



OFFICE *of* INNOVATION &
COMMERCIALIZATION

Introduction to
Lean Launchpad
+
Customer Discovery

October 20, 2022

Overview

- About Office of Innovation + Commercialization
- Intro to Lean Launchpad
- Revisit the Business Model Canvas
- Customer Discovery
- ASK QUESTIONS!!!

UNCW Office of Innovation + Commercialization

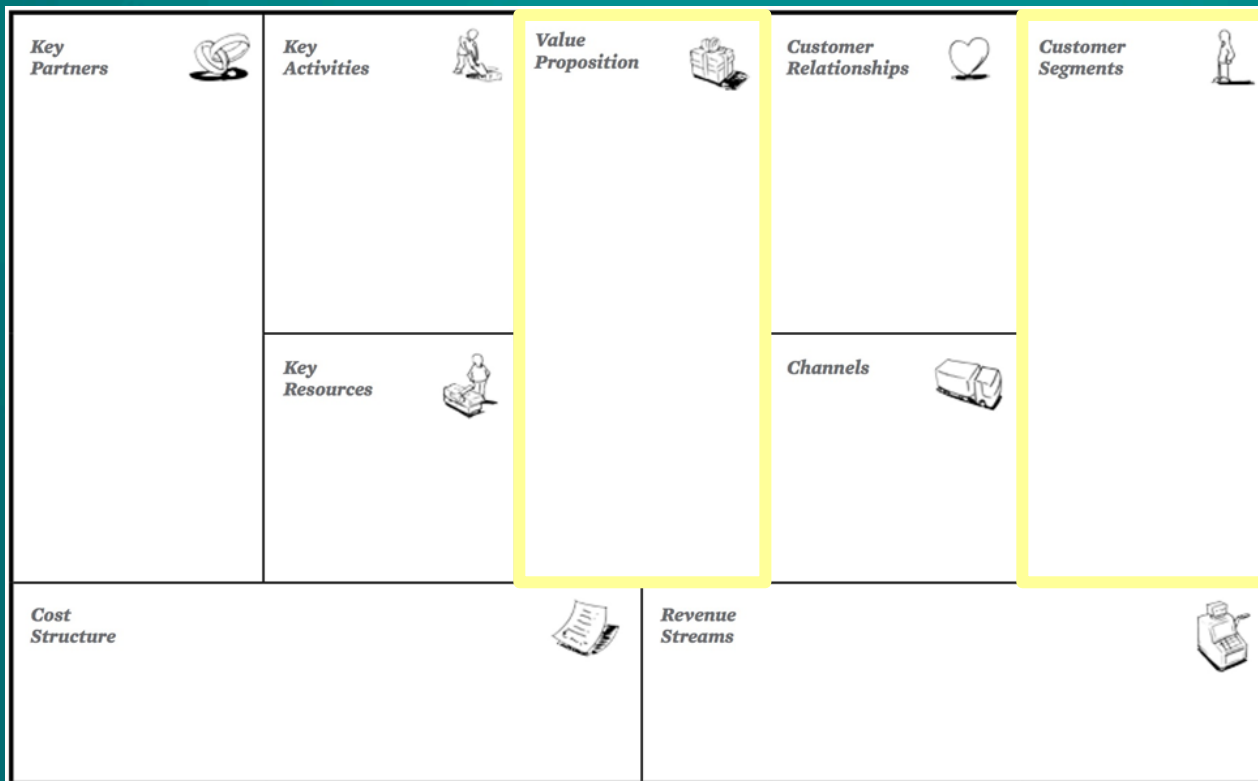
- Technology Transfer
- Industry Partnership
- Entrepreneurial Support
- About Me

Intro to Lean Launchpad Method

- Tools : Business Model Canvas + Customer Discovery
- Talking to customers to validate/invalidate business hypothesis
- Agile development, fail fast and pivot
- Evidence-based, empathy-based
- Not a Business Plan

Business Model Canvas

- Google it, lots of info out there
- Mini-biz plan, gives understanding of how your biz works
- Let's you test, quickly modify – Think you know? Confirm it!
- Value prop + Customer segment are most important



Levels/Stages of Customer Discovery

1. **Problem-Solution Fit** : Can you identify a problem that enough people care about with an intensity large enough to motivate action?
2. **Product-Market Fit** : Can you design a product or process that delivers value in a way that your customers want to consume it?
3. **Business Model Fit** : Can you build a sustainable, repeatable business selling your product or process to your customers?

What you Ultimately want to Learn

Focus your questions towards answering these...

What are the customers really trying to accomplish?

How do they measure success?

What are they currently doing to meet their objectives?

What are the top three obstacles preventing their progress?

What would it take to replace the current solution or workaround with a more appropriate solution or process? What would make them change behavior?

Who do you Interview – Customer Segment + Value Proposition

- A group of people that shares a reason to purchase your product.
- “Everyone” is not your customer.
- Various Customer Segments buy the SAME product for DIFFERENT reasons – That’s Value Proposition



Deep Dive : Sub-Segments & Roles

- All Customers in a Segment are not the same
- Furthermore, there are different Roles within these Sub-Segments
- Think about a new drug entering the hospital market, you need to consider...

End User (Patient)

Decision Maker

Payer

Influencer

Recommender

Saboteur



Customer Discovery

Step-by-Step

Listen, Don't Sell!

- Don't convince them to LIKE your idea
- Extract data
- Listen and dig, why, why, why?
- Customer Interviews -> Conversation

Four Parts to the Process

Planning

Landing

Conducting

Analysis

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Step 1: Planning an Interview

1. Focus on customer segments, sub-segments, roles.
2. Find people you don't already know! They have no relationship to protect.
3. Have a purpose - Know what you think you can learn from this person before you get there.

Step 1: Planning an Interview

Seek easy targets and move up the food chain *later*.



Step 1: Planning an Interview

How do I find them?

- Network – Mentor, Professor, Family, Friends, etc.
- Google – Find companies
- SIC & NAISC Code Lookup
- LinkedIn
- Trade Organizations & Publications
- Conferences, Virtual Conferences, Online/Physical Events
- Social Media

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Step 2: Landing an Interview

- QUICK introduction (look for warm introductions).
- Establish credibility. (previous relationships, warm intros, first names, use the script)
- Appeal to EGO “I know you’re an expert - I want to learn from you.”
- Seek help. You are a student researcher, not salesmen!
- Be confident.
- Seal the deal: 10-15 minutes, get on the schedule, thank them, send calendar invite.
- Be ready to “roll into the interview” right then.

Step 2: Landing an Interview

The SCRIPT

“Hi (their name), my name is __, I’m a PhD/MA/Undergrad student at UNCW working on grant-funded innovation project in your field. I know (or I have heard) that you are an expert in this field and I was hoping to learn from you! Do you have 15-minutes that we could schedule a Zoom or in-person meeting and I ask you a couple of questions?”

Step 2: Landing an Interview

Be wary of the gatekeepers.

Take advantage of *conferences* and *virtual tradeshow*s and other *corporate events*. **ALL BLUE WEEK!**

Look for people that *no longer* work there.

Four Parts to the Process

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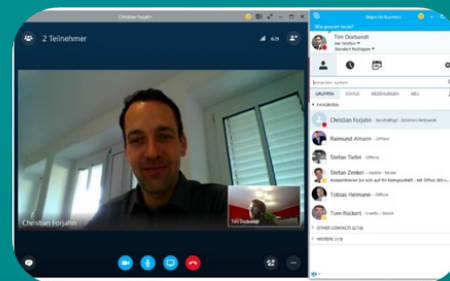
Landing

Conducting

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Step 3: Conducting an Interview

- Plan in this order: *Face to Face*, Zoom, Phone
- Try to *access to their facility* whenever possible. Not campus!
- Take two people whenever possible –assign roles!
- Talk to one person at a time. AVOID LISTENING TO GROUP THINK!



Step 3: Conducting an Interview

- Do not sell! Not about your product, service or research
- Don't convince them to like your idea
- Creates bias
- Try to invalidate your assumptions
- Do not disclose!



Step 3: Conducting an Interview

Develop questions for each interview – Tie to Business Model Canvas

Be very intentional with what you want to learn

Make it a conversation, let responses guide, don't stick to a list

Use common language, they may not be experts

Step 3: Conducting an Interview

Get excited to hear what you don't want to hear! INVALIDATE your hypotheses.

Manage Confirmation Bias

Avoid Speculation or Abstract feelings - ask why, why, why, why, why.

Consider an Icebreaker to build rapport and get them talking. “Tell me about your day to day.”

Don't fear picking the wrong customers/beneficiaries.

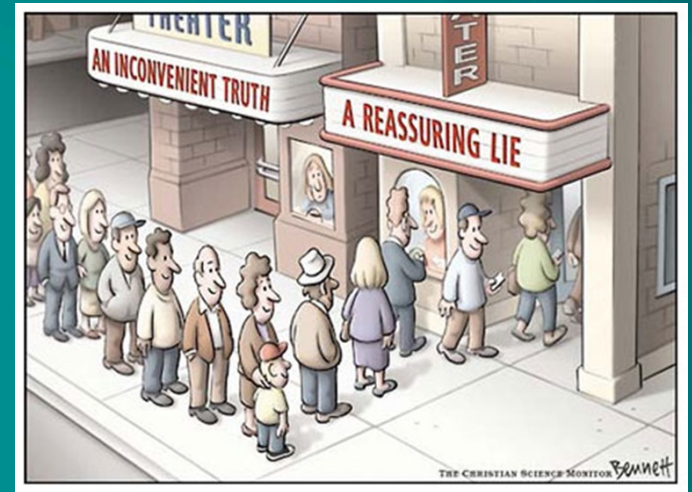
Look for hidden motivations.

Parrot back to confirm.



Step 3: Conducting an Interview

- Always ask **open-ended** questions.
- Never ask **multiple choice** questions.
- Target the **who, what, why, and how**.
Follow the 5 whys!
- Avoid **is, are, would, do you think, and should**.



Step 3: Conducting an Interview

ALWAYS FINISH WITH...

“What did I forget to ask?”

“Is there anyone else you think I should meet?”

Other Tips

- Ask to record, Zoom can record, pros/cons
- Don't give away IP or your secret sauce
- Save their contact information, they are your first customers!
- Follow up with a thank you note
- Don't sell your product!
- Ask for referrals!

Four Parts to the Process

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Landing

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Analysis

Step 4: Analyzing an Interview

Turn data into information through **pattern recognition**!

Make sure you spend as much time **interpreting** the data as you are collecting it!

Step 4: Analyzing an Interview

USE WHAT YOU HEAR TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS

What are the customers really trying to accomplish?

How do they measure success?

What are they currently doing to meet their objectives?

What are the top three obstacles preventing their progress?

What would it take to replace the current solution or workaround with a more appropriate solution or process? What would make them change behavior?

Get OUT of the building!

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