

Lean Canvas

Objective

With this lesson we aim to teach startups how to build a business model on paper. To this effect, we will start by using a Lean Canvas, a tool invented by Ash Maurya.

1. Startups will find out why business plans should not be used in the beginning of a startup.
2. They will learn how to use the Lean Canvas for your own business as well as for assessing other businesses.

Materials

The basic materials are:

- A video with specific instructions on how to use the lean canvas for your startup.
- A video transcript
- Tools. A pdf file with the canvas and a second pdf file with the sequence they need to follow in order to complete the canvas.
- Exercise

Procedures

1. Present the video to the startups. Encourage them to take ample notes.
2. Allow for time to answer the questions that will arise from the video. Usually, startups need clarifications. Therefore, it would be advisable for the mentor to watch the video in advance AND read the transcript. The mentor should understand fully how to fill a canvas and create a business model.
3. Each team should start filling the lean canvas with their business idea, following the suggested sequence. Mentors should go from one team to another to help with the exercise. They should offer their experience but do not push towards one or another outcome. It should not be expected that the canvas is filled in full. In fact, there is a strong possibility that many questions will remain unanswered. As the weekend progresses, these part will become clearer. The canvas should stay on the table for the entire weekend and should be altered accordingly. I would suggest that A4 sheets and pencils are used. It will be easier to erase mistakes, this way. Only one sheet is allowed for each team.