



PLUGGING LOCAL LEAKS

Your Brief

Your team has ten one-hour sessions, eight two-hour sessions and your free time over the next ten weeks, plus the resources below, to complete this Enterprise Brief. You must make all your own decisions and do the work yourselves. You may make changes to this Enterprise Brief, but discuss this with your teacher first.

Your Enterprise

Your main task is to survey and then produce a report on the products that local students are buying from outlets and distributors outside the town. Your main objective is to encourage local retailers to stock these items for their own benefit and that of students. Your work could create more local sales, which could lead to improved employment prospects for locals.

- Interview a range of different aged students in your school to get an idea of what they are buying from outside the town. Consider the full range of possible products including clothing, software, CDs, sports equipment, magazines and toys.
- From this, design a survey form and survey at least 100 students from your school and others in the area.
- When you have collected and organised your data, check with local shops that they are not stocking the items that most appear.
- Use graphs and tables to present your findings in the final report, then produce 40 copies. Ensure that the report describes the purpose of your project and how you went about collecting data. The report should also contain suggestions about other areas where similar surveys should be conducted: areas like households.

Your Resources

You have the following resources:

- 4 hours on-line and 2 hours coaching on web-searching
- \$20 for luncheon expenses
- \$15 worth of access to the school/college telephone, fax, photocopier, postage and other equipment by negotiation (Your teacher will give you a list of unit costs for these areas. You must record all uses and the associated costs.)
- access to other school/college resources and facilities by negotiation.

Launching Your Report

You are required to organise an official launch for your report. Invite local retailers, representatives from the chamber of commerce, representatives from any local economic development agencies, local politicians and the media.

The launch should include:

- providing visitors with a copy of the report
- an outline of the project: its purpose and the methods you used
- an account of your findings and the benefits of 'plugging the leaks'
- recommendations for other 'plugging the leaks' surveys
- an account of what you learned about economics
- an opportunity for local retailers and others to respond to your report
- an official launch of the report by a local dignitary like the mayor
- a light luncheon for guests
- a feedback form so that participants can comment on what they thought about your report and your enterprise.

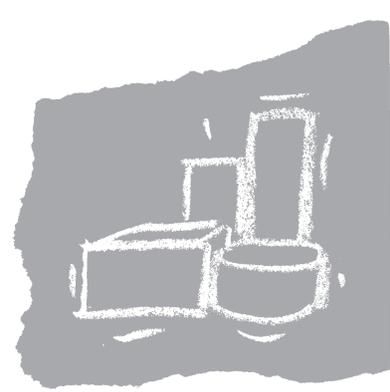
Make sure that your presentation is not boring: try to use examples, tables and graphs wherever possible.

Your Assessment

Your individual assessment will be based on the following:

- (a) The quality of your survey form, as judged by your teacher (20%).
- (b) The quality of the report in terms of presentation and content, as judged by a panel of representatives from the local economic community (30%).
- (c) The effectiveness of the launch in terms of promoting the school's/college's image, as judged by a senior executive of the school/college (10%).
- (d) The effectiveness of the feedback form, as judged by your teacher from reviewing the completed forms (10%).
- (e) Your performance at, and contribution to the launch as judged by your team (20%).
- (f) Your performance at, and contribution to, the debriefing session - which your teacher will tell you more about (10%).
- (g) Your teacher will take into account what the people have to say at the launch and through the feedback form. Make sure the form is well designed, using ratings, multiple choices and comments.

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TEACHER NOTES

The Focus

While this brief focuses on local economic development and has direct relevance to commerce and community studies courses, it is also a good vehicle for practising research and data presentation skills. With a greater stress on statistical analysis and presentation it could fit into a mathematics course.

Recommendations

- ◆ ‘Plugging the Leaks’ campaigns are a widely used strategy in local economic development programs. This project is mostly suitable for small communities.
- ◆ The activity should be highly regarded by the local business community and bring credit upon the students and the school.
- ◆ Students need to provide local businesses with clear descriptions of what they are doing and why, including a stress on their learning objectives, in order to avoid any misunderstandings.
- ◆ Consider videotaping the presentation. It will be extremely valuable for debriefing, as well as providing a learning resource for others.
- ◆ Confer with office staff and others to determine a unit cost for each equipment use (e.g. telephone, photocopier etc.) and provide students with a list.

Debriefing

Explore local economic issues, such as:

- the disadvantages of a ‘leaking local economy’
- the advantages of buying locally
- the notion of treating the local area as a distinct ‘economy’ and managing it
- the local economy relationship to regional, national and international economies (and the limitations of the notion of a local economy)
- other local economic development strategies, and particularly their relationship to employment and community empowerment.

Invite a representative from a local economic development organisation to

- observe the students' debriefing
- respond to economic issues
- brief students on other local economic development strategies.

*Use the Results Radar exercise to focus on the process of being enterprising.
See Appendix A, page 293.*

Review the assessment processes and outcomes.

Extensions and Variations

1. Students survey 'leaks' involving household goods.
2. Students go on to mount a 'buy locally' campaign.
3. Students link up with a local partner like a bank, a real estate agency or community-based business to help them with the brief.

Notes