

Characteristics and Definition of Social Entrepreneur

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Brouard and Larivet (2010) have analyzed several definitions of social entrepreneurs to identify primary and secondary characteristics and to present a definition from those characteristics.

Characteristics

Primary characteristics of Social entrepreneur (SE_NEUR) are:

- (B1) SE_NEUR is defined as an individual
- (B2) SE_NEUR is a change agent and a leader with a vision for change
- (B3) SE_NEUR tackles social problems
- (B4) SE_NEUR wants to achieve social value creation and sustainability
- (B5) SE_NEUR is more concerned with caring and helping than making money
- (B6) SE_NEUR possesses an entrepreneurial spirit and personality (passionate, dedicated, persuasive)
- (B7) SE_NEUR sees and recognizes new opportunities
- (B8) SE_NEUR displays innovativeness and proactiveness

Secondary characteristics of Social entrepreneur (SE_NEUR) are:

- (B9) SE_NEUR may provide a blend of business and social principles
- (B10) SE_NEUR may gather together the necessary resources
- (B11) SE_NEUR may want to put new ideas into concrete transformational solutions
- (B12) SE_NEUR may connect the economy (market forces) and the community
- (B13) SE_NEUR may weight the social and financial return of each investment
- (B14) SE_NEUR may display reasonable risk-taking propensity
- (B15) SE_NEUR may be motivated by long-term interest
- (B16) SE_NEUR may operate in all sectors

Definition

Building upon these characteristics,

Social entrepreneurs are any individuals who with their entrepreneurial spirit and personality will act as change agents and leaders to tackle social problems by recognizing new opportunities and finding innovative solutions; and are more concerned with creating social value than financial value.

More information in:

Brouard, F., Larivet, S. (2010). «Essay of clarifications and definitions of the related concepts of Social Enterprise, Social Entrepreneur and Social Entrepreneurship», in Fayolle, A. and Matlay, H. (Ed.) *Handbook of Research in Social Entrepreneurship*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 352p. (Chapter 3 - p.29-56)