

Faculty & Practitioner's Perspective for Organizing a Social Enterprise for Transformative Scale

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Abstract

As practiced social entrepreneurs, teachers and mentors of entrepreneurs, we know from experience that being an entrepreneur is difficult; succeeding as a social entrepreneur—as defined by Ashoka—is much more difficult. “Social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society’s most pressing social problems. They are ambitious and persistent, tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide-scale change. Rather than leaving societal needs to the government or business sectors, social entrepreneurs find what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution, and persuading entire societies to move in different directions.” (Emphasis added) https://www.ashoka.org/social_entrepreneur

The social entrepreneur faces two very different, complementary challenges: those related to planning, financing, and managing a successful enterprise (Column B) and those related to scaling up the impact of their enterprise to create wide-scale, system change (Column A). The Table© below describes some key dimensions of these challenges.

The Social Enterprise Organized for Transformative Scale

	A	B
Personnel	Social Entrepreneur(s)	Managers
Key Qualities	Idealism, Vision, Passion	Organized, Detail-Orientated
Goal(s)	Transformative Scale/Cultural-System Change related to a pressing societal problem Long Term	Create enterprise-scale positive impact related to a pressing societal problem Short Term
Planning	“Go Big”, Theory of Change	Business Plan
Key Skill Set(s)	Forming or Joining Collaborations Change Agent re: Scaling Up impact of enterprise	Managing growth of enterprise
Key Relationships	Find <u>Allies</u> to expand your Impact & Political Influence;and Use “ <u>Platforms</u> ” to accelerate your Positive Impact	Customers/Clients Value Chain-service delivery process
Metrics	-The Chain of Impact: Focus on Outputs, & Outcomes, & Impacts* -Impact Reporting & Investment Standards * -Social Return on Investment* -Global Impact Investment Rating System * Operational Focus- External *Measuring, financial, and extra financial	Lean Accounting (Orest J. Fiume) * Financials** Operational Focus- Internal *Eliminate non-value adding effort (waste) from your value delivery

	impact (social, environmental) of a company and/or fund.	process **Track Cash-Flow, Budget, ROI
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Our article will present the “lessons learned” from our collective experience regarding the challenges of “scaling and measuring social impact” (Column A) and their implications for “social entrepreneurship education.” We have focused on Column A because as social entrepreneurs, teachers, and mentors we have consistently observed that social entrepreneurs are generally much more familiar with the challenges of Column B and either defer or ignore the challenges of scaling up the positive impact created by their enterprise.

Specific topics related to the challenges of Transformative Scale, as described by contributors to the Stanford Social Innovation Review (SSIR *), among others, will emphasize “how-to” examples that are practical and scalable rather than theoretical.

- Formulating a Theory of Change: problem, opportunity, inputs, impact, legacy
- Collaboration, mobilizing sources of community capital, (e.g., social, financial, etc.)
- Integrating social, environmental impact initiatives with system change
- The potential of synergy from Sustainable Development, Impact Investing, and Social Entrepreneurship to accelerate achieving Transformative Scale.
- Developing and using metrics for both accountability and financing
- Using “Platforms” to increase your bottom line, accelerate impact and reach Transformative Scale
- Scaling Impact-Example: Transforming a Culture of Waste to a Culture of Sustainability
- Monetizing impact projects featuring triple bottom line (TBLI) People, Planet, Profit\$

The article will draw on the resources of the following organizations:

- GCSEN-Global Center for Social Entrepreneurship Network... <http://www.gcsen.com/>
- Urgent VC, LLC. Sustainable Solutions (UVC)... <http://www.urgentvc.com/>
- Marist College School of Management... <http://www.marist.edu/management/welcome.html>