members**

### *Surveys*

**Measure.** An online survey was implemented in August to October 2007. The survey was sent to all team members listed on any CEC contact lists up to that time, including team members who may have dropped out by that point. Using a retrospective pre-/post design, respondents were asked to:

- Assess the effectiveness of the E<sup>2</sup> training on their *knowledge* of entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial communities, and strategies for building entrepreneurial communities; *confidence* that they could take action in necessary ways to successfully make their communities entrepreneur-friendly; and degree of *teamwork and motivation* within their community teams before and after the training.
- Report on team characteristics and processes, including time spent, resources available, individual and team confidence, consensus, cohesion, learning, skills, and influence personality characteristics, and effectiveness of the team champion.
- Report on experiences with the coach, including frequency of interaction, helpfulness of resources, and effectiveness in facilitating team processes.
- Identify internal and external networks. These data were used to conduct social network analyses (SNA) to examine the centrality of the networks. The team members were asked questions about who within or outside of their team they went to if they needed (a) information; (b) connections to the community; and (c) assistance with day-to-day operations. They also listed the people within the team who made them feel valued. SNA as used in this study required that all people in the network respond; this was the case for only five of the teams (that is, on four teams, not all core team members answered the survey), restricting the SNA results to only those teams.

Questions evaluating the E<sup>2</sup> training were rated on a 1- to 4-point scale and most of the remaining questions were rated on a 1- to 5-point scale, with high numbers representing more of the characteristic. The survey is included in Appendix A.

**Sample.** Data evaluating the E<sup>2</sup> training were available for 26 respondents on nine teams, with the number of respondents per team ranging from 1 to 6 ( $M = 4.1$ ,  $SD = 2.6$ ). Three team members dropped out of the initiative after training, citing that they had other work commitments and they could not spend sufficient time on the CEC program. Data on team processes, coaching, and networks were available for 35 core community team members from 9 teams, with the number of respondents per team ranging from 2 to 6 ( $M = 3.9$ ,  $SD = 1.5$ ).

### *Interviews*

**Measure.** Telephone interviews were conducted with team members in March and April 2009. Questions focused on team members' experience with their community teams, coaches, and the CEC program. We also asked them about their goals, successes, challenges, and outcomes. The interviews were audiotaped, transcribed, and coded. The interview protocol is located in Appendix B.

**Sample.** Based on the input of the CEC evaluation team, the program developers, and the head coach, we attempted to select two members from each team for interviews: (a) a highly involved team member, in order to obtain the perspective of an individual likely to have been immersed in most or all aspects of the team; and (b) a less involved team member, in order to get a sense of team processes that may have been *not sustained* in engaging team members and others on a broad scale. On three teams, the selection criterion did not work. One team had only two remaining members, both highly involved and both interviewed. On another, we were unable to reach the less involved team member and replaced him/her with an involved team member. Finally, on the three-county team, three members were interviewed to ensure that each county was represented. The team had limited members; one county was represented by a highly involved member and two by less involved members. In all, interview data was collected from 19 team members.

### ***PowerPoint Presentations***

In May 2008, after one year of implementation, teams convened at a networking retreat to reconnect with each other and share their experiences in CEC. As part of the retreat, each team gave a presentation describing the goals that they had worked toward and the impacts of their activities. These presentations were analyzed to identify each team's intended goals and outcomes. Two teams did not attend the retreat and therefore did not have presentations available.

## **Coaches**

### ***Coach Reports***

**Measure.** Coaches completed an online survey approximately every two months to report on their teams' activities as well as their own experiences as coaches. Reports were collected for March 2007, April-May 2007, June-July 2007, August-September 2007, October-December 2007, and January-April 2008, for a total of six reports. The final survey is included in Appendix C and is representative of the other coach reports.

**Sample.** All reports were available for all teams except one, which had one report missing. Coaches that shared teams submitted a single report for the team.

### ***Interviews***

**Measure.** Telephone interviews were conducted between November 2008 and March 2009. Coaches discussed the support they received from the CEC home office and the support, resources, and connections that they provided to their team members. Interviews were audiotaped, transcribed, and coded. The interview protocol is provided in Appendix D.

**Sample.** All nine coaches and the head coach were interviewed.

## **Secondary Data**

To characterize the communities within which CEC was implemented, data on community features and geographical area were identified from the 2000 U.S. Census<sup>2</sup>. Data for regional teams were based on the weighted average of the communities comprising the region. Features included population density,

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<sup>2</sup>Except for cost of living index, which was collected from [www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com), 2007.

geographical area, education level of residents, household income, poverty level in communities, cost of living index, main industry in communities, and percent of population that was self-employed.

## ***Approach***

In this study, the unit of analysis was the community team. The small number of teams ( $N = 9$ ) precluded the use of typical quantitative statistical analyses. Moreover, great diversity was exhibited in community characteristics, team goals and strategies, team composition and resources, quantity and type of coaching support—essentially, most factors that had the potential to contribute to the effectiveness of CEC, making a summary statement about whether CEC “worked” difficult. While case studies were an option, we chose instead to use a mixed-method approach that was based on a combination of Neo-Analytic Induction and Qualitative Comparative Analysis by Hicks (1994) and had the advantage of permitting a summary of both qualitative and quantitative data. The core of this approach was to identify teams as “*sustained*” or “*not sustained*” and examine whether differences were evident between the two groups.

## **Defining “Success”**

Team “success” could be defined in many ways—for example, achieving the team goals, expanding the network, developing more entrepreneurs, or increasing employment rates. We chose a modest definition of success: whether teams continued to work together on developing entrepreneurial communities one year after the CEC program had officially ended, or were *sustained*. This measure of success was selected with the assumption that CEC would have greater likelihood of impact if efforts were sustained over time, long after the initial supports provided by the program had been removed. Additionally, this definition avoided a single external criterion of success that risked ignoring the considerably disparate communities involved and their unique contexts and needs.

The determination of whether teams were *sustained* was based on input received during the team interviews. In the interviews, five teams reported that they were continuing to work as a team on their goals and strategies, while four teams were not. Although we considered the possibility that the *not sustained* teams that had disbanded had done so because they had achieved their goals and felt their work was complete, this did not appear to be the case. The data suggested that *sustained* teams tended to make a greater impact in their communities, such as retaining and helping start new business through business counseling centers and providing resources like toolkits. Three of the five *sustained* teams reported the wide usage of resources that they had spearheaded. Still, two of the *not sustained* teams mentioned that although their teams were disbanded, the CEC ideas were flourishing in their communities through other organizations.

## **Data Analysis**

Based on the literature on entrepreneurial development, economic and community development, collaboration, and team processes, and guided by the CEC impact model, we developed five areas proposed to contribute to success:

- CEC programming (E<sup>2</sup> training and coaching)
- Community characteristics
- Team characteristics (team composition and resources)
- Team goals and activities
- Team processes (teamwork, team organization and management, external influence, and leadership)

Table 1 shows the predictors and the sources of data for each.

**Table 1. Proposed Predictors and Data Sources**

Predictors	Team survey	Team interview	Coach report	Coach interview	Team presentation	Census data
CEC programming						
Energizing Entrepreneurs (E <sup>2</sup> ) training	X					
Coaching	X	X	X	X		
Community characteristics						
Geographical area		X	X			X
Better education						X
More viable communities						X
Self-employed population						X
Team goals and activities						
Goals	X	X	X	X	X	
Goals that predicted progress	X	X	X	X	X	
Team characteristics						
Team composition	X	X		X		
Resources	X	X	X	X		
Team processes						
Teamwork	X	X		X		
Team external influence and organizing	X					
Team organization and management	X	X	X	X		
Champions (leaders)	X	X	X	X		

Within each area, we identified a set of hypotheses and indicators (listed in the results section). To analyze the data, information was collected from each data source, coded, and entered into an excel spreadsheet. In the spreadsheet, each team was listed on a row with a column indicating whether they met the criteria for success, with  $1 = Sustained$  and  $0 = Not\ sustained$ . The predictors of success were each entered at the top of a column and the data for each team were coded into categories. In most cases, the categories were *Yes* (represented by  $1$ ), indicating that the characteristic was present, and *No* (represented by  $0$ ), indicating the characteristic was absent in that community or team. Some predictors had an additional category (e.g.,  $0 = below\ average$ ;  $1 = average$ ; and  $2 = above\ average$ ). In other cases, responses were listed in words (e.g., quotes from team members). Each row of excel sheet was filled for each team (see Table 2).

We looked at the patterns of predictor variables that differentiated *sustained* teams from *not sustained* teams. The shaded portion in the table shows the teams that were successful according to each of these predictors. The explanation for these predictor variables is given in the results. Under each broad category of predictors, we tested various hypotheses, which are also listed in the results section.

**Table 2. Example of Data Entry in Excel Sheets**

<i>Team</i>	<b><i>Sustained</i></b>	<i>Subcommittees</i>	<i>Many things on agenda</i>	<i>Small geographical size</i>
1	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	Initially yes, but narrowed it down	Yes
2	<b>Yes</b>	No	Initially yes, but narrowed it down	Yes
3	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	No	Yes
4	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	No	No
5	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	No	Yes
6	<b>No</b>	No	Yes	No
7	<b>No</b>	No	No	No
8	<b>No</b>	No	Yes	No
9	<b>No</b>	No	Yes	No

Notes. Shaded rows represent *sustained* teams.

# Predictors of Team Sustainability

In this section, we identify the characteristics that differentiated *sustained* from *not sustained* teams in each of six areas: CEC programming, community characteristics, team characteristics, goals and activities, team processes, and team champions. For each area, several hypotheses are proposed and tested (Table 3). Again, we defined team success based on their sustainability after the CEC program had officially ended. Please note that we used the terms *sustained* and *not sustained* not to make judgments about the quality of the teams' activities, but to identify programmatic and team characteristics that can inform the improvement of the overall CEC.

**Table 3. Summary of Results**

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Indicators that predicted team sustainability</i>	<i>Indicators that did NOT predict team sustainability</i>
CEC programming		
Energizing entrepreneurs (E <sup>2</sup> ) training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive perceptions of team processes</li> <li>• More positive perceptions of the effectiveness of E<sup>2</sup> for identifying goals and strategies for action</li> </ul>	
Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear facilitating role</li> <li>• Coach focused on entrepreneurial ideas</li> <li>• Goodness of fit with team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located in the community</li> <li>• Attended E2 training</li> <li>• Experience in community development</li> <li>• Experience in entrepreneurial development</li> <li>• Communication with team</li> <li>• Attendance at meetings</li> <li>• Connections to networks</li> <li>• Provision to resources</li> </ul>
Community characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small geographical area</li> <li>• Non-regional teams</li> <li>• Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More viable communities</li> <li>• Self-employed population</li> </ul>
Team goals and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An overarching vision-to create an entrepreneurial community</li> <li>• Clear goals</li> <li>• A small number of feasible goals</li> </ul>	
Team characteristics		
Team composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team size (smaller the better)</li> <li>• Business owners</li> <li>• Local government representation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More sectors</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better utilization of resources</li> <li>• More resources leveraged through partnerships over time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More initial resources</li> </ul>
Team processes		
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual confidence</li> <li>• Team confidence</li> <li>• Specialized Knowledge</li> <li>• Consensus</li> <li>• Open communication</li> <li>• Social cohesion</li> <li>• Coordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credibility</li> </ul>



**Table 3. Summary of Results**

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Indicators that predicted team sustainability</i>	<i>Indicators that did NOT predict team sustainability</i>
Team external influence and organizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External influence</li> <li>• Organizing skills</li> </ul>	
Team organization and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dense network</li> <li>• Ease of meeting</li> <li>• Meeting productivity</li> <li>• Subcommittees</li> <li>• Replacement and expansion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequency of meetings</li> </ul>
Champions (leaders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal characteristics (action-oriented, optimistic)</li> <li>• Communication and collaboration</li> <li>• Sharing credit for success</li> <li>• Coaches' perspective on effective leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distributed leadership</li> </ul>

## *CEC Programming*

### **Energizing Entrepreneurs (E<sup>2</sup>) Training**

The team survey asked team members who attended the E<sup>2</sup> training to report on changes in *knowledge* about entrepreneurship, *confidence* in their ability to take action to develop an entrepreneurial community, and *team processes* as a result of the training. Overall evaluation results and recommendations for the E<sup>2</sup> training are reported elsewhere<sup>3</sup>. Here, we present results comparing perceptions and effects of E<sup>2</sup> for teams that ultimately ended up being *sustained* with those that were *not sustained*.

We tested five hypotheses about the effects of E<sup>2</sup> training. For each, we expected that **prior to and/or as a result of E<sup>2</sup>, compared to not sustained teams, sustained teams would report greater levels of and improvement in:**

- **Knowledge about entrepreneurship.** An important part of capacity for change is having the knowledge to take informed action.
- **Confidence to take action to develop entrepreneurial communities.** In order to take action, people need to feel that the action is feasible and can be carried out with hope for success.
- **Positive perceptions of team processes.** The CEC model proposes that team processes are a key part of being able to develop a sustainable group that can take meaningful action.

In addition, we expected that *sustained* teams would report:

- **More positive perceptions of the effectiveness of E<sup>2</sup> for identifying goals and strategies for action.** We anticipated that teams that left the training with a feasible, actionable plan would be more effective in putting that plan to work.
- **More positive evaluations of the E<sup>2</sup> program overall.** We expected that teams that felt more positively about the training would have gotten more out of it than teams that felt less positively, and that this base of knowledge and opportunity for team-building would be more likely to set them on a path to success.

<sup>3</sup>Creating Entrepreneurial Communities: Energizing Entrepreneurs (E<sup>2</sup>) Training Evaluation, December 2007.

### ***Training Issues That Predicted Team Sustainability***

Results indicated that *sustained* teams were more *knowledgeable, confident, and positive about their teams* both before and after the training, and felt that the training was more effective than did *not sustained* teams. Although *not sustained* teams tended to improve a bit more in *knowledge, confidence, and teamwork* than did *sustained teams*, they had not reached the same level as the *sustained* teams by the end of the training.

**Knowledge about entrepreneurship.** Members of *sustained* teams reported being slightly more knowledgeable about entrepreneurship even before training than members of teams that eventually disbanded (2.1 vs 1.8). After the training, *not sustained* team members reported a greater improvement in knowledge compared to *sustained* teams, although *sustained* teams still reported slightly greater knowledge overall (3.4 for *not sustained* teams, 3.5 for *sustained* teams).

**Confidence in team's ability to take action to develop entrepreneurial communities.** On average, members of *sustained* teams were more confident (2.7) when they entered the program than were members of teams that ended up as *not sustained* (2.4). *Sustained* and *not sustained* teams improved about the same amount in confidence; thus *sustained* teams continued to be more confident about their ability to take action to develop entrepreneurial communities than *not sustained* teams (3.7 and 3.3, respectively).

**Perceptions of team.** At the beginning of the week, members of *sustained* teams gave their team higher ratings (3.2) than did members of *not sustained* teams (2.8). Although members of *not sustained* teams reported slightly more improvement in their perceptions of the team compared to *sustained* teams, the difference was quite small, and members of *sustained* teams continued to report more positive perceptions of their teams after the E<sup>2</sup> training (3.6) than members of *not sustained* teams (3.2).

**Goals and strategies.** Members of *sustained* teams felt that the training was more helpful in goal development than did members of *not sustained* teams (3.4 and 3.0, respectively). They also reported that the training was more effective in helping them develop strategies to achieve their goals than did members of *not sustained* teams (3.2 and 2.9, respectively).

**Overall grade.** Members of *sustained* teams were much more likely to give a grade of "A" to the training than were members of *not sustained* teams (62% and 39%, respectively). Members of *sustained* teams were less likely to give a grade of "C" than were members of *not sustained* teams (15% and 23%, respectively).

## **Coaching**

In the CEC model, coaching was presumed to be critical for supporting teams to put their E<sup>2</sup> training and plans into action. However, the CEC pilot program did not have funds to pay coaches for their work. Therefore, for most individuals recruited, CEC coaching occurred in addition to their regular responsibilities. Additionally, while most coaches had experience in economic development, many were also relative novices in the area of entrepreneurial community development. To address this issue, most coaches attended at least part of the E<sup>2</sup> training, and coaches were instructed to be facilitators of the team's processes rather than team members or leaders. Coaches were also provided with a variety of resources and were able to connect the teams with those resources and other connections of which they were aware. Geography was a final factor in coaching assignments, with some coaches placed locally in order to reduce travel requirements.

We tested 10 hypotheses about the role of the coaches using coach and team interview and survey data.

**We expected that, compared to *not sustained* teams, on *sustained* teams:**

- **Coaches would have clear facilitating roles.** Coaches would not take the role of team members or leaders, but would instead support the ideas and actions of the team by facilitating strategies and

providing resources and connections.

- **Coaches would be located within the community.** We anticipated that having a coach from within the community would be an advantage, as these coaches would presumably be more familiar with local issues, connections, and resources than an externally located coach.
- **Coaches would have attended the E<sup>2</sup> training.** We proposed that coaches who attended the E<sup>2</sup> training would be better versed in the program precepts and therefore able to provide more effective support; moreover, they would have received training on facilitation.
- **Coaches would have community and economic development experience.** We assumed that coaches experienced in community and economic development would have better access to resources and connections around those topics, although it might not be specific to entrepreneurial development. We also expected that these coaches would have a better understanding of community and economic development issues.
- **Coaches would have entrepreneurial development experience.** As with community development experience, we expected that teams with a coach who had entrepreneurial development experience would have an advantage in accessing knowledge, connections, and resources.
- **Coaches would focus their coaching on entrepreneurial ideas.** We anticipate that when coaches concentrated on facilitating entrepreneurial development activities with their teams, teams would be more likely to take action.
- **Coaches would have frequent communication with teams and regular attendance at meetings.** The benefits of coaching were expected to be transmitted via communication between the coach and the team; without good communication, coaching could have no effect.
- **Coaches would provide network connections to the team.** We expected that coaches who were able to suggest connections and strategies to expand the team's networks would have teams that would ultimately be more *sustained*.
- **Coaches would provide good resources to the team.** Teams with coaches who could provide new and useful resources were expected to have a better chance of taking effective action.
- **Good fit between the coach and the team.** In the coach-team relationship, both sides matter. We expected that when a match existed between the coach's approach and experiences and the team's needs, as well as when both sides have similar expectations, teams would be more *sustained*.

### ***Coaching Characteristics That Predicted Team Sustainability***

Although many coaching characteristics did not predict success, a few were very important: coaches being clear about their role as facilitators, focusing on supporting teams around entrepreneurial development rather than other issues, and having a good fit with the team.

**Clear facilitating role.** While coaches were instructed to be facilitators, letting team members take the lead, rather than functioning as active team leaders or members, in practice, this varied. Coaches of *sustained* teams were more likely to have clear facilitating roles. Two coaches of *sustained* teams expressed some role confusion (one had been assigned to the team late; the other was treated as a team member to the extent that some of the team members did not realize he/she was an assigned coach), but the other three were very clear about their roles. Three coaches were also team members. One of these stood back and let other team members make decisions (*sustained team*), one had been working with the team members prior to CEC and continued in his/her regular role during the CEC project (*sustained team*) and the other was the team leader (*not sustained team*). The head coach said:

*A coach can be incredibly valuable, input to your progress, if they're allowed to be a coach—just as a coach in a sporting team, they're not out there throwing the ball, or kicking the ball, or whatever case, or making the tackles. They're out there providing some help, guidance, and that's how they're most effective.*—Head coach

All coaches for the *not sustained* teams had difficulty identifying their roles. In some cases, team dynamics were an issue, and coaches felt they needed to take a more active role in order to permit the team to move forward. One team member mentioned that their coach, who was also a team member, lost some of his/her authority with the team because of role confusion. Another coach was forestalled by the team champion in his/her attempts to establish relationships with team members. Additionally, there was confusion about what a “facilitating” role meant, as demonstrated by a third coach:

*I was more of a coach. I don't think I facilitated anything, and I purposely tried not to. In fact, they asked me to, twice I think, and I chose, we talked about it, I would have if they want, really pushed it, but I thought it was more important that they and their community do that.—Sustained team coach*

**Coach focused on entrepreneurial ideas.** Coaches of all but one *sustained* team focused on encouraging more entrepreneurial ideas in the teams; the remaining team did not have good relations with their coach. Coaches of *Not sustained* teams were more focused on correcting or negotiating the team dynamics and often grappled with administrative responsibilities. These coaches may have been restricted in what they could do because they felt that they needed to get the team to function first as a team before they could focus on the tasks that would support entrepreneurship.

**Good fit with team.** Three *sustained* teams had particularly good fit with their coaches, while none of the *not sustained* teams did. In the teams with good fit, the coaches talked about how their teams had the capacity to move in the right direction. Likewise, team members respected their coaches tremendously and credited coaches for some of their success:

*We recognized our CEC coach at our annual [team] meeting as Partners of the Year. And that's a big recognition, but we really felt very strongly about their involvement in helping these communities—Sustained team member*

### ***Coaching Characteristics That Did Not Make a Difference***

**Located in the community.** *Sustained* teams were no more or less likely to have coaches from within the community. However, regardless of whether they were from a *sustained* team, several interviewees suggested that a local coach might not be a benefit. For example:

*A thing that disappointed, from the coach standpoint, was having somebody that you already knew...because you're looking for another perspective out there that is in a different environment than what you are. So it would have been nice if we had somebody different. We probably felt a little cheated with that.—Sustained team member*

*Part of the problem is that many of our coaches, because they are part of the community, have filled that staffing role on other initiatives...working with these same people...I think the community looked at them from the same lens, if you will. So that was a difficult transition.—Head coach*

**Attendance at E<sup>2</sup> training.** Six coaches attended the training. They were evenly divided between *sustained* and *not sustained* teams.

**Experience in community development.** Six coaches were experienced in community development. They were evenly divided between *sustained* and *not sustained* teams.

**Experience in entrepreneurial development.** Six coaches were experienced in entrepreneurial development. They were evenly divided between *sustained* and *not sustained* teams.

**Communication/attendance at meetings.** All but two coaches (one from a *sustained* and one from a *not sustained* team) were reported to communicate well with their teams. Even distant coaches were available

via phone or email. While coaches of *sustained* teams were somewhat more likely to attend most meetings, the pattern was not strong enough to support the hypothesis. Quality rather than mode of communication appeared key, as one coach mentioned:

*I'm probably one that was the most distant physically from them. I was very accessible to them. They did a lot of email chatter around the core team, which was five or six people, and I was always involved in that e-list. And every time I got something, I tried to respond with my thoughts and ideas, and I worked primarily, most directly with [name of the champion], who was the lead there, and besides the email connections, [name of the champion] and I would talk on the phone, maybe two times a month we would have a chat about what was happening, and what was going, and sometimes she would initiate it and other times I would follow up with [him/her] on something.—*

Sustained team coach

**Coach connections to networks.** Five coaches were reported to have connected teams to new networks, but no pattern was evident that distinguished between *sustained* and *not sustained* teams.

**Coach provision of resources.** All coaches were reported to have provided resources to their teams.

### ***Recommendations***

- Assign one coach to each team consistently throughout the program.
- Assign coaches to teams before the program starts to enable them to build trust with the team and be part of the initial planning. Permit coaches and teams to have time to develop relationships.

*I never really bonded with [the team]...I guess all the teams had done this, formed themselves ahead of time. I just came in after the fact.... I just felt like an...interloper or something.—*Sustained team coach

- Assign a coach from outside the community to provide alternative perspectives, avoid existing power issues and personality/community dynamics.
- Train coaches in their roles and responsibilities prior to beginning coaching and revisit and reinforce core concepts over the course of the program.
- Have all coaches go through the full E<sup>2</sup> training prior to or concurrent with their teams to ensure that coaches and teams have the same language, concepts, and tools at their disposal.
- Keep the coaching role separate from the team member/leader role.

## ***Community Characteristics***

Communities varied widely in size, location, and economic status, presenting unique challenges for each team. To assess whether the characteristics of the community predicted whether teams were *sustained* or *not sustained*, we examined several community demographic variables to see whether they differentiated between the two sets of teams.

We assessed four hypotheses related to community demographics. For each, **we proposed that, compared to *not sustained* teams, *sustained* teams would be:**

- **From smaller geographic areas.** We expected that teams representing smaller areas, such as small cities/townships, would have better communication, more accessibility to one another, and more common goals than would teams representing large regions such as counties or multiple-county regions.
- **Better educated.** We anticipated that more highly educated communities might be more entrepreneur-friendly and aware of the long-term benefits of entrepreneurial communities.

- **More economically viable.** We expected that communities with higher household incomes, lower poverty rates, and higher cost of living indexes would have communities with more accessible resources and supports for teams to access and work with.
- **Higher levels of self-employment.** We anticipated that communities with greater self-employment would be especially open to activities of groups supporting entrepreneurship.

### ***Community Characteristics That Predicted Team Sustainability***

The most important community characteristic that differentiated whether teams were *sustained* or *not sustained* was whether they were in a limited geographic area or a large region. In fact, geographic area was one of the most important predictors of success in the entire study.

**Geographic area.** Four of the *sustained* teams represented small cities or townships, while all of the *not sustained* teams represented counties or multiple counties. One *sustained* team represented a county, but the members had a long history working on various entrepreneurial activities together even before the CEC program.

Larger regions encountered two major issues. First, they often struggled with basic logistics, such as holding team meetings. One team member stated:

*We tried to flip-flop the meetings, of one month in our community and the next month in theirs. That didn't always work ... and the communication between the two communities was not always up to speed.*—Not sustained team member

Second, areas within a region sometimes had different levels of readiness, inhibiting identification of a common set of goals. As one member mentioned:

*[One area] was, rightly, pressing ahead with their idea of the youth entrepreneurship project, which I know is still ongoing. And so that didn't seem to me like the right project for our [area]... It seemed as though our [area] got sort of further and further behind from where the rest of the team was going.*—Not sustained team member

**Education.** The majority of *sustained* teams (3) had relatively high levels of college-educated residents in their communities, while the majority of *not sustained* teams (3) did not. The percent of high school graduates in the community did not differentiate between the *sustained* and *not sustained* teams.

### ***Community Characteristics That Did Not Predict Team Sustainability***

**Economic status.** Communities of *sustained* and *not sustained* teams did not differ in median household income, poverty rates, or cost-of-living Index.

**Self-employment.** Self-employment rates in these nine communities averaged 6.5% ([www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com), 2007). No pattern distinguished between *sustained* and *not sustained* teams.

## **Recommendations**

- Select teams that represent smaller areas, such as small- to medium-sized cities, towns, and townships; well-defined neighborhoods that have their own history and identify within larger urban areas may also be appropriate, although this is not clear from this study, as no teams were from urban areas. Teams composed of multiple communities or large geographical areas (e.g., counties or multiple counties) tended to have problems with teamwork and other team processes that can be attributed at least in part to the different communities' disparate issues and concerns.

## Team Goals and Activities

We first give an overview of the goals and outcomes, if available, mentioned by teams and coaches. We then describe what kinds of goals, right from the beginning, distinguished *sustained* teams from *not sustained* teams.

### Goals

Table 4 summarizes the number of teams initially identifying each type of goal and eventually achieving or not achieving the goal. We then describe in detail the types of goals and activities that teams mentioned.

**Table 4. Number of Teams by Intended Goals and Outcomes**

	N	TEAM TARGETED OUTCOME	
		Yes	No
Youth entrepreneurship	7	1	6
Networking and collaboration	7	9 <sup>a</sup>	-
Business resource center	4	4	-
Data collection and dissemination	4	1	3 <sup>b</sup>
Resource creation (toolkit, website, entrepreneur facilitator)	4	2	2
Awards recognition program	4	2	2
Entrepreneur club (E-Club)	2	1	1 <sup>c</sup>
Media attention	-	4 <sup>d</sup>	-

<sup>a</sup>Seven teams identified this as an initial goal, and all ultimately worked on it.

<sup>b</sup>Four teams identified this as an initial goal; one accomplished what they set out to do fully, while three were unable to disseminate data.

<sup>c</sup>Both teams were achieved this goal, but one lost the E-Club by the time of the interviews.

<sup>d</sup>No teams initially identified this as a goal, but four teams received media attention.

### Youth Entrepreneurship

Seven teams identified youth entrepreneurship as a goal was the most frequent goal listed by teams (seven out of nine teams; three *sustained*, four *not sustained*). However, only one was able to achieve substantial positive outcomes in this area. Activities to support youth entrepreneurship included:

- **Connecting with schools.** Two teams established contacts with teachers and school staff, including informational seminars. However, one team disbanded; this team additionally reported that their community was not ready for a youth entrepreneurship program, although they did not specify why.
- **Entrepreneurship fair.** One team conducted a youth entrepreneurship fair; turnout was low.
- **Teachers' training.** One team worked with the intermediate school district and conducted training for teachers, but the team disbanded.
- **Youth participation in internship programs.** A team member who represented the education sector helped youth access internship programs.
- **Partnerships with 4-H and YMCA.** One team was working with 4-H and YMCA to plan summer 2009 programs at the time of the interview.
- **Partnerships with Junior Achievement program.** Two teams partnered with Junior Achievement programs in their community to identify opportunities for youth entrepreneurship.
- **Entrepreneurship curriculum.** One team identified an entrepreneurship curriculum to use in the

future. Another team was developing a youth entrepreneurship curriculum at the time of the interview.

- **Online course for youth entrepreneurship.** One team developed online modules supplementing an existing curriculum to enable youth to get involved in entrepreneurship program. The modules were to be implemented in fall 2009.
- **Youth entrepreneurship camp.** One team was working to organize an entrepreneurship camp for middle school youth at the time of interview.
- **Youth recreational and business center.** One team was planning to develop a youth recreational and business center in their community at the time of interview.

When interviewed, three *sustained* teams were still working on components of youth entrepreneurship (the other two did not have youth entrepreneurship on their agendas). However, all *not sustained* teams had found it difficult to pursue this goal—two did mention that if they reconvened around entrepreneurship, they would continue to target youth.

**Challenges.** Team members and coaches described many challenges in the implementation of the *youth entrepreneurship* program in schools.

- **Commitment from teachers.** Teams found it hard to get commitment from teachers to participate in entrepreneurial programming because all were volunteers. Some teachers also had issues with ideas that the teams presented.
- **Change in school staff.** Relationships were built with certain school administrators and staff. When those individuals left, teams had to start from scratch with their replacements.
- **Difficult to incorporate entrepreneurial curriculum.** All teams found it challenging to integrate entrepreneurial curriculum into the existing school curriculum.
- **Youth attitudes about entrepreneurship.** Participants provided insights about the unwillingness of youth to go into businesses. One participant shared his/her view as:

*High school kids and, in a lot of cases, college students, don't ever see opening their own business as a...viable career once they finish their schooling. I think there's that hard-wired process that, "Okay, I get my high school diploma and I go to work for somebody," or, "I get my college degree and I go to work for somebody."*— Not sustained team member

**Steps to success.** One team was most successful at integrating the youth entrepreneurial component into the schools. They identified the following steps:

- **Favorable attitudes of school superintendents.** This team had a long history in the community and people were aware of its existence. When the team decided to pursue youth entrepreneurship program, they found support from school superintendents, which was invaluable in facilitating the other efforts.
- **Exploratory class.** The team discovered that it was hard to add anything completely new and exclusively to already demanding and standardized curriculum. Instead, they incorporated the youth component as an exploratory class. .
- **After-school activity.** The team started an eight-week after-school E-Club for middle-school students.
- **Online courses.** The team initiated some online courses for middle-school students.
- **Collaboration with Career Tech Center.** The team collaborated with the career technology center for youth in their community. Youth who participated in the program developed products for sale; the patent for one of these products was underway at the time for interview.



### ***Business Resource Centers***

Four teams (three *sustained*, one *not sustained*) updated or established Business Resource Centers in their area libraries. The purpose of these centers was to provide free business counseling and resources to prospective entrepreneurs in the community. The Business Resource Centers provided the following services:

- Business counseling (i.e., one-on-one guidance to people who were interested to start their businesses)
- Series of seminars and lectures
- Trainings and workshops
- Resources and guidelines to start business
- Business Inventory
- Invited counselors to host hours at Business Resource Center

The teams eventually classified as *sustained* collaborated with SCORE or other business concierge programs to provide business counseling. All three *sustained* teams mentioned impacts made by Business Resource Center:

- Business retention in communities that were closing business due to economic hardship
- Better lines of communication at business resource centers
- Increased number of clients at resource center
- A few new businesses started as a result of counseling
- Very high business counseling demand in one of these communities

Two other *sustained* teams did not establish formal Business Resource Centers, but they provided business counseling to interested entrepreneurs through collaboration with various programs, such as the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) or Small Business and Technology Development Centers (SBTDC).

### ***Entrepreneurs Club (E-Club)***

Two teams opened E-Clubs in their communities. They invited speakers and conducted trainings, workshops, and mentoring. Both E-Clubs were developed primarily by the team champion; however, one champion was viewed as taking the credit for its development, while the other distributed credit among team members. When the former champion left the team, the E-Club disbanded, but the latter team's E-Club expanded regionally. The champion of this team shared:

*I might be considered a champion but, we really have a strategic team that evolved out of the CEC program. And all of those folks are the champions. So, you know, I really have a group of champions that are working alongside me, beside me.—Sustained team member*

### ***Data Collection and Dissemination***

Four teams (two *sustained* teams and two *not sustained* teams) explicitly made it a goal to collect data in their communities about entrepreneurial and business assets and needs. All used surveys to collect data. Survey data were supposed to be transformed into a business resource directory or business inventory; however, only one team reported using the information effectively (for their visioning plan). At the time of the interviews, another team was still working to provide centralized information across agencies by creating a “one-stop resource center.” Two teams did not use the information they had collected.

## ***Creating Resources***

Three teams (two *sustained*, one *not sustained*) envisioned creating resources for their communities beyond those already described.

- **Tool kit.** One team created an entrepreneurial toolkit that would provide new entrepreneurs the guidance to start a new business. The team members reported that the toolkit was widely disseminated (i.e., made available at the library, city office, and Chamber of Commerce).
- **Enterprise facilitator.** One team reported that one of their goals was to recruit an enterprise facilitator at their regional E-Clubs. In support of this, they wrote a USDA grant that was rejected. Although this grant was rejected, the team was seeking other funding at the time of the interviews.
- **Websites.** Two teams set out to create websites. One was in progress at the time of the interviews, and the other indicated that they were having problems uploading to the server.
- **Resource mapping.** One team worked on mapping the resources available in their community:

*Just a wealth of resources. We had 65 or 70 people attend... We profiled what these resources were.*—Sustained team member

## ***Networking/Collaboration***

Seven teams (three *sustained*, four *not sustained*) mentioned in their initial goals that they sought out to form partnerships, expand their teams through networking, and form collaborations with other governmental and non-governmental organizations in and outside of their communities. The other two *sustained* teams did not mention networking and collaboration as an explicit goal, but did identify collaboration with different agencies as accomplishments at the end of the program year. On one team that eventually disbanded, members reported that they had started to communicate with other agencies; however, the team's coach had a different perspective, stating that one reason for the team's poor sustainability was the lack of communication between the team and the other agencies—in the words of the coach, "the CEC team was not inclusive."

*Sustained* teams networked with organizations, small businesses, and entrepreneurs in and outside of their communities, and collaborated with the local government; government collaboration turned out to be such an important issue that we discuss it further later in this report. Some also raised funds and leveraged resources such as staff from non-traditional sources through these partnerships. *Not sustained* teams were much less likely to establish partnerships and collaboration with the local governments.

## ***Media Attention***

Four teams (three *sustained*, one *not sustained*) received media recognition for their efforts. While none of these teams identified media attention as an initial goal, they recognized its value after getting it, and subsequently worked to publicize their efforts.

## ***Awards Recognition Program***

Four teams (three *sustained*, one *not sustained*) intended to establish recognition programs for businessmen and entrepreneurs in their communities. Whereas the *not sustained* team did not create an award program, two of the *sustained* teams did recognize entrepreneurs in their communities and the third was still working on the program at the time of interviews.

## ***Other Outcomes***

Other outcomes reported by teams included:

- Easier business registration
- In a local election, people elected officials supportive of the CEC team's goals and activities.

## Goals That Predicted Success

In defining success, we avoided definitions that focused on achievement of team goals because teams started from very different places and had very different goals. Instead, we hypothesized that the kinds of goals that teams began with might differentiate teams that were eventually *sustained* from those that were *not sustained*. While we did not specify how those goals may be different for *sustained* and *not sustained* teams, a few patterns emerged. Specifically, **compared to not sustained teams, sustained teams had:**

- **An overarching vision—to create an entrepreneurial community.** *Sustained* teams articulated an overall goal of changing attitudes of people in their communities and making their communities more entrepreneurial friendly. For example, they said:

*Our goal was to have more entrepreneurial, self-reliant business-friendly community.*—Sustained team member

*We set out to create a culture that embraces entrepreneurs.*—Sustained team member

*Not sustained* teams identified and worked toward goals, but none mentioned a long-term broader vision. *Successful* teams also first identified their overall mission, and then worked toward small concrete goals that were steps towards the broader vision.

- **Clear goals.** Successful teams had clear goals to work toward, whereas for not sustained teams, future steps were unclear.
- **The capacity to translate overarching vision into a small number of achievable goals.** While many teams started with lots of items on their agenda, three sustained teams focused on a limited number of goals that had a good chance of success; the other two sustained teams began with a large list of goals, but subsequently narrowed the list to a more manageable slate. This strategy provided opportunities for small wins that teams could celebrate and get motivated around. A coach said:

*They picked some things that were easy to accomplish, but yet good. And so they had a couple wins under their belts...they were able to get some traction.*—Head coach

Of the *not sustained* teams, all but one had many things on their agenda or had no agenda at all. The other *not sustained* team had a small number of achievable goals, but struggled with logistics.

Coaches facilitated the process of goal identification used by *sustained* teams. For example, coaches of two *sustained* teams mentioned that they pointed out and reinforced small wins. In addition, when one of the *not sustained* teams became frustrated that they were not able to achieve much out of their many goals, the coach prodded them to go for the low-hanging fruit; in response, the team successfully established an E-Club. However, this was not sustained.

## Recommendations

- In the initial training, focus teams on the development of a long-term, overarching vision that can serve as a touchstone for the development of more specific goals as the process unfolds.
- Ensure that coaches are experienced with or receive training in supporting group decision-making through collaborative processes.
- From the beginning, set expectations for teams about how the process of identifying goals and activities is likely to work—that is, that there will be a period of brainstorming, followed by goal-

and priority-setting. Some teams had members who were against brainstorming or revising initial goals; alternatively, some teams discussed options for so long that team members started to leave due to what they perceived as a lack of progress.

- Have coaches use logic modeling or other strategic planning processes to facilitate teams to identify activities that will lead them to the immediate and intermediate outcomes that will feed their long-term goals. This process will also help teams identify the pieces that need to be developed (e.g., connections to certain groups, resources that need to be identified) to make their vision happen.
- Have coaches facilitate their teams to prioritize their goals, increasing chances of success by intensively focusing on a few areas rather than working less effectively across many areas.
- Early on, have coaches facilitate teams to identify activities that can provide motivating “small wins” to enable evidence of progress; these will be both motivating and encourage community buy-in.
- Have coaches work with teams to decide whether they will initiate completely new activities, build on what already exists, or both.
- Provide specific training on how to get publicity for the program in order to get community buy-in and local and regional government backing.

## *Team Characteristics*

### **Team Composition**

The team selection process for participation in CEC emphasized having diverse sectors represented on the team. For this study, we also examined the size of the team and diversity with respect to gender as well as representation by specific sectors. We identified five hypotheses, **expecting that, compared to *not sustained* teams, *sustained* teams would:**

- **Have more team members.** We anticipated that larger teams would have wider networks and more people to implement activities, thereby increasing the chances of meaningful change.
- **Include several sectors.** We presumed that teams that include diverse sectors (e.g., business, education, government, arts, culture, and libraries, nonprofits, etc.) would have wider reach, more connections, and broader interests to support the development of entrepreneurial communities.
- **Be represented equally by both men and women.** Teams that have both men and women may have advantages in the kinds of sectors represented or in skills and interaction processes that may be more characteristics of one gender or another.
- **Have team members who are business owners.** Business owners may have existing networks that are critical to implementing and expanding entrepreneurial activities.
- **Have local government represented on the team.** For some changes critical for the development of an entrepreneur-friendly community to occur, collaboration with local government is a must.

### *Team Composition Factors That Predicted Team Sustainability*

Several aspects of team composition differentiated *sustained* from *not sustained* teams, including team size, representation by business owners, and *effective* inclusion (or eventual inclusion) of local government.

**Team size.** Teams had an average of 7 core team members, ranging from 3 to 10. Contrary to expectations, *sustained* teams tended to have fewer members than *not sustained* teams (6 and 9, respectively). Although potential benefits for large teams may be expanded networks and more hands to do the work, a large team

is also likely to have more challenges related to logistics and getting consensus about goals and activities. Team size should be guided by team goals; if networking is a primary goal, teams may benefit from more team members, but if program development and implementation is a primary goal, fewer team members may be necessary.

**Business owners.** About half of all the CEC participants were business owners, with two teams completely made up of business owners and one team having no business owners at all. On all of the *sustained* teams, more than half of the team members were business owners. This was the case for only one *not sustained* team. However, it did not make a difference whether the person considered him/herself an entrepreneur.

**Local government representation.** All but one team had a team member who worked in local government, so simply having the government sector on the team did not predict success. However, when we looked more deeply at the process of collaboration with local government through the team representative, a clear pattern emerged. Four types of relationships with government via the team member were evident:

- **Collaboration from the beginning (successful teams).** Three *sustained* teams had good relationships with local government through their team member from the beginning. One team in fact ran much of their activity directly through local government activities, while the other two effectively balanced multiple sectors, including government. An advantage for these teams was that they were able to build on some existing activities:

*We've really got some of our traditional programming going, like SCORE, existing businesses is a very active program for us now. But we didn't feel like we necessarily had to reinvent the wheel. It was just to make sure that, you know, trying to make the car run as efficiently as possible sometimes.*—Sustained team member

- **Initial conflicts, followed by the development of collaboration (successful teams).** The two other *sustained* teams initially had conflicts with local government despite its representation on the CEC teams; however, with much persistence and collective work, these teams were eventually able to reach move to an effective collaborative relationship with their local governments:

*A commissioner has become very involved in the group. We've made presentations to the city commission a couple different times. I mean, we're trying to... you know, we're trying to incorporate all those kinds of things.*—Sustained team member

One team, which did have a government representative on the team, noted that striking a balance on the core team between government people and business owners/other sectors is important; this team's community initially perceived CEC as another government program. Moreover, many people in this team's community felt that CEC was unnecessary due to the presence of strong programs operated through local government.

- **Lack of government support or active undermining by government (not sustained teams).** Despite the presence of government members on their teams, two *not sustained* teams did not have support of local government:

*Well, one member (from local government) was not much of a team player... One of the problems was that [his/her] community helps fund the project. We had to come up with a certain amount of money to be part of the project. [His/Her] community was part of that, and [he/she] also sits on the board that oversees our coach... There were a lot of things that happened, that because of that dynamic, that made it difficult to get around [him/her].*—Not sustained team member

If relationships with local government are poor, access to the community can be cut off:

*We had a couple of meetings in one community, and instead of promoting CEC, it became a complaint session for the local businesses against the city government. And it was very awkward and it wasn't dealt with. It was allowed to go on and on. And it actually caused some difficulties in the community, going back to the city manager so that [he/she] asked that we not have any more meetings in the community.— Not sustained team member*

On two teams, ideas developed by the CEC were appropriated by local government. Although the ideas might have flourished in the community, the team members got discouraged in lack of appropriate credit and the team fell apart. One of the members shared with us:

*See, here's where the thing kind of fell apart. We did have a person that was with [government]. And we would talk about all these ideas at our committee. And then [he/she] would take them and implement them within [his/her organization]. And then it would come out before we had a chance for everybody...—Not sustained team member*

These team members placed much of the responsibility for their teams' disbanding on the difficulties of collaborating with local government, which obstructed their ability to take action.

- **Few attempts to collaborate with government (*not sustained teams*).** The other two *not sustained* teams were both regional. One did not include government representation. The other did not appear to find a way to incorporate government involvement that would bridge the multiple regions, and essentially did not address the issue.

### ***Team Composition Factors That Did Not Matter***

**More sectors.** On average, teams had five sectors (range = 2 to 10), but the number of sectors did not differentiate *sustained* and *not sustained* teams. Overall, team members were most likely to come from business and business support services, including economic development associations (7 teams), the business community (6 teams), the Chamber of Commerce (4 teams), business services (3 teams), and entrepreneurial services (2 teams). Three teams included representatives from education (both higher education and K-12). Local government was represented on all teams but one, although these team members may have joined later in the process. Arts, libraries, and nonprofits were not well-represented: arts (1 team), libraries (1 team), and nonprofits (2 teams). Only one core team reported representation from a lending institution.

**Gender.** Teams' gender distribution did not definitively distinguish *sustained* and *not sustained* teams. However, there were suggestions that having a number of women on the team might be a positive force; three *sustained* teams had more females than males, while only one *not sustained* team had more females. The key may be to have more than one of each gender. For example, one of the *sustained* teams had a single woman, who mentioned how she felt excluded based on gender-stereotyped expectations from male colleagues:

*I felt like I was expected to be the secretary. And that's not me (laughs). I own my own company. You know, I used to be secretaries on different boards and stuff like that and I guess that was probably something that disappointed me a little bit. Because it was, "[She'll] keep us organized," "She'll do this," "She'll do that." And for me, personally, I guess I wanted to be more of a team member doing things other than writing things down.—Sustained female team member*

This team member ultimately left the team.

## ***Recommendations***

- Require core teams to include business owners/entrepreneurs.
- Encourage core teams to have local government representation. However, also provide training on ways to incorporate government into the team, and pitfalls that can occur when relationships with government are not collaborative or when government may view CEC activities as duplicative or may appropriate CEC ideas. In the RFP, tell applicants to take a hard-eyed, objective look at their history with local government and to provide evidence of cooperative relationships. In cases where relationships with local government need to be built, helping teams develop and implement a plan to link effectively with local government may be a better course than requiring local government membership from the outset.
- With the above recommendations in mind, encourage teams to make sure that teams are balanced between local business and local government.

*A lot of them were kind of governmental and quasi-agency type of folks...And so then we started engaging more entrepreneurs....now we've got too many entrepreneurs and not enough government people. And there's a real fine line...You've got to have that right mix of folks in the room.—Sustained team member*

- Require core teams to have multiple sectors represented on the core team, but note that additional sectors can be included through connections to partners. Large teams with many sectors risk additional team conflicts if there is not a history of working together or the team does not have consensus about what they want to accomplish.
- Encourage teams to include multiple men and multiple women, and to represent the community with respect to race/ethnicity. A recent study has shown that people living in communities with a high proportion of Hispanics are more inclined towards entrepreneurship than others, irrespective of their personal ethnicity (Loveridge, Miller and Satimanon, 2009). It may thus be important to tap into the entrepreneurial energies of multiple groups to achieve results.
- While research suggests that the optimal size of a team is five to seven people (Knowledge@Wharton Network, 2006), this evaluation suggests that team size matters less than who the people are, what strengths they have, and how well they work together. Small teams can be successful by developing strong partnerships with other groups; large teams can be successful by developing subcommittees. However, team members are likely to leave, so a minimum number of team members should be required in the selection process that will permit the team to continue even if up to half of its members are lost.
- In implementing the above recommendations, guide teams to include all members as true partners. Recruiting members simply to fill a quota or meet these guidelines without ensuring that they are both interested in participating and will be part of an engaged collaborative process is likely to cause more problems than solutions.

## **Resources**

Teams that began or obtained more resources to support their work, such as office space, administrative support, officially contributed time, funding, and so forth, would be expected to have an advantage in taking action compared to teams that did not have access to resources. In this section, we tested three hypotheses on the availability and utilization of resources by the team members. **We expected that, compared to *not sustained* teams, *sustained* teams would have:**

- **More initial resources.** Resources increase the ability of team members to conduct their activities.
- **Better utilization of the resources available.** Utilization of resources is more important than its availability.

- **More resources leveraged through partnerships over time.** Teams that can elicit resources from partnerships may have chances of being successful.

### ***Resources Characteristics That Predicted Success***

The level of resources available initially appeared less important to success than what teams did with those resources and how they approached increasing their access to resources over time.

**Better utilization of resources.** All but one coach of *sustained* teams reported that their teams fully utilized the meager resources available. One team member expressed both positivity and the challenges:

*We never let...limitations on financial resources prevent us from doing stuff, but the reality is that some things do cost money. So, you know, when budgets are tight, you still need some funding to move forward...So I'd say that's one of the challenges moving forward.*—Sustained team member

Two of the *not sustained* teams started with more than average resources, but their coaches indicated that the teams did not fully utilize the resources available.

**More resources leveraged through partnerships over time.** Regardless of success, most teams built some resources through their partnerships, and the regional teams shared their resources with each other. However, what is notable is that although two of the *sustained* teams had at one point lost more than half of their team members, they were able to partner with other organizations and thereby build resources for their teams. For example:

*It was our community foundation taking on a role for community support and with exposure to our efforts and [his/her] emphasis; they stepped up and said, "We need to do something." And they put money behind this. And we now have...what they call a business concierge. And this is... a 3-year granted program, mostly through community foundations from the county, \$100,000 a year for a dedicated employee. And he is a business support person. He is to help entrepreneurs, existing businesses, help them get, find, whatever, resources they need. This is huge!*—Sustained team member

In addition, compared to *not sustained* teams, *sustained* teams tended to generate more resources over time in the form of human support (three *sustained* teams, one *not sustained* team), and two *sustained* teams built up resources through partnerships with non-traditional private organizations.

### ***Resources Characteristics That Did Not Make a Difference***

**More initial resources.** Three teams reported having only one resource, three teams had three resources, and three teams had more than three resources. For example, assuming that a resource was available if *any* team member reported it, 8 teams had officially contributed time, 5 teams had access to a secretary/assistant, 6 teams had office space, 6 teams had funds, and 4 teams had a website. Thus, the extent to which the teams had access to supportive resources varied substantially. The number of resources, however, did not differentiate *sustained* and *not sustained* teams. Team members viewed the lack of resources as a problem:

*The challenges had been just the lack of financial resources. And then the reality is that there has to be financial resources in a constrained economy, we all need guidance and direction. And we need assistance in being directed into those... those resources that exist for entrepreneurship development or, you know, economic development from that standpoint*—Sustained team member



*Well, the biggest challenge is...what are you trying to do and what are the goals? And when you have limited time and little...limited resources and limited people, where do you devote your energy? —Sustained team member*

Nonetheless, it appears that how teams used the resources that they do have and the efforts they made to get more resources was more important than the amount of resources that they began with.

### ***Recommendations***

- In the application process, require letters of support from both participating public or private organizations.
- In the application process, letters of support should explicitly state that at least one person has to dedicate a certain portion of their paid work time per week as a team coordinator. In addition, require organizational letters of support that show commitment to contribute some combination of office/meeting space, administrative support, and/or other support that teams can justify will help them meet their goals.
- Ensure that teams use their existing resources (administrative support, office space, and funding for projects) to the maximum extent possible—and use it to leverage additional resources, including funds. Resource development may become an explicit goal in the team’s activity plan.
- Make sure that all team members are aware of the resources that the team has available.
- Work more closely at the beginning to identify strengths and resources available in the team and build on those available assets that the team members have.
- Identify social networks in the beginning and develop a list of assets that they might bring to the teams.
- Identify a comprehensive list of state and national resources for both information and for funding, materials, curricula, etc. Ensure that this list is easy to use, with resources categorized by type and with short definitions that will make the resources on the list understandable and accessible.
- Make coaches responsible for identifying a comprehensive list of local and regional resources. Have coaches collaborate on the regional lists.
- Have coaches facilitate team sessions to develop plans for accessing these resources.
- Train and coach teams in innovative ways to partner with other initiatives and organizations, including developing relationships with non-traditional organizations (i.e., not “the usual suspects”) that will permit resources to be shared.
- Have coaches facilitate team sessions to brainstorm and plan for partnership development that can build both resources and community buy-in to CEC activities.

## ***Team Processes***

*Getting good players is easy. Getting them to play together is the hard part.—Casey Stengel*

The CEC model proposed that for the program to be effective, team members needed to have the capacity and readiness to work effectively together as a team—and without effective teamwork, *sustained* expansion and activities were unlikely. While the CEC program took on the responsibility of building team capacity to take action specifically around developing entrepreneurial communities by holding the E<sup>2</sup> training and providing a coach for connections and resources, other elements of teamwork needed to emerge out of the people who made up the team and their interactions. Coaches were instructed to facilitate team processes for effective work, but they had differing views on what this meant and how much control they were to take. Thus, team attributes and processes were the piece of the program that the CEC developers had the least influence on, but were likely to make or break team success.

To study team processes, we primarily looked at team survey and interview data. Because one *sustained* team had survey data for only one team member, that team is excluded from these analyses, resulting in a sample of four *sustained* teams and four *not sustained* teams for sections using team survey data. Based on the research literature on work teams, we tested 15 hypotheses related to teamwork, team organization and management, and external influence and organizing, **expecting that, compared to *not sustained* teams, *sustained* teams would have:**

### ***Teamwork***

- **More confidence that they, as *individuals*, could complete activities and tasks successfully.** To be able to conduct team work, team members need to be able to feel like they can effectively handle assignments that they take on. The questions in this section included: “I am confident in my understanding of how to perform my tasks” and “I am confident I can make decisions under ambiguous conditions for my tasks.”
- **More confidence that they, as a *team*, could complete activities and tasks successfully.** Excellent teamwork moves beyond the abilities of the individual members. The questions in this section included: “Our team is confident we can cope if our tasks become more complex” and “Our team is certain we can cope with different task responsibilities competing for our time.”

*When a team outgrows individual performance and learns team confidence, excellence becomes a reality.—Joe Paterno*

- **More consensus about the goals to be accomplished and how to achieve them.** A shared vision is critical for team members to efficiently work together to make change happen. Questions in this section included: “Our team agrees on the way we perform our tasks” and “Our team has a shared sense of task importance.”
- **More open communication.** Teams that are open to multiple perspectives and encourage innovative thinking may have more success than teams that communicate rigidly or in a hierarchical fashion. Team members reported on items like: “People are encouraged to ask ‘why’ regardless of rank” and “People give open and honest feedback to each other.”
- **More social cohesion among team members.** While it is not absolutely necessary to like the people one works with, especially on a long-term, volunteer project such as CEC, members who do not enjoy spending time with one another would be unlikely to continue to participate. Items in this section included: “Our team members get along well with each other” and “Our team members enjoy spending time together.”
- **More specialization.** By having team members each possess unique skills and knowledge, and having all team members aware of their fellows’ abilities; teams have more capacity for taking action than teams where members all have the same skills and knowledge. Questions related to specialization included: “I have knowledge or expertise about an aspect of the team activities that no other team member has” and “I know which team members have expertise in specific areas.”
- **More credibility among team members.** One characteristic of effective teams is that members feel that they can trust information provided by their colleagues. We asked statements like, “I trust the other members’ knowledge about the team activities is credible” and “When other team members give information, I do not want to double check it for myself.”
- **More coordination.** Smooth functioning and organization, hallmarks of good coordination, promote team success. Items in this section included: “Our team works together in a well-coordinated fashion” and “Our team has very few misunderstandings about what to do.”

### ***Team External Influence and Organizing***

- **Greater external influence.** Many of the activities the teams undertook were expected to be more

successful if teams had larger networks, especially among people in the community who had the power to make decisions on issues of meaning for entrepreneurial support. We asked items such as: “I have connections to people that can influence the decisions that affect this community” and “I have connections to people that can influence decisions.”

- **More organizing skills.** In a project that targets getting community residents and leaders to support toward change, organizing skills can be helpful. We asked team members about the extent to which they agreed they had skills, for example, in “Recruiting people for the team” and “Creating a plan for action.”

### ***Team Organization and Management***

- **Denser networks within the team.** A dense network within a team means that members have direct connections to many other members, facilitating information sharing and knowledge of what the other team members are involved in. In contrast, a network that has subgroups or one where team members tend to all communicate through a single centralized person rather than with each other is less flexible and connected.
- **Easier time meeting.** Meetings are key communication forums: places to brainstorm ideas, develop plans, and assess what worked and what did not work, and then start the process again. We expected that *sustained* teams would be better able to schedule and hold meetings compared to *not sustained* teams.
- **More productive meetings.** Pulling the team together is important but not sufficient; meetings are unlikely to be effective unless they are productive and goal-oriented.
- **Subcommittees.** While organization of subcommittees is more likely in larger teams, these can be an important way to share workload and make progress on multiple fronts. However, subcommittees are viewed here as functional or task-oriented, addressing a particular issue or activity, rather than regional, which have the potential to be divisive rather than productive.
- **More replacement and expansion of team members.** Initiatives often lose members after the initial excitement transitions to the reality of doing the work. Teams that are able to replace lost team members and even expand the team may have a greater chance of sustainability and impact.

### **Team Processes That Predicted Success**

*Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, and working together is success.*—Henry Ford

Most of the team processes we examined differentiated *sustained* and *not sustained* teams, despite the fact that most of the differences were not particularly large. Teams with poor team processes run a very high risk of being unable to function effectively enough to make significant and long-lasting change.

#### ***Teamwork***

**Individual confidence.** Members of *sustained* teams scored an average of 3.9 on individual confidence, while members of *not sustained* teams scored an average of 3.6.

**Team confidence.** Members of *sustained* teams scored an average of 4.0 on team confidence, while members of *not sustained* teams scored an average of 3.7.

**Specialized knowledge.** Members of *sustained* teams scored an average of 4.1 on specialized knowledge, while members of *not sustained* teams scored an average of 3.8.

**Consensus.** One of the areas that most differentiated *sustained* and *not sustained* teams was consensus—team members feeling that they agreed upon their goals and strategies. Members of *sustained* teams scored an average of 4.2 on team consensus, while members of *not sustained* teams scored an average of 3.7.

**Open communication.** Members of *sustained* teams scored an average of 4.3 on communication, while members of *not sustained* teams scored an average of 4.0. One team member from a *not sustained* team speculated:

*It took us several weeks to get organized and things were chaotic for quite some time. And we never really recuperated from that. My perception and my reasoning for this was that several of us were so intermingled in our business world that it was very difficult to make suggestions, which then were viewed as criticisms.*—Not sustained team member

**Social cohesion.** Another relatively large difference between *sustained* and *not sustained* teams was social cohesion—team members liking one another and enjoying spending time together. Members of *sustained* teams scored an average of 4.2 on social cohesion, while members of *not sustained* teams scored an average of 3.7. It should be noted that two of the *sustained* teams had lost most of their members, and for some time, both teams had only two members. On the positive side, the teams became more cohesive:

*Well, I think that our team was relatively small and one person had to bow out. But as a result of that, the few remaining team members really pulled together and they became very tenacious and determined to move forward. And they were very clever in how they used a variety of resources to do that. Our team members looked out for each other.*—Sustained team member

**Coordination.** Members of *sustained* teams scored an average of 3.8 on coordination, while members of *not sustained* teams scored an average of 3.6.

### ***External Influence and Organizing***

**External influence.** Members of *sustained* teams scored an average of 4.3 on influence, while members of *not sustained* teams scored an average of 4.0.

**Organizing skills.** Members of *sustained* teams scored an average of 4.2 on organizing skills, while members of *not sustained* teams scored an average of 4.0.

### ***Team Organization and Management***

**Dense network.** As expected, *sustained* teams were more likely to have dense networks—that is, most members were connected with multiple other team members. Two of these teams, at some point in the process, had only two members, resulting in easy connections. One recruited more members and became a highly cohesive team. The other remained a small team, but had strong external connections to local government and the chamber of commerce. Another *sustained* team had subcommittees that worked on different tasks, but had effective structures to communicate among the subcommittees. The final *sustained* team had a long history of working together.

Three *not sustained* teams had networks comprised of multiple subgroups, which can contribute to conflict, lack of information-sharing, and exclusion. Two of these were because they were comprised of multiple communities. Another *not sustained* team had a network that was centered around just one person (the “gatekeeper”), meaning that most people on the team communicated primarily with that person. This type of organizing structure is risk because the entire team is likely to fall apart if the central person leaves; and because information filtered through that person may not get the benefit of larger perspectives and cross-pollination of ideas.

**Ease of meeting.** While *sustained* teams had little trouble meeting, only one *not sustained* team met without difficulty. The teams comprised of subgroups had problems finding times and locations, and the other team found the gatekeeper acted as a bottleneck and did not communicate explicitly about meetings.

**Meeting productivity.** *Sustained* teams reported that meetings were productive, either from the beginning of the project or following an initial period of visioning and brainstorming. However, some team members found this period without specific action, and at least one team member left because of it.

Two of the *not sustained* teams had trouble getting together for meetings at all. In the gatekeeper team, one person monopolized the meetings, limiting suggestions from others. The final team reported that meetings were unproductive and turned either into complaint sessions about other local organizations or chat fests:

*I called our meetings the “slap-and-giggle group.” We would often be on a tangent that had nothing to do... you know, someone was getting married and they were talking about their wedding plans, and da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da. And it was a huge waste of time.—Not sustained team member*

**Subcommittees.** Four of the five *sustained* teams had subcommittees to work on different goals of the teams. One of these teams reported:

*We’ve got six committees, resource and tools, programs, finance, outreach, youth, and fund raising. And we’ve got at least three people in each committee and to volunteer, just say, “Yes, I’ll be on that committee.” So that helped us to broaden... when you define the work, it makes it easy for people to say, “Well, yeah, I’ll help you do that.” But when it’s pretty abstract, people don’t know exactly how they can contribute. But if you break it down into six program areas, well, then, they can say, “Well, yes, I’d like to work on that,” and “This is how I can help.” So pretty much each of those committees are meeting separately from the entire group, too.—Sustained team member*

A coach of a *sustained* team said:

*They had a team of four or five people, and they are really powerful people. They all kind of contributed in different ways, and it didn’t fall on one person’s shoulders, and they kind of took the bull by the horn...I give them credit for being strategic.—Sustained team coach*

The *sustained* team that did not form subcommittees had a small team. None of the *not sustained* teams had subcommittees.

**Replacement and expansion.** All teams except one faced loss of team members due to job changes, dissatisfaction with the potential or actual work load, or team conflicts. Three teams, including two *sustained* teams, had substantial losses and the remainder had more limited losses. Having team members quit was an especially significant blow when the former members had been trained in E<sup>2</sup>:

*The biggest initial challenge was that half of my team that went to training fell away. We only lost two members, but that was half of our team, 50% of our team, that we had invested money in. You know, that we had invested \$1,500 each in training and they came back and said, “We’re not going to be involved anymore.” What that set up for us was then we had to get through that psychological impact of that decision.—Sustained team member*

*Sustained* and *not sustained* teams did not differ in the extent of attrition. Instead, how teams reacted in the face of these losses made the difference; the two *sustained* teams with substantial attrition had team champions who were very determined and possessed a “someone has to do it” attitude. These teams regrouped, replacing their members and making critical partnerships with other organizations through

which work could be done. In fact, according to coaches, all but one *sustained* team expanded their teams, but none of the *not sustained* teams recruited new members:

*The original team, the numbers fluctuated and no effort was made to appoint [new team members].—Not sustained team member*

## Team Attributes and Processes That Did Not Matter

### *Teamwork*

**Credibility.** Members of *sustained* teams scored an average of 4.2 on credibility, while members of *not sustained* teams scored an average of 4.1. Although *sustained* team members did score slightly higher than *not sustained* team members, we did not consider the difference large enough to be meaningful.

### *Team Organization and Management*

**Meetings.** One may assume that if the teams spend more time monthly on the meetings, the team would likely to achieve their goals faster than their counterparts. To test this hypothesis, we took the weighted average of the time spent by the teams- we categorized the teams as above average and below average. Three teams, including one *not sustained* team spent more than average time on the monthly CEC activities. Overall, we failed to see any effect of time spent on monthly meetings on the success of the teams.

## Recommendations

- In selecting team members, teams should carefully consider their history together—whether they have worked together before, how well they were able to coordinate and share responsibilities, and simply whether they like one another. In the RFP, provide guidelines for team member selection: “What strengths would this potential team member bring to the table?” “Is this person interested in being an engaged, active team member?” “Have we worked with this potential team member before and how did it go?” Answering these questions will help in developing a good team.
- Encourage teams to include only those who really want to participate. Otherwise, they are likely to leave, potentially after significant investment has been made into their training.
- Require teams to have office/meeting space and administrative support, even if shared. This does not mean full-time, dedicated support, but rather that these supports are available and responsibility is assigned.
- Train coaches or make sure coaches are experienced in conflict resolution and facilitation of team processes in addition to content-based entrepreneurial community development.
- Help teams see the benefits of and develop dense networks. Train coaches to watch for red flags: for example, one person taking over or multiple coalitions or groups with little communication across groups.
- Suggest that teams develop subcommittees that can divide the workload and responsibilities. However, ensure that a venue exists for subcommittees to meet regularly to report out, reorient toward the broader goals, and get feedback from the full team.
- Remind coaches to encourage teams if they get frustrated with slow initial progress. Coaches can intervene by walking the team through their goals, challenges, solutions, and strategies, noting small successes and helping develop specific steps that can be easily achieved to provide evidence of progress, however small.
- Instruct coaches to step in if meetings are unproductive to the point of making team members

frustrated. In some cases, meetings may be devoted to brainstorming, which is not necessarily unproductive. If, however, team members are beginning to view the process as not going anywhere, it may be a good opportunity to facilitate a plan to achieve small wins through easily achievable activities to show progress.

## *Champions*

Excellent leadership is another critical characteristics of good team functioning. For CEC, we asked teams about who they considered to be “champions”—the most influential, motivating, and visionary team member or members. We expected that, compared to champions of *not sustained* teams, champions of *sustained teams* would:

**Be more action-oriented and optimistic.** All champions were considered to be the most influential and visionary people on their teams, but expected that the champions of *sustained* teams would be exceptionally goal-focused and positive, determined to take plans through to completion.

**Have more open communication and collaboration with other team members.** We also anticipated that champions who exchanged ideas, had open discussions, and encouraged collective decisions would have teams with motivated team members who felt like part of the process and so would be more sustainable and effective in taking action.

**Share credit for success.** The literature on leadership notes that effective leaders share credit for successes among their teams and do not take credit solely for themselves.

**Distributed leadership.** In addition, in analyzing the data, we discovered that four teams (two *sustained* and two *not sustained* teams) had more than one champion, in what we called “distributed leadership.” We did not specifically identify hypotheses about distributed leadership, but report on it below.

**Have coaches rate them as more effective leaders.** To get an alternative perspective, we asked coaches whether they felt that the champions identified by teams were effective leaders.

## **Characteristics of Champions That Predicted Team**

**Personal characteristics.** Compared to champions of *not sustained* teams, champions of *sustained* teams were more likely to be:

- **Action-oriented.** Many interview participants repeatedly emphasized the importance of taking action over just talking:

*[Team] talked and discussed the things to death, but never able to take action.*—Head coach

Champions of four *sustained* teams and two *not sustained* teams were considered action-oriented. This was particularly critical for the two *sustained* teams that faced huge attrition; despite this setback, due to the determination and “someone has to do it” attitude of their champions, they continued to be sustained a year after the program ended.

- **Optimistic.** Optimism and hope keeps people going even during times of crisis and frustration. Champions of four *sustained* teams were optimistic, while none of the champions for *not sustained* teams were optimistic.

**Communication and collaboration.** All champions of *sustained* teams communicated and collaborated well with their teams, while all but one champion of *not sustained* teams did so. For example, in the team

where the champion was a gatekeeper to the team, he/she functioned as a communication bottleneck between the coach and rest of the team members:

*The team ought to have some kind of regular communication, expectations, honest communication, representation, where they all had a voice. No, it wasn't that way. It was like two opposites who have a project together.*—Not sustained team coach

On another *not sustained* team, a team member discussed how the champion's lack of leadership skills and communication could not resolve the ongoing issues in their team. In contrast, a champion of a *sustained team* reported that he/she trusted the team members and invited open communication:

*You let them have ownership of the task that you give them. I'm not a micro-manager. So it's like if I'm asking you to do something, are you willing to do it? And [if] you're carrying it through and doing it, then I want you to have the authority... you don't have to come and ask me every five minutes, "Is it okay if I do this?" You know, I had strong people on my team...they may take it and go in a different direction than I had in mind, but that's okay. I mean, if that's the direction that the group wants to go, then that's the direction of the group.*—Sustained team champion

Another *sustained* team champion concurred:

*I enjoy being the champion or the chairperson. My style of leadership is that I value everyone's opinion and...you put the topic out there, you have discussion, and then I think it's the leader's role is to kind of facilitate the discussion, keeping it on track... Saying, "Okay, now we have the information. Now let's make a decision. What is it that we want to do?" ...I may not always be in favor of what the consensus was, but I feel strongly that the consensus of the group that's voting... once that consensus is made, that's what you go with and you support.*—Sustained team champion

**Sharing credit for success.** Champions of *sustained* teams shared credit for success among their team members:

*Overall, our team has worked beautifully together. And it's funny because I might be considered a champion, but we really have a strategic team that evolved out of the CEC program. And all of those folks are the champions. So, I really have a group of champions that are working alongside me, beside me*—Sustained team champion

A coach validated this:

*[Champion] did really well at bringing a lot of players to the table. Strong leadership there, really, and [he/she] didn't need the glory. That was the beautiful thing...[he/she] gave lots and lots of people credit.*—Head coach

In contrast, the champions of two of the *not sustained* teams wanted to take credit for what they were doing. One coach gave an example:

*[Champion] never felt like [he/she] got enough credit for what was going on. So the focus was always on where [champion] was going professionally, in power issues, which was the champion's focus more than a community focus, if that makes sense.*—Not sustained team coach

**Distributed leadership.** We did not hypothesize about the effects of having distributed leadership, or more than one champion, and results were inconclusive, but suggested that it can present challenges. Distributed leadership worked for one *sustained* team, which operated subcommittees. For the other *sustained* team and the two *not sustained* teams that had distributed leadership, this mode was less effective; the coaches of these teams reported that since the teams had more than two champions, no one was accountable and ready to take responsibility. While by definition the *sustained* team continued to meet



and was sustained for at least a year after the CEC program ended, it was less effective in taking action than some of the other *sustained* teams.

**Coach perceptions of champions' effectiveness.** We asked the coaches of individual teams if they thought that the champions were effective leaders. While one *sustained* team coach did not participate in the last round of the coach report, where this question was asked, all other *sustained* team coaches reported that the champions were very effective. Coaches for the *not sustained* teams reported that champions were not effective or were themselves the champions and so their ratings are not included.

## Recommendations

- Encourage or provide leadership training for all team members, and especially for team members who emerge as team champions.
- Have coaches facilitate champions and all team members to take ownership over specific activities to avoid overreliance on one person whose loss could cause the team to a standstill. As one coach said:

*I encouraged them to find diverse sources of energy to accomplish things. I did not want them to have one select leader who felt the burden of all of the work that they could do. So, right from the beginning I was constantly encouraging them to allow one of their other members to take responsibility for different projects, for the program.—*  
Sustained team coach

- At the same time, have coaches help the team identify someone—a team member, not the coach—who is willing to hold the team accountable to make progress.

# Challenges

The data in this section came predominantly from interviews; the section is divided into two main parts: Challenges faced by the teams and challenges faced by the coaches.

## *Challenges Faced by Teams*

In interviews, team members as well as coaches described the challenges that they (or their team) encountered in trying to implement the CEC initiative.

### *Establishing a Presence in the Community*

Many teams reported that because other programs, mostly governmental, existed in their communities, they found it difficult to establish themselves as a unique community presence that did not duplicate ongoing efforts. One team member shared:

*There's a lot of programs out there, there's a lot of resources ... what was different about this program? You know, how do we establish ourselves?—Sustained team member*

A coach said:

*Besides the distance, besides losing representatives, besides being new to a position, I would say there's a significant lack of understanding in our region for supporting entrepreneurs. There's a lack of support in that work up here. And so trying to convince the important players or the important officials or movers and shakers to grasp that economic gardening concept has been a bit of a challenge.—Not sustained team coach*

Another coach talked about territorial attitudes that the team faced:

*I always think it should be easier than it is to cut across existing institutional process and get people to collaborate. [Laughter] but my experience tells me over and over that it isn't, and the existing services and arms of government, and regional services and opportunities are very protective and turf-based, even when there's a cause out there that overlaps with everybody, and it would be marvelous if people could get that.—Sustained team coach*

### *Unrealistic Expectations for Impact*

Team members felt the time period for the project was too short to result in community impact. Most teams focused on building their capacity to take action for several months. A team member said:

*People are always looking at achievement, and this was not something that there was going to be achievement in a short amount of time.—Sustained team member*

### *Lack of Trust between Parts of the State*

Three CEC teams were from northern Michigan. Their team members mentioned that their communities were wary of information and programs originating in southern Michigan, and felt that this might have contributed to difficulty in getting the communities engaged in the initiative.

## ***Using Volunteers***

A significant challenge mentioned by team members was the reliance on volunteers to implement the program. A coach discussed the considerable time commitment for team members involved in the specific aspects of the work:

*They're not staff people, they don't have the time... even though the training, their expertise...to sit down and look at a zoning ordinance and go through it, that's the thing that they need to work with the city or whatever.—Sustained team coach*

## ***Focusing the Vision***

Most teams encountered a major challenge in sorting through the plethora of information that they received in their initial trainings and getting to manageable action. Many teams wanted to accomplish a lot and started to get frustrated with their slow progress. A team member reported:

*I think the primary challenge for everybody was, number one, determining exactly what we wanted to do with our training and what type of program we wanted to create in our respective communities. Who we felt we could partner with? Who could really take the lead in putting those programs in place?...That was difficult. That was difficult. Just trying to be focused and identify what we wanted to do with it and subsequently how to do it. ...You're provided a wealth of information and very effective training, but the bottom line is it's up to you to implement and put that training and that information to work for you.—Not sustained team member*

A coach echoed:

*They wanted to do so much ...they didn't know where to start, and they didn't have the patience to work through things methodically, and then just kind of under the pressure of achieving a lot of things.—Sustained team coach*

Another team member described the same frustrations:

*Just really identifying exactly what we wanted to do. What real program, what real initiative we wanted to put in place. It took us a long time to really come up with a list of... I think we ended up with three big main goals.—Not sustained team member*

## ***Regional Teams***

The results described earlier point to the difficulty of implementing the CEC program in regional teams. A team member said:

*It would have been better if we would have just taken one team and stuck with it, but that wasn't... I think it's good to have a team that fits in one community, rather than trying to friend two communities.—Not sustained team member*

A coach concurred:

*Blending two communities is not a good idea...They like each other and all that, but it was very confusing and very hard for them to focus on their particular community.—Not sustained team coach*

Regional teams also ran the risk of not being informed about activities that occurred in the other communities on the team:

*A lot of new information, not only about building entrepreneurship but about what other things were going on in the whole county. We have a county-wide team, so I only*

*knew a lot about what was going on in my own small community and not the other communities in our county.*—Not sustained team member

### ***Confusion about Coach's Role***

Initially, some teams were confused about the role that their coaches were to take. For example, because resources, such as a paid staff person to assist with administrative work or team activities, tended to be scarce, some teams expected the coach to fulfill those roles:

*I would say the best way I could describe our coach would be...more of an executive assistant, I guess. I don't mean for that to be derogatory. But my thought is...oftentimes the executive assistant to the company CEO actually does most of the work...keeps their boss on track, focused, organized, but doesn't necessarily make the big decisions. They arm their bosses with all the information that they can and then the supervisor makes that decision.*—Not sustained team member

Other teams expected the coach to act as team leader:

*I think they fully expected us to be the chairperson and driver of this committee. And the program was not set up that way and we certainly were trained as coaches not to do that. We're on the sidelines. They're the ones having the ball in their hands.*—Head coach

### ***Amount of Information from the Central Office***

Many coaches mentioned that the amount of information shared by program developers at the beginning overwhelmed the teams. A coach reminded us that CEC was not the only thing team members had to deal with:

*Oh, my gosh. It was just incredible amounts of information. And almost overwhelming to our teams. And I think that by utilizing the coaches a little better, we could have been able to say, "Let's soften that down a little bit," or "Let's tone that down a bit." Because these people have lives, too, you know? Their entire universe isn't centered around CEC.*—Not sustained team coach

Another coach said:

*I think in our enthusiasm to share resources, I think we hit them with a fire hose sometimes when we should have just done it with a garden hose.*—Not sustained team coach

### ***Lack of Resources***

Most teams worked on minimal resources (i.e., human and financial resources), which team members and coaches both saw as a significant challenge in working efficiently toward team goals:

*"I think they really needed a paid staff person to do a lot of the stuff that they wanted to do. There's no money for that, so they're being more advisers instead of trying to actually do everything themselves."*—Not sustained team coach

Another coach shared:

*It seems like, regardless of what community does it, you always need an office, a "staff person" to take some of the ideas and run with it...it just seems like having a staff person is useful and helpful and if that staff person's a team member, versus a coach,*

*seems like it would work out better because that's what we ended up being, was a staff plus the support that never...then we're still on the line with our board of directors ourselves because they're saying, "Well, how come x, y, and z isn't getting done?"* — Sustained team coach

A coach shared that access to resources would formalize the process, which in turn would improve the working of the teams.

*All of these people were doing this out of their hearts and their basements. They didn't have a legitimate home...I thoughtfully cringe at wanting them to be more formal...but I think in order to make it work better, that that's one of the things that would have had to happen.*—Sustained team coach

## ***Challenges Faced by Coaches***

### ***Coaching Multiple Teams***

At least two coaches alternated between two teams, creating inconsistency and difficulty engaging for both coaches and teams. One coach remarked:

*I was working with another person, and he/she and I were switching on the two teams. He/she would take the one team, and I would take the other team, and then we'd switch back and forth, just depending on our schedules. And I think it would have worked out better if we would have stuck with one team.*—Sustained team coach

### ***Joining Team Late***

At least four coaches formally joined their teams after the teams had been formed. One coach shared the consequences of joining late:

*The team that I never really bonded with had kind of formed, and formed themselves ahead of time. I just came in after the fact. I just felt like an...interloper or something.*—Sustained team coach

### ***Coach's Role Confusion***

Some coaches had problems with how their roles were defined. Some coaches wanted to work with the teams closely as their members. One said:

*With my position being economic development coordinator for the county, developing entrepreneurship I felt like is part of my job responsibilities, but yet with the role of the coach, I felt like I should step back and let them make the decisions, be more of a facilitator versus an active, vocal member...So it was difficult. I wanted to make more decisions, be a more vocal member of the group, a team member versus the coach. It was hard to sit back, it seemed like we weren't progressing as far as I felt like we should of.*— Not sustained team coach

*Hindsight's always 20/20. I maybe would've come on as a member of the group and had someone else serve as coach, maybe it would've been a lot more successful.*—Not sustained team coach

At least one coach started as team member; one team member shared his/her frustration with the shift in roles:

*At first [coach] started out as a team member. And then he/she stepped back and said that it was our team, our grant, our products and, basically, just did the minutes and provided us with the handouts...I think it left us floundering.—Not sustained team member*

### ***Competing Communications***

Some coaches mentioned challenges with communications coming from different levels of the system. One coach shared his/her frustration: by being overtaken by the head coach and also provided a suggestion for future expectations about roles and responsibilities,

*There was an overall CEC program chairman for the state. And oftentimes that CEC chairman for the state circumvented the coach's role and communicated directly with the teams. That caused some confusion on our part as coaches because sometimes the teams knew about stuff before we knew about it, you know? And so then the teams call us up and say, "Hey, what are talking about here?" And I'd say, "Well, geez, I have absolutely no idea." And so that put us in an awkward position as far as what our role was, and it also put us in an awkward position as far as the knowledge thing.—Not sustained team coach*

He/she suggested clarifying these expectations in the future:

*Again, this is all part of expectations and relationships and roles; in that information flow for the statewide program, does it flow through the coaches to the team or does it just go to the teams? Each other way was no problem as long as we understand. The way I understood at the beginning was the coach was really going to be that information flow. And I'm not looking to be a gatekeeper here. It just made it a little more difficult.—Not sustained team coach*

## ***Recommendations***

In interviews, team members and coaches were asked to make some recommendations.

### ***Reduce Amount of Information to Most Useful Pieces***

Team members and coaches suggested that the most important information should be disseminated on priority basis. A coach said:

*We offered way too many choices. "Oh, you can do..." "Here's 66 different ways that you guys can..." Literally, it took them six months to even figure out what the heck they were going to do. And if they had fewer choices at the beginning, say, "Okay, here's a couple of different things. These are two models to choose from," ...it would have lessened that a little bit and they could have been focused a little bit better.—Not sustained team coach*

One team member suggested that a model or framework around which communities could focus their work, especially at the beginning, is essential:

*There has to be, right from the top up, a framework that...every community can use, that there are certain things that need to be provided out to the community. Then each community can have their... their own list or their own expo or their own business meetings, after-hours meetings. But there should be a list of certain items that every*

*community needs to have in order to be successful and this road map or framework that we need to follow.*—Not sustained team member

Some coaches and team members felt that the information coming from the central office very academically oriented. One team member commented:

*This was an academic type of thing. Just academia coming to tell us how it should be....A lack of real life experience and all that sort of thing.*—Sustained team member

They suggested that in future work, information should be more realistic and easily translated into community work.

### ***Connect Communities...But Don't Compare Them***

Many team members and coaches suggested that the nine teams and their coaches should form a tighter network than they did. One team member emphasized that teams were working on their own and suggested that they be accountable to each other and to a common repository of information:

*There were some good connecting points, but we were all doing stuff as teams. We were all doing stuff and ...it just wasn't getting fed to this central repository. And I think that mechanism was established, but there was this real lack of accountability.*—Sustained team member

Two coaches tried disseminating information about teams' strategies and accomplishments as they occurred, both to provide examples to other teams and to recognize the teams who were making strides. However, other team members felt slighted and that they were being compared negatively to these teams; they suggested that it would be helpful to highlight and discuss the distinctly different places at which teams start.

*When I go to CEC meetings...I was just so jealous of them. It took me a while to get to the point, like, "Quit looking at [team]. They're in a different place than you are," you know? I think that made us frustrated because we're not doing what they're doing. So I guess to better identify and make, you know, a community feel more comfortable with what point they're starting at.*—Sustained team member

Another team member got very frustrated with the coach because of what was perceived to be constant comparisons with other teams:

*I think every community has a personality. Every committee had a personality of its own. Where one thing may have worked in a different community, it wasn't going to in another community. And so I wonder if [coach] didn't learn that every community is different and there are just some things, based on the personalities of the people there, some things could work, but some things just weren't going to go. And so that was probably the frustrating thing. There was no one-size-fits-all approach.*—Not sustained team member

### ***Define Success***

Some coaches as well as team members thought that the success was not very well defined in the CEC pilot project. One of the coaches shared with us,

*We didn't do a very good job of identifying how we measure results. Because to me, what this is really all about, is at the end of the day, are we growing the economy, are we creating businesses, are we expanding businesses, are we creating more jobs.*

*Nowhere in any of this, from the very beginning to the very end, was there any discussion about, “Okay, guys. We’re doing all this stuff, but, ultimately, the question’s going to be, ‘Okay, you did all this stuff, but were any more jobs created as a result? Were there any new business started as a result? Did any businesses grow and expand as a result?’”* —Not sustained team coach

Another coach, when asked what was successful for his/her team, said:

*Well, I have a tough time when you say, “What was successful?” That...indicates that you want to say, “Well, there it is. There’s our goal fully formed.”* —Sustained team coach

This coach shared that the time period to assess entrepreneurial success allowed by CEC was very short and commented, “Entrepreneurship is a never-ending story.” He/she further added:

*Our measure of success—or non-success—is, have you awakened an awareness that entrepreneurship is a teachable and therefore learnable discipline? Yes or no? Do people go back to saying, “Our measure of success is how have we diverted the culture from employee, or job-taker, culture” as we call it—big factory culture, there’s many terms for it. Have you been successful in creating entrepreneurship or job-making? Creating employers rather than employees?... We think we have. The community... regards starting their own business as just as possible of success as going to work for some company.*—Sustained team coach

### ***Structure the Overall CEC Program More***

Some team members and coaches expected the program to be more structured. One team member complained that some teams were asked to apply, whereas others were invited to join the program and felt that if there were some guidelines for selection, they should have been consistently followed. A team member said talked about the challenges and benefits of the loose structure:

*I guess our expectations were that it would have been a bit more of a structured pilot. It was really open-ended. And we were truly the guinea pigs. And that’s okay. We can recognize that out of that, the benefits that came from that was our own personal and professional growth and our ability to try and work out what the heck we were doing, you know (laughs).*—Sustained team member

Some team members also thought that there should have been more accountability:

*If you create a procedure or you say, “Well, we’re going to flex this procedure but expect that this is going to happen,” you really need to stick to that to make sure a group follows through and comes through and there’s some level of accountability to the pilot.*—Sustained team member

### ***Provide More Follow-Up Trainings and Support***

Both coaches and team members said that they were appreciative of the support that they received from the CEC central office. However, they also mentioned that some information was redundant and would be more useful if tailored to individual needs. Some coaches, for example, suggested that the first retreat after the E<sup>2</sup> training should be held early on to enable inexperienced coaches to get support through networking. A coach explicitly laid out the reason:

*The first training thing, that was all theoretical, and then we actually got into the trenches—and then it’s nice to, once you get your feet wet, talk to the communities, the trainers again, and other teams to figure out what’s going on, early on while you can still do something about [it].*—Sustained team coach



A team member suggested having follow-up trainings after the E<sup>2</sup> training:

*It was good to do the real in-depth training, but I think in order to keep that at the forefront and in order to continue to engage...you would need to do follow-up sessions or something like that. Because I hadn't heard anything else, really, from CEC. I mean, after we graduated, there was a couple of additional programs that was put on, but other than that it dropped off the board, too. So it almost seems like, even from MSU's perspective, that it has been a dropped priority.—Not sustained team member*

The coaches also suggested that the coach phone conversations should be more substantial and content focused. Most of them said that these phone conference calls were more like reporting sessions than content-based support. A coach said:

*It was interesting to hear what other people were doing. I don't think I learned anything that helped me from it. It was more reporting on what we were doing, so it wasn't any philosophy. It would have been nice to get to that.—Sustained team coach*

Another coach suggested that more training be facilitated by the use of the latest technology for both coaches and team members to save travel funds:

*I know travel dollars are at a premium at this time and maybe if we could have enhanced the phone conferences by doing it in combination with the Breeze technology...put up slides and reports.—Sustained team coach*

### **Make Sure Team Members Share Training Information**

Almost all teams lost team members—sometimes the majority. To address this problem, one idea was to disseminate the initial training content to all team members and some people beyond the immediate team. One team members described how she disseminated all the information that she had before she moved to another position:

*I did pass on a lot of information both to the [team and the] Chamber of Commerce. I attended some of their general membership meetings and talked about the information that I had. I shared materials with them. But I didn't want to be the sole person, you know, in possession of that information. It was important to me to put those ideas out there. And there was a readiness for that.—Not sustained team member*

### ***Impact of Economy on Program Implementation***

Coaches and team members had mixed views about the impact of the economy on future CEC programs. Most suggested that a poor economy is an excellent environment within which to initiate the CEC program, but a few thought it would be hard for people to get loans or take risks. A coach said:

*I've definitely seen a significant increase in people interested in small business development in our area. And I think that's a direct correlation to the inability to find jobs. And so people are looking at alternative ways to create an income and that is by starting their own business.—Sustained team coach*

A team member had a different view:

*I think the challenge that we faced is the challenge that everybody's facing, and that's the economy right now. And people are very leery about borrowing money. People are very leery about opening businesses. And so when you combine those two, people are scared to death about borrowing money to open a business. There wasn't any way we were going to necessarily impact that for the better while our economy starts to come back a little bit.—Not sustained team member*

Last, but not least, a team member enthusiastically shared:

*Success breeds success. So if they have some success, I think people will latch onto that—will like to be part of successful programs. So if we can get...more things going as successful, we'll get more buy-in and more commitment.—Sustained team member*

# Community Capacity Assessment

As part of this study, we had initially intended to assess the readiness and capacity of communities for entrepreneurial community development. To build on the training and materials received at the E<sup>2</sup> training, assessment tools from the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship and the Heartland Center for Leadership Development (available at [www.energizingentrepreneurs.org](http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org)), to which team members were exposed at the E<sup>2</sup> training, were combined into a comprehensive community assessment (Appendix E). The purpose of the community capacity assessment was to provide information that would help teams assess assets and needs, identify a local pool of resources and entrepreneurs, and form a baseline and, eventually, a follow-up assessment to evaluate progress in their communities.

## *The Instrument*

The assessment had several sections:

- Community attitudes about entrepreneurship
- Community resources for entrepreneurs, including resources that individual entrepreneurs could access, systemic supports, local business infrastructure, networking opportunities, support from community leadership, supportive policies toward entrepreneurs, within-business support of continuing entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial opportunities for youth, and financial supports
- An inventory of local assets, including support programs, business resources, and capital programs
- An inventory of entrepreneurial talent in the community, categorized by developmental stage
- Community-level measures of success, such as number of entrepreneurs and % employment

Teams were instructed to take the first 30-60 days (or longer) to gather information that would inform these assessments, come to a collective decision about how to respond to each question that would form a *team response*, and send the assessments to the research office. In practice, each team did the assessment differently. Some rated the items as a team; others selected items and had community members or business leaders rate them, often using clicker technology as part of a community forum. Most teams sought input by talking to members of their communities, conducting a survey of their own, or running focus groups.

## *Results*

In the end, it became clear that while a community capacity assessment could be a critical part of the process, it was beyond the ability of these teams, made up primarily of volunteers, to conduct a thorough assessment of the readiness and capacity of their communities for developing supportive entrepreneurial communities. For this reason, we did not attempt to pursue a follow-up assessment. Nonetheless, we recommend that future CEC teams receive more training in how to conduct such assessments or that external supports be developed that can provide these assessments, because getting data to demonstrate community needs as well as program impacts will be critical to building momentum and sustaining gains made through CEC programming.

In Table 5, we provide a snapshot of data about community attitudes and resources for entrepreneurship from the eight teams who submitted data. Scores range from 1 to 5, with 5 being indicating more supportive attitudes or more resources available. In addition, we provide the % of teams where the average score indicated that the attitude was very positive or the resource was very available. Because data were collected in many ways and with varying numbers of reporters, we do not attempt to make comparisons between *sustained* and *not sustained* teams. However, we can make a few comments:

- Communities were most likely to have a local business infrastructure; nearly a quarter strongly agreed that this was available. Nonetheless, three-quarters did not have this.
- Entrepreneurial support systems, such as local organizations focusing on entrepreneurial community development or programs to identify and support entrepreneurs, were nearly non-existent.
- While general community attitudes about entrepreneurship were viewed as more positive than support from local leadership, both were very weak.

Overall, the community capacity assessment has much potential to feed data to teams to generate action plans and support funding requests; but much work needs to be done before it becomes a feasible tool.

**Table 5. Community Capacity Assessment, Baseline**

<i>Team</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Community attitudes</i>	<i>Support for individual entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Entrepreneurial support systems</i>	<i>Local business infrastructure</i>	<i>Networking opportunities for entrepreneurs</i>
1	1	2.3	2.4	1.7	2.1	1.8
2	2	2.1	1.3	1.0	2.3	1.0
3	1	3.0	1.9	1.8	2.0	1.7
4	0					
5	1	2.6	2.0	1.7	2.6	2.2
6	0					
7	32	2.8	2.1	2.0	2.6	2.6
8	5	2.3	1.9	1.9	3.0	1.9
9	1	-	1.5	1.3	3.8	2.3
% of teams who answered "quite a bit" or "strongly agree"		15%	11%	4%	24%	13%

<i>Team</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Support for entrepreneurship from local leaders</i>	<i>Supportive policies toward entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Within-business support of continuing entrepreneurship</i>	<i>Entrepreneurship opportunities for youth</i>	<i>Financial supports</i>
1	1	2.1	2.3	-	1.5	1.4
2	2	1.3	1.8	1.5	1.3	1.1
3	1	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0
4	0					
5	1	2.7	2.7	2.2	1.9	1.7
6	0					
7	32	2.3	2.3	2.0	1.9	1.9
8	5	1.7	1.9	1.7	1.9	1.4
9	1	1.3	2.0	1.3	1.2	1.3
% of teams who answered "quite a bit" or "strongly agree"		7%	14%	5%	7%	7%

# Summary

In this study, the unit of analysis was the community team. The small number of teams ( $N = 9$ ) precluded the use of typical quantitative statistical analyses. Moreover, great diversity was exhibited in community characteristics, team goals and strategies, team composition and resources, quantity and type of coaching support—essentially, most factors that had the potential to contribute to the effectiveness of CEC—making a summary statement about how CEC “worked” difficult. While case studies were an option, we chose instead to use a mixed-methods approach that had the advantage of summarizing both qualitative and quantitative data about CEC team success. It should be noted that this evaluation study does *not* examine the ways in which teams collaborated with community partners to advance entrepreneurship or the impact of the teams’ entrepreneurial efforts in their respective communities.

Team “success” could be defined in many ways—for example, achieving the team goals, expanding the network, developing more entrepreneurs, or increasing employment rates. **We chose a modest definition of success: whether teams continued to work together on developing entrepreneurial communities one year after the CEC program had officially ended.** This measure of success was selected with the assumption that CEC would have greater likelihood of impact if efforts were sustained over time after the initial supports provided by the program had been removed. Additionally, this definition avoided a single external criterion of success that risked ignoring the considerably disparate communities involved and their unique contexts and needs. Using this criterion (sustained and not sustained) to divide the teams into two groups, we focused our evaluation on understanding the differences between the two groups.

## *Findings and Recommendations*

**Below, we summarize the findings and provide recommendations for program developers and providers.** These recommendations are likely to be valuable to other groups creating and implementing community-team-based approaches to entrepreneurial development as well.

### **Programming**

The 2007 CEC program had two primary components: (a) an intensive four-day training around the development of entrepreneurial communities and (b) one year of coaching support designed to provide resources and facilitate the development and implementation of action plans. In addition to the primary activities, networking activities such as conference calls, a discussion group, a listserv, and a conference at the end of the programming year were also implemented.

The following programmatic characteristics were found to distinguish *sustained* from *not sustained* teams:

- Better training experiences through E<sup>2</sup>.
- More knowledge about entrepreneurial communities, confidence in the team’s ability to take action to build an entrepreneurial community, and more positive perceptions of the team at the beginning of the program—pieces that *not sustained* teams increased through their E<sup>2</sup> training, but still lagged on compared to *sustained* teams.
- Having coaches who had clear facilitating roles (rather than leadership or administrative roles), who focused on entrepreneurial ideas, and who fit well with the team.

### **Recommendations**

1. Assign one coach to each team consistently throughout the program.

2. Assign coaches to teams before the program starts to enable them to build trust with the team and be part of the initial planning. Permit coaches and teams to have time to develop relationships.
3. Assign a coach from outside the community to provide alternative perspectives, avoid existing power issues and personality/community dynamics.
4. Train coaches in their roles and responsibilities prior to beginning coaching and revisit and reinforce core concepts over the course of the program.
5. Have all coaches go through the full E<sup>2</sup> training prior to or concurrent with their teams to ensure that coaches and teams have the same language, concepts, and tools at their disposal.
6. Keep the coaching role separate from the team member/leader role.

## Community Characteristics

Communities varied widely in size, location, and economic status, presenting unique challenges for each team. We examined several community variables, including demographics, geographic area, education levels, economic viability, and self-employment.

The following characteristics were found to distinguish *sustained* from *not sustained* teams:

- Smaller geographic area
- More college-educated residents

### *Recommendations*

1. Select teams that represent smaller areas, such as small- to medium-sized cities, towns, and townships; well-defined neighborhoods that have their own history and identify within larger urban areas may also be appropriate, although this is not clear from this study, as no teams were from urban areas. Teams composed of multiple communities or large geographical areas (e.g., counties or multiple counties) tended to have problems with teamwork and other team processes that can be attributed at least in part to the different communities' disparate issues and concerns.

## Team Goals and Activities

We asked teams about their goals, successes, challenges, and outcomes—besides summarizing the goals of these teams, we examined the types of goals that made a difference between the two groups of the teams. The following characteristics were found to distinguish *sustained* from *not sustained* teams:

- An overarching vision focused on the creation of an entrepreneurial community
- Clear goals
- A small number of feasible goals

### *Recommendations*

1. In the initial training, focus teams on the development of a long-term, overarching vision that can serve as a touchstone for the development of more specific goals as the process unfolds.
2. Ensure that coaches are experienced with or receive training in supporting group decision-making through collaborative processes.
3. From the beginning, set expectations for teams about how the process of identifying goals and activities is likely to work—that is, that there will be a period of brainstorming, followed by goal-and priority-setting. Some teams had members who were against brainstorming or

revising initial goals; alternatively, some teams discussed options for so long that team members started to leave due to what they perceived as a lack of progress.

4. Have coaches use logic modeling or other strategic planning processes to facilitate teams to identify activities that will lead them to the immediate and intermediate outcomes that will feed their long-term goals. This process will also help teams identify the pieces that need to be developed (e.g., connections to certain groups, resources that need to be identified) to make their vision happen.
5. Have coaches facilitate their teams to prioritize their goals, increasing chances of success by intensively focusing on a few areas rather than working less effectively across many areas.
6. Early on, have coaches facilitate teams to identify activities that can provide motivating “small wins” to enable evidence of progress; these will be both motivating and encourage community buy-in.
7. Have coaches work with teams to decide whether they will initiate completely new activities, build on what already exists, or both.
8. Provide specific training on how to get publicity for the program in order to get community buy-in and local and regional government backing.

## Team Characteristics

The team selection process for CEC participation emphasized the inclusion of diverse sectors. For this study, we also examined the size of the team and diversity with respect to gender as well as representation by specific sectors. In addition, we looked at the resources that the teams started with and built over time to support their work, such as office space, administrative support, officially contributed time, and funding. We expected that teams with more resources would have an advantage compared to teams with fewer resources. The following characteristics were found to distinguish *sustained* from *not sustained* teams:

- Team composition
  - Smaller core team size
  - Inclusion of business owners
  - Local government representation that was collaborative, not competitive
- Resources (office space, administrative support, etc.)
  - Better utilization of resources
  - More resources leveraged over time
- Personality characteristics such as agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and imagination, as well as less neuroticism.
  -

## Recommendations

1. Require core teams to include business owners/entrepreneurs.
2. Encourage core teams to have local government representation. However, also provide training on ways to incorporate government into the team, and pitfalls that can occur when relationships with government are not collaborative or when government may view CEC activities as duplicative or may appropriate CEC ideas. In the RFP, tell applicants to take a hard-eyed, objective look at their history with local government and to provide evidence of cooperative relationships. In cases where relationships with local government need to be built, helping teams develop and implement a plan to link effectively with local government may be a better course than requiring local government membership from the outset.
3. With the above recommendations in mind, encourage teams to make sure that teams are balanced between local business and local government.

4. Require core teams to have multiple sectors represented on the core team, but note that additional sectors can be included through connections to partners. Large teams with many sectors risk additional team conflicts if there is not a history of working together or the team does not have consensus about what they want to accomplish.
5. Encourage teams to include multiple men and multiple women, and to represent the community with respect to race/ethnicity. A recent study has shown that people living in communities with a high proportion of Hispanics are more inclined towards entrepreneurship than others, irrespective of their personal ethnicity (Loveridge, Miller and Satimanon, 2009). It may thus be important to tap into the entrepreneurial energies of multiple groups to achieve results.
6. While research suggests that the optimal size of a team is five to seven people (Knowledge@Wharton Network, 2006), this evaluation suggests that team size matters less than who the people are, what strengths they have, and how well they work together. Small teams can be successful by developing strong partnerships with other groups; large teams can be successful by developing subcommittees. However, team members are likely to leave, so a minimum number of team members should be required in the selection process that will permit the team to continue even if up to half of its members are lost.
7. In the application process, require letters of support from participating organizations that explicitly contribute a portion of time for at least one and preferably more team members. In addition, require letters of support that show commitment to contribute some combination of office/meeting space, administrative support, and/or other support that teams can justify will help them meet their goals.
8. Ensure that teams use their existing resources (administrative support, office space, and funding for projects) to the maximum extent possible—and use it to leverage additional resources, including funds. Resource development may become an explicit goal in the team’s activity plan.
9. Make sure that all team members are aware of the resources that the team has available.
10. Work more closely at the beginning to identify strengths and resources available in the team and build on those available assets that the team members have.
11. Identify social networks in the beginning and develop a list of assets that they might bring to the teams.
12. Identify a comprehensive list of state and national resources for both information and for funding, materials, curricula, etc. Ensure that this list is easy to use, with resources categorized by type and with short definitions that will make the resources on the list understandable and accessible.
13. Make coaches responsible for identifying a comprehensive list of local and regional resources. Have coaches collaborate on the regional lists.
14. Have coaches facilitate team sessions to develop plans for accessing these resources.
15. Train and coach teams in innovative ways to partner with other initiatives and organizations, including developing relationships with non-traditional organizations (i.e., not “the usual suspects”) that will permit resources to be shared.
16. Have coaches facilitate team sessions to brainstorm and plan for partnership development that can build both resources and community buy-in to CEC activities.

## **Team Processes**

Based on the research literature on team work, we proposed various predictors related to teamwork, team organization and management, and external influence and organizing, expecting that the successful teams would show more positive functioning in all areas. The following characteristics were found to distinguish *sustained* from *not sustained* teams:



- Teamwork
  - Individual confidence
  - Confidence in team
  - Consensus about goals and activities
  - Open communication
  - Social cohesion
  - Specialized knowledge
  - Coordination
- External influence and organizing skills
- Team organization and management
  - Closely knit (dense) network rather than distinct subgroups or a gatekeeper to information
  - Easy access/short distance to meetings
  - Productive meetings
  - Subcommittees
  - Replacing lost team members and expanding the team

### ***Recommendations***

1. In selecting team members, teams should carefully consider their history together—whether they have worked together before, how well they were able to coordinate and share responsibilities, and simply whether they like one another. In the RFP, provide guidelines for team member selection: “What strengths would this potential team member bring to the table?” “What are this potential team member’s motives for joining the team?” “Have we worked with this potential team member before and how did it go?” Answering these questions will help in developing a good team.
2. Encourage teams to include only those who really want to participate. Otherwise, they are likely to leave, potentially after significant investment has been made into their training.
3. Require teams to have office/meeting space and administrative support, even if shared. This does not mean full-time, dedicated support, but rather that these supports are available and responsibility is assigned.
4. Train coaches or make sure coaches are experienced in conflict resolution and facilitation of team processes in addition to content-based entrepreneurial community development.
5. Help teams see the benefits of and develop dense networks. Train coaches to watch for red flags: for example, one person taking over or multiple coalitions or groups with little communication across groups.
6. Suggest that teams develop subcommittees that can divide the workload and responsibilities. However, ensure that a venue exists for subcommittees to meet regularly to report out, reorient toward the broader goals, and get feedback from the full team.
7. Remind coaches to encourage teams if they get frustrated with slow initial progress. Coaches can intervene by walking the team through their goals, challenges, solutions, and strategies, noting small successes and helping develop specific steps that can be easily achieved to provide evidence of progress, however small.
8. Instruct coaches to step in if meetings are unproductive to the point of making team members frustrated. In some cases, meetings may be devoted to brainstorming, which is not necessarily unproductive. If, however, team members are beginning to view the process as not going anywhere, it may be a good opportunity to facilitate a plan to achieve small wins through easily achievable activities to show progress.

## **Champions (Leaders)**

Excellent leadership is another critical characteristic of good team functioning. We asked teams about who they considered to be “champions”—the most influential, motivating, and visionary team member or members. The following characteristics were found to distinguish champions of *sustained* teams from those of *not sustained* teams:

- Action-oriented and optimistic
- Open communication and collaboration with other team members
- Share credit for success

### ***Recommendations***

1. Encourage or provide leadership training for all team members, and especially for team members who emerge as team champions.
2. Have coaches facilitate champions and all team members to take ownership over specific activities to avoid overreliance on one person whose loss could cause the team to a standstill.
3. At the same time, have coaches help the team identify someone—a team member, not the coach—who is willing to hold the team accountable to make progress.

## **Additional Recommendations from Team Members and Coaches**

1. Reduce the amount of information to the most useful pieces.
2. Connect communities...but don't compare them.
3. Define success.
4. Structure the overall CEC program more.
5. Provide more follow-up trainings and support.
6. Make sure team members share training information.
7. Discuss the impact of the economy on program implementation.

## **Community Capacity Assessment**

As part of this study, we had initially intended to assess the readiness and capacity of communities for entrepreneurial community development. The purpose of the community capacity assessment was to provide information that would help teams assess assets and needs, identify a local pool of resources and entrepreneurs, and form a baseline and, eventually, a follow-up assessment to evaluate progress in their communities. In the end, it became clear that while a community capacity assessment could be a critical part of the process, it was beyond the ability of these teams, made up primarily of volunteers, to conduct a thorough assessment of the readiness and capacity of their communities for developing supportive entrepreneurial communities.

### ***Recommendations***

1. Provide CEC teams with more training in how to conduct such assessments, or...
2. Develop external supports (individuals or teams) to provide these assessments, because getting data to demonstrate community needs as well as program impacts will be critical in building momentum and sustaining gains made through the CEC programming.

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# Appendix A. Team Survey

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Community Team (check one):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boyne City             | <input type="checkbox"/> Meridian Township |
| <input type="checkbox"/> East Jordan/Charlevoix | <input type="checkbox"/> Newaygo           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Huron Shore            | <input type="checkbox"/> South Haven       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ionia                  | <input type="checkbox"/> St. Clair         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marine City            |  |

## Demographics

1. What sector do you represent on our team? (check all that apply)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts council   | <input type="checkbox"/> Higher education institution    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business community   | <input type="checkbox"/> Library                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business services (lawyer, accountant, communication, marketing) | <input type="checkbox"/> Mayor's office                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chamber of Commerce  | <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal office                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial lending institution                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit service organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic development agency                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Public education                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurial service organization                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth development organization  |
|   | Other _____  |

2. What organization do you work for? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your position? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Are you a business owner (check one)?    Yes        No   

5. Do you provide entrepreneurial support services as part of your job? Yes  No

6. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Gender:    Male     Female

8. What is your highest level of education (check one)?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than high school | <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High school diploma   | <input type="checkbox"/> Master's degree   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associates degree     | <input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate, MD, JD |

9. Are you Hispanic/Latino?    Yes  No

10. Race (check all that apply):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American-Indian or Alaska Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian                            | <input type="checkbox"/> White                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African-American        |  |

10a. If you checked multiple boxes, what do you identify as your primary race? \_\_\_\_\_

11. What is your annual household income (check one)?

- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 or more

**Energizing Entrepreneurs (E2) Experience**

12. Did you attend the Energizing Entrepreneurs (E2) training in February 2007? Yes  No   
*(If no, use skip logic to go to question 86)*  
*(If yes, go to question 13)*

<b>BEFORE attending the E2 training, how much did you know about:</b>	<b>Not much</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Quite a bit</b>
13. The unique characteristics of entrepreneurs				
14. The characteristics of an entrepreneurial community				
15. The concept of economic gardening				
16. The unique needs of entrepreneurs				
17. Challenges faced by entrepreneurs				
18. The benefits of entrepreneurship for your community				
19. The development cycle of entrepreneurs (aspiring, start ups, growth-oriented, high growth)				
20. The specific needs of each stage of entrepreneurship				
21. Resources for creating entrepreneurial communities				
22. Entrepreneurial pipelines				
23. Youth entrepreneurship				
24. Measuring and documenting entrepreneurial activity				
25. Measuring and documenting how entrepreneurial you community is				
26. How to generate community support for entrepreneurship				
27. Strategies for creating entrepreneurial communities				
<b>BEFORE attending the E2 training, how confident did you feel that YOU, WITH YOUR TEAM, could:</b>	<b>Not much</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Quite a bit</b>
28. Identify the entrepreneurs in your community.				
29. Identify the resources in your community that support entrepreneurs.				
30. Identify the strengths of your community that make it friendly to entrepreneurship				
31. Identify the challenges in your community that present barriers to entrepreneurship				
32. Reach the people who matter for changes to happen				
33. Build a network of people/organizations invested in developing an entrepreneurial community				
34. Recruit additional active core team members				
35. Obtain additional financial resources to support your team's activities				

36. Take action in ways that will lead to greater change in your community				
37. Succeed in building an entrepreneurial community				

<b>How much do you agree that each of the following statements were true BEFORE you attended the E2 training?</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
38. I knew most of my team members who came to the E2 training well.				
39. I was confident our team could work together effectively.				
40. I was looking forward to working with my team to build an entrepreneurial community.				
41. I had ideas about what our team would do in our community.				
42. I felt that I could make important contributions to the team.				
43. I felt that our team could work through disagreements well.				
44. I was motivated to work toward developing an entrepreneurial community.				
45. I liked my team.				
46. I thought we had all the key players who could influence our community on our team.				
47. I thought we had the knowledge about entrepreneurship that we needed to be successful.				
48. I thought we had the knowledge about our community that we needed to be successful.				

<b>AFTER attending the E2 training, how much did you know about:</b>	<b>Not much</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Quite a bit</b>
49. The unique characteristics of entrepreneurs				
50. The characteristics of an entrepreneurial community				
51. The concept of economic gardening				
52. The unique needs of entrepreneurs				
53. Challenges faced by entrepreneurs				
54. The benefits of entrepreneurship for your community				
55. The development cycle of entrepreneurs (aspiring, start ups, growth-oriented, high growth)				
56. The specific needs of each stage of entrepreneurship				
57. Resources for creating entrepreneurial communities				
58. Entrepreneurial pipelines				
59. Youth entrepreneurship				
60. Measuring and documenting entrepreneurial activity				
61. Measuring and documenting how entrepreneurial your community is				
62. How to generate community support for entrepreneurship				
63. Strategies for creating entrepreneurial communities				

<b>AFTER attending the E2 training, how confident did you feel that YOU, WITH YOUR TEAM, could:</b>	<b>Not much</b>	<b>A little</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Quite a bit</b>
64. Identify the entrepreneurs in your community.				
65. Identify the resources in your community that support entrepreneurs.				
66. Identify the strengths of your community that make it friendly to entrepreneurship				
67. Identify the challenges in your community that present barriers to entrepreneurship				
68. Reach the people who matter for changes to happen				
69. Build a network of people/organizations invested in developing an entrepreneurial community				
70. Recruit additional active core team members				
71. Obtain additional financial resources to support your team's activities				
72. Take action in ways that will lead to greater change in your community				
73. Succeed in building an entrepreneurial community				

<b>How much do you agree that each of the following statements were true AFTER you attended the E2 training?</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
74. I knew most of my team members who came to the E2 training well.				
75. I was confident our team could work together effectively.				
76. I was looking forward to working with my team to build an entrepreneurial community.				
77. I had ideas about what our team would do in our community.				
78. I felt that I could make important contributions to the team.				
79. I felt that our team could work through disagreements well.				
80. I was motivated to work toward developing an entrepreneurial community.				
81. I liked my team.				
82. I thought we had all the key players who could influence our community on our team.				
83. I thought we had the knowledge about entrepreneurship that we needed to be successful.				
84. I thought we had the knowledge about our community that we needed to be successful.				



85. The E2 training helped our team develop GOALS for making our community more entrepreneurial (check one).
- Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
86. The E2 training helped our team develop effective STRATEGIES AND WAYS to make our community more entrepreneurial. (check one)
- Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
87. What grade would you give the E2 training? (check one)
- A
  - B
  - C
  - D
  - F
88. If you have any additional comments about the E2 training, please let us know:

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**Team Processes**

89. Are you currently a member of the core CEC team for your community? (check one)  
 Yes  I was, but am not any longer   
*If yes, use skip logic to go to question 91.*  
*If was, but am not any longer, use skip logic to go to question 90..*
90. What made you decide not to continue? \_\_\_\_\_  
*Skip to the end and "Thank you."*
91. How many hours do you spend monthly on CEC activities? \_\_\_\_\_ hours
92. What does your team want to accomplish? \_\_\_\_\_
93. What are the primary ways your team is making that happen? \_\_\_\_\_
94. What resources does your team have?
- Access to a secretary or assistant
  - Office space
  - Funds
  - Website
  - Officially contributed time (signed off by an organization)

**Experience with Coaches**

95. What do you expect from your coach? \_\_\_\_\_

96. How often do you interact with your coach?

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- 2-3 times a month
- Once a month
- Less than once a month

97. What is the most likely way you interact with your coach?

- In person
- By phone
- By email

98. What is the second most likely way you interact with your coach?

- In person
- By phone
- By email

99. What has your coach done for you that you couldn't have done without him/her? \_\_\_\_\_

100. In your opinion, how important ?

- Yes  No

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
101. Without our coach, our team wouldn't be as far along as we are.					
102. When we ask for help from our coach, we get it.					
103. Our coach is important to the success of our team.					
104. Our coach is responsive to the needs of our team.					
105. Our coach is invested in the success of our team.					
106. Our coach gets along with team members.					
107. Our coach provides us with useful information.					
108. Our coach connects us to people or organizations that further our goals.					
109. Our coach gives us advice.					
110. Our coach is a sounding board for ideas.					
111. Our coach helps us get physical resources.					
112. Our coach acts as a liaison to the MSU CEC home office.					
113. Our coach connects us to the Extension network.					
114. I wish we had a different coach.					
115. Our coach encourages us to have our own ideas.					
116. Our coach keeps us on track.					

<b>Individual confidence</b> (adapted from DeShon et al., 2004)	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
117. I can meet the challenges of my role on my team.					
118. I am confident in my understanding of how to perform well in my role for the team activities.					
119. I can deal with making decisions even when the situation is a bit uncertain.					
120. I am certain that I can manage the requirements of my position on my team.					
121. I believe I will do well in working on team activities even if the amount of work increases.					
122. I am confident that I can cope with my role if the team activities become more complicated.					
123. I believe I can develop effective methods to handle changing aspects of our team activities.					
124. I am certain I can cope with competing time demands in the team activities.					
125. I am confident that I can perform well on our team activities even if things get more difficult.					
<b>Team confidence</b> (adapted from DeShon et al., 2004)	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
126. Our team can meet the challenges of the team activities					
127. Our team is confident in its understanding of how to perform well for the team activities.					
128. Our team can deal with making decisions even when the situation is a bit uncertain.					
129. Our team is certain that it can manage the requirements for the team activities.					
130. Our team believes it will do well in the team activities even if the amount of work increases.					
131. Our team is confident that it can cope if the team activities become more complicated.					
132. Our team believes it can develop effective methods to handle changing aspects of the team activities.					
133. Our team is certain it can cope with competing time demands in the team activities.					
134. Our team is confident that it can perform well in the team task even if things get more difficult.					

<b>Consensus</b> (Kozlowski, unpublished; modified by Evaluation Team)	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
135. Our team is unified in its vision of what we want our community to be.					
136. Our team has a unified vision for what we should do to accomplish our goals.					
137. Our team agrees on how important our activities are.					
138. Our team agrees on the way we perform our activities.					
139. Our team agrees on which activities are most important.					
140. Our team members contribute to the team's activities.					
141. Our team members agree in the way we approach problems.					
142. Our team members prefer to work together.					
143. Our team views our team activities as the reason for our being together.					
<b>Social Cohesion</b> (Kozlowski, unpublished; modified by Evaluation Team)	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
144. Our team members get along well with each other.					
145. Our team members enjoy spending time together.					
146. Our team members look out for each other.					
147. Our team members care about each other.					
148. Our team members have good relationships with each other.					
149. Our team members enjoy each other's company.					
150. Our team members like to socialize together.					
151. Our team members stand up for each other.					
152. Our team members support each other.					
153. Our team members are friends with each other.					
154. Our team members personally respect each other.					
155. Our team members try to minimize interpersonal conflict					
<b>Specialization (adapted from Louis, 2003)</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
156. Each team member has specialized knowledge or expertise in some aspect of our team activities.					
157. I have knowledge or expertise about an aspect of the team activities that no other team member has.					
158. Different team members are responsible for expertise in different areas.					
159. The specialized knowledge of several different team members is needed to complete our team activities.					
160. I know which team members have expertise in specific areas.					

<b>Credibility (adapted from Louis, 2003)</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
161. I am comfortable accepting suggestions on how to do something from other team members.					
162. I trust that other members' knowledge about the team activities is credible.					
163. I am confident relying on the information that other team members bring to the discussion.					
164. When other members give information, I want to double-check it for myself. (reversed)					
<b>Coordination (adapted from Louis, 2003)</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
165. Our team works together in a well-coordinated fashion.					
166. Our team has very few misunderstandings about what to do.					
167. Our team tends to backtrack and start over a lot.					
168. We accomplish team activities smoothly and efficiently.					
169. There is much confusion about how we will accomplish team activities (rev)					
<b>Levels of Influence (Foster-Fishman, 2009)</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements:					
170. I participate in important decision-making processes in my community.					
171. My team and I can influence the decisions that affect this community.					
172. I have connections to people that can influence decisions.					
173. I feel like I have a pretty good understanding of the important issues that confront my community.					
174. I have control over the decisions that affect my life.					
175. I am not afraid to stand up for my rights.					
<b>Open Communication.</b> In this team.... (Watkins & Marsick, 1996)	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
176. People give open and honest feedback to each other.					
177. People listen to others' views before speaking.					
178. People are encouraged to ask "why" regardless of rank.					
179. Whenever people state their view, they also ask what others think.					
180. People treat each other with respect.					
181. People spend time building trust with each other.					

<b>Organizing Skills (Foster-Fishman, 2009)</b> To what extent do you agree that you have the following skills?	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
182. Getting people to work on community issues or projects.					
183. Recruiting people to join the team					
184. Creating a plan for action.					
185. Getting city and business leaders to listen to you.					
186. Getting other groups or organizations to partner with your team in its efforts.					

## Leadership

187. Who would you consider to be the champion (most influential, motivating, visionary person) on this team? (You may list yourself; please list only one person) \_\_\_\_\_

If you listed yourself, please click here.

*If checked, skip to question 195)*

Think about the person you listed above. Please answer the questions below in reference to that person:

188. Do you know where you stand with your champion...do you usually know how satisfied your champion is with what you do?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Rarely              Occasionally              Sometimes              Fairly Often              Very Often

189. How well does your champion understand your job problems and needs?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Not a Bit              A Little              A Fair Amount              Quite a Bit              A Great Deal

190. How well does your champion recognize your potential?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Not at All              A Little              Moderately              Mostly              Fully

191. Regardless of how much formal authority he has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your champion would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
None                      Small                      Moderate                      High                      Very High

192. Again, regardless of the amount of formal authority your champion has, what are the chances that he/she would "bail you out," at his expense?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
None                      Small                      Moderate                      High                      Very High

193. I have enough confidence in my champion that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

194. How would you characterize your team working relationship with your champion?

1	2	3	4	5
Extremely Ineffective	Worse Than Average	Average	Better Than Average	Extremely Effective

**Social Network**

195. Please list all the people you consider to be on your core team.

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you have regular contact with this person outside of your CEC activities?  Yes  No

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you have regular contact with this person outside of your CEC activities?  Yes  No

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you have regular contact with this person outside of your CEC activities?  Yes  No

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you have regular contact with this person outside of your CEC activities?  Yes  No

196. **Within your core team**, who do you go to if you need information about how to develop an entrepreneurial community? List up to three, but you do not need to list three. List them in order of importance (who you would go to first, second, and third)

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

197. **Within your core team**, who do you go to if you need to be connected to someone in your community in order to do your team activities? List up to three, but you do not need to list three. List them in order of importance (who you would go to first, second, and third)

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

198. **Within your core team**, who do you go to if you need to know about the day-to-day operations of your team (team meetings, organization, scheduling, etc)? List up to three, but you do not need to list three. List them in order of importance (who you would go to first, second, and third)

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

199. **Within your core team**, who makes you feel most valued and included in the team? List up to three, but you do not need to list three. List them in order of importance (who you would think of first, second, and third)

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

200. **Outside of your core team**, who do you turn to for information about how to develop entrepreneurial communities? You may list up to 10, but you do not need to list 10.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

201. **Outside of your core team**, who do you turn to for resources (finances, equipment, volunteers) to support your activities for developing entrepreneurial communities? You may list up to 10, but you do not need to list 10.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_



The following questions ask about your temperament, and will help us understand how the team works together and how having people with different temperaments contribute to team effectiveness. There are no right or wrong answers, and please answer honestly. Your answers will be kept private.

**Personality**

<b>Please indicate the extent to which the following statements are accurate or inaccurate for you.</b>	<b>Very inaccurate</b>	<b>Moderately inaccurate</b>	<b>Neither accurate nor inaccurate</b>	<b>Moderately accurate</b>	<b>Very accurate</b>
202. I sympathize with others' feelings.					
203. I am the life of the party.					
204. I get chores done right away.					
205. I have frequent mood swings.					
206. I have a vivid imagination.					
207. I don't talk a lot.					
208. I am not interested in other people's problems					
209. I often forget to put things back in their proper place.					
210. I am relaxed most of the time.					
211. I am not interested in abstract ideas.					
212. I talk to a lot of different people at parties.					
213. I feel others' emotions.					
214. I like order.					
215. I get upset easily.					
216. I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.					
217. I keep in the background.					
218. I am not really interested in others.					
219. I make a mess of things.					
220. I seldom feel blue.					
221. I do not have a good imagination.					

Thank you for completing this survey!

# Appendix B.

## Team Member Interview

1. How would you describe your experience on the [community name] CEC team? [WARM-UP]
2. Thinking back on how your team worked together, what went well? Why? [TEAM]

3. What was a challenge for your team? [TEAM]

*Prompts for challenges*

- More diverse people on the team
- Time commitment
- Reduction of conflicts with responsibilities from home organization
- Payment for time spent
- Assistance with travel to community
- Recognition from boss (or others)
- Assistance with tools for team development, organizing meetings
- Materials, worksheets for entrepreneurship development
- Other

4. Were you able to implement entrepreneurship ideas from the trainings? If so, which ideas worked for you? What effect did they have? [ENTREPRENEURSHIP]

*Prompts for entrepreneurship ideas*

- Characteristics of entrepreneurs & entrepreneurship
- Asset mapping
- Identifying entrepreneurs in your community
- Economic gardening
- Engaging youth in entrepreneurship
- Creating an entrepreneurial culture in your community
- Focus on arts, cultural, or heritage based economic development

*Prompts for trainings*

- E2d trainings
- Progress Report meetings
- Retreat at Edward Lowe Foundation
- Meeting in South Haven
- Final networking event in Lansing

5. What role did your coach play? [COACH]

- Clear distinctions between coach, champion/team leader, fuzzy distinctions

6. What kind of support did your coach give your team? What made a difference for you? [COACH]

*Prompts for support*

- Encouragement, pats on back
- Referrals to information resources—inside or outside of community
- Help making the team members work well together
- Assistance in organizing meetings, taking minutes
- Access to resources for activities—mailings, photocopying
- Someone to hold you accountable

7. What did your team set out to accomplish? [IMPACT]
  
8. What was successful? Why? How do you know? [IMPACT]
  
9. What was not so successful? Why? How do you know? [IMPACT]
  
10. What are your team's next steps? Will you stay involved? [SUSTAINABILITY]
  
11. Based on your experience, how do you define “entrepreneurial culture?”  
[ENTREPRENEURSHIP]
  
12. What else would you like us to know?

# Appendix C. Coaching Report

This coaching report is for the period of JANUARY THROUGH APRIL 2008. When you answer the questions, please think only about the team activities and processes that occurred during this time.

1. What community team is this report for? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Did your team meet during this period? (If your team did not meet, you will skip some questions)
  - Yes
  - No
3. Why didn't your team meet? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many times did your team meet? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many of these meetings were you able to attend in person or by phone? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How important was your presence?
  - Not that important--they don't really need me
  - A little important--I can contribute every once in a while
  - Somewhat important--I play an important role
  - Very important--they wouldn't get much done without me
7. Who typically led the meetings? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Who was CONSISTENTLY present? (please list names) \_\_\_\_\_
9. What was the primary goal your team wanted to accomplish during this period? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What was the most significant action that your team took during this period, and how did they get there? \_\_\_\_\_
11. What was the most significant challenge your team faced during this period, and how did they handle it? (This might be internal, from within the team, or external, from the community.)  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. DURING THIS PERIOD, how much progress did your team make toward achieving their goals?
  - They made great progress, more than anticipated.
  - They were right on target.
  - They moved forward, though less than anticipated.
  - They made little or no progress.
13. How would you rate the team on the following? (1-4, Strongly disagree to Strongly Agree)

Is motivated	Has adequate resources
Has enough people to do	To do the work
The work planned	Has a clear plan for action
Is able to deal with	Is open to all members'
Conflict effectively	Ideas and suggestions
Has consensus around	Has an effective leader
Goals and vision	

14. What resources did you refer your team to? \_\_\_\_\_
15. What strategy or approach did you find most effective to facilitate team processes and action?  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. What was the greatest challenge you encountered as a coach? \_\_\_\_\_
17. How many hours did you spend coaching? (include meetings with the community team or the CEC coach team, travel, emails, phone calls, etc. If it's easier, you can provide an answer such as "an average of 2 hours per week.") \_\_\_\_\_
18. How much did coaching get in the way of your other job-related responsibilities?
- Not at all--it was easy to balance coaching and my other job responsibilities
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - A lot--it was difficult to coach well and still meet my other job responsibilities effectively
19. What was the most significant thing you learned about being a coach? \_\_\_\_\_
20. As the year of coaching ends, what are your thoughts about where your team will go from here? (1-4, Strongly disagree to Strongly agree)
- The team is pretty much the same as the local economic development group (EDC, EDA).
  - The team will continue to work together regularly.
  - The team would benefit from further coaching from an experienced coach.
  - The team has made significant impacts in developing an Entrepreneurial community over the past year.
  - The team has a clear plan of action for the future.
  - The team took advantage of the CEC program as much as it could over the past year.
  - The team has definite support from local leaders.
  - The team has the necessary connections to continue its work.
  - The team has the resources needed to continue their work.
  - The team took full advantage of my support.
  - The team used the resources I provided.
  - The team has definite support from local entrepreneurs.
  - The team has been successful in meeting its goals during the past year.
  - The team really consists of only one or two people.
21. Where do you think the team will go from here? What will get in their way in the future, and what will they need to be successful? \_\_\_\_\_
22. What organization do you work for? \_\_\_\_\_
23. What is your position? \_\_\_\_\_
24. Please indicate how much you agree with the following (1-4, strongly disagree to strongly agree):
- I was experienced with community economic development before the CEC program.
  - I was experienced in entrepreneurial community development before the CEC program.
  - I am an entrepreneur myself.
  - I was familiar with the community that I worked with before the CEC program.
  - I am familiar with the community that I worked with now.
25. Any other comments about your experiences with the CEC program? \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix D. Coach Interview

1. How would you describe your relationship with the [insert community] CEC team? [WARM-UP]
- Coach, team leader, facilitator, champion—combination
  - Did your relationship change over the year

2. What was the focus of your coaching? [COACHING]
- Working together as a team
  - Goal setting, holding meetings, taking minutes
  - Connecting with resources in the local community
  - Expanding the network of community members committed to entrepreneurship
  - Accessing resources at MSU or throughout state
  - Understanding entrepreneurship

3. What kind of coaching support did you receive from CEC? Was it helpful? Why? Why not? What else might have been helpful?

4. How much emphasis did you put on coaching entrepreneurship strategies? [ENTREPRENEURSHIP]

*Prompts for entrepreneurship ideas*

- Characteristics of entrepreneurs & entrepreneurship
- Asset mapping
- Identifying entrepreneurs in your community
- Economic gardening
- Engaging youth in entrepreneurship
- Creating an entrepreneurial culture in your community
- Focus on arts, cultural, or heritage based economic development

5. What did your team set out to accomplish? [IMPACT]

6. What was successful? Why? How do you know? [IMPACT]

7. What was not so successful? Why? How do you know? [IMPACT]

*Prompts for challenges*

- Time commitment
- Reduction of conflicts with responsibilities from home organization
- Payment for time spent
- Assistance with travel to community
- Recognition from boss (or others)
- Assistance with tools for team development, organizing meetings
- Materials, worksheets for entrepreneurship development
- Other ways

8. Based on your experience, how do you define “entrepreneurial culture”? [ENTREPRENEURSHIP]

9. What was your team’s perception of entrepreneurial culture? [ENTREPRENEURSHIP]

10. What else would like us to know? [WRAP-UP]

# Appendix E. Community Capacity Assessment

The Creating Entrepreneurial Communities community capacity assessment has multiple purposes, including:

- Giving a picture of the current state of your community's entrepreneurial system and support
- Documenting the assets in your community that are available to support entrepreneurs
- Identifying entrepreneurs at a variety of stages in your community
- Providing a baseline assessment that can provide a reference point later on in a follow-up assessment

**Facilitated by your CEC coach, your team will engage in a process of discovery over the next month or months that will result in a complete community capacity assessment.**

This assessment will both act as a reference document for your team and provide data for the CEC evaluation conducted by MSU. After one year, your team will conduct a follow-up to see what has changed over the course of the coaching. At the end of the evaluation, the baseline and follow-up community capacity assessments will constitute important data for the individual report that MSU will develop for your team.

**The community capacity assessment is not envisioned to be a quick survey to fill out, but rather a process that will take at least 30 to 60 days, and perhaps more, depending on when you have all your team members identified.** To be most informative, it will involve talking to and connecting with organizations, entrepreneurs, and community members—during the  $e^2$  training, you already began to think about Sections C (Specific Development Assets) and D (Entrepreneurial Talent). Resources from the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship and the Heartland Center for Leadership Development are attached that can provide some guidance for the process. These resources and more can be found at [www.energizingentrepreneurs.org](http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org) by clicking on any of the areas on the  $e^2$  circle and clicking on "Tools." You can use them as is, revise them to fit your own needs, or use other creative techniques.

**One copy of the attached community capacity assessment should be completed by the team as a whole; however, you may decide to conduct surveys, focus groups, interviews, visits, or other means to get the information that results in your final assessment and informs your final ratings.** If you would like to include that information as well, please feel free to do so. You can complete the assessment by clicking or filling the answers in directly in the Word document, or you can print it out and write on it.

## Community Attitudes About Entrepreneurship

This section describes the attitudes that people in your community hold about entrepreneurship. To get information for this section, you might give a survey to, conduct focus groups with, or interview local entrepreneurs, elected officials, organizational and business leaders, or citizens; or you might create some other way to gather the data. To assist with this process, the following resources are attached:

- *The Community Feelings About Entrepreneurship survey, which lists the questions below in survey format*
- *The Rural Community Entrepreneurship Survey, which also includes some questions from other sections of this community capacity assessment*
- *The Entrepreneur Focus Group Questionnaire*

	Not at all	A little	Some-what	Quite a bit	Very strongly
<b>Most people in our community...</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1. Understand that entrepreneurs are critically important to the future of our community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Recognize the value of new local business.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Understand that business failure is part of the learning and innovation process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Celebrate the growth of companies, not just the absolute size of companies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Support someone who is creating a new business or expanding an existing business.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Support businesses that are taking risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. See entrepreneurs as "made, not born."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Encourage youth to learn skills related to creating and growing a business.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Value and support young people who are in the process of starting new businesses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. See the development of youth entrepreneurs as important to the future of our community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Would like to create and grow a business.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



***What information did you use to make your ratings for Section A?***

*Surveys of community members. If yes...*

*Who were they (entrepreneurs, regular community members, business leaders, etc)?*

*How many from each (entrepreneurs, etc)?*

*Focus groups with community members. If yes...*

*Who were they (regular community members, business leaders, etc)?*

*How many from each (entrepreneurs, etc)?*

*Interviews or conversations with community members. If yes...*

*Who were they (regular community members, business leaders, etc)?*

*How many from each (entrepreneurs, etc)?*

*Other information. If yes, please describe:*

## Community Resources for Entrepreneurs

This section describes the breadth and strength of the resources available in your community. Section D of this community capacity assessment lists the specific programs and resources that are available, but this section evaluates how strong these resources are—that is, how accessible, widespread, targeted, and helpful they are.

To get information for this section, you might give a survey or conduct focus groups with local entrepreneurs, interview service providers, or develop some other way to gather the data. To assist with this process, the following resources are attached:

- *The Community Resources for Entrepreneurs survey, which lists the questions below in survey format. If you choose to use this, you might select pieces or use the whole thing.*
- *The Rural Community Entrepreneurship Survey, which also includes some questions from other sections of this community capacity assessment*
- *The Rate Your Community Support for Entrepreneurship survey*
- *The Entrepreneur Focus Group Questionnaire*

	Not at all	A little	Some- what	Quite a bit	Very strongly
<b>Our community has...</b>					
<b><i>Support for individual entrepreneurs</i></b>					
1. Programs to encourage and support entrepreneurs to develop and grow.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Locally available entrepreneurship training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. An information resource center to help entrepreneurs develop their enterprises.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. An ombudsman or mentor to help entrepreneurs develop their enterprises.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Assistance programs that are tailored to the needs of the unique individual entrepreneur and the unique community (rather than a one-size-fits-all program).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Supports to help entrepreneurs expand the geographic area of their markets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Access to affordable legal, accounting, and personnel management services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. A public or private business incubator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b><i>Entrepreneurial support systems</i></b>					
9. A local organization solely focused on improving this community's entrepreneurial climate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Well-coordinated entrepreneurial support activities across service providers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. A program to identify entrepreneurs in the area and learn and address their needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Support systems that are geared for all phases of the business life cycle (birth, small, medium, large, spin-off, and succession).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Not at all	A little	Some-what	Quite a bit	Very strongly
<b>Our community has...</b>					
13. Entrepreneurial development strategies that complement and build on the natural and cultural assets of the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. A business expansion and retention program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Local business infrastructure</b>					
15. Infrastructure, including telecommunications, sufficient to support entrepreneurs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. A Downtown Development Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. An Economic Development Association	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. A county/city/township staff person to do economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. An industrial park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. A downtown district	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. A mall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. An exit on a major road	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. A fine arts council	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. A community band	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Networking opportunities for entrepreneurs</b>					
25. Opportunities for new and experienced entrepreneurs to network and develop mentoring relationships.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Networks linking entrepreneurs to capital, new employees, and strategic partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Knowledge clusters—groups of people who know much about a specific area, such as marketing, production, or technology—engaged in learning and exchange of information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Support from community leadership for entrepreneurship</b>					
28. Current community leadership with a vision for entrepreneurship.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. A way to publicly recognize or acknowledge entrepreneurs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. A commitment from community leadership to focus additional resources on entrepreneurial activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Supportive policies toward entrepreneurs</b>					
31. Favorable regulations for start-ups, expansions, and transitions (permits and zoning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Fair, consistent application of local regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Not at all	A little	Some-what	Quite a bit	Very strongly
<b>Our community has...</b>					
<b><i>Within-business support of continuing entrepreneurship</i></b>					
33. Local businesses that encourage and support spin-offs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Intergenerational mentoring by business owners and managers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Business owners who actively encourage the rest of the family to be part of their business.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b><i>Opportunities for youth</i></b>					
36. Clubs, school activities, or events that promote entrepreneurship among youth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. Local internship opportunities for local school children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. Local internship opportunities for local college-age students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b><i>Financial supports</i></b>					
39. Easy access to financing resources supporting start-ups and expansions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. Access to venture capital and/or angel investors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. A lending program (less than \$35,000) specifically for micro-businesses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. An Individual Development Account (IDA) program to help entrepreneurs build start-up capital.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. A loan fund program for business start-up and expansion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Boards, commissions, or public bodies that offer financial assistance to business start-ups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. A Community Development Financial Institution (a private financial institution whose mission is community development).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. External assets in entrepreneurial development engaged with the community, including:					
a. Foundations (please list:           )	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The Heartland Center, Iowa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The Rural Policy Research Institute Center for Rural Entrepreneurship (RUPRI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. MSU Product Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Small Business Technology Development Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Sirolli	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. LISC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Not at all	A little	Some-what	Quite a bit	Very strongly
<b>Our community has...</b>					
h. University or community college programs to support entrepreneurs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. SCORE—Service Corp of Retired Executives (to mentor or counsel businesses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Others (please list:           )	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

***What information did you use to make your ratings for Section B?***

- Surveys. If yes...*
  - Who were they (entrepreneurs, service providers, etc)?*
  - How many from each (entrepreneurs, etc)?*
- Focus groups. If yes...*
  - Who were they (entrepreneurs, service providers, etc)?*
  - How many from each (entrepreneurs, etc)?*
- Interviews or conversations. If yes...*
  - Who were they (entrepreneurs, service providers, etc)?*
  - How many from each (entrepreneurs, etc)?*
- Other information. If yes, please describe:*

## An Inventory of Specific Assets in Our Community that Assist Entrepreneurs

This section identifies development assets that are mobilized to support the needs of entrepreneurs in your community. The information in this section will come from your work in Section B. It consists of a specific listing of the programs and resources available in your community. These resources can provide additional partners and become the foundation for a resource list for local entrepreneurs.

This list will provide a current inventory of what is available that suggest by *what is missing* what *other* services and resources could be developed for entrepreneurs. Your team will return this list, which the evaluation team will keep as a baseline. At the end of the year, we will provide this list back to you so that you can then note what is new or different.

To assist with this process, the following resources are attached:

- Mapping Your Community's Development Assets *from the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship; this provides a process for identifying and developing the entrepreneurial support system*
- Entrepreneurial Asset Mapping Tool

**(See next page)**

What entrepreneurship programs does our community have? For the community capacity assessment to turn in, type the program names in the boxes below:

<b>Mentors/peer group programs</b>	<b>Business plan development support</b>
<b>Self-awareness assistance</b>	<b>Feasibility study support</b>
<b>Assessment programs</b>	<b>Technical assistance programs</b>
<b>Training programs</b>	<b>Specialized assistance programs</b>
<b>Marketing development and marketing programs</b>	<b>Youth programs</b>

What business services are available to assist entrepreneurs in our community? You may also want to note for your own use what size business they are targeting for services; is a certain number of employees or amount of revenue required to qualify for services? Type the names of the business service resources in the boxes below:

<b>Accounting</b>	<b>Business transfer planning</b>
<b>Legal</b>	<b>Production</b>
<b>Human resources</b>	<b>Marketing</b>
<b>Information technology</b>	<b>Marketing identification and development</b>
<b>Financing</b>	<b>Other</b>





## Entrepreneurial Talent in Our Community

This section identifies the specific entrepreneurs in your community. In addition, because entrepreneurs at different stages have different support and resource needs, this section allows you to identify each entrepreneur's current developmental stage.

You may decide to develop a list of the entrepreneurs in your community along with their contact information to use in your own development projects. It would be fine to simply provide the evaluation team with that list, as long as you note the developmental stage of each entrepreneur. This may be a list that your team will update continuously throughout the year as you make more contacts or new entrepreneurs develop. The list will also give you an idea of what developmental stage of entrepreneurs you may want to target to keep the pipeline flowing in your community.

At the end of the year, we will get the updated list to see how many entrepreneurs have been added (or whose businesses have shut down) during the course of the year and whether you had the opportunity to work with them. We will also use this list to send out a survey to entrepreneurs after the first year; this data will be provided back to you.

To assist with this process, the following resources are attached (you are not expected to use all of them; rather, they provide possible tools should you choose to use one of these techniques to gather information):

- Assessment Series: Understanding Entrepreneurial Talent
- Entrepreneurial Asset Mapping Tool
- Entrepreneur Quick Test
- Rural Entrepreneur Survey
- Entrepreneur Visit Protocol
- Tourism Related Visit Protocol
- Transfer Business Visit Protocol
- Growth Business Visit Protocol

**(See next page)**





## Measures of Success

The indicators below will be used to track the activities and impacts of the team. *For this baseline community capacity assessment, only complete the information on Community Data. The additional information is provided so you can see what you can keep track of and report on at the end of the year.*

### **Baseline: Complete as part of your current community capacity assessment**

<b>Community Data</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>How was this measured?</b>
Current number of home-based businesses		
Current number of businesses with:		
Less than 5 employees		
6 to 19 employees		
20 to 99 employees		
SBA loan amounts in 2006		
Number of businesses registered for a DBA (doing business as) in 2006		
Current number of entrepreneurs		
Current number of female entrepreneurs		
Current number of ethnic minority entrepreneurs		
Current employment rate in your region		
% of people currently employed in your community		

**Follow up: You will be asked about this at the end of the year. Do not fill out at this time.**

Community Data	Number
Current number of home-based businesses	
Current number of businesses with:	
Less than 5 employees	
6 to 19 employees	
20 to 99 employees	
SBA loan amounts in 2006	
Number of businesses registered for a DBA (doing business as) in 2006	
Current number of entrepreneurs	
Current number of female entrepreneurs	
Current number of ethnic minority entrepreneurs	
Current employment rate in your region	
% of people currently employed in your community	
Number of presentations to community groups, agencies, organizations (informal—for example, you're part of a group that's meeting, and you say, "Let me tell you about what we're doing...")	What organizations?
Number of community presentations to community groups, agencies, organizations (more formal—for example, you are on the agenda to make a presentation about your team's work)	What organizations?
Number of people we reached with our messages	
Number of media pieces (newspaper articles, radio programs, or other media coverage about entrepreneurs or the CEC program)	
Number of entrepreneurs visited	
Number of referrals made	
Impacts	Number
Number of jobs created	
Full time	
Part time	
Number of jobs saved	
Number of businesses created	
Amount of investment	
Number of business turnarounds	
Number of business transfers	
Number of community-based programs about entrepreneurship developed	What programs?
Other outcomes achieved	

## Overall Community Capacity Questionnaire—OPTIONAL

**This section is optional.** It provides an assessment of your community’s capacity at a broader level—outside of entrepreneurial development, what assets characterize your community? As with the rest of the assessment, if you decide to complete this section, your team will complete it as a group and turn in only one copy; but you might gather the information from a variety of sources. **If your team would like to complete this section, MSU will incorporate it into your community’s individual report.**

	Not at all	A little	Some-what	Quite a bit	Very strong
<b>COMMUNITY CAPACITY</b>					
1. Community leaders understand and use information about the community and the region (such as the U.S. Census) to make strategic decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Pride in our community shows up in neighborhood and community beautification efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. People from different backgrounds and incomes work together to make the community a better place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Organizations (service clubs) and institutions (hospitals, schools, churches) in our community work together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. People in our community believe that, in the long run, we have to do it ourselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Residents in our community have many chances to participate in decision making.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Our community leaders and organizations encourage a deliberate transition of power to a younger generation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The community supports a leadership development training program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The community provides leadership opportunities for youth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. In our community, women and minorities are accepted in all types of leadership roles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Strong multi-generational family traditions are demonstrated in our community when we see all ages participating in events.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Our traditional institutions (schools, churches, businesses, etc.) are action oriented and responsive to the needs of the people who live here.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. New residents typically feel welcome in our community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. The community demonstrates a willingness to seek help from the outside.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Not at all	A little	Some-what	Quite a bit	Very strong
15. Our community projects show respect for the various cultures of community members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Typically, our leaders build on the positive things in our community rather than focusing on the things that are wrong.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Residents in our community tolerate others with different perspectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. As we work on community issues, we welcome questions, alternatives, and make use of research-based evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. In our community projects, "who does what by when" (accountability) is made public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Lots of different people take on leadership roles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. We pay attention to the results of our community betterment efforts by celebrating successes while acknowledging that there is still work to do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. We keep improving community projects by using some reflection time to understand what works and what doesn't.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. A variety of people will run for public office and feel that doing so is not a risk.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>LOCAL ECONOMY</b>					
24. Our business community offers high quality on a regular basis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Members of the community and local businesses are aware of competitive positioning (marketing, global niche, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. The community supports an active economic development program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. The community leaders understand the limitations and opportunities that result from the physical environment and make decisions accordingly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Local government and community organizations carefully use fiscal resources and understand their fiduciary responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Good business ideas in our community can attract the necessary financial capital to get them going.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. There are many people in our community who actively support economic development efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. The focus of our community's economic development efforts <i>outside of this team</i> includes:					
a. Business attraction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Supporting existing businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	Not at all	A little	Some-what	Quite a bit	Very strong
c. Working only with businesses in town	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Working with both town and country businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Considering farms as part of the business community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Helping new businesses get started	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Other (describe):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. In our community, we see ourselves as part of a greater region and consider all communities within that region in our planning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>INVESTMENT IN THE COMMUNITY</b>					
33. Our community invests in its future by passing school bonds, hospital bonds, or library projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. The community supports a community foundation or other types of local philanthropy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Donations for projects come from all segments of the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. We find resources for economic development projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. Typical fundraising efforts result in many small gifts as well as large gifts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. The community recognizes and supports community volunteers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. Local businesses support the community through donations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. The community supports and maintains a sound and well-maintained infrastructure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. Our community shows strong support for K-12 education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. Our community shows strong support for lifelong learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. Our community shows strong support for job skills training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Our community shows strong support for birth to 5 programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. There's evidence in our community that the arts, music, and our library are important parts of everyone's life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>