Diamond Challenge
for High School Entrepreneurs

Session 7: Using a Business Model Canvas

Overview

This session introduces the notion that businesses can be decomposed into ideas about the customer, problem, solution, unique value proposition, revenue model, and other components.

Key Points

❖ No business plan survives first contact with customers; therefore, it is better to start by trying to validate a business concept.

❖ Your job as a startup is to develop a business model-- a description of how an organization creates, delivers and captures value.

❖ The best place to start the process of developing a new business model is by considering: who the customers are, what their problem is, what solution you will provide, and how/why your solution is better than current offerings.

Discussion Questions

1. How is it possible that an entrepreneur can spend a lot of time writing a business plan and still fail when he or she actually tries to go to market?

2. When does it make sense to spend time writing a business plan?

3. With the amount of effort and resources that are needed to transform an idea into a successful business, do you think ideas are assets or liabilities?

Additional Resources

Guide to the Business Model Canvas

Lean Canvas Course from Ash Maurya

Examples of Well-Known Business Models

Business Model Talk at Stanford by Alexander Osterwalder

Possible Assignments

1. Pick a business model that attracts you and brainstorm other business ideas that could use a similar model.

2. Download a copy of the business model canvas (click on download link in first paragraph; the link in the title doesn't work) and begin to fill in the first draft of your idea. If you don't have an idea yet, practice using the canvas with a business model that attracts you.

3. Pick two or three companies and compare their business models, e.g., Apple, Google, Amazon, Microsoft, and Facebook.