



# **Social Enterprise Business Plan Contest**

## **HELP Session**

### Presentation tips

OR, how to compress 6 months of hard work into a 15  
minute story



# SE Business Plan Elements: Recap

---

- The problem
- Theory of change
- Your solution (strategy/business model)
- The team
- Measuring results
- Competition
- Risks
- Financial Plan



## Judging Criteria: Recap

---

**People** – The team has or can get relevant skills, contacts, experience.

**Social Value Creation** – The business model is likely to create the social benefit proposed and the team has thought about performance measurement. Scalability has been addressed either through internal or external means.

**Context** – The rules of the game are favorable (regulatory, tax, political). Actual or potential competition is identified and manageable.

**Resources** – The financing plan and cost structure is sensible in terms of launch and sustainability; Funding sources have been identified and a plan for securing initial investment is articulated.



# Presentation tactics

## **6 general tactics for telling the story persuasively\*...**

- Keep it simple – “clarity is the soul of persuasion”
- Share vivid stories – “it’s easier to argue about numbers than about symbols, which provides at least one reason to use symbols either alone or in conjunction with analyses”
- Know your audience – “different people have different agendas”. Refine your pitch for the audience of the moment.
- Repeat yourself – say the most important thing more than once
- Choose your words carefully – words can be value-laden
- Make your message real – your passion is powerful

\*paraphrased from Professor Nitin Nohria, “Principles of Effective Persuasion,”  
HBS Case No. 9-497-059



# Specific tips for HBS Business Plan Contest

---

- You own the room. Introduce your team briefly by name to the judges and ask who they are and what organization they represent – this does count against your 15 minutes.
- Who presents? Okay to have one person do it, okay to switch off among team members, but it should seem natural.
- DON'T turn off the lights. If you are using power-point make sure the color scheme works with the lights on.
- Assume the judges know nothing about your plan prior to your presentation.
- If questions are raised it's because info was not clear – instead of repeating material, understand what is being asked
- REMEMBER: To get into their wallets, you must first get into their hearts and minds. Grab their attention with a story, a demo or an interactive q&a that makes your plan real.



# HBS Business Plan Contest Common Mistakes

---

- Team not clear and concise on business model
- Team members don't say who they are and why they are pursuing
- Team doesn't engage judges (reads from notes or stands by computer)
- Team runs out of time, without details on substance
- Team defends self during Q+A/feedback