Success Factor Guide

What are Success Factors?

Success Factors are the tactics that are critical to a response's success or failure. What social change strategy did this solution use that made it work (or not work)?

Where did your Success Factors come from?

We developed this in-house. It was a long process, headed by Tina Rosenberg, Taylor Nelson, and Matthew Zipf, which involved reading hundreds of stories to see what tactics were critical to making a response work. Much solutions journalism tells the story of a response that succeeded where others had failed, and seeks to identify how — what did this response do differently? We tried to identify, name and classify all these different tactics.

Why are Success Factors important?

The same Success Factor can power all kinds of social initiatives. For example, "addressing underlying issues" or "building trust" can lead to successful responses in education, health, criminal justice and many other fields. People working in all these fields can benefit by learning how successful programs use these tactics. And using the focus of Success Factors to make these connections helps people to understand the systems that create social change.

Categories & Definitions

Attacking root causes: Solving problems by addressing the underlying factors. By digging deep and attacking the root causes of a problem, changemakers are able to treat the disease rather than just the symptoms. These solutions offer help to those in need, employ a comprehensive approach to problem-solving, and address the determinants that keep individuals and communities from succeeding.

- **Attacking social determinants:** Helping people with underlying issues caused by poverty.
- **Using a comprehensive approach:** Providing people with services that address multiple challenges at once.
- **Help rather than punishment:** Thinking of behaviors such as addiction as diseases that require treatment.

Expanding access: Bringing products and services to new people, in new markets, in new ways. From developing medicines for neglected diseases to delivering contraceptives via aerial drones, these solutions focus on providing services to those in need. By expanding marketing and distribution, reducing costs, and rewriting rules in pursuit of equality, changemakers broaden the reach of their innovations, extending access to all.

- **Leveraging technology:** Using new tech to solve old problems, often addressing how to provide access to underserved populations.
- **Marketing to the base of the pyramid:** Making products needed by the poorest financially and physically accessible.
- **Last-mile delivery:** Building the last step in a distribution system to get products into people's hands.
- **Eliminating barriers:** Removing the often-hidden obstacles that keep people from solving problems.
- **Frugal innovation:** Adapting goods or services in ways that are financially accessible for the poor.
- **Equitably distributing goods/services:** Inventing business models that more equitably distribute goods and services.
- **Building distribution systems:** Creating a business model that allows a product or service to reach its audience.
- **Downshift jobs:** Instead of relying on expensive specialists, train less-educated people to accomplish the same goals.
- **Leveling the playing field:** Rewriting rules to make them fairer.
- **Piggybacking:** Broadening impact by attaching a program to one that's already widespread.
- **Sharing economy:** Providing access to instead of ownership of products and services.
- **Increasing transparency:** Empowering people by revealing hidden information.

Categories & Definitions

Embracing the power of relationships: Building and leveraging human networks to solve problems. By building trust and personal relationships in a community, social entrepreneurs are able to create change on a behavioral level. They also make use of positive peer pressure and social norming — showing people that certain peers are actually behaving well.

- **Social norming:** Establishing social norms by telling people what others are doing. Showing people that their peers are actually behaving well.
- **Positive peer pressure:** Using peer pressure to push people into good behavior.
- **Building trust:** Using interventions that increase compliance by building trust. Often this involves enabling work with marginalized people by helping them with the problems they define or recruiting front-line workers who are their peers.
- **Building personal relationships:** Using the power of personal connections to create behavior change.

Empowering people: Building the confidence and problem-solving ability of communities. Working closely with the demographics they serve, changemakers identify communities' assets and build programs that are controlled by locals. In so doing, they encourage resilience and turn "victims" into problem-solvers. Some of these featured solutions work by teaching a community to expect more of itself, its leaders, and its government.

- **Focusing on assets, not need:** Looking for the problem-solving strengths of people normally treated as victims.
- **Local control/ownership:** Building programs managed and controlled by the people served
- **Resilience:** Encouraging or incenting people to bounce back from adversity.
- **Raising expectations:** Encouraging people to expect more of their government and systems, often by showing that others are doing better with similar resources.

Practicing human-centered design: Customizing and tailoring solutions to meet a person or a community's needs. In developing solutions, changemakers employ human-centered design, meeting people where they are at, employing behavioral economics, and identifying cases of positive deviance. Sometimes they even employ humor, exemplifying a technique that takes into account existing and natural behavior.

- **Using humor:** Defusing tension, winning friends and engaging people with humor. Can be used to cut fear.
- **Identifying positive deviance:** Looking to and learning from individuals and communities that have achieved unusual success, sometimes colleagues or neighbors.
- **Meeting people where they are at:** Providing services without the requirement of previous behavior change or that fit the way people behave.
- **Using behavioral economics nudges:** Using strategies that acknowledge and take advantage of natural human behavior.

Categories & Definitions

Cultivating collaborations: <u>Reaching across the aisle and rounding up the community to solve problems.</u> From partnering cops and clinicians to connecting public high school students with jobs in industry, these solutions depend on coordinating many actors to achieve success. On a macro level, collaboration-driven projects might bring together the private sector, government, and NGOs; on a local level, they might be as simple as uniting teachers, counselors, and parents to help students grow.

- **Collective action:** Coordinating many actors, who would not necessarily be working together, to respond to a problem. Bringing them together is key to the success of the solution.
- **Private-public partnerships:** Uniting private actors and government agencies to serve the public more effectively than either sector could alone.
- **Cross-sector collaboration:** Combining the expertise, resources, and capabilities of organizations from different sectors to achieve a goal not possible for organizations from a single sector.
- **Crowdsourcing:** Getting ideas and solutions from the crowd.

Using creative financing: <u>Harnessing the power of economics and investment.</u> These solutions take advantage of money, not only in its ability to fund programs but also as a means of giving people autonomy and the power to solve the challenges they face in the ways they see fit. From providing freed slaves in Thailand with cash grants to offering small loans to businesswomen in developing countries, these solutions take advantage of the incentives, power, and leverage of finance.

- **Providing cash instead of goods/services:** Donating cash instead of food, other goods or services to support local markets and autonomy.
- **Micro-enterprise:** Providing skills and tools to help people start small businesses.
- **Using financial incentives:** Rewarding results and/or paying for success — no matter how they are achieved.
- **Business with social goals:** Investing in or operating businesses that pursue and weigh social goals alongside financial returns — a double bottom line.
- **Crowdfunding:** Raising money from the crowd.
- **Using the market:** Finding free-market ways to solve social problems.
- **Microfinance/Microcredit:** Creating financial products such as savings plans or insurance to help poor people get richer.

Categories & Definitions

Overcoming the big challenges: Showing how to solve the problems all entrepreneurs face. Certain challenges — questions of scaling and impact measurement and evaluation — are endemic to social entrepreneurship. These stories illustrate how changemakers are addressing those challenges, and whether they're finding success.

- **Idea diffusion:** Helping ideas spread. How do ideas travel from place to place? These stories discuss the challenges of sharing and spreading ideas, and how changemakers help solutions flow across cities, states, and nations.
- **Piloting:** Executing and learning from a test-run. Executing a pilot run allows changemakers to test the viability of a solution in practice, explore possible changes, and gauge the community's response.
- **Scaling:** Growing and replicating a solution, typically executed by a single organization. These stories address one critical question: How does a solution move from the pilot stage to wider implementation?
- **Impact measurement:** Evaluating whether it works. Measurement can be a daily process of gathering intelligence and feeding it back into the system, or a formal study of a solution's effects and outcomes.
- **Financial sustainability:** Creating long-term financial viability. Half the challenge of developing a good solution is ensuring its financial viability. Stories that fall under this category address how changemakers are building financially-sustainable solutions, so that money extends rather than limits their impact.
- **Sustainability of the solution:** Engineering solutions to last. This often means a solution created and run by the people it affects, who will be more likely to keep it going. Stories under this category focus on long-term viability and sustained impact.
- **Learning from failure:** Analyzing, adapting to, and making use of failure. By embracing and understanding the lessons of a failed solution, changemakers can turn failure into a learning experience.
- **Creating accountability:** Creating systems to hold members of a community accountable for their decisions.