

ICSB GAZETTE

THE GLOBAL LEADER SUPPORTING MICRO-, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

MONDAY, JANUARY 7, 2019. ISSUE 5

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN A RUDE ENVIRONMENT

WRITTEN BY: ASSOCIATE PROF HOOI DEN HUAN, DIVISION OF MARKETING AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS NANYANG BUSINESS SCHOOL, SINGAPORE



"Holistic entrepreneurship education is needed to both develop the mindsets and skillsets of recipients, and to capture their hearts to further enhance their entrepreneurial spirit."

Today's environment is RUDE (Rapidly changing; Uncertain; Dynamic and Engaging), because of ever-changing demographic, economic, technological, political/legal, and social/cultural factors. The changes are not only rapid, but at times, can be ruthless; they are not only uncertain but at times unpredictable. They are not only dynamic but at times disruptive, and are not only omni-engaging but also enabling. In such a RUDE environment, critical questions prevail, such as "how do you educate entrepreneurs from around the world?" and "how do you ensure what is taught is still of value and relevance for today and tomorrow?"

To continue to stay relevant, especially in such turbulent environments, holistic entrepreneurship education is needed to both develop the mindsets and skillsets of recipients, and to capture their hearts to further enhance their entrepreneurial spirit. Effective entrepreneurship education in my view is multi-dimensional and covers many areas as outlined below:

Multi-disciplinary approach to the curriculum, staff, and students - Diversity, when properly embraced, enriches creativity and innovation – the very elements that are so important for people to cope with a world that is witnessing rapid transformations in the Industrial 4.0 age. Diversity can be achieved in many ways, including a multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural approach to the curriculum, faculty, staff, and students from a wide spectrum of different disciplines and cultures.

The diversity and freedom from a single-disciplinary bias brings a richer flow and cross-fertilization of ideas, even though more efforts need to be infused to manage the conflicts and frictions arising from differing backgrounds and viewpoints



Take for example a technopreneurship education program such as the Masters of Science in Technopreneurship and Innovation offered by the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. A multi-disciplinary approach would mean teachers, staff, and students come from different cultural and disciplinary backgrounds, with a diverse range of backgrounds including science, technology, engineering and mathematics, arts and humanities, architecture, design, business, and economics among others.

To facilitate such a strategic approach, there would be a stronger argument that the structure for an entrepreneurship education center is such that it should be at least a department by itself within a university rather than be a subset of another department, be it an engineering, science, humanities, or business school. Ideally, it should be an autonomous institution with its own mission, vision, goals, resources, and governance.

Learning inside-the-classroom - The curriculum necessarily needs to reflect on the type of entrepreneurship education that each institution wishes to focus on. It would be a mistake to believe that there is only one type of entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education has its own segments, be it sports entrepreneurship, arts entrepreneurship, tourism entrepreneurship, or the like. For example, should the focus be on technopreneurship, the research and curriculum may be modeled after the technology venture creation cycle with emphasis not only core business theory and applications, but also on creativity, technology, and innovation as is the case with the above-mentioned Masters in Technopreneurship and Innovation programs. Inspirers (rather than lecturers) could be an appropriate mix of academics, professionals, public-sector officers, NGO volunteers, venture capitalists and start-ups, and established business owners. By themselves and collectively, they could provide a rich pool of expertise in both broad and specialist areas such as creativity.



"A multi-disciplinary approach would mean teachers, staff, and students come from different cultural and disciplinary backgrounds."

Learning outside the classroom - Outside-the-classroom activities and interactions are very likely to be as important as, if not more than, inside-the-classroom activities. These may include activities such as participating in talks, seminars, conferences, workshops, business challenges, business incubation activities, immersion programs, scholarships, internships, community services, etc. It may also include activities that some academics may deem unconventional or frown upon, such as Karaoke, dancing, golf, music, and arts classes and adventure camps. These are some of the very activities that real-life entrepreneurs may engage in. Engaging in such activities together would provide excellent networking skills and relationship building opportunities.

Pedagogical methods - The pedagogy should be relevant to the learning objectives and outcomes. A wide variety of methods should be employed, such as case-studies, computer simulations, seminars, role-plays, design-thinking, switching teacher-student roles, rocket-pitches, and overnight or short-period topic-specific compact courses.

Facilities - As the name suggests, facilities are intended to facilitate the learning experiences of the student. Some degree of investment would be necessary to provide the environment and equipment that is conducive to learning. Facilities may include walls covered with writeable and easy-to-erase paint, flip charts, white/blackboards, computers, projectors, screens, audio and video recording capabilities, relaxation rooms, design-thinking fixtures and fittings, free-flow innovation labs, mobile and online networking labs, seminar rooms, auditoriums, multi-media rooms with see-through and one-way mirrors, discussion rooms with structural flexibility, etc.

Strategic Alliances (global and local network and support) -Entrepreneurship education is such a fast-moving area that no one single institution can attempt to do it all alone. Hence, this area can include faculty exchanges and recruitments, joint courses, sharing of curriculum, or accommodating each other's staff and students' visits, including immersion programs. For any institution to be world-class, it has to identify the right strategic alliance partner(s) to work with. Such partners should not be confined solely to educational institutions but the whole gamut of players in this area.

Aims of an effective entrepreneurship education - Effective entrepreneurship education includes enabling participants to develop the following:

Know-what: Business and innovation knowledge

Know-where: An enterprising mindset to know where to search for opportunities and resources

Know-how: Suitable entrepreneurship skill sets

Know-who: Entrepreneurship network

Know-I: Self-knowledge of one's purpose in life; strengths and weaknesses

Given that the landscape is ever-changing and where change is the only constant in this world, developing an effective entrepreneurship education may mean departing from conventional educational approaches. It will do well for entrepreneurship educational institutions to provide not just the tools but also the right learning environment and culture.

Students should also be encouraged to adopt the four Ps of entrepreneurship to think beyond just making profits and material success. They need to develop not just the skills and the mindset but also the heart and spirit of meaningful entrepreneurship. Hence, entrepreneurship educational institutions should also embrace the following four Ps and consider how best to help their students define and develop them:

Purpose - do not just be different or do things differently; do things that can ultimately make a meaningful difference to humankind, whether it is job creation or solving a social problem.

Passion - do what one likes to do; try to like what one has to do

Perseverance - when the going gets tough, the tough get going

Principles - without integrity, all else falls apart, and without a sense of social responsibility and contributing back to society, the fruits of success may not be all that meaningful.



About ICSB Gazette:

The ICSB Gazette is a weekly edition of a key topic that ICSB will showcase. The content is varied from research, practice, policy, and education. The editor of the ICSB Gazette is Ms. Jordyn Murphy, ICSB Operational Manager. She will be soliciting ideas and articles from ICSB members world-wide.

ICSB Executive Director Comment:

With the world needing to create millions of jobs by 2030, Hooi Den Huan's view of a multi-disciplinary approach to entrepreneurship is so relevant and important. 1.8 billion youth have the power to transform the world as we know it. To accomplish this, we need to take a new, relevant approach to education and entrepreneurship.

Dr. Ayman El Tarabishy



Jordyn Murphy Editor, ICSB Gazette

Jordyn is the Operations Manager at the International Council for Small Business in Washington, D.C and the Editor of the ICSB Gazette.

Contribute:

Have a topic you would like to see or an article to share? Please submit for consideration to jordyn@icsb.org

ICSB Gazette

THE VOICE OF MICRO-SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES