



REGENT BUSINESS SCHOOL
Brown Bag Seminar Series 2014

Issues in Critical Management Studies

Seminar Topic: Social Entrepreneurship: Creating Social Value in Society and Business and Enhancing Development

Date: Friday, 15th August 2014
Venue: Regent Business School – 8th Floor Boardroom
Time: 09h00 – 11h00
Presenters: TEDx Presenters
Moderator: Professor DV Soni

Background

There has been a slight change in the Brown Bag Seminar Schedule. In last week's seminar the panellists discussed "entrepreneurship" and during discussion time the issue of "social entrepreneurship" was raised. In order to facilitate the continuation of the overall theme of "entrepreneurship", we felt that it was necessary to bring the seminar on "social entrepreneurship forward.

In this seminar session, a group of TEDx panellists will inform us how "social entrepreneurship" a relatively new and growing phenomena, can contribute positively to the amelioration of some of the major problems and challenges of global development. At the end of the video presentation we hope that the participants will be able to apply their mind as to how "social entrepreneurship" differs from "classical entrepreneurship" and how it may contribute towards poverty reduction in South Africa and the African continent, at large.

What is a Social Entrepreneur?

A social entrepreneur is someone who recognizes a social problem and uses entrepreneurial principles to organize, create, and manage a venture to make social change (a social venture).

Whereas a business entrepreneur typically measures performance in profit and return, a social entrepreneur focuses on creating social capital. Thus, the main aim of social entrepreneurship is to further social and environmental goals.

However, whilst social entrepreneurs are most commonly associated with the voluntary and not-for-profit sectors, this need not necessarily be incompatible with making a profit.

Who are Social Entrepreneurs?

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 take new leaps.

Social entrepreneurs often seem to be possessed by their ideas, committing their lives to changing the direction of their field. They are both visionaries and ultimate realists, concerned with the practical implementation of their vision above all else.

Each social entrepreneur presents ideas that are user-friendly, understandable, ethical, and engage widespread support in order to maximize the number of local people that will stand up, seize their idea, and implement with it. In other words, every leading social entrepreneur is a mass recruiter of local changemakers, role model proving that citizens who channel their passion into action can do almost anything.

Over the past two decades, the citizen sector has discovered what the business sector learned long ago: There is nothing as powerful as a new idea in the hands of a first-class entrepreneur.

What is a Social Enterprise?

Social enterprises are social mission driven organizations which apply market-based strategies to achieve a social purpose. The movement includes both non-profits that use business models to pursue their mission and for-profits whose primary purposes are social. Their aim is to accomplish targets that are social and/or environmental as well as financial: is often referred to as the triple bottom line. Many commercial businesses would consider themselves to have social objectives, but social enterprises are distinctive because their social or environmental purpose remains central to their operation.

Social entrepreneurship is

- about applying **practical, innovative and sustainable approaches** to benefit society in general, with an emphasis on those who are marginalized and poor.
- a term that captures a **unique** approach to economic and social problems, an approach that cuts across sectors and disciplines.
- grounded in certain **values and processes** that are common to each social entrepreneur, independent of whether his/ her area of focus has been education, health, welfare reform, human rights, workers' rights, environment, economic development, agriculture, etc., or whether the organizations they set up are non-profit or for-profit entities.

It is this approach **that sets the social entrepreneur apart from the rest of the crowd of well-meaning people and organizations** who dedicate their lives to social improvement.

Typical Social Entrepreneurs can be described as..

- A pragmatic visionary who achieves large scale, systemic and sustainable social change through a new invention, a different approach, a more rigorous application of known technologies or strategies, or a combination of these.
- Combines the characteristics represented by Richard Branson and Mother Teresa.

Social Entrepreneurs share common traits such as:

- an unwavering belief in the innate capacity of all people to contribute meaningfully to economic and social development

- a driving passion to make that happen.
- a practical but innovative stance to a social problem, often using market principles and forces, coupled with dogged determination, that allows them to break away from constraints imposed by ideology or field of discipline, and pushes them to take risks that others wouldn't dare.
- a zeal to measure and monitor their impact. Entrepreneurs have high standards, particularly in relation to their own organization's efforts and in response to the communities with which they engage. Data, both quantitative and qualitative, are their key tools, guiding continuous feedback and improvement.
- a healthy impatience. Social entrepreneurs don't do well in bureaucracies. They cannot sit back and wait for change to happen – they are the change drivers.

Social entrepreneurs are:

- **Ambitious:** Social entrepreneurs tackle major social issues, from increasing the college enrollment rate of low-income students to fighting poverty in developing countries. These entrepreneurial leaders operate in all kinds of organizations: innovative nonprofits, social purpose ventures such as for-profit community development banks, and hybrid organizations that mix elements of nonprofit and for-profit organizations.
- **Mission driven:** Generating social value-not wealth-is the central criterion of a successful social entrepreneur. While wealth creation may be part of the process, it is not an end in itself. Promoting systemic social change is the real objective.
- **Strategic:** Like business entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs see and act upon what others miss: opportunities to improve systems, create solutions and invent new approaches that create social value. And like the best business entrepreneurs, social entrepreneurs are intensely focused and hard-driving-even relentless-in their pursuit of a social vision.
- **Resourceful:** Because social entrepreneurs operate within a social context rather than the business world, they have limited access to capital and traditional market support systems. As a result, social entrepreneurs must be exceptionally skilled at mustering and mobilizing human, financial and political resources.
- **Results oriented:** Ultimately, social entrepreneurs are driven to produce measurable returns. These results transform existing realities, open up new pathways for the marginalized and disadvantaged, and unlock society's potential to effect social change.

Please contact Ms Fikile Mkhize: alumni@regent.ac.za to reserve a seat.