



Global Knowledge Initiative

Solution Canvas Presentation Facilitation Guide

Total Time for Training ~2Hour

Key to GKI Facilitation Guide

Bold is say out loud (Directions or key points)

Regular is script/outline

Italicize is notes for Facilitator

Introduce Presenters 20Sec	
Objectives	<p>Our objectives for today will be mastering a tool called the Solution Canvas. The good news is, you're more than halfway to completing a Solution canvas with the work you've done so far!</p> <p><i>Refer to previous modules for content leading up to the Solution Canvas.</i></p> <p>We've spoken a lot about testing and de-risking your solution in the early stages, but it's likely you haven't had much time to do that yet. The Solution Canvas is a great tool to guide that testing, which is our ultimate goal. For today, however, we're just going to focus on the first step of distilling the remaining elements of your solution.</p>
Business Model Canvas	<p>The tool we are going to use today, the Solution Canvas, is derived from the Business Model Canvas. So let's take a moment to learn the history of the Business Model Canvas, how it became so wildly popular in the last 15 years, and why it's a relevant tool for social innovators.</p> <p>What is the business model canvas? It's a simple visual map that helps people clearly understand the key elements of a business. It was created by Alexander Osterwalder, a Swiss business school teacher. He built it as a educational tool for people to quickly grasp the key elements and</p>

	<p>assumptions in their business. His version asks innovators to identify their customer segments and the problem their customers had that their business was solving (otherwise known as a value proposition). Innovators have to distill channels they will use to reach their customers, key activities and partners, cost structure and revenue streams... all in one page!</p> <p>Shortly after, Eric Ries, founder of the Lean Startup method, created a "lean business model canvas" that emphasized testing elements of your business BEFORE you build it, in order to fail fast while you still had time to pivot.</p> <p>The essential truths that Osterwald, Ries, and others landed on is that there is often too much complex planning before you know if the essence of your solution will even work. Sound familiar? We use different language, but we have the same problem in the social and humanitarian sectors.</p>
<p>Example Canvases</p>	<p>Since the creation of the original canvas, the world has gone canvas crazy. There are value propositions canvases, social impact canvases, event canvases, policy canvases. Everything in canvas format!</p> <p>The exact content of the squares will vary, but there are compelling reasons the canvas tool has gone viral. It's an excellent tool for de-risking and pressure testing ideas. The one stop visual also makes it an essential tool for planning and communication, replacing burdensome proposals and project plans in the early stages.</p>
<p>What's wrong with a traditional project plan?</p>	<p>What is wrong with a traditional project plan? Traditional project plans have some pitfalls if they are created too soon in the process:</p> <p>They are often lengthy and complex, many most people never fully read them.</p> <p>They can take a long time to create, which means less time to focus on testing your assumptions or prototyping elements of your solution. The more time that you can spend in the real world engaging with your users and stakeholders, the more likely your solution is to succeed.</p> <p>During earlier stages of innovation, much of the a traditional project plan is actually guesswork. Why create so much detail when so much is actually unknown?</p>
<p>Why Use a Solution Canvas?</p>	<p>So, why do innovators prefer the canvas approach?</p> <p>A solution canvas helps innovators quickly distill the key elements, while not overplanning.</p> <p>As mentioned, it's an excellent tool for testing and de-risking. And, finally, it is easy very easy to share and explain. Others can grasp the essence of your solution in just a few minutes.</p>

<p>Solution Canvas Example</p>	<p>Now that you have a quick introduction to the canvas tool, let's look at how we're going to use a variation of the tool.</p> <p>We have adapted a version we'll refer to as our Solution Canvas. These will be completed by your team to serve as a blueprint for testing and prototyping your solution.</p> <p>I'll walk you through the canvas, but first I want acknowledge all the work you've already done! Each of squares that are gray represent a part of the canvas that you've already given substantial thought to.</p>
<p>#1 The Problem</p>	<p>Now let's go square by square to unpack each element.</p> <p>Your articulation of the problem has probably gone through several iterations over the last few months. By now, you have arrived at a problem statement that includes a rigorous analysis of the systems level impacts and root causes. In systems thinking, we often have to use our zoom lens. While your current perspective on your problem is a broad, zoomed out perspective, with the Solution Canvas, we begin to shift our thinking and perspective to how our stakeholders view the problem. It's the same systems level problem. The problem itself doesn't change, but you may end up shifting the perspective to be more focused on how your stakeholders would articulate the problem.</p>
<p>#2 Root Causes</p>	<p>Here too, you've already done so much work! This will be good opportunity to sense check whether the root causes you've identified as priorities to address are carefully matched to solving the top issues of your stakeholders.</p>
<p>#3 Solution Users</p>	<p>Next up - Who has this problem? Who will be the primary group that you will be directly engaging? If you have multiple user groups, how are they segmented?</p> <p>Also, feel free to name this box something else! We realize the term "Solution User" is very clunky, but we have a broad range of teams and solutions, making it tough to choose one term that works for everyone.</p>
<p>#4 The Solution</p>	<p>The next step is to jump into the solution. What is the solution that directly solves the top 3 problems that your user or stakeholders have?</p>
<p>#5 What's the value proposition to the Solution User?</p>	<p>We are going to bring this all together in the value proposition. The value proposition is a way to very simply demonstrate the benefit your solution provides, for the user, combined with why it is better than existing or alternative solutions.</p> <p>The tricky part about value proposition is that it's not defined by us. It's defined by our "solution users".</p>
<p>Tip: Is the systems</p>	<p>Again, the systems level problem may look different at the user's level. So continue to keep this in mind and you think about the value proposition.</p>

level problem different from the user's problem?	
What's the comparative advantage of this model?	You may not end up using all of this language directly for your canvas, but another useful exercise for defining your value proposition is to look at the alternatives or compensating behaviors that stakeholders currently use to solve these particular problems. Are there similar solutions out there, but you've identified a key advantage for yours?
Value Proposition	This might sound like a lot of information to cram into one box, but there's a simple template you can use to try writing a value proposition for your users. Who are they? What is the pain point they have, and how does your solution solve those particular problems?
Example	Let's look at a quick, made up example. <i>Facilitator should come up with a relevant example</i>
Second Example	And let's do another one. <i>Facilitator should come up with another relevant example</i> If this particular value proposition template doesn't work particularly well for your team, talk with your coach. There are other formulas and templates for communicating your value proposition that may work better.
# 6 Who are the partners and stakeholders ?	Next, we pull more from your stakeholder analysis to highlight the key partners and stakeholders that are essential to your solution
#7 What's the value proposition to them?	It's important to note, that creating a hook for your stakeholders is just as important as creating a hook for your solution users... and often that value proposition is different! Taking the time to ensure the solution meets their needs is the first step to ensuring success, sustainability, and possibly scale, if you envision your solution being implemented longer-term.
#8 Channels	For this box, you may not have had too much time yet to think about the channels you will use to reach either your solution users or stakeholders. A channel might be how you'll attract customers, recruit participants, engage an audience, etc. Essentially, where and how do you connect with them?

	<p>We've included a few key questions to consider: Through which channels do your stakeholders want to be reached? How do you know? How are you reaching them now? Which channels work best and are most cost-efficient? How are you integrating channels with customer routines, behaviors, and habits?</p> <p>The underlying theme here is that there are many ways to connect, the question then is which option is the most effective approach?</p>
Key Metrics	<p>For key metrics, you've already given thought to how you might measure impact and monitor progress</p> <p>A key area that is often overlooked but critical to innovation is early indicators that demonstrate traction for your solution. As you are implementing a new solution, what's one metric that would clue you in to how users and stakeholders are receiving, implementing, and experiencing your solution? Are they hooked? Are they excited? Are they bought in? Or not? This early metric gives you an opportunity to pivot and improve.</p>
Cost Structure	<p>For cost structure, we are not looking for a budget! We know those details typically included in a budget might change dramatically.</p> <p>Instead, in a canvas you will distill the key unit costs or drivers of costs for your solution. It can be incredibly difficult to think about work in the social sector as a unit, but it's critical for understanding how the solution might be sustained and scaled. A few example of possible units for our teams might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovators supported ● People trained ● Workshops hosted ● 1 month of platform or website hosting ● Each crowdfunding project hosted ● 1 Pop-up community space <p><i>Facilitator is encouraged to change this list based on the content of the project.</i></p> <p>In addition to understanding the core unit of cost, identifying the key cost drivers is a critical risk to understand as well.</p>
Funding Streams	<p>Finally, if your solution is intended to sustain or scale past the timeline for your project, how will that be funded? Who is paying? That doesn't mean you've fully identified or secured a funding source. Instead, the objective is to identify what would be needed and whether it's within the realm of realism.</p>
Next Up	<p>As you complete your solution canvas, you will have many answers, but likely several unknowns. Additionally, each box that we fill in will come with some assumptions.</p>

	<p>Your job is to convert unknowns into knowns and unvalidated assumptions into a higher level of confidence.</p>
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Enjoy creating your canvas and talking through your solution with your team! Our next session will cover creating a testing plan.