

# THE UPSTARTS WIRE



## TORRINGTON & GUERNSEY

In the spring of 2020, we partnered with High Schools in Torrington & Guernsey, Wyoming, to implement UpStarts. The joint program started out in person but shifted to an entirely online format as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students and facilitators had to navigate the changing environment due to COVID-19 and adapt to virtual sessions and client meetings. Local businesses were Twister's, a bed, breakfast, & restaurant and Transwest Ford, a Ford automotive dealership. The teams were faced with challenges related to customer reach and promotion of these local businesses. Teams developed advertising and promotional merchandising solutions to increase the reach of these businesses. Learn more about these teams' process and solutions at <http://upstartsacademy.com/impact>

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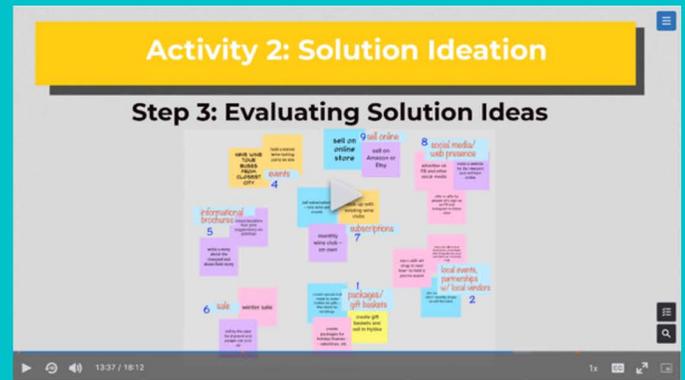
# TRAIN-THE-TRAINER WORKSHOP

UpStarts launched our first train-the-trainer workshop in March 2021 for educators interested in facilitating the program. The aim of the training was to provide facilitators with content and theoretical grounding of the program, as well as walk them through the steps of implementing it in their communities. We had originally planned an in-person training in the spring of 2020, but it was brought to a halt by COVID-19. We pivoted and changed the training to an asynchronous, cohort-based workshop, which was delivered via Google Classroom. The first cohort consisted of 9 participants. It took approximately 7 to 8 hours to complete the entire training, but we kept it open for two weeks to give the educators more time to work at their own pace.

The training modules contained informational videos, interactive questions, and self-check discussion forums to help educators reflect on the module content and activities. Some modules also had hands-on assignments for educators to work through the specific activities in the curriculum so that they could understand what youth will be going through. Before the workshop began, we hosted a live virtual launch event to meet all of the educators who registered and to introduce the UpStarts team. At the end of the training, we also hosted a live virtual wrap-up to answer questions and to informally gather participants' feedback about their experience.

Overall, we thought the training was a success, and have created a virtual online Facilitator Training program for future UpStarts facilitators – learn more here: [upstartssacademy.com/resources/facilitator-training/](https://upstartssacademy.com/resources/facilitator-training/)

## SLIDE FROM WORKSHOP TRAINING



“Concise and to the point. Very well organized and easy to follow. At my own pace.”

- Educator 2021

# TIPS FOR FACILITATING UPSTARTS

We recognize that many who work in youth programming have had years of experience, while others may be new to the field. Below, we share some tips and lessons we have learned in implementing UpStarts in different contexts. In this issue, we focus specifically on how to form and maintain partnerships with local businesses and organizations.



1. The key to successful programming is positive relationships. Youth participants will benefit tremendously through the real-world interactions and engagement. Begin by searching for local partners who can meet those needs and who could also mutually benefit from the program. The UpStarts program seeks local businesses and organizations that have challenges youth participants could help solve. The program also seeks owners and organizational leaders who are willing to serve as mentors for youth participants. In exchange, the local businesses get assistance in resolving their challenge, an increase in publicity for their business or organization, and contribute to their local community development.

2. One good place to start is the local Chamber of Commerce or local business associations. Building partnerships takes time. It is important not to rush through this process, especially in communities with a limited number of businesses and organizations. Taking the time to explore both of your needs and discussing how you can mutually benefit each other will set the stage for an enduring partnership. Often times, a tremendous amount of time and effort are put into building partnerships, then the staff person who coordinated these efforts move on to a different position or leave the field. The program ended up having to rebuild those partnerships over again and local businesses may also grow weary of the partnership rebuilding process. To prevent this from occurring, engage multiple staff or team members in the partnership building process so that they can continue the effort if staff changes occurred within the program.

# TIPS FOR FACILITATING UPSTARTS

3. Another aspect of preparation is to orient business and organizational partners to successfully work with youth. Most businesses and organizational partners will not be well-versed in this area, as it is not their main focus. One idea is to host an orientation session with all participating partners or to schedule one-on-one meetings with each partner depending on their availability. The purpose of the session or meeting is to highlight the skills and characteristics of an effective mentor, such as how to offer constructive criticism to help youth learn. However, begin by asking the business or organizational partner about their previous experience of working with young people.

4. When it comes to working with youth to solve a business or organizational challenge through UpStarts, it is important for facilitators to recognize that youth participants may not have all the skills to work through the problem at the get-go. The facilitator could also ensure that businesses and organizational partners understand the purpose of positive youth development programs, such as UpStarts, is to help youth participants develop skills as they engage in programmatic activities. Set

the stage for success by emphasizing the process of learning rather than the outcome of solving the challenge. Youth participants will do their best to work through the challenge, but keep in mind that the solution may or may not be effective. If partners expect a magical solution to help them fix their problems, they may end up feeling disappointed. Even failures can serve as learning opportunities. Having this understanding at the get-go will help everyone form realistic expectations about the solutions or outcomes to be delivered at the end of the program.

**UpStarts is seeking partnerships with youth-serving programs and organizations, who are interested in entrepreneurship education. If you would like to find out more about to run**

**UpStarts in your community visit**

**[upstartssacademy.com/resources/facilitator-training/](https://upstartssacademy.com/resources/facilitator-training/)**

