

Entrepreneur's Edge (e²)

Professional Development for Entrepreneurs and Innovators OCRI e² Program Outline

Next Session: February 9-13, 2009, in OCRI Boardroom at 2625 Queensview

Introduction

The OCRI Entrepreneur's Edge program (e²) is Ontario's best-of-breed professional development program for senior team members in entrepreneurial companies – teams that plan, design and deliver innovative products and services. Now in its 4th year, this program is the equivalent of three days of intensive knowledge building over a week of half days – allowing entrepreneurs to continue all their current responsibilities, while taking away tools for immediate use to solve their most important current challenges.

The group size is limited to 12 people, assuring each participant of an interactive and personalized coaching environment. The module leaders are experienced entrepreneurs who can challenge participants to refine a business model, make introductions to potential advisors, and critique plans in progress.

Who should attend e²

The e² program is for small business leaders who face any one of three types of growth challenges:

- New products,
- New markets, and/or
- New companies

The positions of attendees typically include: President, CEO, CTO, COO, VP Engineering, VP Marketing, Product Line Management (PLM), Founder, Co-Founder, Advisor, BoD and Investor.

Participants may be experienced business people, who report that the program delivers a highly pragmatic toolkit in a peer-to-peer fashion, covering all the needed disciplines – e² extends their own knowledge into the new areas needed for continued growth. The participants may also be new to entrepreneurship, in which case the e² program's delivery of a one-stop, one week, complete toolkit helps them accelerate success with their new offerings and new business opportunities.

Multiple members of management teams sometimes attend as a group. These people gain the additional benefit of a common set of business knowledge, success tools, and a common vocabulary for internal dialog. The effect is to reduce internal friction and increase the speed of arrival at key decisions with a strong consensus, and a higher likelihood of success.

What is delivered at e² – the takeaways for e² Attendees

The e2 program provides an intensive delivery of highly relevant knowledge on how to achieve innovation success, covering the entire spectrum of needed knowledge – strategic perspective, market and product definition, sales and marketing management, product and IP development, team building, financial planning and business plans/investor presentations.

The e2 program agenda includes 12 modules lead by innovation veterans and entrepreneurs with deep hands-on experience in their topics. This faculty also provides a class manager throughout the week, to help the class maintain continuity of the various modules. The faculty information is available at: http://www.ottawacapitalnetwork.com/the_edge/moduleleaders.cfm.

Each day starts early with coffee, juices, and a light continental breakfast. Monday evening there is a dinner meeting with a successful Guest Entrepreneur providing a short engaging talk with time for questions and answers. Guest entrepreneurs for e2 sessions have included:

- Jim Roche, Co-founder, past CEO of Tundra Semiconductor, Founding member Newbridge
- Mahshad Koohgoli, Founder & past CEO of Nimcat (acquired by Avaya), & Protecode
- Shawn Griffin, Founder & Past CEO of SpeechFront (acquired by Nuance), & Pointshot Wireless

This sets the tone for peer-to-peer learning and new mentorship connections throughout the week.

Overall, the e2 Program uniquely delivers a complete set of knowledge and business tools to help participants achieve entrepreneurial success. Here is the Agenda:

Day 1 – Monday (7:30am – 1:45pm)

M0 – Overview – The challenges of early stage business formation and company growth

M1 – Strategic Planning – The need for efficient execution

M2 – Team Building and Management – Aligning and growing human capital

Dinner evening (6:00pm to 9:00pm) – with Guest Entrepreneur

Day 2 – Tuesday (7:30am-12:45pm)

M3 – Market Strategy – Finding a Market/Product sweet spot

M4 – Market Value Assessment – Nailing customer value to build a successful business

Day 3 – Wednesday (7:30am-12:45pm)

M5 – Product Line Management (PLM) – Translating customer needs to actions

M6 – Engineering Management – Intellectual property and execution

Day 4 – Thursday (7:30am-12:45pm)

M7 – Marketing Tactics – Getting heard at the lowest cost

M8 – Sales Management – Getting results with the right framework

Day 5 – Friday (7:30am-3:45pm)

M9 – Financial Management – Developing the financial plan

M10 – Financing the Plan – Nuances of investing

M11 – The Investor’s Perspective – The Pitch and final thoughts

Why attend – Developing your own Business Case for e2 Participation

Attending e2 requires a modest investment of time and money, and there are various return-on-investment scenarios depending on your situation, both in your business and in your professional career. Multiple potential benefits can apply:

- For experienced people, it fills in the knowledge/experience gaps with pragmatic tools from the top practitioners in all the needed disciplines
 - These attendees will have the greatest gains, since they can typically implement the new knowledge most quickly, with application to specific current business issues
- For inexperienced people – it provides one-stop knowledge and takeaways to achieve success with new products, new markets or new companies
- It delivers tools that can be used immediately for any small business or early stage company – so the week of intensive learning is a top priority use of time.
- For established small companies it allows them to de-risk their business plans for “2nd product line”, “next product line” or “new market” expansion

From a financial payback perspective, the e2 Program delivers tools that can be used by attendees to help achieve measurable benefits. Our Alumni rave about the benefits they receive from the e2 program – and we can introduce you to a graduate who faces business challenges similar to yours. The testimonials below give real examples, from real attendees. Build your own business case based on your own situation, using benefit areas relevant to your business, such as:

- Avoid months of delay in attaining key business milestones
- Avoid costly errors in resource allocation, which are common in small businesses as they grow
- Accelerate revenue ramp up with a new product line
- Accelerate the attraction of investment funding

The program is supported by the Province of Ontario and as a result, this \$3,000 program is being offered for \$1395 – a reasonable investment. Now is the time for action.

The next session is Feb 9-13, 2009 in the OCRI boardroom at 2625 Queensview Drive. Seating is limited to 12 attendees – make your plans early and register early. For assistance in evaluating the program for your situation, contact Peter Fillmore, at 828-6274 ext. 273 or pfillmore@ocri.ca .

Registration can be done by phoning the OCRI Entrepreneurship Centre at 560-6081 ext. 0 and asking for Christine Evans. More information is available on-line at www.entrepreneurship.com/theedge .

Success Stories from e2 Alumni – Testimonials

“We used the e2 toolkit to tighten the focus of our market entry strategy – investors were immediately impressed, and we landed a \$500K seed round within months after attending e2. It works.”

Matthew Williams, Founder, iPeak Networks Inc.

“We used knowledge gained from the e2 program to solidify our project management and marketing skills. These skills directly impacted our proposal writing approach and led to us winning a \$300K contract with a new client, opening the door to substantial additional opportunity. This happened within 6 months of our CTO and me completing the Entrepreneur’s Edge (e2) program. The program was also a great team building experience. I highly recommend it!”

John M. Seck, President, BlackCherry Digital Media

“As Founder of a new company with good technology and no serious money, raising capital was my prime objective in early 2006 when I attended the e2 Program, which provided key insights on the VC fund raising process. I used the knowledge gained from the e2 Program to sharpen the company’s business plan, especially in parts concerning market entry, growth and exit strategies, as well as to re-define the team-building objectives. As a result, we first closed a \$250K pre-seed round in September 2006, within 5 months after e2, and then consecutively \$3M Canadian and \$16.5M US in seed and series A rounds in 2007.”

Valery Tolstikhin, D. Sc., Founder & CTO, OneChip Photonics Inc.

“The Cadillac of entrepreneurship programs... To spend several half-days with presenters of this caliber is invaluable.”

Ken Prevost, Prevost Associates