CSCI 5193 Assignment: Workshop Retrospective
Dal Innovates Collide Program - Mentorship Stream
Winter 2022

Introduction

As a quick introduction about the program, Dal Innovates Collide is a seven-week program developed to help give students with the skills and confidence required to validate business ideas and learn to combat the fear of reaching out to potential customers, be aware of confirmation bias, and identify the skills necessary to run a business.

The first week

So far, past a week in the seven-week long program, the online group session primarily concentrated on the crux of understanding what it takes to lead a successful business, how to potentially target a customer group, and the very importance of the first customer of the product, which often tends to be the starting point of getting to know the market better even at an early stage of prototyping.

The entire 1.5 hours of the session was interactive; the breakout room to discuss each other's ideas and share opinions was productive in a way to get an outside perspective, which is crucial in the early stages of the prototype or even when it's a thought process to consider building a business.

The 2-minute pitch

The breakout sessions were aimed at "team building and idea formation," with a quick 2-3 minutes pitch, structured to include the target group, the idea of the business, opportunities that we look forward to, and what it takes to make this a reality.

Lean Canvas

Soon after the breakout session, we learned more about the lean canvas template, and in fact, it's one of the week's take-home tasks. The first draft of the lean canvas template is meant to give a rough picture of clearly defining the problem, the proposed solution to tackle the problem, potential customer cohort target, and finally, the value proposition. All of which is a part of the lean canvas template.

Collaboration

More importantly, coming to the best part of the session, the ability to form a team with common interests or based on missing skills. A channel where any of us can drop a message on what we are good at and further mention what we are looking for in order to collaborate and work together towards the business idea.

Lastly, the online sessions are on Zoom, conversations over slack, and team management in Notion, which seem like the right set of tools to make this program a success. With the completion of the first week and six more weeks to go, the experience is positive.