

Learning Outcomes/Reflection Paper

Alicianna Flores

Old Dominion University

1. From the reading assignment The meaning of “Social Entrepreneurship” by J. Gregory Dees I learned about the meaning of social entrepreneurship and the differences between business and social entrepreneurship. Social entrepreneurs are change agents in the social sector, by “adopting a mission to create and sustain social value, recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission, engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning, acting boldly without being limited by resources, and exhibiting heightened accountability to the individuals served and for the results of their actions: (Dees, 2001). Social entrepreneurs make huge changes regarding the way things are done. They are bold dreamers who do not only treat the problem but go even further than that and try to eliminate it (Dees, 2001). Their goal is spread change and make improvements not only locally but globally (Dees, 2001). Social entrepreneurs sole focus is contributing to their cause, and this focus is not corrupted by things such as financial returns (Dees, 2001) . Social entrepreneurs see opportunity all around them and are driven by compassion and a desire to help others (Dees, 2001). They are persistent and commit to making a positive change, even when running into roadblocks; seeing pitfalls as learning experiences instead of failure (Dees, 2001). Social entrepreneurs are innovative and creative, constantly coming up with new ideas and ways to contribute to their cause (Dees, 2001). They continue to progress forward with their mission, regardless of limited resources they find a way to make it work (Dees, 2001). Social entrepreneurs ensure that their actions serve the individuals and communities that they intend to help, meaning that they continuously asses the target groups needs in order to fulfill them (Dees, 2001) . When looking at the difference between social entrepreneurship and business entrepreneurship there is one key aspect that differentiates them greatly. This is the motive of the entrepreneur themselves. While business entrepreneurship focus on wealth creation and use this as a way to measure the

businesses overall value, social entrepreneurships do not (Dees, 2001). Social entrepreneurships instead place value of things such as social improvements, public goods, and benefits for people who cannot afford to pay themselves (Dees, 2001). Both business and social entrepreneurships work in markets, but this environment better serves business entrepreneurships (Dees, 2001) .

This ties back into the motives of these two types of entrepreneurs and the way that they measure values. Markets allow business entrepreneurships to gain a clearer look on their progress than social entrepreneurships, because for them they provide measurable results. While business entrepreneurships use profit (revenue minus cost) as an indicator of success, social entrepreneurships are based off of a more abstract idea (Dees, 2001). When positive change is made, they rarely gain economic rewards, making staying afloat an increased challenge. Social entrepreneurships often mainly rely on donations and volunteers for this reason (Dees, 2001).

This reading will help me greatly in the future when running my own nonprofit organization. I plan on managing multiple locations that will be providing therapy services for free or low costs. After reading this article I now understand what makes a social entrepreneur different from a business entrepreneur. I will use the knowledge that I learned to keep focused on my mission and to understand that profits are not the goal and should not be used as indicators of my organization's success. I will instead try to find other ways to determine if my organization is indeed making a change in the lives of individuals in the areas we will be operating in. I believe that surveys and other assessments will be more useful when determining success that profits will be. I sincerely hope to embody each of the characteristics that make up a social entrepreneur. In order to do this, I plan on always focusing on the needs of the target group that I have dedicated to serve. Although individuals running nonprofit organizations face increased

risks/difficulties because they are often harder to fund, I plan on persevering and being successful in my venture.

2. From the reading assignment *The Public Innovator's Playbook: Nurturing bold ideas in government* by William D. Eggers and Shalabh Kumar Singh, I learned about the innovation process as well as innovation strategies. The innovation process is a cycle that includes four phases, these phases include idea generation and discovery, idea selection, idea implementation, and idea diffusion (Eggers & Singh, 2009). Idea generation and discovery consists of brainstorming and research. Many ideas will be brought to attention, and all possibilities will be considered. After this step is completed, you then pick the best idea from the brainstorming list you or you and your colleagues generated. You then move onto the implementation step, where the idea is then refined and executed (Eggers & Singh, 2009). Key strategies for successfully implementing innovations include receiving customer feedback, ensuring effective communication between leadership and workers on the line of the organization, and clearly defining a mission for the organization so that progress can be assessed (Eggers & Singh, 2009). The last stage is diffusion. This stage involves collaboration and the transfer of ideas. This is where government, academia, and other businesses are contacted in order to generate innovation, exchange knowledge, and inform the government about issues that advance or stall innovation (Eggers & Singh, 2009). Innovation strategies include cultivation, replication, partnering, networking, and open sourcing. Cultivation consists of modifying the inside of your organization in order to enhance idea generation and motivate employees to deliver their best (Eggers & Singh, 2009). Replication consists of adapting previous innovations in order to fit a new context (Eggers & Singh, 2009). Partnering consists of teaming up with other economic and/or political sectors such as government, academia, and private industries (Eggers & Singh, 2009). Networking is similar to partnering, but instead of a bilateral relationship (consisting of two entities who are working together), multiple organizations work together to meet a common

goal (Eggers & Singh, 2009). Open sourcing is a relatively new concept when it comes to innovation strategies. Open sourcing at its root refers to an occurrence in which resources are piled together in one location from a variety of sources, and normal individuals are able to access that information and use it in order to then in turn learn and develop ideas and/or products themselves. These strategies for innovation as you can see go from internal orientation to external orientation, meaning that you first start within your organization and then end up moving outside further and further into the community, allowing more ideas to be shared. Something else I learned in this reading that applied specifically to my nonprofit that in economically struggling communities' governments often partner with nonprofit organizations to create and disuse innovations to support the community (Eggers & Singh, 2009).

The information that I learned in this article will help me continuously find ways to introduce new innovations both to my organization and the communities I serve. Because of the information I learned I now understand where ideas can be generated from. This will help me in the future when I am running my organization because I now plan on using surveys with both my employees and the individuals my organization serves in order to get a better idea on both how to improve the interworking's of my nonprofit organization and the services we provide, as well as generating new ideas related to expansion and new therapy practices. I now know that it is possible to reach outside of your organization and community, with the technological advancements we have now there are online platforms where people share a large amount of new information daily. Having a firm understanding of the innovation process as well will greatly help me follow the steps when coming up with new ideas. Being able to first brainstorm with colleagues and other individuals and then narrow my list is a great way to start the process.

Being able to then put that into place in my workplace will be sure to bring a positive change to society.

3. From the discussion board assignment “Characteristics of Successful Entrepreneurs” I learned what characteristics successful entrepreneurs all tend to share. An entrepreneur is commonly known as an individual who creates a business that provides services and/or products. However, truly successful entrepreneurs are so much more than that. An successful entrepreneur is confident (Patel, 2017). They believe in their abilities and dreams and realize that they are unique individuals, therefore they do not compare or second guess themselves. They are also open minded and creative, constantly are coming up with new ideas on how to grow and change (Patel, 2017). They always are thinking of a better way of doing things and tend to think outside the box to come up with new solutions. They are resourceful and know how to make the most of what they have (Patel, 2017) . Successful entrepreneurs are flexible, meaning that they know how to adapt to new situations that arise and are always ready and willing to learn, change, and grow (Patel, 2017). Successful entrepreneurs are not only willing to learn, but eager to learn (Griffiths, 2016). They are never content, and while they are confident in their abilities, they also understand that they need to constantly work on their skills. They constantly challenge themselves and are always learning new things to help improve their businesses and the way they run things. They want to become the most knowledgeable individual in their respective field. They are also passionate, truly in love with their work (Patel, 2017) . They find joy in their business and view it as more than just a job, but instead a way of life. They constantly want to do more and want to make their business better. Successful entrepreneurs are self-motivated and focused (Patel, 2017). They do not allow external factors to get them off track and have the ability to prioritize. They have strong work ethics and are more than willing to put in the hard work and time required in order to run a successful business. They also are proactive and take charge of their future, with no one telling them what they must do. Successful entrepreneurs are



optimistic (Patel, 2017). They look forward to the future with optimism and are dreamers. When they are confronted with challenges, entrepreneurs believe in their ability and are excited to be facing the task. Even if there are failures along their journey, they persevere and are resilient. Successful entrepreneurs are risk takers and opportunity seekers (Patel, 2017). They are willing to take calculated risks in the case that it would be the best for them and their business. They push themselves out of their comfort zones and are able to find opportunities in almost all situations. They actively look for opportunities and do not wait for them to just appear. They are goal-oriented, always looking toward the future. They have their goals in their minds at all times and the actions they take are aimed at achieving those goals. They have strong people skills and strong communication skills. They have the ability to motivate employees and can use persuasion to sell products and/or services. Entrepreneurs often use networking in order to create new opportunities for themselves and to grow their business (Griffiths, 2016). They create positive, helpful relationships with others.

I will use what I learned in the future, as I plan to open a clinic like the one in my business plan. Successful individuals often face a variety of problems in their everyday life but are always able to push forward. They do not let problems discourage them, and they do not quit. Bumps along the road are to be expected, but true failure only occurs when you stop trying. I believe that being successful is a mindset. This idea has actually been supported, as all successful entrepreneurs have been found to embody shared characteristics. Knowing the characteristics of successful entrepreneurs will aide me greatly in the future while I try to embody these characteristics. Being passionate about my work, open minded, and a great communicator, among other factors, are characteristics that I currently embody. Remembering to stay confident, optimistic, and flexible is important to remember if I want to be successful in my endeavors. I

will remember the reason that I started my organization and will continue to push forward so that meet my goal of helping low income individuals with disabilities receive the help they need.

4. From the market research section of the business plan I learned how to successfully include data regarding the target population and market relevant to my business venture. When researching my industry, I discovered that the healthcare industry is made up of various sectors and one of the biggest in America, with the world atlas determining in 2017 that it had a GDP value of 1.136 trillion and represented 8 percent of the overall GDP (Sawe, 2017) ]. The healthcare industry is also expected to only continue to grow, with The Bureau of Labor Statistics stating that employment of healthcare occupations is projected to grow 14 percent from 2018 to 2028 (BLS, 2019). I learned that the critical needs of my target population include the ability to receive low cost, high quality care from a variety of healthcare professionals such as pediatricians, developmental psychologists, and various therapists such as speech, physical, and occupational therapists. A need exists for these services in the community. While no official reports on the number of individuals with disabilities in the Hampton Roads Area has been reported, the U.S Department of Education states that IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities (Virginia Department of Education, n.d.). The Hampton Roads area is one of the biggest metro areas in the state of Virginia, with Virginia Beach being the most populated city in the state of Virginia, so one can only assume that there will be a constant need for these services in the local area (“Virginia Population”, 2019). I learned about regulatory restrictions surrounding my business including that according to federal tax requirements, no earnings are allowed to personally benefit employees, individuals, or directors of my organization. I also learned that the main barrier to my target market is the high investment costs due to the need for quality professional personnel and equipment, as well as the location and daily operating costs. I learned that the only free/low cost

care in the local area provided for individuals with these specific needs are two university based clinics (Old Dominion and Hampton University) and home based early intervention offered through social services. I was able to create a pricing structure for my organization, where I decided that free services will be provided to individuals making 200% or less than the federal poverty level in each specific calendar year and low cost services will be provided to individuals making 400% or less than the federal poverty level in each specific calendar year. I decided this because my goal is to eliminate hardship that would be faced if individuals were forced to pay full price. I was able to determine the strengths of my competitors which include quality personnel, acceptance of various insurances and payment forms, and high quality treatment facilities. I was also able to determine the weaknesses of my competition which include a high cost for services and lack of a program for children such as the one my nonprofit provides.

I will use the information I learned through this activity in the future to help shape my organization. Having a firm plan for a pricing structure will help ensure that my organization is upholding its promise of helping the target audience. Being able to make a small profit which will then be distributed back into the organization will help us maintain both a high quality clinic and high quality professional medical services. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of local competition will allow me to focus on setting my organization apart from them and therefore allow me to draw in more clients. Having a strong understanding of both the overall industry and its expected growth as well as the relationship pertaining to my specific metro area is significant because it allowed me to estimate a market share that can be changed over time based on changing statistics. The market research section of the business plan overall gave an in depth look at our chosen industries that really helped shape our organizations and provided a firm education base from which the other parts of the business plan could be constructed.

5. From the Service/Product line section of the business plan I learned about life cycles, research and development, and intellectual property. I also learned about how to successfully describe my business in a way that is marketable. A products/services life cycle refers to the period of time in which a product is conceived and developed, brought to market and later removed from the market (Kopp, 2019). This cycle includes four stages: introduction, growth, maturity, and decline. In the introductory stage, the product is undergoing research and development and if determined that the product will be marketable it is then marketed. In the next stage which is the growth stage, demand, production, and availability all grow and expand. When the product reaches the maturity stage, the product enters its most profitable stage in which the costs of marketing and producing decline. In the last stage, which is referred as decline, the product loses market share due to increased competition. Based off of what I learned my organization would be considered to currently be in the introductory stage, because we know which services we will be providing and where we will be located, but we still need to put various therapists, psychologists, doctors, and educational specialists on our pay roll. We also are still seeking a building suitable to carry out the various services that we will provide and working on funding. Anticipated intellectual property fillings the would need to be done would include various education and marketing materials created by my organization, which I learned can be done by registering works with the United States Copyright Office for 45\$ each (Spelman, 2019). The process is actually quite simple. Forty five dollars may not seem like a lot, but it can add up quite easily. This is something that was taken into consideration when creating my budget. When completing this section of my business plan I learned how to analyze research and development efforts of not only my own business, but also of others in my industry. I was given the opportunity to outline activities that I have planned. This included analyzing the impact of

increased social interactions (through the social events my organization plans) on the overall wellbeing of children with disabilities, the impact of our organization's services on the overall stress levels of families, and the effectiveness of new therapy treatments. When creating my company description as part of this section I learned that it is important to focus on aspects of your organization that set you apart from the competition and that will catch the attention of your target audience. For this reason, I made sure that I highlighted that we are the only clinic in the Hampton roads area that offers free or low cost services from fully licensed medical professionals (not students) in conjunction with a social program for students with disabilities. I pointed out that our organization focuses both on children and their families, giving them both the medical services and education that they need.

The service/product line section of the business plan will help me in the future because it allowed me to learn about the meaning of the life cycle of a business and the various stages involved. This information is an asset because I am currently in the first stage of the life cycle and understanding the following stages will allow me to not only recognize when they are occurring but will also allow me to promote and/or prevent them from occurring. Understanding what intellectual property is and how to complete the process to register works will help ensure that I am not taken advantage of and get ideas stolen and/or altered from what their original purpose was. Being able to create plans for research and development will help ensure that my organization is always staying current and moving ahead, trying to constantly bring about a positive change in communities. Learning how to successfully create a company description may seem like an easy task, but can be difficult as it requires you to ensure that you really stand out to prospective clients. Being able to receive feedback to help me strengthen my company description will help greatly as I now will be able to catch the attention of my target audience.

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