SPARK SERIES

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at PURDUE NORTHWEST

Financial Planning & Funding with Dr. Nassim Abdi

"There's a fine line between being stubborn and being resilient."

- Dr. Nassim Abdi
Learning Scientist, DEI Leader, & Co-Founder of StoryBolt

EARLY LESSONS & INSPIRATION

! *Answer the following questions based on what you learned from the video. Be as specific as possible.*

1 EARLY INSPIRATION & BIG IDEAS

What inspired Dr. Nassim Abdi to start StoryBolt, and how did her background shape that vision?

▶ Hint: Her journey shows how personal experiences can spark powerful business ideas.

2 FUNDING & FOCUS

How did Dr. Nassim first approach funding StoryBolt?

▶ Hint: Learning how funding works is just as important as having a great idea.

3 OUTSIDE INVESTMENT

What was Dr. Nassim's approach to raising outside investment as a mission-driven founder?

▶ Hint: Investors back founders who know their audience and can prove impact matters.

4 PIVOTING FOR PROGRESS

How did Dr. Nassim decide when to pivot StoryBolt's business model?

▶ Hint: Sometimes the smartest financial move is to pause, listen, and adapt.

DISCUSSION-BASED QUESTIONS

! *Reflect on your personal thoughts and write your answers below.*

1 PERSONAL CONNECTION

What part of Dr. Nassim's story stood out the most? Why?

2 BIGGEST TAKEAWAY

What's your biggest takeaway from her story about funding and staying true to your mission? How can you apply that to your own ideas?

3 APPLYING LESSONS

Dr. Nassim said that finding the right funders meant finding people who believed in her vision. Think about a goal you have — who could support you if they understood your "why"? How would you explain it to them?

4 INSPIRATION

Dr. Nassim faced big challenges as an immigrant and woman entrepreneur but kept moving forward with purpose. Who inspires you to stay resilient, and how can you use that energy to pursue your own dreams?

5 STORYTELLING & IMPACT

Dr. Nassim built StoryBolt on the idea that **stories create empathy and drive change.** Think about a story, documentary, podcast, article, or nonfiction book that really stuck with you. What made it memorable? Did it change how you thought or felt? Did it inspire you to do anything differently?

LET'S GET CREATIVE

! *Use your creativity to complete the following activity.*

1 PLAN WITH PURPOSE

Dr. Nassim Abdi built StoryBolt to spark empathy and inclusion through storytelling. When it came time to raise money, she learned that funding isn't just about the dollars — it's about finding people who believe in your mission. Now it's your turn to practice connecting purpose + plan.

Step 1: Define Your Mission
What's one cause, issue, or idea you care deeply about?

Step 2: Build Your Solution
How could you turn that passion into a business or project? Describe what it would do and who it would help.

Step 3: Know Your Numbers
Imagine you're pitching to an investor or a grant panel. How much money would you need to start, and what would it go toward?

Amount Needed: ______________________

It would pay for: ______________________

Step 4: Find the Right Partner Dr. Nassim looked for funders who shared her values. List two kinds of people or organizations who might support your mission — and why.

1.

2.

2 PITCH PERFECT

Using your answers from Steps 1–4, write out your own elevator pitch — something you could say in 30 seconds to make someone believe in your idea.

Example:
"Hi, I'm [Name], and I'm creating [business or idea] to [solve problem]. We help [audience] by [solution], and with [support type], we can [impact]."

Now write yours below:

____

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GREAT WORK! You're one step closer to thinking like an entrepreneur. Keep exploring, learning, and dreaming big!