



OIDD614 Fall 2023: Brief Syllabus

Please refer to Canvas Modules for due dates and details

Professor Serguei Netessine

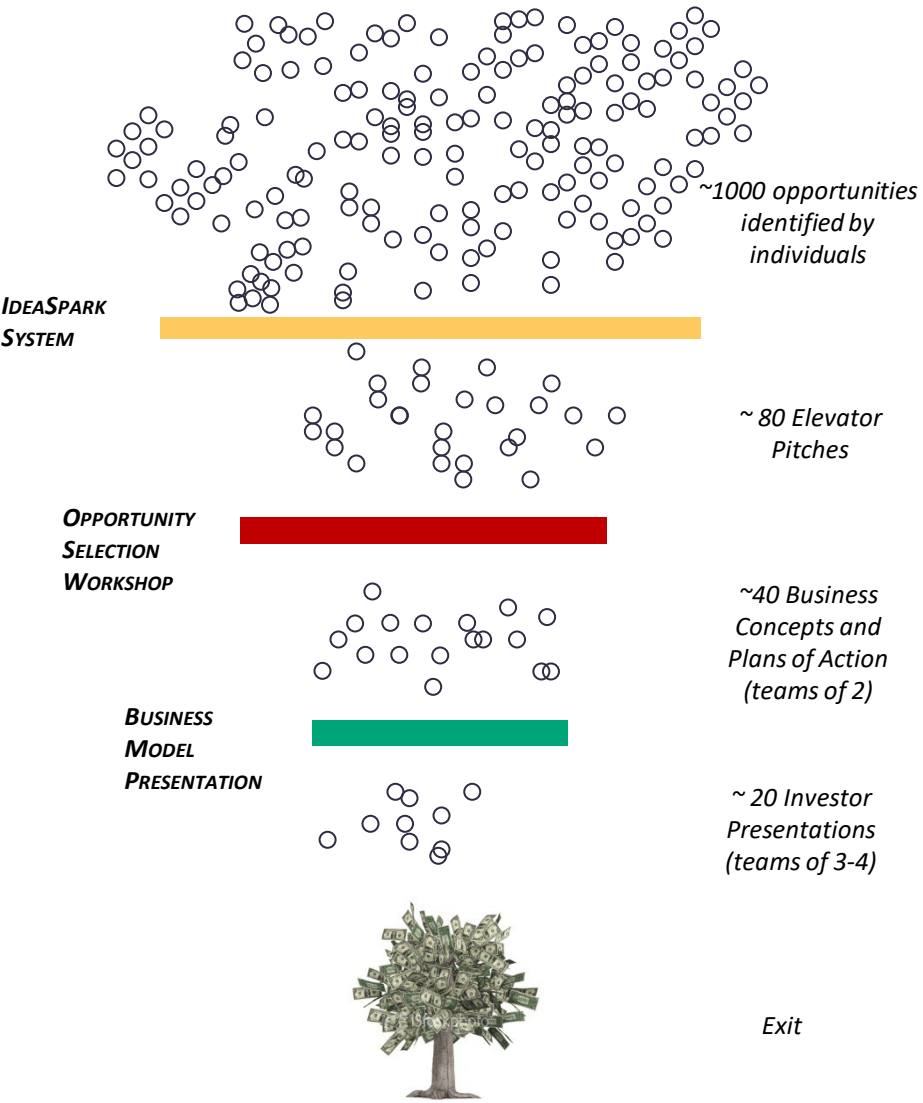
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OIDD614: INNOVATION THROUGH IDENTIFYING NEW BUSINESS MODELS

IDEA TOURNAMENT



LEARNINGS

- Idea Generation
- Idea Selection
- Idea Presentation
- Product-market fit
- Business Model Generation
- Business Model Refinement
- Risk Prioritization
- Risk Mitigation Strategies
- Experiment Design



TASK PRIORITIZATION

BUSINESS MODEL ANALYSIS

better place



COURSE INFORMATION

PROFESSOR SERGUEI NETESSINE;

[CONNECT ON LINKEDIN](#)

[FOLLOW ON TWITTER](#)

MY INVESTMENTS ON [CRUNCHBASE](#) AND [ANGELLIST](#)

TEACHING ASSISTANT: KOMAL VASEER

COURSE STRUCTURE

OID614 is an experiential workshop that combines three novel approaches to Innovation/Entrepreneurship: *Business Model Innovation*, *Idea Tournaments* and *Lean Startup*. Business Model Innovation is a novel technique to identify entrepreneurial opportunities via innovating the business models in existing competitive industries. Idea Tournaments is a process that leverages the wisdom of the crowd for entrepreneurial opportunity generation, selection and refinement. Lean startup philosophy prioritizes tasks to limit entrepreneurial risk. Taken together, these approaches are in contrast to the conventional serendipitous, solitary process of entrepreneurship and instead provide a systematic risk-limiting pathway to realizing entrepreneurial outcomes.

As a class, we will follow these techniques and jointly start one or more new ventures. We will use scientific principles to generate 1000+ new business opportunities and through a variety of selection mechanisms, we will filter and develop these opportunities until two dozens or fewer outstanding business concepts remain. Students who have entrepreneurial passions will be encouraged to take these concepts forward with a team of classmates. The plan is illustrated on the preceding page.

Alumni of this course have gone on to develop multiple successful businesses and have realized significant financial gains from the ideas generated and developed during this course.

WARNING

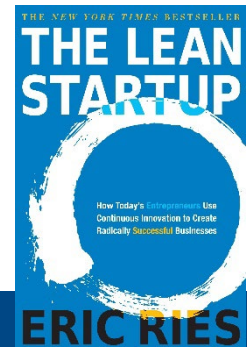
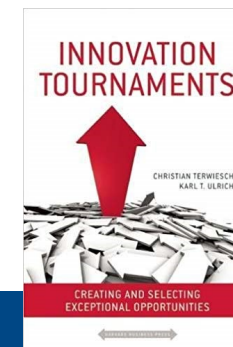
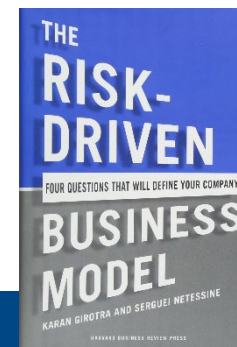
Alumni describe this course as a twisted combination of American Idol, The Apprentice and The Survivor. Outside of reality television, this is highly unusual. It is also totally and completely voluntary and optional class.

The techniques, tools and approaches followed in the course are all derived from recent and ongoing research. Like with any alpha product, the course structure and exercises *will* change during the course as our knowledge of what works in entrepreneurship and innovation develops. First session will give a good overview of the approach used.

COURSE WORK

The context of searching and refining an entrepreneurial idea provides many rich problems with which to develop the tools and methods in the course. Thus, all work for this course is focused on real problems related to advancing the business concepts we will generate. Each exercise will help us refine and help take our business concept to the next stage. There is no "make work" or "make believe" exercises for this course. Of course, real work is often much more demanding than make-work, thus participants should budget for workload from the course.

Expect changes, expect technology glitches, expect uncertainty.



COURSE POLICIES

COURSE ATTENDANCE, SECTIONS AND DEADLINES

This course has a very challenging logistical structure with many deadlines for idea submission/evaluation/pitching. Therefore:

- You must attend section for which you have been enrolled.
- Attendance of the first session is mandatory.
- Deadlines have no grace periods. Please consider possible technology failures and other force majeure and submit assignments in advance. You will lose points for the activities submitted late or not submitted at all, there is no partial credit. Please note all deadlines listed on canvas.

RESPECTING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, USAGE OF AI AND ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

The ideas generated and shared are assumed to be the property of those who submit them. [The originator may enter any mutually agreed contract with other team members.](#) Of course, basic ethical behavior is assumed.

These ideas should not be shared outside of the class without the permission of the originator.

No idea should be replicated within the class.

In the event of a breach of these rules, disciplinary action under the rules prescribed by Wharton student policies may be initiated.

I have not seen any breach of the above expectations; Nevertheless, given no judicial precedence with respect to a course like ours; I cannot guarantee that, if these expectations are breached, there will be totally water-tight legal protection.

You are welcome to use AI models (ChatGPT, GPT, DALL-E, Stable Diffusion, Midjourney, GitHub Copilot, and anything after) in a totally unrestricted fashion, for any purpose, at no penalty. However, you should note that all large language models still have a tendency to make up incorrect facts and fake citations; code generation models have a tendency to produce inaccurate outputs; and image generation models can occasionally come up with highly offensive products. The use of an AI program is encouraged, as it may make it possible for you to submit assignments with higher quality, in less time.

TEAM FORMATION

The course starts with individual work, we re-organize in teams of two midway during the class and then again in teams of four. This process is designed to identify the most promising opportunities and to re-allocate our resources to these opportunities.

If your idea is not eliminated, you will be responsible for finding new members of your team. Put differently, you are now given the right to integrate more team members to work on your idea. If your idea is eliminated you will need to pair up with a surviving project/team. I understand that some of you may not be able to find your ideal teammates and partners. However, I think the ability to recruit talent after your idea has been granted more resources, and the ability to become a productive and useful part of a new startup team are all necessary skills for any aspiring entrepreneur.

GRADING

The primary gain from the course is learning a systematic, risk-limiting technique for entrepreneurship and grading has no place in a course like this. Nevertheless, the administration requires to have a grading scheme. There will be no exam or final report and only basic effort put into the class simulations (and not results) will be evaluated by me, by TA and by your peers. My goal is to help each one of you identify real business opportunities. If you are taking this course, do not think about grades. On Canvas you will be able to see exact points assigned for each activity in class. Please check these points in advance.

1. THE FAIRY TALES OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP (8/29)

REQUIRED READING:

1. Course Outline.



FUN READING:

1. Read as many posts as possible on my blog, RenaissanceInnovator.com

PROJECT ASSIGNMENT (COMPLETED INDIVIDUALLY BEFORE START OF THIS CLASS):

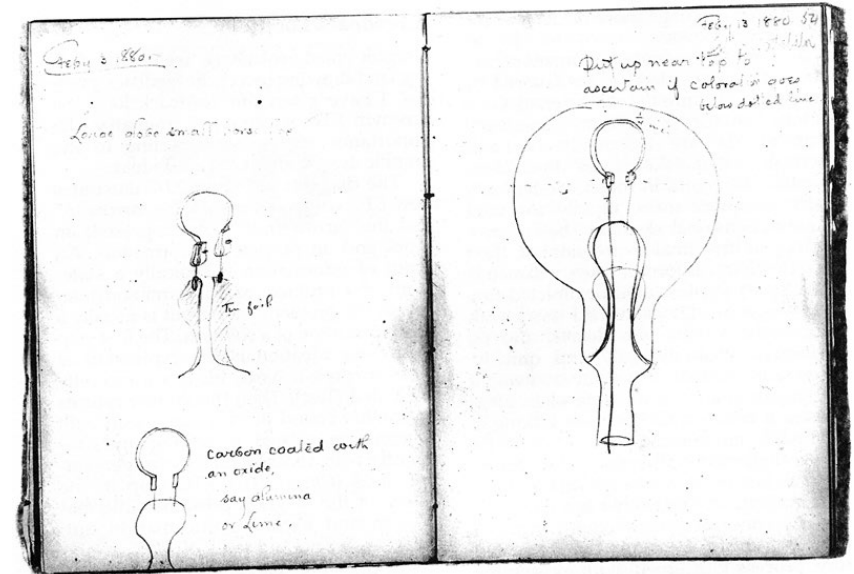
1. Read course policies.
2. Complete pre-course survey.
3. Add blogs RenaissanceInnovator.com, techcrunch.com, springwise.com, venturebeat.com to your favorite RSS reader
4. Start thinking of some new business ideas. For purposes of the course and for your future entrepreneurial career, the most valuable businesses are those that:
 - Do not involve any novel technology or new product design.
 - Require relatively limited capital investment and a few weeks of effort to get to a validated business concept.
 - Serve markets that include 25-35 years-old professionals, and not some hard to access niche market. Our course methodology will mostly allow us to test such ideas



2. OPPORTUNITY GENERATION I: PRODUCTS AND SERVICES (8/31)

FUN READING:

1. "[Where the best and worst ideas come from?](#)", MIT Sloan Management Review Interview. Contains synopsis of research on idea generation. Full paper available via [SSRN](#)
2. "[Good Ideas and How to Generate Them?](#)", Chapter 2 from book "Why Not?: How to use everyday Ingenuity to solve problems Big and Small" by Barry Nalebuff and Ian Ayres. [Buy book at Amazon.](#)
3. "[Could anyone have thought up Hotmail?](#)" Book Excerpt from "The nudist on the late shift" by Po Bronson. [Buy book at Amazon.](#)



Sketch from one of Thomas Edison's lab notebooks.

PROJECT ASSIGNMENT:

1. Based on techniques learned in class today and using AI tools to help you, generate ***at least* ten opportunities** for a new business. An opportunity is a novel match between a customer need and a solution to that need. The novelty arises from identifying latent needs, new solutions or superior ways of "delivering" the solution to the need. For purposes of the course and for your future entrepreneurial career, the most valuable businesses are those that:
 - Do not involve any novel technology or new product design.
 - Require relatively limited capital investment and a few weeks of effort to get to a validated business concept.
 - Serve markets that include 25–35-year-old professionals, and not some hard to access niche market.Our course methodology will mostly allow us to test such ideas.
2. For each of the opportunities, generate a descriptive title and an exciting 50-word description. The description should identify the novel element– the need, solution or delivery mechanism and make a strong pitch for the business opportunity. Save titles and description. You will be required to enter them into a web-based system in a few days.
3. You should have received an email invitation to our web-based high throughput idea screening system, the IdeaSpark. Reply to the invitation and setup your account. Familiarize yourself with the interface.

3. OPPORTUNITY GENERATION II: BUSINESS MODELS (9/5)

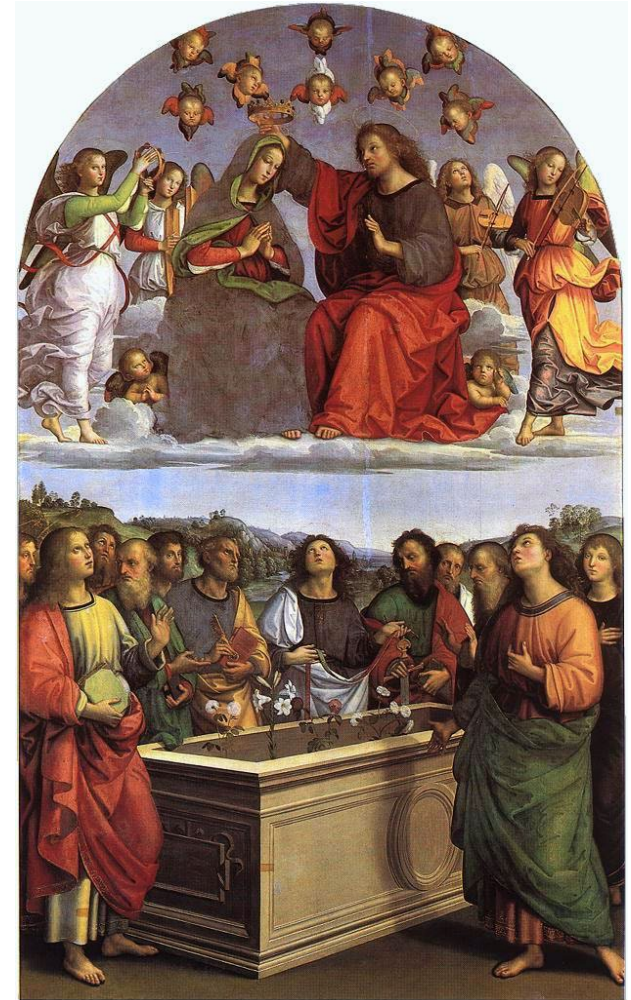
FUN READING:

1. [“How to build risk into your business model”](#), Karan Girotra and Serguei Netessine, May 2011, *Harvard Business Review*.
2. [“Four paths to business model innovation”](#) Karan Girotra and Serguei Netessine, July-August 2014, *Harvard Business Review*.

PROJECT ASSIGNMENT:

1. Based on techniques learned in class today and using AI tools, generate ***at least*** 10 opportunities for a new business. For purposes of the course and for your future entrepreneurial career, the most valuable businesses are those that:
 - Do not involve any novel technology or new product design.
 - Require relatively limited capital investment and a few weeks of effort to get to a validated business concept.
 - Serve markets that include 25–35-year-old professionals, and not some hard to access niche market.Our course methodology will mostly allow us to test such ideas
2. For each of the opportunities, generate a descriptive title and an exciting 50-word description. The description should identify the novel element—the need, solution or delivery mechanism and make a strong pitch for the business opportunity. Save titles and description.

You have now generated over 20 opportunities, submit them through Canvas. Now select the best 5 of these (more if you want) and submit them to the IdeaSpark **by 9/9 9AM**. Over the weekend, visit the IdeaSpark again and vote on ***at least*** 100 different opportunities (or 20 times number of ideas submitted). You are encouraged to vote on as many opportunities as possible **by 9/10 9PM**.



The [Coronation of the Virgin](#) 1502-3, by Raphael

4. OPPORTUNITY EVALUATION (9/7)

FUN READING:

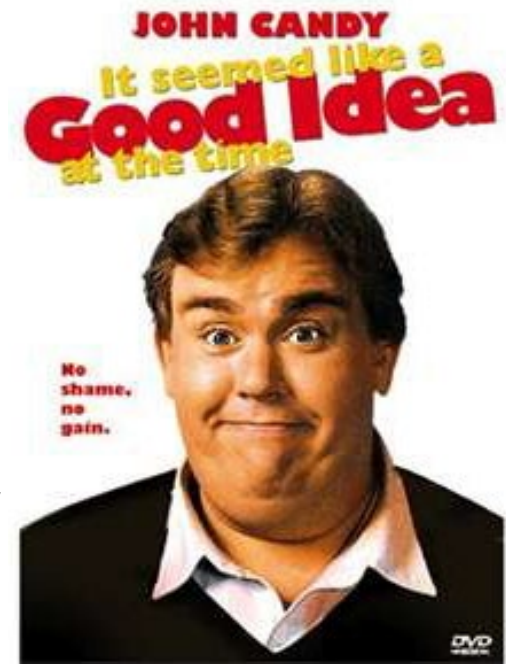
1. Kornish, L. and K. Ulrich. 2014. [The Importance of the Raw Idea in Innovation: Testing the Sow's Ear Hypothesis](#). Journal of Marketing Research.
2. [Surowiecki, J. 2005. The Wisdom of Crowds.](#)

PROJECT ASSIGNMENT (COMPLETED INDIVIDUALLY):

1. Consider the IdeaSpark data for the opportunities you identified. You can access this data by logging back into the IdeaSpark. Based on that data, your own beliefs and passions, and any additional investigation you have done, select one opportunity to pitch to the group in class. THIS OPPORTUNITY MUST NOT BE ONE THAT SOME OTHER CLASSMATE HAS IDENTIFIED, UNLESS YOU OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM A CLASSMATE TO USE THEIRS. You are free to choose an entirely new opportunity that was not identified by any other classmate.
2. Using AI tools, prepare a 60-second pitch and a single slide for one opportunity. (The nice thing about a 60-second pitch is that you can practice it 30 times in just 30 minutes. Please do!). Use the presentation to convince your classmates that there is a legitimate, untapped, profitable business opportunity. Typically, at this stage you need not make a business case, but you just need to excite the class about the opportunity and your capabilities. A pitch could be direct advertisement of the product/service to the class

STUFF TO HAND IN A DAY BEFORE CLASS (BY 6PM 9/11):

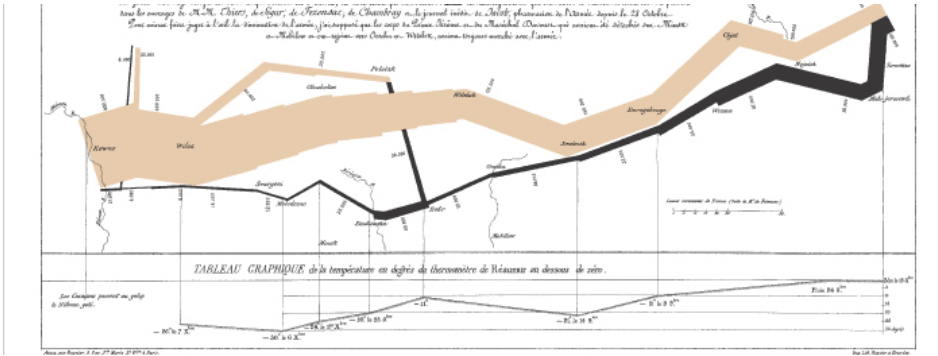
1. Submit PDF file of a one-slide presentation. Make sure your graphic is an attractive and appealing. It will be your main advertisement medium.



5. OPPORTUNITY PITCHES (9/12)

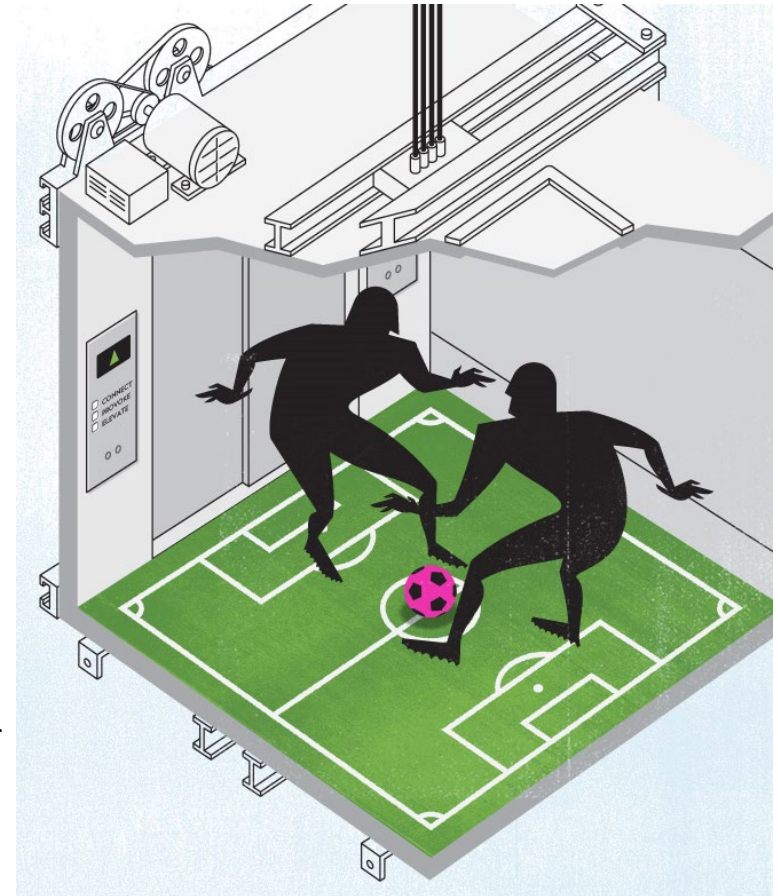
FUN READING:

1. Wikipedia article on Edward R. Tufte: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Tufte



PROJECT ASSIGNMENT:

1. You will have the opportunity to rate all pitches in this section. The 35 or so opportunity-entrepreneurs that receive the most votes will be selected for further development.
2. If you are one of these 35 entrepreneurs, you are **required** to partner with another student registered for this section of the class. If your idea did not make it, you need to partner with someone whose idea makes it to the next round.
3. The working unit from now on is the team and not the idea, thus you and your team-mate are free to pursue any idea whatsoever for the next stage, even a completely new one.



6. CUSTOMER DISCOVERY (9/14)

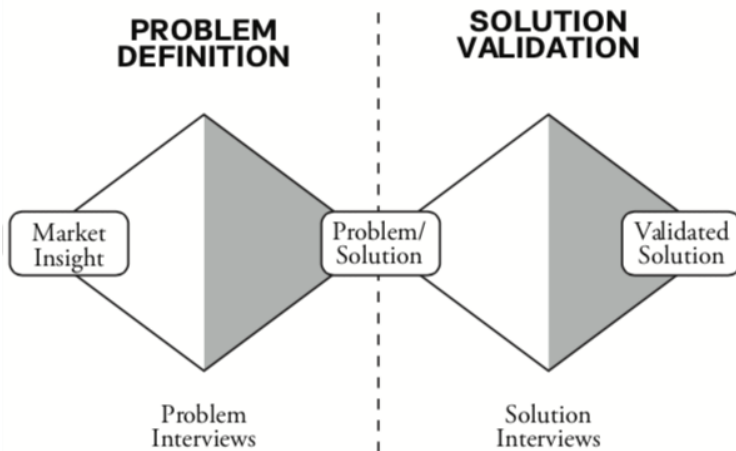
FUN READING:

1. Practical tips on [Customer Discovery Interviews](#).
2. Personas and the [Customer Discovery Handbook](#).
3. [How to run a user interview](#).
4. [Customer discovery in the time of COVID-19 virus](#).



STUFF TO HAND IN BY NEXT CLASS DAY 8:30AM

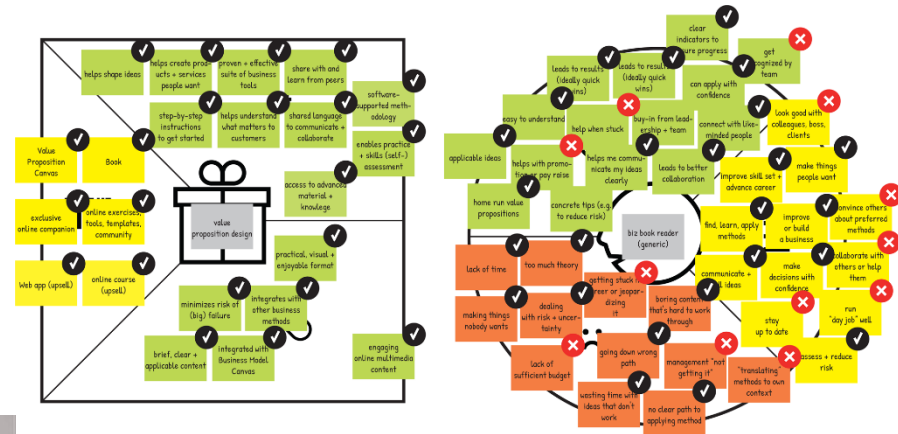
For your concept company, carefully conduct several customer discovery interviews using modified questionnaire. Fill out the questionnaire for a few customers and submit them through Canvas.



7. PRODUCT-MARKET FIT (9/19)

FUN READING:

1. Osterwalder et al. [Value Proposition Design](#).
2. Christiansen, C. [Jobs to be done theory of innovation](#)



STUFF TO HAND IN BY NEXT CLASS DAY 8:30AM

For your concept company, carefully analyze value proposition and map it out with your team. Refine product-market fit based on feedback from your peers. Submit Value Proposition in pdf format through Canvas.



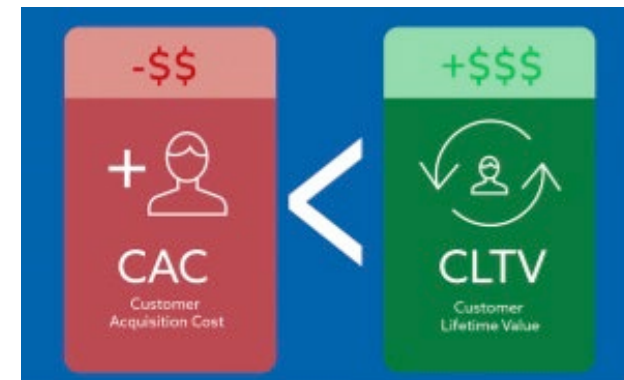
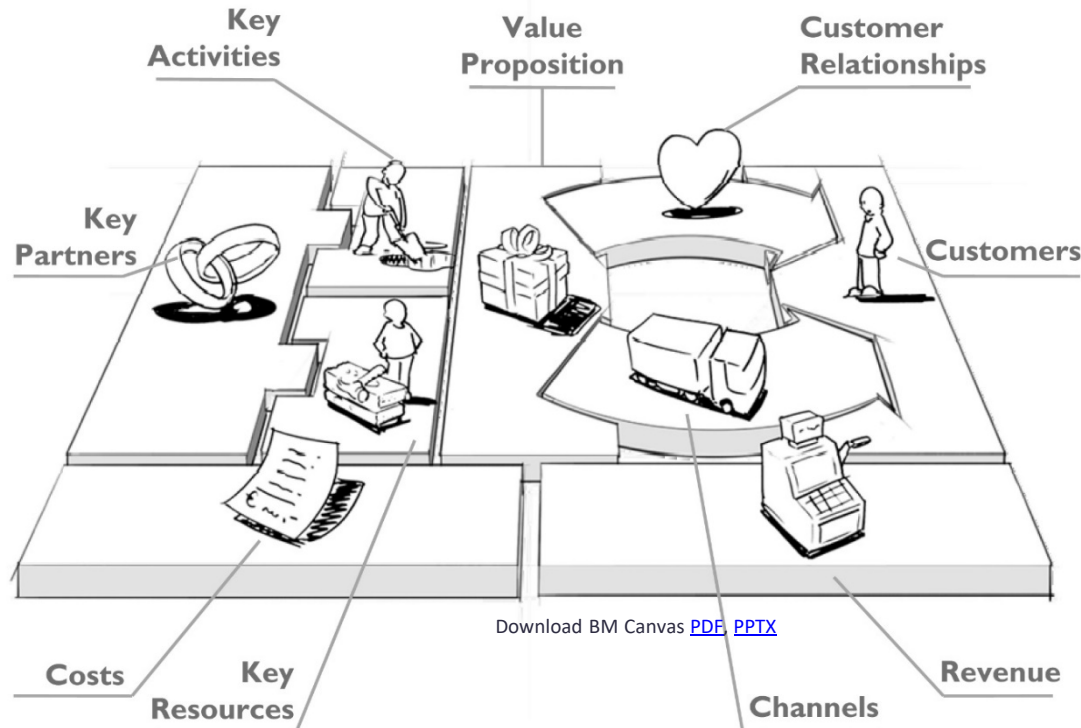
8. PUTTING MEAT AROUND THE IDEA (9/21)

FUN READING:

1. Osterwalder and Pigneur. [Business Model Generation](#).
2. [Unit Economics: A “Must Have” at All Stages of a Startup](#).
3. [Should startups care about profitability?](#)

STUFF TO HAND IN BY NEXT CLASS DAY 8:30AM

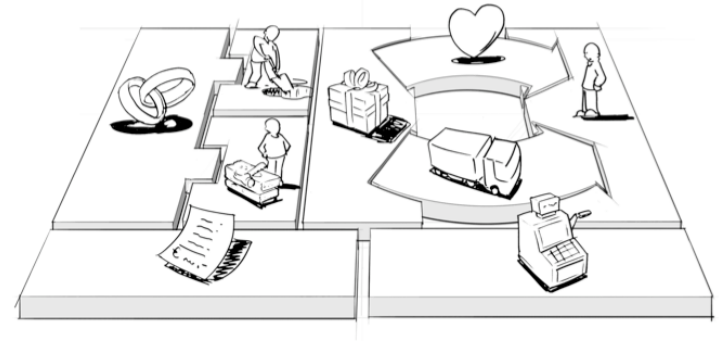
Along with your partner develop your idea further by dreaming up a full business. Use the canvas to articulate your dreamed up business! Think about monetization strategy and KPIs that you would track, including unit economics and customer acquisition strategy. For your concept company, carefully analyze its business model and map it out with your team. Use feedback from other teams to improve your business model. Submit result through Canvas in PDF format.



9. WORKSHOP: CONCEPT PITCHES (9/26)

STUFF TO HAND IN BY MONDAY 6PM, 9/25:

Prepare a 120-second pitch for your opportunity. You should enhance your original presentation by discussing value proposition and product-market fit that you expect. You can refer to customer discovery interviews to tell the story. Submit slides for this presentation through Canvas.



PROJECT ASSIGNMENT IN CLASS

1. You will be able to evaluate all presentations. The 17 or so opportunity-entrepreneurs that receive the most votes will be selected for further development.
2. If you are one of the 17 teams that advances, you are **required** to partner with another two students registered for this section of the class. You will need to find partners right after the pitches.
3. If your idea did not make it, you need to partner with someone whose idea makes it to the next round. The working unit from now on is the team of four, so you and your team-mates are free to pursue any idea whatsoever for the next stage, even a completely new one.

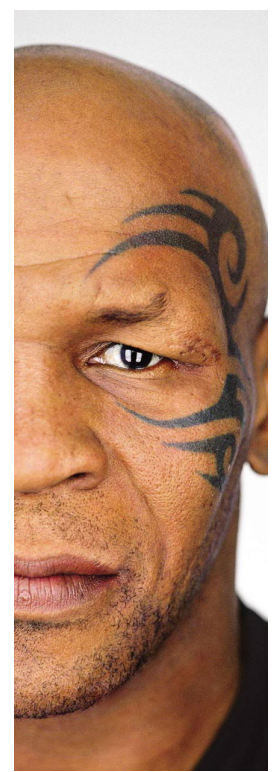
10. VENTURE RISK MANAGEMENT (9/28)

FUN READING:

1. Vanity Fair article on Segway. [14-segway-vanityfair.pdf](#)
2. [“Why the Lean Startup Changes Everything”](#), Steve Blank, May 2013, Harvard Business Review. Available only in course-pack for copyright reasons

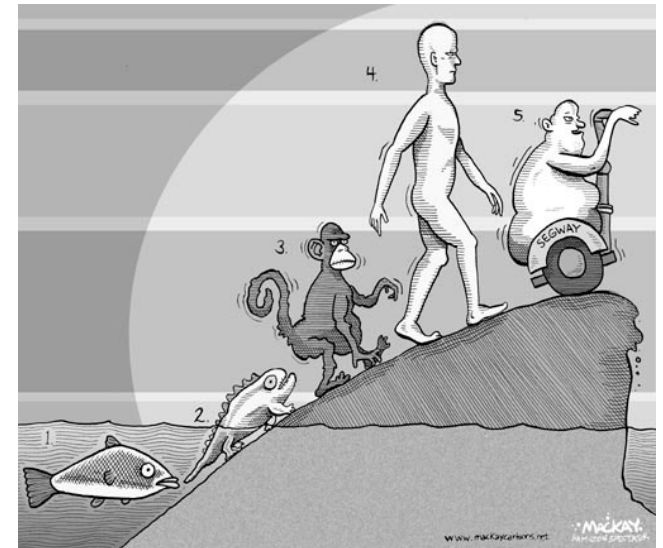
*Everybody has a plan
until they are punched
in the face.*

Mike Tyson



STUFF TO HAND IN BY 8:30AM OF NEXT CLASS DAY

Using Business Model Canvas, prioritize risks in your business model and devise risk-mitigation strategies for top three risks. Ask your peers for feedback. Revise accordingly. For every risk-mitigating strategy fill out Experimental card with KPI and description of the experiment, submit through Canvas.



11. SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTATION (10/3)

FUN READING:

1. Better Place: the Electric Vehicle Renaissance. INSEAD case study.
2. [The surprising power of online experiments.](#) HBR article.



FINAL PROJECT WORK

Design a sequence of experiments with specific steps for conducting them. Prepare a 240 second presentation for your opportunity. You should enhance your original presentation by discussing business model, risks, and above all your experiments

STUFF TO HAND IN BY 10/4, 6PM.

Slides for your presentation which should include proposed money usage, highlight your team's capabilities and explain value proposition/business model, but focus on next steps: experimentation.



12. INVESTOR PITCHES (10/5)



FUN READING:

1. [How to pitch your company.](#)
2. [Talking to investor](#)
3. [How to present to investors](#)

PROJECT ASSIGNMENT IN CLASS:

1. You will be able to evaluate all presentations in class.
2. Treat this presentation as an investment pitch: the goal of this presentation (as opposed to other pitches in this course) is to raise money from your classmates.
3. At the end of class today, we will use simulated investments market: each person will be given \$10,000 that you will be able to invest any way you like. After the class, you will find out which investment pitches collected the most capital.

