

The One Page Business Plan Workshop

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Abstract

The business plan and business plan presentations are key tools, used by marketing educators, entrepreneurial educators and collegiate entrepreneurs. Over the last year faculty and student teams have presented this active learning technique to the 2003 National Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization annual conference, the 21st Annual Entrepreneurship Forum in 2003, the 2003 Annual Global Conference of the Academy of Business Administration, and the 2003 MarkEd Conclave to rave reviews. Professor Hackbert received the 2003 USASBE Best Practices in Teaching Award from his entrepreneurship educator's colleagues demonstrating this technique. This presentation demonstrates a teaching-learning technique applied in undergraduate courses for marketing and entrepreneurial majors as well as for liberal arts undergraduates including engineers and scientists with interests in advancing invention and innovations. As a modified version of the "one pager" new venture summary plan submitted by entrepreneurs to angel investors and at venture capital funding source presentations, this technique shows marketing students and faculty participants how to answer five critical questions asked of all new ventures: What are you building? Why does this business exist? How will you build the business? What is the work to be done? What results will you measure?

The OPBP is a very simple, versatile, consistent, flexible tool and can be used for a variety of purposes. There is no room for fluff or filler. The use of key words and short phrases tells the reader or audience that only the essence is being presented for review. The fact that the business model is only one page communicates

that the investment in reading and listening is limited.

At Sierra Nevada College, we have adopted this technique in entrepreneurship courses taught across the curriculum to liberal arts students. In two 45 minute sessions, with the support of a workbook, students follow templates, complete worksheets, and review their new venture proposals collaboratively first with a learning partner and then within small groups. Students learn the power of key words and short phrases. Students learn the process of integrating all of their inter-disciplinary studies, both in academia and real-life to create a compelling story of how they are going to build a successful business. Students learn that everyone sells through out their careers – even if their profession is not sales. Finally students learn to tell the "story" of their business with just enough facts and details to convince the audience that the business is viable, but leave them wanting to schedule a meeting to learn more.