Social Entrepreneurship Clinic

Syllabus

Capacity-Building for Change Agents

Jonathan C. Lewis, Instructor

SUMMARY

After the Social Entrepreneurship Clinic, you will walk away understanding the process of social entrepreneurial problem-solving, armed with some practical skills required for a social entrepreneurship career and feeling empowered to make a difference – starting now.

Here is the basic idea: Lofty ideals are not enough. Wanting to do good is one thing. Actually doing good is another. When we hold ourselves to lesser performance standards, it disrespects the impoverished, the disenfranchised and the people whom we seek to help and empower.

Spoiler Alert: The Clinic is not (mostly) about surveying or analyzing theories of social action, social enterprise business models, particular social innovations or your dream solution to the world’s problems. It’s about how you advance your social change agenda, mission and career. It’s about your effectiveness in achieving your mission.

While the Clinic addresses the operational and ethical distinctions between for-profit versus nonprofit enterprises, government programs versus non-governmental organizations (NGOs), political action versus social service delivery programs, donating versus investing money, venture capital versus "patient" capital, faith-based versus secular interventions, etc., the Clinic curriculum is agnostic about these competing methodologies and theories of social change. The instructor is a proponent of “pragmatic pluralism.”

You bring your passion and the cause. The Clinic brings the nitty-gritty, actionable tools to help get you started and step up your game. The Clinic is about doing stuff.

CURRICULUM SYNOPSIS

Manifestly, the Clinic is dynamic. One, the curriculum is customized to the expected audience – whether undergraduates seeking to shape their impact education or mid-career social entrepreneurs seeking skills and innovations to steer their social ventures. Two, as an active learner, you will bring your own challenges and experiences to the conversation and, as time permits, we will energetically adjust the course in the moment to respond to you.
See Appendix A for the planned course outline!

See Appendix B for what I hope are useful resource documents. These are optional readings and reference materials.

**CURRICULUM METHODOLOGY**

**Format.** Each Clinic module (90 minutes) is thematically organized around a Café Impact video theme. The Clinic opens with brief remarks and problem statement from the instructor. Then, a Café Impact video is screened and talked about. Finally, a case study is distributed and discussed.

**How To Shine!** The Clinic center of gravity is interactive learning, team problem-solving, sharing resources, entrepreneurial ways of re-thinking problems and concrete skills acquisition. The Clinic approach, tone and style is collegial, relaxed, professional, fun and -- be ready -- rigorous.

The Clinic embraces team-building and supportive peer-to-peer feedback. In the over-sold mythology about the lone social entrepreneur, the charismatic community leader, the “self-made man,” etc., it is easy to forget that social change is, well, social, i.e., a community-based process -- collaborative and cumulative. It builds on the work of others, depends on the support of others and succeeds with the help of others.

The Clinic depends on interactive case-discussion and strong participant…wait for it…participation. Listening skills are implicitly modeled and taught because listenership, not speakership (or, worse, the canned elevator pitch!), is the critical underpinning for social entrepreneurship career-building. Come prepare to share your views and listen to others do the same.

Regardless of the advertised topic, all issues, questions and challenges relevant to social enterprises and social change are on the table. Constructive, high-quality participation includes drawing on your own experiences and life story without over-generalizing. Articulate (and fight for) your views backed by logic and evidence, not just with provocative statements proffered under the bogus claim of disruptive innovation. 😊

Show up on time, prepared to engage your fellow classmates (and me). Whether Clinic-related or employment-related, you insult your colleagues and demean yourself by showing up unprepared. If you are absent, your contribution is inescapably irreplaceable, null and void.

**Non-Learning Objectives.** You should not expect to learn the following:

- Conventional wisdom about the social sector, impact investing or anything else.
  “There is something personally satisfying about being disagreeable by advancing
the truth.” (John Kenneth Galbraith, Harvard economics professor, presidential advisor and US Ambassador to India).

- Politically-correct jargon. Plan to speak in simple English.
- How to write a business plan or give an elevator pitch. Both are put in their place.
- Why your idea for a Tom’s Shoes-like venture sucks (or, by analogy, extensive feedback on your particular social venture concept). Would love to rip the idea apart...
- Theoretical or abstracted analysis about the various theories of economic development and social change, although robust discussion on these topics inescapably occurs.
- Financial re-structuring plans for your social impact investments. For that, make an individual coaching appointment.
- Hat tricks to magically and mysteriously marry profit margins and social missions. Sacrifice is talked about.
- Personal fashion advice, except as it applies to effective fundraising. (My favorite color is purple, if you care.)
- Mediocre or substandard hot dog stand recommendations. Instead, see: http://jonathanclewis.me/hot-doggery/.

PRE-CLINIC PREPARATION

Clinic Prerequisites. You are a citizen of the world: you read newspapers, you have internet access and you hold a library card. Accordingly, this Clinic assumes that you already know about the size, scope and the intractable pervasiveness of social and economic injustice.

Clinic enrollment assumes you are a pragmatic, hard-working, focused social entrepreneur, change agent or political activist. It assumes you are neither a policy ideologue nor a romantic who naively idealizing poverty and its denizens. Open-mindedness matters in social change and in life.

This Clinic is for you, but – more importantly – for the impoverished and powerless whose existence shames us all.

For The First Session. Come prepared to introduce yourself in less than 60 seconds (absolutely enforced). Focus on the essentials of your social mission OR your current/hoped-for role in the social change field. Tell us what you want us to remember about you and/or your social justice work. To make a good first impression, practice, practice, practice your one-minute presentation.

If you have a particular cause or organization which moves your heart, bring literature to share with the other Clinic participants. Kickass change agents use every opportunity to advertise!
Individual Coaching Appointments. Part and parcel of the Clinic experience is the opportunity to schedule individual coaching sessions for your venture’s management team or for yourself. All topics are fair game. Details announced in class or check out the host institution’s website.

HELPFUL BACKGROUND

About the Instructor. My resume and current social enterprises are posted at http://jonathanclewis.me/. You can follow me on Twitter (@SoCentClinic), friend me on Facebook or link at LinkedIn. I do not have a gift registry, although now that I’m thinking of it….

Colleagues Forever. Email: JLewis@MCEnterprises.org. Phone: 530-758-8600. As colleagues in the fight for social justice, email and telephonic communications are encouraged. You are welcome to contact me even after the Clinic ends!

Clinic History. The Clinic curriculum was developed over a three-year period during which time the instructor was a Lecturer at the Blum Center for Developing Economies, University of California, Berkeley, and interviewer for the Café Impact social entrepreneurship how-to video series. It is taught on campuses and at conferences around the world. The marketing tagline may need a bit more work: In the Service of a Better World, Ruining the Careers of Social Entrepreneurs. 😊

Clinic Guarantees. If you ignore the following guidelines, the Clinic is guaranteed to disappoint you. These “learned lessons” are garnered from launching and leading various for-profit and nonprofit enterprises and attending a zillion boring conferences:

- Time is our most precious and irreplaceable asset. “Time is the scarcest resource and, unless it is managed, nothing else can be managed.” -- Peter F. Drucker, American management consultant. We have a short time together, so we need to work fast. Committed change agents are advised to use, perhaps a better word is leverage, time efficiently in the service of their mission. The poor and the powerless are waiting.

- “I used to think I was poor. Then they told me I wasn’t poor. I was needy. They told me it was self-defeating to think of myself as needy. I was deprived. Then they told me underprivileged was overused. I was disadvantaged. I still don’t have a dime. But I now have a great vocabulary.” – Jules Feiffer, American satirist. From time to time, the Clinic will employ common words, humor, generalizations, shorthand and politically incorrect examples to describe the poor, poverty and practical approaches to moving your social enterprise agenda. This is not disrespectful. It is efficient communications. The Clinic is about alleviating social injustice in all its ugliness, not fretting over what to call it.
• Disagreement is important. If you and I always agree, one of us is unnecessary. The Clinic depends upon robust brainstorming and its corollary, diversity of intelligent opinion. That said, opinions without performance are generally useless and absolutely useless in the social action field.

• Every single participant (or, for that matter, social enterprise worker) is entitled to ask every dumb question and make every idiotic mistake......once. As colleagues, part of our responsibility is to help each other execute smartly and reach our goal. That means, while we expect each other’s best effort, it is better to correct mistakes internally (i.e., in the Clinic and among ourselves as professionals) without recrimination. The sin is making the same mistake again!

• When someone says "don’t take it personally, it’s just business," it usually means that they are going to screw you. It’s always personal. If you care about your work, the mission, the respect of your community, etc., then it hurts when colleagues let you down, funding is denied or other hurdles materialize. Because tenacity and toughness are part of the social capital of the poor and the powerless, they are respected Clinic attributes.

• As bad luck has it, I am not a mind reader. Talk to me if you need clarification, have a problem, want to proffer a Clinic suggestion or just think that I have lost my mind (which will remain our secret, please). We are colleagues, not psychics. This point is worth remembering as you team-build in real-life for social change.
Appendix A – Whitman College Curriculum Synopsis

Weapons of Career Construction

Note: Students, community members and others are advised that it is perfectly acceptable to participate on a mix and match basis. Each of the following seven modules/workshops consist of a single topic, screen an individual Café Impact video and utilize a standalone case study.

That said, the three Saturday sessions are, generally speaking, about designing an undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate social sector educational career path. The Sunday sessions are about raising for-profit and nonprofit funds for social enterprises. The two evening sessions address issues broader challenges for change agents.

Session 1 – Customizing Your Social Impact Education/Part I (Saturday/11:00am – 12:30am)
  • Video: How-To Educate Yourself For An Impact Career

Session 2 – Customizing Your Social Impact Education/ Part II (Saturday/2:00pm – 3:30pm)
  • Video: How-To Ready Yourself To Have A Huge Impact

Session 3 – Customizing Your Social Impact Education/ Part III (Saturday/4:00am – 5:30pm)
  • Video: How-To Instantly Unleash Your Competitive Edge

Session 4 – Art of Raising Social Impact Money/ Part I (Sunday/1:30pm – 3:00pm)
Session 5 – Art of Raising Social Impact Money/ Part II (Sunday/3:30pm – 5:00pm)
  • Videos:
    - How-To Give Your Inner Fundraiser More Currency(1st)
    - How-To Kick It As A Fundraiser For Fun And Profit(2nd)
    - How-To Reject Rejection When It's Personal(3rd)

Session 6 – How-To Convert Your Convictions Into A Career (Monday Evening)
  • Video: How-To Convert Your Convictions Into A Career

Session 7 – How-To Use Ambiguity To Pioneer Change (Tuesday Evening)
  • Video: How-To Use Ambiguity To Pioneer Change
Appendix B – Resource Documents

Weapons of Status Quo Disruption

**Recommended Resources** - A selection of resources that keep me informed, are provocatively useful or have stimulated my thinking. Bonus: Of hundreds of terrific economic development books (and plenty of awful ones too), ten books about poverty, power and prosperity that made me mad, sad, laugh or think harder.

**Skills Mastery for Change Agents** – Tips on honing your professional expertise and developing the non-negotiable skills required to make a serious difference in the world.

**Fundraising Mastery for Change Agents** - If you can’t (or won’t) raise money, you aren’t a social entrepreneur. Your social mission deserves it. Your social venture requires it. These suggestions are divided into the Pre-Pitch, the Non-Pitch Pitch and the Post-Pitch.
Social Entrepreneurship Clinic

Recommended Resources

**Generally Helpful Stuff.** In no particular order, here is a selection of resources that keep me informed, are provocatively useful or have stimulated my thinking.

- **Café Impact** - how-to social entrepreneurship videos and blogs (Jonathan self-promotion alert!). ([http://cafeimpact.com/](http://cafeimpact.com/))
- **Colloquium for the Common Good** – executive leadership seminar (Jonathan self-promotion again!). Opportunity Collaboration, annual event. ([http://www.opportunitycollaboration.net/](http://www.opportunitycollaboration.net/))
- **Global Issues** - social, political, economic and environmental issues website. ([http://www.globalissues.org/](http://www.globalissues.org/))


• **Sasha Dichter’s Blog** – fundraising tips and insights blog. ([http://sashadichter.wordpress.com/](http://sashadichter.wordpress.com/))

• **Skoll World Forum on Social Entrepreneurship** – the social sector entrepreneurship conference. ([http://skollworldforum.org/](http://skollworldforum.org/))

• **Social Entrepreneur’s Guide for Writing Great Blog Posts** – sensible, smart blog writing tips apply also to pitches and powerpoints. Lynn Serafinn (author, The 7 Graces of Marketing), website, June 8, 2013. ([http://the7gracesofmarketing.com/?p=1748&preview=true](http://the7gracesofmarketing.com/?p=1748&preview=true))


**Jonathan’s Top Ten Books.** Of hundreds of terrific economic development books (and plenty of awful ones too), these ten about poverty, power and prosperity made me mad, sad, laugh or think harder:

*Big Necessity* by Rose George (Henry Holt & Company, 2008). Compelling and repelling, “the unmentionable world of human waste and why it matters” gets to the bottom (get it?) of the global public health challenge. A colonoscopy about changing the health, dignity and living conditions for 3 billion people.

the breadth of the author’s reach. Love or hate globalization, this anthropological and economic history is a reminder that we are all, inescapably, global citizens.

*Farewell to Alms* by Gregory Clark (Princeton University Press, 2007). So many myths and mythologies surround our understanding about why some countries are rich and others poor. A provocative investigation into the cultural norms that impede economic development.

#GlobalPOV Project by the Blum Center for Developing Economies, University of California, Berkeley ([http://blumcenter.berkeley.edu/globalpov/](http://blumcenter.berkeley.edu/globalpov/)). OK, OK, this is not a book, but it is a captivating, entertaining, aggravating videos series about poverty and power. I just love learning from this series.


*New Jim Crow* by Michele Alexander (The New Press, 2012). If you are an American citizen, you need to know the contents of this book and, as a baseline commitment to social change, vote in every election as if you were a young black male.

*Portfolios of the Poor* by Daryl Collins, Jonathan Murduch, Stuart Rutherford and Orlanda Ruthven (Princeton University Press, 2009). As the subtitle explains, learn about “how the world’s poor live on $2 a day.” This is a must-read bible for every social entrepreneur working on global poverty.

*Poverty Capital* by Ananya Roy (Routledge, 2010). Using the microfinance movement (or industry, if you prefer) as the book’s motif, a thoughtful, probing look at the economic development industry and its received wisdom. The author thinks like an academic and writes like a poet.

*The Bottom Billion* by Paul Collier (Oxford University Press, 2007). “Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It” reads the subtitle. A balanced, smart description and prescription regarding the big factors which anti-poverty activists need to know.

*Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy* by Pietra Rivoli (John Wiley & Sons, 2005). A readable expose about wasted taxpayer dollars and unfair market competition that simultaneously screws American consumers here and poor subsistence farmers overseas documents the truth of H.L. Mencken’s “Every decent person is ashamed of the government he lives under.”
Social Entrepreneurship Clinic
Skills Mastery for Change Agents

Inspired and informed by the Café Impact\(^1\) how-to social action interviews

- Take sides. A story from the sixties anti-war movement tells about the pacifist minister A.J. Muste who was challenged about standing quietly, night after night, in front of the White House, holding a lone candle. Asked, "Would that really change anything?" Muste replied, "Oh, you've got it all wrong. I'm not doing this to change the country. I do it so the country won't change me."\(^2\) You cannot be a successful change agent without being fierce. Sure, collaborate and cooperate, but be a warrior for social and economic justice. Make some enemies.

- Pick something and focus your talents today. “A good plan, violently executed now, is better than a perfect plan next week.”\(^3\) When starting (or growing) your social change career, raising money or managing your personal life, avoid over-planning. The warning signs are conjuring up grand schemes, making lists of potential financial backers, endlessly re-writing your business plan or making a list of the perfect attributes for your future life partner. A business plan, idling in neutral, is a creative work of fiction.\(^4\) Get started.

- What we think, we become. Develop good habits of mind. If you arise every morning thinking to yourself "Today I’m looking for a social sector job,” then you are an unemployed change agent-in-waiting. If you pop out of bed every morning thinking “Today I’m fighting against injustice,” then you are a change agent-in-action finding large and small ways to make a difference right now. Can’t think of something useful? Pick up a piece of litter, post a blog comment, send a provocative article to a potential colleague or put a campaign poster in your street-facing window. Doing almost anything will make you stronger.

- Don’t pretend to be what you’re not. It never works out. Figure out what you like to do (it’s that simple); then fire up those aptitudes and attributes for something you believe in. Linguistic intelligence, mathematical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, emotional intelligence, financial intelligence, etc. are just a few categories. Social change work is not about you being perfect. It’s about you making a difference.

- "Move slowly. Mend things.”\(^5\) Social change work happens in the trenches, not on the ramparts. A conversation here, a fund-raising call there. “Great work is often built on the mundane. Great cathedrals start with bricks, great paintings begin with paint, and

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\(^1\) 30 how-to social action videos and blogs: [http://cafeimpact.com/](http://cafeimpact.com/).


\(^3\) George Patton, American World War II Army general.

\(^4\) Steve Blank @ The Lean Startup Conference, December, 2013: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjvEanpktEo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjvEanpktEo).

\(^5\) Rebecca Hong, faculty member, Lick-Wilmerding High School graduation speech, 2013.
great novels start with words.⁶ Minimize execution risk by being well-organized, learning hard skills and following through on the boring details. Write concisely, proof read carefully and file properly.

Only Three Non-Negotiable Skills!

Social change demands communicating a vision of justice and a path forward. Being the “voice of the voiceless” starts with finding your own voice! You cannot succeed without piercing clarity.

Talk with one person (no more, no less!) each day about your passion. Keep it real. Translate yourself into a framework until the other person understands.

Be unambiguously specific about what your cause needs.

Listening is the industrial spying of social change. Listen, really listen.

Learn how every person learns so you know how to follow-up.

Learn what they care about and how you can help.

Write daily. A journal about your journey for justice. A letter to the editor.

A thank you note to a donor or impact investor. A blog post.

Get friends, family and fans to edit your words.

• Take a risk on yourself. If your inner voices are in an uproar about your negative insecurities, tell them to shut up. You are not alone. At some level and in some way, we are all imposters. Social entrepreneurs are imperfect beings — with imperfect answers — acting on imperfect information — for causes with imperfect results. “You can only be as good as you dare to be bad.”⁷

• Never fail by never failing yourself. “The only highly sustainable source of self-confidence comes from deep self-knowledge and blatant self-honesty. I think of it as understanding two important modes: my failure mode and my recovery mode. If I can understand...how I fail, I will also know when I will not fail. Then I can have...self-confidence, despite knowing I am not perfect.”⁸ Failing sucks, but you are bigger and better than a single idea or project. Salvage what you can from the experience. Be the badass individual your unique life story justifies. Don’t fail to give value to your life.

• To innovate, don’t self-censor. “I am constantly asked by students how I get good ideas. My answer is simple: First, have a lot of ideas. Then, throw away the bad ones.”⁹ There was a moment in time for every – take your pick – Nobel Prize winner, great writer, risk-taking statesman, entrepreneur, inventor and social change pioneer before he or she had yet to imagine their invention, uncover their creative spark or envision a new paradigm of societal justice. Tomorrow could be your day.

⁷ John Barrymore, American stage and screen actor.
⁸ Chade-Meng Tan, Google engineer and author of *Search Inside Yourself*.
⁹ Linus Pauling, Nobel Laureate for chemistry and peace (only person to win two undivided Nobel Prizes).
“Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.”\textsuperscript{10} An optimist responds to rejection by creating self-learning opportunities and by figuring out how to do it better the next time. A pessimist quits. If you are fighting to upend the status quo (and you should be), disappointment is in your future. So, ditch the excuses and down-in-the-mouth demeanor. Do better next time.

\textbf{Practice Daily, Starting Today!}

\textit{Personal mastery of a skill requires 10,000 hours of focused practice (5 years, assuming a 40-hour week)*}

Learn just three non-negotiable change agent skills (prior box).
Each day do less than you can, but start today.
Don’t let it become a burden or chore.
Plan to do it the rest of your life.
maintain momentum.
Stay playful.

*thanks, Malcolm Gladwell, Guy Kawasaki & Chade-Meng Tan

“Survive long enough to get lucky.”\textsuperscript{11} Social change is propelled, and thwarted, by hundreds of complex, nuanced factors, most of which are totally outside your control. What you can master is your own toughness, tenacity and resiliency. Quitting is not an option for you any more than for an impoverished woman struggling against 10,000 years of economic and gender discrimination to feed her children.

Distinguish between anger and indignation.\textsuperscript{12} We know “indifference is a paralysis of the soul, a premature death,”\textsuperscript{13} but anger is not the opposite of indifference. Negative feelings can easily spin out of control; anger makes you weaker and unproductive. Blind anger blinds you too. Social and economic justice and INjustice is about power – who has it and who doesn’t. “When you reach the top [when one level of justice nears], keep climbing.”\textsuperscript{14} Indignation is righteous fury.

Take care of yourself. Being kind to yourself is the empowering thing to do. “Always look out for Number One and be careful not to step in Number Two.”\textsuperscript{15} Martyrs, misfits and the personally miserable make lousy change agents. Everyone has bad days, so cut yourself some slack. Tend to your economic needs, relationships, emotional health and physical safety first. Laugh. Have a modicum of control over your own life. Be joyful in your work. Changing the world is heady stuff. It’s fun. Really.

“Hope is not a prognostication. It is an orientation of the spirit, an orientation of the heart.”\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{10} Colin Powell, American Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
\textsuperscript{11} Kevin Lynch and Julius Walls, social entrepreneurs and authors of Mission, Inc.
\textsuperscript{12} Chade-Meng Tan, Google engineer and author of Search Inside Yourself.
\textsuperscript{13} Anton Chekhov, Russian playwright and short story writer.
\textsuperscript{14} Zen proverb.
\textsuperscript{15} Rodney Dangerfield, American comedian and actor.
\textsuperscript{16} Václav Havel, President of Czechoslovakia, playwright and poet.
Social Entrepreneurship Clinic
Fundraising Mastery for Change Agents
Inspired and informed by the Café Impact\(^1\) how-to social action interviews

Pre-Pitch

- If you can’t (or won’t) raise money, you aren’t a social entrepreneur. Your social mission deserves it. Your social venture requires it. “You can’t change the world if you’re dead, and when you’re out of money, you’re dead.”\(^2\)

- Start today. Always be fundraising, not strategizing about fundraising. Avoid over-planning. Don’t wait for the perfect brochure or pitch. The warning signs are conjuring up grand schemes or researching lists of moneyed people. “A good plan, violently executed now, is better than a perfect plan next week.”\(^3\) Even if you screw-up, getting started gives you hands-on practice.

- Self-awareness, emotional intelligence and understanding your own motivation matter. It’s extremely difficult to be successful in attracting financial support unless you are comfortable in your own skin. Hanging out in rooms packed with lots of rich, powerful people requires self-confidence.

- Get over yourself. If you have a chip on your shoulder, exude self-righteous arrogance or manically think your program is the solution, forget it. Even if you garner that first audience with a potential contributor, you are unlikely to get a second one. You won’t be happy in life (that’s your problem) and you won’t be successful as a social justice fundraiser (and that’s a problem for your mission).

- Expect to be treated rudely. Although rarely admitted, donors, impact investors, foundation executives, etc. treat fundraisers as de facto commodities. In the marketplace of social change organizations, there is a nearly infinite array of choices. “One of the principal virtues of free-market choice is that it gives people the opportunity to express their displeasure by exit….Treating people in this way is unseemly at best and reprehensible at worst….Exit, or abandonment, is the response of last resort.”\(^4\) Unhappily for you, until you have established a human relationship with a prospective funder, you are simply another money-seeking organization which makes you a commodity.

- Five books or resources worth reading before you ask for money:

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\(^1\) 30 how-to social action videos and blogs: [http://cafeimpact.com/](http://cafeimpact.com/).


\(^3\) George S. Patton, American World War II Army general.

Non-Pitch Pitch

- Sell hope. No sane person thinks your program will solve all the world’s problems or even a small fraction of one of them. If you have a shred of doubt that you are in the “hope business,” consider that, in defiance of science and heredity, Americans annually buy more than 50 million diet books and spend more than $50 billion on dieting. Also consider that, against all numerical odds, millions of people buy lottery tickets every day.

- Keep it simple. People are not good listeners. Shocking, I know. The more choices, options, information, data, intricacy, analysis and complexity you introduce into the conversation, the more likely it is you will confuse things. The prospect will probably be too embarrassed to admit that your competent, comprehensive and complex explanation left him behind, triggering the delaying tactic of asking you to provide more information, answer more questions, etc. Or, even worse, the prospect will defer to their financial, legal, spousal or spiritual advisers. Your job is not to educate the prospect about every aspect of your work. Your job is to explain how the potential investment or contribution aligns with the prospect’s values.

- Use an English dictionary. Skip the insider lingo, faddish jargon and muddled up phraseology. “Couching familiar ideas in pretentious language is…a sign of poor intelligence and low credibility.” For example, borrowing language from Wall Street, it’s sexy these days for social sector leaders to talk in terms of investment (“we are investing in people; your investment will do such-and-such; invest in the future”). If you are asking for a business investment for a social enterprise, that language is accurate. If you are asking for a donation, save yourself the time-wasting miscommunication.

- Make it memorable with your personal story. “Good stories provide a simple and coherent account of people’s actions and intentions. The explanatory stories that people find compelling are simple; are concrete rather than abstract; …focus on a few striking events…” Your story is, by definition, more compelling, more immediate and more authentic than your organization. It’s also easier for you to remember.

- Assume values alignment. When talking about your social enterprise, focus on its unique competitive advantage. Population served? Geography? Innovation? Revenue model? Lower overhead? Don’t insultingly focus on lecturing or haranguing about the terrible plight of the planet or its beneficiaries. If the prospect were not generally on your side, you probably wouldn’t even be meeting.

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7 Thinking, Fast and Slow, Daniel Kahneman, Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 2011.
8 Thinking, Fast and Slow, Daniel Kahneman, Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 2011.

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• Stick to the SROI (social return on investment). You are not a financial advisor. You are a better-future advisor. Fundraisers for impact investments have an unfortunate tendency to focus on financial returns. Don’t. Remind yourself why you have been granted a meeting in the first place. You are in the room because “market reasoning is incomplete without moral reasoning.”9 Unless your name is Warren Buffett, your potential impact investor is not particularly interested in your financial acumen.

Fundraising Basics!

*If you can talk, you can raise money. It’s a learnable skill, like any other.*

Raising money is *not* about persuading the unpersuadable.  
It’s about aligning social missions.

Focus on your story and your commitment.  
Say “this is important to me.” Explain why.

Dump the paralyzing ‘money-is-power, I-am-weak’ mindset.  
Be powerful by making it personal.

Don’t sweat trying to be charming. Personal charisma is over-rated.  
Show interest in other people. They will *think* you are charming.

Have fun. Laugh. Take pleasure in the work.  
Happy people raise more money. It’s true.

• Don’t ever fall into the habit of thinking about “the person across from you as a transaction, as simple dollar signs. No matter how you dress up your language, if you see your prospect as a means to an end then she’ll feel that way. Whereas if you treat her as a person with whom you are building a real and substantive relationship, you can (counter-intuitively) talk comfortably, early on and directly about money.”10

• Ask questions. Learn about the other person. What motivates the prospect? Areas of social change interest? What organizational factors matter to the prospect? Ask for help in addressing your organizational challenge. The question “how can you help us?” might produce some invaluable surprises. (Invitation to a dinner party with George Clooney?)

• Don’t ask for money. Don’t ask for a favor. Ask people to take responsibility with you for making the world better by investing/contributing to your social venture.

• “When is the right time to make ‘the ask’? My take on this particular rule of thumb is that it is better to ask sooner than you’d like….This is primarily about getting through our own

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10 *So, You Looking?*, Sasha Dichter’s Blog, October 1, 2013.
http://sashadichter.wordpress.com/2013/10/01/so-you-looking/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+SashaDichtersBlog+%28Sasha+Dichter’s+Blog%29
fears about asking – we usually take too long – and about recognizing that we are giving the person across the table an opportunity to do something important, and we should help them do something big, not small.\textsuperscript{11}

\section*{Practice Everyday, Starting Today!}

\textit{Personal mastery of a skill requires 10,000 hours of focused practice (5 years, assuming a 40-hour week)*}

Talk with one person (no more, no less!) everyday about $\textdollar\textdollar\textdollar\textdollar\textdollar. Keep it real.
Be unambiguously specific about what your cause needs.
Each day do less than you can, but start \textit{today}.
Don't let it become a burden or chore.
Plan to do it the rest of your life.
Maintain momentum.
Stay playful.

\textsuperscript{*thanks, Malcolm Gladwell, Guy Kawasaki & Chade-Meng Tan}

- Ask what it will take to close the deal. Don't create an 'out' by asking if the prospect wants/needs more information. Sending more information is a follow-up tactic, not a contribution.

- Like everyone else, fundraisers are profiled and stereotyped. “Evaluating people as attractive, or not, is a basic [human] assessment. You do that automatically whether or not you want to, and it influences you...[Hence, voters vote if] 'he looks the part for a leadership role.'” If you dress inappropriately or like a slob, have bad breath, etc., well, you have other issues, but your chances of raising much money are low. Be self-aware.

- Take control of situations if they turn negative. (a) Ask a version of “teach me what I need to know to convince you to say Yes.” (b) Redirect your “fundraising goal” to the second-place prize. Ask what other resources or connections that the prospect might provide. (c) Learn how to improve for the next time.

\section*{Post-Pitch}

- Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up. No means “not yet.” After every meeting (no matter how brief or casual...even a chance chat at a party), set the stage for the next encounter. End every discussion with a specific next step. Become a resource to the prospect. Helping others begets people helping you. Provide organizational updates only when you have significant progress to report. Write thank you notes (for useful tips, see \textit{Anatomy of a Thank You Note}\textsuperscript{12}).

\textsuperscript{11} So, you \textit{looking}?, Sasha Dichter's Blog, October 1, 2013.
http://sashadichter.wordpress.com/2013/10/01/so-you-looking/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+SashaDichtersBlog+%28Sasha+Dichter%27s+Blog%29

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Anatomy of a Thank You Note}, Sasha Dichter's Blog, November 26, 2013.
http://sashadichter.wordpress.com/2013/11/26/anatomy-of-a-thank-you-note/
• Save everyone in a database. Life status changes. Today’s pauper could win the lottery tomorrow or discover a rich uncle. As a social justice fundraiser, your job description does not include predicting the future.

• Rejection is personal, but it’s not necessarily about you. (a) Even before you enter the room, maybe the prospect was already looking for reasons not to write a check. Maybe the prospect prejudged your venture as non-aligned with her values, issues, geographical focus, beneficiary profile, etc. Or, maybe the alignment is perfect, but the prospect has already funded similar projects and is looking for something new. (b) No matter how effective your presentation, maybe the prospect is not even paying attention. Maybe they just learned his or her dog died or discovered a distracting case of hemorrhoids. Unless you can cure hemorrhoids, it’s not about you.

• Rejection sucks. The capacity to manage rejection is the most important skill you aren’t taught in school. Working to undermine the status quo inescapably means the largest percentage of feedback and decisions will be negative. Rejection is a badge of honor.

• Don’t carry “turn downs” into the future. In psychological terms, don’t let your mind anchor your negative experiences. In military terms, don’t fight the last war. In human terms, don’t stereotype future prospects.

• Social change is propelled, and thwarted, by hundreds of complex, nuanced factors, most of which are totally outside your control. What you can master is your own toughness, tenacity and resiliency. Giving up is not an option for you any more than for an impoverished woman struggling against 10,000 years of economic and gender discrimination to feed her children.

“Hope is not a prognostication. It is an orientation of the spirit, an orientation of the heart.”13

13 Václav Havel, President of Czechoslovakia, playwright and poet.