

## **Visioning Exercise, Center for the Arts**

**Led by an outside facilitator who works with Google**

I listen to a lot of pitches from entrepreneurs and wannabe entrepreneurs. Often, at the end of listening to 10-15 minutes of their impassioned pitch, I'm left with the following two questions: "So what? Who cares?"

If I ask these questions, it's usually because they haven't figured out why their product/service/solution is different, unique, or somehow interesting. Most wannabe entrepreneurs never figure out how to satisfactorily answer my "so what? who cares?" questions.

So, in our session, I will be starting with those two questions. I mean, come on! There are thousands of cool, quaint, little towns in the world. And there are thousands of arts organizations that try to bring interesting, creative people together. Oh! You've got a cool, hip little town with an arts organization? So what? Who cares? What makes you special? I want to hear the answer to those questions...

Also, when we work with startups, we have five main areas of focus. These areas of focus are applicable to just about every business. And, not coincidentally, by addressing these areas, you end up with a pretty good answer to the "so what? who cares?" questions. So start thinking about them:

1. Technology: Yes, at Google we are thinking about actual technology. But "technology" is really just a catchall term for "the cool things that you're uniquely good at"
2. Product: once you figure out the cool things that you're uniquely good at, you have to figure out how to package that up into a product. A product, simply put, is something that people can buy from you. Even better, a product is something that people actually want to buy from you. What are your products? And why do people buy them (as opposed to the bazillion other products that they could buy)?
3. Design: is your product user friendly? Is it intuitive? Is it beautiful? Is it helpful? Does it delight your users?
4. Growth: How will you generate demand for your product? How will you produce enough to meet demand? How will you fund this effort?
5. People. Who do you need on your team? What skills should they possess? How will you find them and recruit them? What skills are core to your team and which can be outsourced to third parties? How will you motivate these people? How will you train them? How will you compensate them? What happens when there is conflict between team members? And what happens when someone is not a good fit for your team? For the people that remain, is there a mission and a vision that you'd like them to get behind? How will you communicate that mission and vision? Is there a particular team culture that you'd like these people to be part of? Why should they keep working for you anyway?