

We Rock Wall

Lessons from Our United Villages' Community Outreach

Some people call it an Assets Map...
Some people call it an Interest Inventory...
We call it a We Rock Wall!



Creating a visual display of the gifts and talents of a community.

This document is like a tool chest, take from it whatever works best for achieving your own neighborhood or community goals.

Identify the community that will be involved.

- A neighborhood
- An apartment
- A shared interest group or club
- A faith-based community
- Staff of an organization/business

Our “community” was the staff of Our United Villages. Participating in the We Rock Wall is voluntary.

Identify the questions that will be asked in a 1:1 interview.

- What is the purpose of this activity?
- What do you want to learn about the community?
- How will this information be used?
- Develop a list of questions that you will ask each person who chooses to be interviewed.

We asked each staff member the same questions. The questions focused on their strengths, gifts, and talents. We wanted the We Rock Wall to be a snapshot of each staff member and then show the connections or common interests of the group. See Appendix A for a copy of the interview guide we used.

Identify who will do the interviews.

- What languages have been identified in the community?
- Who is interested in being an interviewer?

We have three interviewers and one interpreter. We rotate who does the interviews based on availability.

Get the word out.

- What is the best method for ensuring that everyone within the community will get the information?
- What language can be used to explain the project?

We talked about the We Rock Wall at the all staff meeting and put a flyer about the activity in every staff member’s mailbox on payday. We identified the languages spoken by staff and translated the invitation into those languages. See Appendix B for the flyer we used to get the word out.

Conducting the interviews.

- When is the best time to conduct the interviews?
- Will they all occur within a specified time period or will this be an ongoing activity?

We scheduled interviews with staff as they were interested and willing. As new staff came to Our United Villages, we offered the opportunity to participate. The We Rock Wall is an ongoing effort. The interviews took between 15 and 30 minutes each. We took a photo of each staff member at the time of the interview.

Categorizing the interviews into themes.

- What part(s) of the interview will be visually displayed?
- What process will be used to identify themes in the interviews?

After conducting approximately 20 interviews, we categorized the results into themes. Nine themes bubbled to the top: indoor activities, outdoor activities, volunteering, music, art, sports, kids/family, social activities, and thrift store shopping. These themes were used to organize individual responses.

Creating a visual portrayal.

- Where should the visual portrayal be located so that it is accessible and useful to the community?
- What will the visual portrayal look like?
- How can the visual portrayal reflect the culture of the community?

The We Rock Wall covers one wall of Our United Villages' staff lunch room. To reflect the culture of this community, we made the We Rock Wall out of recycled and reclaimed objects. For example, the words "We Rock Wall" are made out of wood knobs.

Honoring each individual and honoring the group.

- How can this activity lift up the strengths, gifts, and talents of each individual in the community?
- How can this activity show the connections and common interests of the group as a whole?

The We Rock Wall has a photograph of each employee with a unique quote that emerged during their interview. The pictures of each person create a border around the We Rock Wall. In the middle are the nine themes that emerged. Individual responses that relate to the theme are posted on note cards around that theme. See Appendix C for an sample.

Enhancing the functionality and utility.

- What functions will this activity serve?
- How will it be useful to the community?

The We Rock Wall is a celebration of the community. In addition, it serves as a place for (1) new staff to get to know the community, (2) staff to connect with each around common interests, (3) a place to post needs and offers. See Appendix D for more information.

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Name: _____

Department: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____

1. How do you like to spend your time? _____

2. What do you do for fun? _____

3. What do you like to do indoors? _____

4. What do you like to do outdoors? _____

5. What are you really good at? _____

6. How would people in your life describe you? _____

7. What ideas do you have to be more connected to your co-workers? _____

Potential Themes:

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-
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Appendix B: Getting the Word Out

We Rock Wall

Have you ever wondered if there is someone that you work with who has similar hobbies as you?

Does someone you work with know how to do something that you would like to learn about?

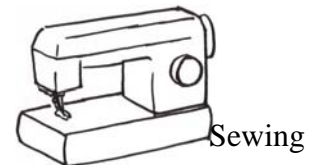
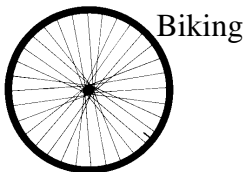
Do you have a skill or talent that you could teach to your co-workers?

Our United Villages Community Outreach office is beginning the process of informal interviews with every OUV employee who chooses to participate. We are going to interview each staff member about their skills, talents, and strengths. This is an opportunity for employees to build community with each other. Four employees will be conducting the interviews. Once staff members have shared their responses, Community Outreach will create a display for the wall of our lunch room. For example, if someone talked about enjoying biking, we may put up a bike wheel on the wall. Each staff member's picture and department will be placed next to the things they enjoy. You will be able to discover what interests you have in common with your co-workers. This interview is a *voluntary activity*; you do not have to participate if you do not want to.

We appreciate the talents, gifts, and skills that every OUV staff member brings to our workplace!

We will contact you to schedule a 20 minute informal interview. If you want a heads-up about what we will be asking, below is the list of questions we plan to ask:

- How do you like to spend your time?
- What do you do for fun?
- What do you like to do indoors?
- What do you like to do outdoors?
- What are you really good at?
- How would people in your life describe you?
- What ideas do you have to be more connected to your co-workers?



Appendix C: Honoring Individuals & the Group as a Whole

Individual Photo with Unique Quote

- The photos create a border for the We Rock Wall.
- It helps people put a face to a name.
- We pick out a font that compliments the person’s personality and unique quote.
- The picture was taken in a way the person wanted (i.e. with their dog, in a nature setting, on their front steps, riding their bike)
- We show the picture and the quote to the person before posting it to ensure that it is a picture they like.

Mary Stephens
DeConstructionist



Mary enjoys creating art out of found objects, mountain biking, and says “I could play cards all night long.”

Group Themes

Individual responses were written out onto index cards based on the theme they would fall under. The index cards were displayed around the theme which showed the common interests amongst staff.

Concept	Example
After conducting approximately 20 interviews, we identified nine themes.	Indoor activities, Outdoor activities, Volunteering, Music, Art, Sports, Kids/Family, Social Activities, and Thrift Store Shopping.
We decorated a card with images for each theme.	Outdoor Activities was decorated with images of hiking, camping, canoeing, biking, etc.
Individual’s responses were displayed around the theme.	Mary’s cards would be categorized in the following ways: Mountain biking= Outdoor Activities Creating art out of found objects = Art Playing Cards = Social Activities

Appendix D: Enhancing the Functionality and Utility

Needs & Offers

The We Rock Wall celebrates how we all have something to offer and something to gain by connecting with our community.

On one side of the We Rock Wall, we put two sections for posting:

- I am in need of... / I am looking for...
- I have to offer... / I would like to invite you to...

Examples of needs and offers that were posted include:

- I am in need of... / I am looking for...
 - A couch
 - Someone to watch my kids this Friday
 - Some who can show me how to change my oil myself
- I have to offer... / I would like to invite you to...
 - My art show this weekend
 - Free bike tune-up done by me
 - Rock-climbing lesson

Connections & Similar Interests

The We Rock Wall encourages us to explore the resources we already have amongst ourselves to meet our needs and build community.

We have seen conversations start up between employees based on the We Rock Wall.

- Hey! I saw you like sci-fi movies too, have you seen...
- It said on the We Rock Wall that you know how to sew. Could you show me...
- You have dogs too? Would you be up to trading pet-sitting...

Group activities have emerged from the common interests we learned about.

- Loves to cook → creating A Cook Book for employees to share recipes with one another
- Loves to make music with others → A Drum Circle once a month that is open to all staff
- Loves to eat → A staff initiated pot-luck at work
- Loves to hike → Sharing hiking trails and hidden spots with each other
- Loves sports → Launching a fall ball softball team