A Collaborative Approach to Creating Solutions

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November 3, 2015
Grassroots Origins

- Began with the keen interest and curiosity in financial literacy from community organizations.

- Early inclinations to work together evolved into more formal relationships and structures.

- All subsequent activities followed from observations about gaps, needs and possibilities.
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The need
To expand the size of community interested in financial literacy.

The response
The formation of the Financial Works Conference in 2009.

The impact
The development of a larger community inspired to advance financial literacy and empowerment in Edmonton and elsewhere.

The beginnings of the ABLE conference.
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The need
To connect with others in the province who are also active in promoting financial empowerment.

The response
The formation of the Alberta Financial Empowerment Collaborative.

The impact
The relationship building has allowed for the sharing of information, the consideration of a broader provincial scope and shared advocacy.
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The need
To enhance the level of financial literacy expertise in Edmonton.

The response
The formation of the Facilitator’s Resource Committee tasked with providing half day and two day training sessions.

The impact
425 people have been trained to provide financial literacy programming.

Networking and relationship building.

Increasing support and interest in financial literacy and empowerment.
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The need
To secure reliable funding for asset building financial literacy groups.

The response
The joining of forces to obtain grant and corporate funding for Empower U: Building Confident Futures Initiative. United Way played a pivotal role.

The impact
Presently 11 organizations that offer facilitated financial literacy groups and matched savings of 2:1. In four years, 577 people have completed the groups and purchased assets.
Participant Focused

**Evaluations**
Participant feedback determines Empower U’s directions and priorities.

**Observations**
Listening to participant comments about their challenges led to the creation of the Job Readiness event.

**Appreciations**
Participants involved in ATB Financial ‘This is Me Art’ Showcase and the ATB Financial Comedy nights.
Participant Focused

“Facilitators are awesome. They care about you. They are inspiring and act as mentors. They want you to succeed.” Empower U Participant
Key Components in Creating Solutions in a Collaboration

**Inspiration and Vision**
Seeking inspiration and learning opportunities.
Remaining focused on participant needs.

**Relationships**
Fostering formal and informal relationships.
Recognizing all the contributions as valuable.

**Composition**
Inviting a diversity of voices and perspectives.
Involving backbone organizations as well as supportive organizations.
Ensuring there are champions who are passionate and committed.

**Structure**
Developing ways of resolving differences of opinion.
Using evaluations and research to base choices.
Remaining flexible and aware of the need to evolve.
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