

Start-Up Community

Best Practice Report-Tampere

Innovative methods of Entrepreneurship training as a part of academic education and VET

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Introduction

A common problem throughout Europe is that entrepreneurship is taught by teachers with no real-life experience of the topic. Also there is a general opinion that entrepreneurship education is often something extra or just glued into curriculum as a voluntary and separate instrument. The real-life application of the learnt skills is missing and the students don't get enough active experiences.

During the research of the topic, we noticed the issue and made a practical guide to teachers, student and companies. The guide offers practical tips and solutions how and why they can start acting more "entrepreneurship-minded" by taking small steps in their community.

Successful entrepreneurship needs several different inputs. Entrepreneurship skills are for sure one of the most important. In order to identify entrepreneurial opportunities and to turn (entrepreneurial) projects into successful ventures, motivated people need the right skills. In order to better support entrepreneurship, universities themselves need to be entrepreneurial. University entrepreneurship support prepares students for future entrepreneurial careers and promotes the commercialisation of research results. However, this success depends also in part on the close co-operation and integration of the university internal support with the external entrepreneurship support-system.

Assisting the establishment of new firms is a key objective of university entrepreneurship support, but not its only one. Tangible outputs (such as the number of assisted new ventures) and intangibles outcomes, such as the spread of entrepreneurial culture and the creation of entrepreneurial mindset should coexist.

Entrepreneurship education can present entrepreneurship to students as a possible career choice as well as a general advocate for the mindset and type of creativity employed, it can assist students in developing the technical and business skill-set essential to have a successful entrepreneurial career and it can finally let professional educators assume the

responsibility of providing the body of knowledge associated with the entrepreneurial phenomenon.

VET

According to the final report of the EU-project “Entrepreneurship in Vocational Education and Training”, entrepreneurship is included in the national curricula for vocational education in a majority of European countries, at least to some extent. However programmes and activities included in those figures may differ greatly in intensity and effectiveness. In any case, there is in general a perception that there is still a gap to be filled.

As academic degrees are more standard in Europe and have much in common, VET schools have more variety what comes in curriculum and education methods. One method that has spread through-out Europe, most known being successful in Germany, is dual-system. Dual-system connects VET students and enterprises together by apprenticeships, and students do work placements in enterprises. This system brings students inside the real enterprises and involves enterprises into training students. It also tackles one important part of entrepreneurship education that is hard to achieve: Dual-system makes it easy for SMEs and micro companies to participate in education. This is usually done by taking a student to work placement period. In many cases the student acts as a simulation for a one-person micro company what it’s like to have an employee.

Academic education

Academic education has very clear targets to meet and accordingly has focused its efforts on achieving these to maintain the high standards vital to excellent education. There are however an increasing number of options for students who are interested in enterprise to

choose; these range from BTECs (vocational), University courses and extra-curricular activities.

Florida University in Valencia and Tiimiakatemia in Finland (more about these in Best Practice cases studies) offer an innovative method to combine entrepreneurship fully to the curriculum in academic studies. When traditionally entrepreneurship has been taught as a separate and a voluntary part of academic studies, these types of schools offer options to students that lets them study the whole degree by doing customer projects.

Overview from the partner countries

United Kingdom

Academic education has very clear targets to meet and accordingly has focused its efforts on achieving these to maintain the high standards vital to excellent education. There are however an increasing number of options for students who are interested in enterprise to choose; these range from BTECs (vocational), University courses and extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, there are more modules or course components being included across the board which focus on enterprise, business skills, becoming ready for work and being an entrepreneur. These are not yet widespread and rarely found where there is no direct link to the core subject. As the relationship between business and education continues to improve I believe that this will change – as all students will need to be comfortable, confident and aware when applying for places or roles in the future and academic attainment will no longer be the differentiator. Academics will always be a significant consideration but more as a threshold above which one must attain, and not a means to stand out from the crowd.

Lord Young's latest report, "Enterprise for All" published in June 2014, recommends that UK Universities should offer students enterprise electives and start-up programmes during their studies. For students who wish to apply themselves fully to launching a business as part of a degree qualification, a unique option is available in the UK known as Venture Creation Programmes (VCP). The undergraduate VCPs currently offered by three UK universities are good examples of the type of programme available to entrepreneurial students. This is another field in which UK universities lead the world.

According to researchers at Chalmers University in Sweden, the UK's first independent university, the University of Buckingham, launched the first undergraduate VCP in the world in January 2006. Two other UK universities have started similar VCPs, Coventry University in September 2006 and Huddersfield University in September 2009.

Vocational education continues to have a poor reputation in the UK though this too is improving as the changes to the higher education system are encouraging students to better consider their future journey. Vocational education seems to have been faster and more agile in its response to the demand for enterprise and business experience and skill. This manifests itself in courses entirely focused on entrepreneurship, support programmes within education organizations for enterprise and employability and indeed additional modules designed to be appropriate and relevant to the course students.

One challenge faced by all is the delivery of enterprise and entrepreneurship education or training by appropriate people. Far too often, once the content has been created it is given to individuals without real world experience of what they have been asked to teach and so can become flat, uninspiring and lifeless. Many organizations work very hard to build links with business and professionals to combat this but this is a resource intensive activity.

Spain

In Spain, between 90 % and 100 % of the students of professional education some time participate in programs of enterprise spirit of its professional trajectory educative. Nevertheless, the programs and activities including in those numbers can enormously defer in intensity and effectiveness. In any case, in general it is considered that it continues being an emptiness that it is have to cover.

In many cases it is considered that insufficient competition of the professors constitutes a problem, at least with regard to its practical experience in enterprise spirit. In this scope an improvement is very necessary. Most of the Spanish regions they declare that they offer to the professors courses of formation in enterprise spirit, but few do it with a systematic approach.

By another part, it does not seem to have important administrative obstacles to cooperation between school and company, and generally this type of collaboration well is

established, mainly in the countries where a “dual system” exists. Not, it can be difficult to guarantee the participation of the small companies and micro companies.

With independence of the scope of in question professional formation, the most effective way to teach enterprise spirit is that the students participate in practical projects and activities on that it is insisted on the learning through the practice and real experience in enterprise spirit is acquired. An education oriented to the resolution of concrete problems and the acquisition of experience is essential to impel the enterprise mentality and capacities.

Education methods most used are the theoretical classes, the games of company and based on simulations by computer, the companies of students, the work of project and in group, the visits to companies and the practices. In spite of the ample range of pedagogical tools existing, in general the present methods are considered old fashioned and effective little.

It could be due to that all the professors do not choose by active methods or to that all are not enabled to follow them. Another problem is the nonexistence of methods interdisciplinary of work in concrete projects. Most of the professors present they have not received formation in enterprise spirit; therefore, it can that does not know to focus their education suitably.

In Spain, the education in the enterprise spirit includes in the curriculum national frame and is obligatory in all the branches of the EFP (technical, industrial, commercial, etc.). The programs and activities of enterprise spirit that comprise of the established courses usually tell on a minimum of 35 hours the year, distributed in three hours weekly during the second year of studies. The 35 hours correspond to 55 % of the curricular content (because the Ministry of Education gives general directives of educative policy), but the independent communities can increase them until 100 %.

Germany

The final report of the EU project “Entrepreneurship in Vocational Education and Training” describes the current situation in Germany: “All the framework curricula for VET set by the Kultusministerkonferenz (Standing Conference of Education Ministers) specify that vocational schools must provide an insight into various forms of employment including entrepreneurship, to support a career and life plan involving self-employment. All vocational schools have to operate in this context, so entrepreneurial ways of thinking and acting form part of the established curriculum. However, entrepreneurship is not yet included in all recognized VET courses; school programs still contain too little about business start-ups and entrepreneurship. Although initial steps have been taken, future modernization of VET should systematically include entrepreneurship.” This report also states the advantage of the “dual system” of apprenticeship in Germany where training in school and work placements in an enterprise are connected.

Co-operations of VET schools and enterprises are well established. This system of involving enterprises in training students can be considered to have an innovative and entrepreneurial dimension in many cases.

For further training in entrepreneurship there is a huge offer from private training companies like workshops, seminars and correspondence or online courses. In a very important role in this context are the training offers by the 83 regional-oriented Chambers of Industry and Commerce as well the 55 Chambers of Crafts in Germany. Furthermore, the Adult Education Programs by the municipalities often offer evening courses both for all the technical competencies (like accounting skills) and detailed entrepreneurship issues (like business-plan, financing, franchise system etc.). The Employment Office addresses topics for starting a business out of unemployment in special workshops.

According to the 2012 Global Entrepreneurship Report (GEM), Germany is not one of the leading nations with regard to start-up activities. In 2012, 5,3 % of Germany’s working age population were actively trying to start a business or were owners or managers of firms that were no more than 3,5 years old. The share of nascent entrepreneurs in Germany

was approximately 3,51 % in 2012. In 2013 almost 870,000 people turned to self-employment, which represents an increase of 12 % (95,000 more Start-ups) compared to 2012. Berlin has been rated as the start-up hub in Germany, however compared to other international cities it is only number 15 worldwide (Leading hubs are Silicon Valley, Los Angeles, Tel Aviv and Seattle). German Universities are one of the most important stakeholders involved in the start-up promotion system in Germany.

Turkey

Objective of vocational training which gains required skills and personal traits to individuals in the labor markets is not only to employ individuals as a paid employee in a workplace, but also to ensure becoming an employer in a sense by means of giving them an entrepreneurial personality to show the necessary entrepreneurial characteristics.

In Turkey, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have an important place in economic sphere. Thus, priority objective of the secondary vocational education and apprenticeship courses which aim to train intermediate manpower is to create skilled workforce for SMEs. Besides, there is a need professional staff with improved entrepreneurial characteristics that could start their own business.

Best Practice Case Studies: Entrepreneurship as part of a VET course

Finland

TOY – Entrepreneurial on-the-job learning



Most professional and vocational programmes include a period of on-the-job learning; TOY is one way of completing it. Ordinarily, students do their on-the-job learning at an employer's workplace, but in this model they complete this aspect of their studies in a co-operative society, where they develop their entrepreneurial skills.

In the TOY model, entrepreneurship is learnt by doing. The TOY programme nurtures the students' entrepreneurial attitudes and prepares them for running a business in their own fields of profession. The most valuable experiences they obtain from learning with their peers in a TOY team. Students bill their work for customers through a co-operation like Taidosto in TOY model, or in rare cases, through their own companies if they have one.

http://issuu.com/letshope/docs/toy_english

Taidosto Co-operative

In Taidosto Co-op the members:

- own the co-op together
- are employees of Taidosto co-op
- pay a provision of their income to Taidosto. This provision is used for all the co-ops expenses, like bookkeeping, marketing, website etc. Provision in co-ops like Taidosto is between 6-12 %, depending what services the co-op offers to its members.



Taidosto was founded in 2004 for craftsmen and artisans of Ikaalinen School of Crafts and Design. There was a need to offer the students a legal way to bill their customer projects that were done while studying. It works as a learning platform for students to learn such entrepreneurial skills like customer service, time management, marketing and billing. Now in 2015 Taidosto has 370 members, who work in trades such as blacksmithing, building restoration, bookkeeping and woodworking.

Yearly renovation is relatively small, 200 000 €/year. It shows that Taidosto works well for an early option to bill student work during the studies, but with a high 12 % provision Taidosto is not very well profitable form of entrepreneurship in a long term.

Taidosto was a pioneer co-op of its kind when founded. It is still used as a model when similar co-ops have been established in all parts of Finland in vocational and academic schools.

United Kingdom

Enterprise for All



Higher Education recommendation: 'to have an elective enterprise module available to all students'. As part of a review on Enterprise Education one of the recommendations made was to have a module available to all which includes the basics in enterprise, setting up a small business and working for yourself. There is specific focus on 'modules for working for yourself' to be included for all students of vocational trades. There is progress being made with some colleges, awarding organisations and Universities committed to including these modules – the results are will be reviewed in the years to come to see both the impact and wider spread nationally.

Young Enterprise Company Programme– Vocational Qualification.



The Company Programme is Young Enterprise's flagship programme which supports students in secondary schools in creating a company and generating revenue for it as part of a national competition. Though this has been available for many years it has only recently been given a qualification associated with it. This as a process is progressive – it takes extra-curricular opt-in activities and recognises their value within the wider assessment framework. The process in achieving this is not easy however, and though it would benefit many enterprise/entrepreneurship activities to have recognition it is not readily available on a smaller scale.

Student Enterprise and Employability (SEE)– University of the Arts London.



With wide ranging courses available, many of which cater for designers, artists and producers, this University has a team in place to support them through and after their course in developing their own practice and making it a viable career for them. It is common for Universities in the UK to have enterprise and employability programmes but uniquely to UAL they have students most likely to require the skills and experience for futures built on their studies. SEE offers mentoring, a SEED finance programme, resources, workshops, events and significant opportunities presented in partnership with external organisations.

Germany

JUNIOR-Projekt (“Young entrepreneurs initiate, organise and achieve”)



This project is carried out under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology and aims at students from the ninth year to those in general and vocational colleges. It started in 1994 and was initiated by “Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft (IW)” (Institute of German Economy).

There are projects going on in 15 federal states of Germany. In the scope of the project ten to fifteen students set up a student mini-company, and creatively develop and market a business idea for an academic year. Through “learning by doing” the students deal with topics of entrepreneurship. The business ideas range from products to services such as event management, mobile phone training for older people and computer and Internet services. The innovative potential of the project lies in improving young people's understanding of the processes involved in running a company. In the past 13 years about 40 000 students have founded student companies and experienced business in real life.

The support services by IW JUNIOR gGmbH include workshops for teachers and students, work material, consultancy, feedback on business documents, organisation of events, project website, telephone hotline and the organisation of regional and national competitions.

ESP



Participating students in “JUNIOR” can acquire a certificate – the entrepreneurial skills pass (ESP). It is a European certification for entrepreneurial thinking, economic know-how and professional qualifications. Besides starting the own business for at least one



academic year, students need to participate in three self-assessments and a final international exam on entrepreneurial skills and general economic know-how. This additional qualification can be regarded as a door opener for successful students as companies support them by offering internships, training, scholarships and mentoring.

Junior Achievement Young Enterprise Europe (JA-YEE)



The German JUNIOR coordinator IW JUNIOR gGmbH is member of the European organisation Junior Achievement Young Enterprise Europe (JA-YEE). With 39 members JA-YEE is the largest European organisation that imparts topics of the economy and start-up businesses to students by promoting the company programme in schools. JA-YEE developed the programme “Global Enterprise Project” (GEP). The goal of GEP is to promote knowledge and understanding for the globalisation among students. The programme includes an online quiz, the visit of a trainer coming from a globally operating company, the participation in a national and European competition. Since 1999 IW JUNIOR gGmbH is also member in the world-wide organisation for school-company programmes, called JA Worldwide, which is located in the US.

Skills for the Future



Furthermore, JUNIOR and Hyundai Germany started the programme “Skills for the Future” in March 2013. There is also a co-operation between JA-YEE and Hyundai Motor Europe on a European level. The special about this company programme is giving young people insight in professional perspectives within the automobile industry and focuses on the MINT skills. It also aims at stirring up the entrepreneurial spirit in young people. “Skills for the Future” is a three-year programme for 10 000 young people in VET



schools of 15 European countries with the cooperation of 400 employees from Hyundai. Participants also start their JUNIOR company with the support of their teacher and a mentor from Hyundai. These companies shall connect to MINT or even with the automobile industry. Once a year there is also a Hyundai Award for the best business ideas.

Turkey

The Specialized Vocational Training Centers Project (UMEM Project -Skill'10)

The Specialized Vocational Training Centers Project (UMEM-Project Skill'10) which has started on 23rd June 2010 serves as an instrument of active labor market policy for tackling against unemployment and diversifying entrepreneurial environment. UMEM Project can be defined as an initiative to provide skills and jobs for unemployed people and to give them an entrepreneurial personality to show the necessary entrepreneurial characteristics.

The main target group of the project is youth unemployed although this project applied for all kinds of unemployed age groups. For this purpose, within the scope of UMEM 111 vocational schools have chosen for training among 81 cities in Turkey. UMEM project provides employers 18 % employment tax deduction as well as ensuring qualified jobs and skills for job seekers and new entrepreneurs.

In 2013, the Ford and the Toyota companies have benefited from project with 1000 and 800 workers. Also, as a result of courses many participants have required qualifications to start their own businesses especially in the manufacturing sector. In context of UMEM project, in January 2013, a total of 175 courses opened in 33 provinces.

Best Practice case studies: Entrepreneurship as part of Academic course

Finland

Tiimiakatemia



The Award-Winning Tiimiakatemia of the JAMK (Jyväskylä) University of Applied Sciences combines the worlds of business and education. Tiimiakatemia was founded in 1993 by Johannes Partanen. During 17 years, the number of students increased from 24 to approximately 180 learners in 10 teams. All of them will graduate as Bachelors of Business.

All teams operate as independent cooperative companies. Students have to do real-life projects, which they have to find themselves, to cover all the expenses of the company. Projects function both as learning environments (for studies and developing the individual's competence) and as ways of doing business (for team companies). Learning is a process that is not divided into modules or subjects like marketing or leadership.

Tiimiakatemia has no legal control over its team companies; it only provides the coaching for the learning process. The main methods are learning by doing and team learning. Projects offer opportunities to apply studied theory directly into practice and also provide a platform for students to reflect on theory in light of their own experiences while studying.

Teams use dialogue as a tool to share knowledge and think together. The purpose of dialogue is to go beyond one individual's understanding – the whole organizes the parts, rather than trying to pull the parts into a whole. In dialogue, people become observers of their own thinking.

www.tiimiakatemia.fi/en/

United Kingdom

Peter Jones Enterprise Academies



Founded in 2009 by a successful household name entrepreneur, there are now over 25 academies in the UK. They offer BTECs (business and technology education council – vocational qualifications) in enterprise and entrepreneurship, adult short courses in understanding enterprise and higher level courses in enterprise and business innovation. These courses specifically appeal to young people genuinely interested in starting their own business, often who have not enjoyed traditional academia (following the course, University it still an option that some take). Importantly, all throughout the course students have direct contact with mentors, professionals, entrepreneurs and role models – in a mature and business-like engagement structure. A central part of each course is that students must set up and run their own business – not just plan it! The model for the academies is that they exist within other larger colleges as independent organisations which makes them convenient and attractive for students.

University Summer Camps eg Entrepreneurial Smart Camp, Imperial College London

Imperial College London

During the summer holidays many UK Universities are now offering short courses, many of which are focused on Entrepreneurialism, Innovation and Business. These courses provide an option outside of core studies to learn about business in a very engaging way and within a group of like-minded people. These courses are normally paid for and attract students from over 100 different countries for the experience. At present this is a relatively new programme, but growing, and it is innovative as it gives undergraduates a fantastic opportunity to experience advanced business topics very early on in their studies.

The University of Huddersfield



The University of Huddersfield also offers a three-year VCP through its BA Enterprise Development honours programme. Described as a 'pracademic' degree, students combine academic modules with business start-up practice. Alongside traditional business studies modules such as marketing, accountancy and law, a suite of specialised modules require students to reflect on how their learning and practical experience informs their business journey. The University's student and graduate business start-up unit - the Enterprise Team, can provide additional support and potential funding.

In Year 1, students are required to develop and pitch a business idea; Year 2 concentrates on business planning around the chosen idea, and Year 3 sees the launch and potential growth of their business. Students must start-up and register a business in or before their third year of study in order to graduate on this degree. If students are unable to do so, or decide business start-up is not for them, they may swap onto an alternative BA Enterprise Studies degree route at the end of their second year. There is also an option to extend into a fourth year for those whose business takes off and requires concentrated attention at an important time for their studies.

"Uni Media Mash", formed in January 2014 by BA Enterprise Development student Sam Forrest whilst still in his first year of study, is an example of a current student business. It is an online trading platform for students, which makes it easy for members to trade university textbooks and media-related items simply and safely with each other on campus. The platform is currently being used by three universities across the UK. Its success to date led to Sam being a finalist in the "15 for 15" competition, a nationwide search for Britain's brightest and best self-employed people.

Spain

LEINN



Entrepreneurial leadership and innovation Degree LEINN is the first official title recognized in leadership, entrepreneurship and innovation at the European level. Title of

the University of Mondragón, LEINN focuses on the business area in which students develop capabilities creating new businesses and developing entrepreneurial projects.

If you graduate in Entrepreneurial leadership and innovation you will be able to efficiently lead the creation of new enterprises and manage your own groups. You will have the preparation to work in a world of global and multilingual, thus contributing to the knowledge society the key to competitiveness is innovation.

Entrepreneurship Degree



The Entrepreneurship Degree is a educational project promoted by Escuela de Empresarios EDEM trough its Centro Universitario assigned to the Universitat de València, with the aim of entrepreneurs training. It is a

project with a high demand level. Its object is a training of entrepreneurs and intraentrepreneurs, with support and collaboration from entrepreneurial world. An aim is to cover a society's need of entrepreneurs contributing an economic development and generating employment and riches.

<http://www.edem.es>

Germany

Gründungsservice: the Technical University of Berlin's entrepreneurship centre

Started in 2004, the objective is to group and increase existing entrepreneurship support activities as well as to enhance opportunity recognition and the entrepreneurship rate within the Berlin-Brandenburg economy. Alumni founders are employed as role models, mentors and partners (focus is given on women entrepreneurs). Professors act as "entrepreneurship ambassadors" and "mentors". The Gründungsservice organizes regular meetings with professors from all faculties to assess demands and interests for entrepreneurship support activities.

Univations and Scidea: entrepreneurship support at the Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg

SCIDEA UNIVATIONS started in 2004 as a network of the 4 public higher education institutions in Southern Saxony-Anhalt with the goal of spreading an entrepreneurial culture amongst students, researchers, professors, and the University administration, and to accompany students, graduates and researches during the business start-up process.

Scidea started in 2007 with the help of a grant by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology. The aim is to enhance knowledge and technology transfer activities in the region and the science industry collaboration in general, involving different stakeholders from industry and science organisations, the finance sector business support and science networks. Both UNIVATIONS and Scidea are integral parts of a broader approach in Sachsen-Anhalt to promote entrepreneurship and innovation throughout education, even at its earliest stages. Both initiatives are open to students, graduates, professors and researchers from all faculties.

The Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, affiliated to the University of Halle, coordinates UNIVATIONS, Scidea and other related projects. UNIVATIONS and Scidea are located within the Halle technology park “Weinberg Campus”, which also hosts important research institutes such as Max Planck, Fraunhofer, Leibniz and Helmholtz as well as young technology firms. The focus is on the region’s innovation fields of life sciences, chemistry/new material, renewable energy, creative economy.

Turkey

TOBB University of Economics & Technology (ETU) Department of International Interpreneurship



“Interpreneurship” is a concept of a new type of entrepreneurship that introduces innovative attitudes in the traditional world of business. This new style entrepreneurship is related to high-tech startups and extraordinary economic growth. The emergence of creative entrepreneurs in a world of life-time employment is about to change the traditional structure of management practices.

TOBB ETU Department of International Interpreneurship was established in 2010. The department has started training with 40 students in 2011. The preparatory classes for students include the Russian and English education. The students receive their undergraduate education in Moscow State University for three semesters in Russia. Also, in context of the TOBB ETU Joint Training Program, students have interned in Russia or Russian-speaking countries. Total credit curriculum for undergraduate students is 124 credits.

In 2012, the department has begun education for Arabic and Arab countries. In this context, students might receive some part of their education in the Arab Academy for

Science, Technology and Maritime Transport in Egypt, Alexandria. Just as in education in Russia, students also receive a certificate from the institution abroad.

In this undergraduate program 30 % of the courses are taught in English. The main goal of the department is to train specialized individuals in international markets. In 2013, the world's largest integrated natural gas company Gazprom has provided full scholarships to eight students of TOBB.

France

HEC Paris



HEC is a famous business school. Since more than 30 years, HEC is committed into entrepreneurship proposing various programs toward this topic. HEC-Entrepreneurs, which is a master dedicated to entrepreneurship, implemented a new pedagogy « learning by doing » allowing access to its students to a high level scientific training combined with a human sciences training. This pedagogy rests on four real missions: students, per groups of 3 or 4, are handling real responsibilities in the area of firm creation, corporate turnaround, business buying and business development. Beside of these practical missions, the master is offering seminar and courses.

Université Paris-Dauphine



Dauphine is a prestigious university based in Paris. Dauphine offers a master dedicated to entrepreneurship, since 2005, focusing on interaction between academic and professional courses/situation.



KULTTUURICAMPUS
IKAALINEN

The master is also giving some training/internships in various fields to offer a full curriculum to its students.

EM/Centrale Lyon



EM Lyon is one of the best business schools in France. It is based in Lyon. Lyon is also hosting one of the best engineer schools called Centrale Lyon. These two schools have created a high level partnership to offer a joint program dedicated to entrepreneurship innovation during 2 years (Innovation, Design, Entrepreneurship & Arts program).

Practical tips to encourage for entrepreneurship

How to teach entrepreneurship when you are not an entrepreneur?

Teaching is undergoing a lot of changes as careers are less secure, specific and more scattered – this trend is likely to continue in the future. VET schools traditionally trained students for a specific skill or need in the field, and the main objective was to give every student a functional practical basis in a trade.

The traditional academic model of the teacher providing information directly is not always appropriate. The role of the teacher in the learning process needs to change accordingly. Instead of a one directional focus on content and direct delivery by giving lectures in front of the class, teachers need to give students real-life experiences, wider understanding of how their knowledge and skill are valued in the real world, and start acting like a coach or mentor.

A common problem throughout Europe is that entrepreneurship is taught by teachers who lack real-world experience. The most effective way to ensure that teacher competence in this field is adequate and up-to-date would be to make entrepreneurship a mandatory part of teacher training, but this is a long term solution that requires significant support. It is also important to offer further training to teachers who have already completed their training and want to develop themselves in their path of Life-long learning.

However, it is not necessary that a teacher has to be an entrepreneur to teach the topic. In Tiimiakatemia, the Entrepreneurship centre of Excellence of the JAMK University of applied sciences in Jyväskylä Finland, the problem was acknowledged and they came up with an eighteen month Team Master Coaching program. It provides a tested path for a teacher to let go of the old routines and start encouraging students to actively pursue their own areas of interest.

How to give students active experiences instead of sitting them in a class room?

- Give opportunities to work directly with and into employers.
- Always choose outside school lessons if they can be arranged and fits the topic that is going to be learned: business visits, exhibitions, business lectures, open-door days in companies and societies, different schools etc.
- When doing a project, actively encourage or even demand students to co-operate with students who are studying for a different degree in your school.
- Always include the real-life application of the knowledge or skill they have learnt.
- Give students responsibility and let them handle real assignments from customers. This is very hard at the beginning, to let them make mistakes. But the best way to learn is by doing, so students should be given a real situation to learn in and not be protected from making mistakes, instead making a mistake should be a thing to be proud of and learn from! The teacher's role is to process the mistakes when they happen with students and offer solutions how to not repeat them in the future.
- Use co-operatives as a tool (or similar light business structure that allows the students to bill their customers). Co-operation is a great business structure to use in schools, it has low (or nearly zero) financial risk for a student to join in, and it lets them bill legally all the projects they do while studying. Co-operations can be school-operated (best suited for VET-schools) or run by a class (like in Tiimiakatemia model, where all the classes form their own co-operation the first day in school). Co-operation business structure is only specific to some EU-countries, but is there a way the students could charge for their projects in your country?
- Show me the money. The students' interest for subjects like VAT, product pricing, taxes etc. can be taught very simply and effectively: Let them write an invoice to their customer or a cheque to their suppliers! The level of engagement skyrockets, because it is the students own money at stake! The process of developing their business model starts immediately, when they see and actually feel in their pockets how the total sum of the check was distributed to taxes, VAT, materials, salary etc.
- Check from your national agency if there is any upcoming European cross-country projects that the class could participate or scholarships to apply

Teachers Guide to encouraging students

- Letting go of the old routines is painful. Specially handling real-life projects over to young students is a giant leap to take. You will notice quickly that going out of the comfort zone is worth it. Learning by doing is so powerful a method, that the projects starts to teach the students and the teacher can step out of the way.
- Resistance from colleagues. This can be crushing, doing things differently in such a traditional field as a school, is certain to raise anger and stubbornness from other teachers. Try to find like-minded people around you to better cope with the pressure, be open about the results you've made with the class with new teaching methods.
- Lack of projects. Like in every company, the products must be marketed or else you can't give any real-life assignments to your students! Co-operating with your schools marketing students is an option, or doing guerrilla marketing with the students. The amount of money to use for advertising is most likely going to be very small.
- Work experience – try to get some work experience during holidays with a company you are interested in.
- Network – with businesses. Remember there are plenty of business networks that you can ask to be invited to make new contacts in the business world.
- Have a clear idea what you want – from businesses or employers.
- Get buy-in from your principal and senior leaders so you too can be recognized for good work.
- Ask the students which local entrepreneur they would like to invite to speak for the class and then invite the winner!

How to contribute to Education as a Business

- Give students work you genuinely need doing, or projects you actively want ideas for.
- Communications – are not always perfect, be clear about how you want to work from the start.
- Deadlines - be firm about when you need the task to be done. Check regularly that the project is moving forward and in the right direction.
- Start small – there are many ways you can work with a school/in education – what works for you?
- Invite the teacher to your office – so they understand what you do. Bear in mind that it is probably a while since you've been at school yourself, so it's a great chance to update your knowledge how the education works today!
- Try intensive projects with students – for example a 6 hour-innovation day, you name the topic! Or 24-hour “new product design” camp.
- Students can offer “out of the box” solutions for common problems in your business, since their minds have not (yet) been overloaded with information and habits how things have been done in the past. Divide the students into groups and make a competition: Give them a problem from your company, but don't let them know how it gets handled in real-life! See how differently the groups start to solve the problem. This could be especially useful in small companies, or where workforces movement is slow.
- Searching for good interns? Giving students small projects shows you who has potential and value for your company.