How Do You Know You’re Getting It Right?: Implementing an authentic student partnership program, getting the people right, and managing uncomfortable emotions

Workshop

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Abstract:

The Student Health & Wellbeing Ambassadors Program is a student partners project designed to support other student partnership projects. Student Ambassadors work actively with staff to develop the program itself, while simultaneously working on other student health and wellbeing initiatives. Over the last two years, Ambassadors have been involved in proposing, planning, promoting, implementing, and reviewing over 20 projects, including running campus-wide events, developing resources, and delivering promotional campaigns. While they work on these projects, they also contribute to the development of the Ambassadors Program, which has evolved in line with their input and incorporates new voices with each generation. This practical workshop will be ideal for those thinking about setting up their own student partnership program or those who have already begun and are starting to wonder if it’s worth all the trouble (hint: it is!). This workshop was conceived and designed, and will be delivered, as a student partnership project, run by both staff and students from the Ambassadors Program. The following topics will be covered:

• Setting Up Your Program: Involving students in the process to build authenticity from the get-go, and finding a structure that works for everyone
• Gauging Student Partners: Finding actively engaged students and empowering them to become equal partners, on the fly
• Having an Agile Mindset: Embracing discomfort and developing strategies for managing frustration to get things done while caring for your own health and wellbeing
• Teamwork Isn’t Just a Graduate Attribute: Creating a shared vision and working together to build an authentic partnership

Biography:

1. Ben’s academic background is in English and Creative Writing, but he’s been working in student support for the past six years. He took on his current role with on clear objective: get more students engaged with their health and wellbeing, more often. He introduced the Student Health & Wellbeing Ambassadors Program to do just that.
2. Emily is in her Honours year of a Bachelor of Engineering. She is passionate about engaging with her peers and improving their wellbeing, with a particular focus on mental
health issues that affect university students. Emily has also been with the Ambassadors Program from the start.