Where Do I Start?

Customer Discovery

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This session will

• introduce the minimum set of concepts that you need,

• explain the basic concepts and

• point you to good reference books, articles and other videos so you can go deeper into each topic.
Your BMC: A Collection of Hypotheses

• What you believe to be true and not necessarily what is actually true.
• Be humble enough to accept that the elements of your current business model are only true if they are true in the reality of the marketplace.
• Get out and test the elements of your business model, especially the customer segments, and their respective value propositions.

Do you have anything to sell, yet?
Get Out of the Building

- Interviews and not surveys,
- Face-to-face for several reasons:
  - Gauge their enthusiasm, their strength of feeling.
  - Discover the unexpected.
- Phone interviews are less valuable than face-to-face interviews
- Ask mostly open-ended questions and allow the discussion to flow
- Remember that you are testing your hypotheses
- When some of them turn out to be wrong, you will want to discover that quickly and adapt your business model accordingly
  - you will want to “pivot”
Getting Interviews

• Seeking Advice, Not Selling
• Play the GW Card!
• Kogan Plaza for Students
• Conferences and Meetups
• Gatekeepers
• LinkedIn: Search > Find Alumni > People
People, Problems, Solutions
In That Order
People

Learn about them
• Who are they?
• What’s their role?
• What is their typical day like?
• How do they spend their time?
• What do they read?
• What do they do for fun?
• Who are their friends?
Problems

Learn about the problems that they see as important.

• What are the top 3 challenges they face?
• What is frustrating, expensive or time consuming?
• What would they change right now if they could?
• How are they solving these problems now?
• The “Magic Wand” question
Testing for Price

• How much do you currently spend to address this problem?
• What budget do you have allocated to this and who controls it?
• How much would you pay to make this problem go away?
• **Only Now** you are ready to introduce your solution.
• Start conceptually:
  • “If you had a product that would do X, would that be valuable to you?”
• Introduce an Minimum Viable Product (MVP).
• Remember you are not selling, you are learning.
Commitment and Advancement

If things go really well, you may be able to get:

• Commitment – They are showing they’re serious by giving up something they value like time, reputation or money.

• Advancement – They are moving to the next step, moving closer to purchasing.
An Effective Interview Session

- Be prepared, but keep it casual
- Listen closely; listen mostly
- Look for patterns.
- Bring along a team mate.
- Interview only one customer at a time.
- Ask about behavior in the past, not beliefs and opinions about the future
- Always end with an “ask.”
  - “Is there anything else that I should have asked you about?”
  - “Can you recommend some other people I should talk to?”
Interviewing Customers

Steve Blank's Customer Discovery Checklist
https://startupweekend.wistia.com/projects/zt618zz0r7

Getting Out of The Building

Customer Development Data
Interviewing Tips: Further Reading

By Giff Constable:

• **12 Tips for Early Customer Development Interviews**

• **Talking to Humans: Success Starts With Understanding Your Customers**
Interviewing Prospective Customers

The Mom Test: How to talk to customers & learn if your business is a good idea when everyone is lying to you

by Rob Fitzpatrick
Call to Action

- Think Hard About Your
  - Customers,
  - Value Proposition,
  - Problem-Solution Fit.
- Build your Business Model Canvas.
- Get Out and Test it With Real Customers.
- Iterate.