

Entrepreneurship Training: Turn the idea into a plan – and into business?

Journalism Entrepreneurship Training

Main Issue: Based on five years with entrepreneurship training for journalism BA students in their last semester, this tip sheet offers a range of concrete tips for the training of journalism students for working in a new and demanding media industry. The tip sheet refers to issue no. 7 in the IJIE State of the Art analysis (the Ten Tips Guide): "Future journalists should be given information about the new business models".

Website: DMJX website, English version: <http://www.dmjx.dk/international>

Course:	Study program	Level	Students
Journalistic Entrepreneurship	Journalism BA	BA, 8th semester	60

Keywords: entrepreneurship, concept development, innovation

Short description: This paper is based on experiences from the teaching of 'journalistic entrepreneurship' at the Danish School of Media and Journalism, DMJX.

Over the last five years, final-semester journalism BA students follow an 8-week course on innovation, concept development, pitching, and entrepreneurship.

There is a double purpose of the course: 1) Prepare students to establish their own business. And 2) prepare them to act as intrapreneurs and innovators inside existing organisations.

The main contributor to this tip sheet is associate professor Kim Albæk, course coordinator. He draws on a range of internal and external guest lecturers, as well as a smaller core group of fellow teachers who counsel the students on their projects.

To do	Topic	Teaching method
8 weeks as a basis length of the course	Course duration Entrepreneurship training	<p>The course, upon which this tip sheet is based, consists of 2 weeks with introductions, readings, and lectures.</p> <p>Followed by 5 weeks where the students in groups of 4 develop a new journalistic product or concept. This work involves in-depth analysis of market/audience needs and preferences; prototyping is encouraged, but not mandatory.</p> <p>The last week involves pitching of the product idea before a panel and fellow students, followed by finalisation of the three submission elements: project/concept description, investigation/research report, and reflective report.</p>
With shorter time, focus on Concept Development	Concept Development Entrepreneurship training	<p>A growing number of graduates seem to get to work with concept development later on. However, few of them get the chance to become involved in larger projects as the project here at the school; they are often forced to jump directly to concept development based on assumptions, largely neglecting audience and market research.</p> <p>With that in mind, the basic minimum package must focus on concept development in case we can't take the full 8 weeks of training.</p>
With more time, go into business models and market analysis	Business models Entrepreneurship training	<p>You can't give students Business Administration skills in a few days' time, and indeed not j-students. But with more time, more business understanding and more market analysis would be the elements to add to an 8 weeks course before graduating the students (or at least, as an optional course).</p>
Be open, ignite your own entrepreneurial behaviour	Role of the teacher Entrepreneurship training	<p>As a teacher in entrepreneurship, be entrepreneurial yourself. Not that you need to run a business start-up parallel to your teaching. But be entrepreneurial in the way you approach your course over time: Develop the course, adapt to new knowledge, and adjust the content continuously.</p>

To do	Topic	Teaching method
Go external for professional sparring on entrepreneurship	Role of the teacher. Entrepreneurship training	You will hardly find enough (sparring) and inspiration in j-schools and universities when it comes to entrepreneurship and innovation. So go external: Professional associations, business clubs, friends and neighbours – ask for their contribution and inspiration. Also, form networks with teaching staff at other educational institutions.
Make the pitching-day a day of partying – in front of a realistic audience	Pitching Entrepreneurship training	If possible, arrange pitching of concept ideas, preferably shortly before the submission deadline. A structured and open pitching - in front of students and teachers and a panel of 'simulated experts' - is highly motivating and rewarding. It is pitching-training, but indeed it also improves the concepts and the final submissions. (Suggestion for a pitching model: Let the students define their own panel well in advance, i.e. to whom they would like to present their concept. The panel then pretend to be these 'real' experts, e.g. a potential customer, a media organisation, an investor. With students and teachers as a silent audience, the pitch consists of presentation and questions, and with a feedback afterwards on both concept and performance.)
Pitching, and a free bonus gift	Pitching Business partners Entrepreneurship training	Without being intentional, the pitching obligation has proven to be helpful for students in getting their concept/idea realised. The explanation is simple: Either because they become ready to approach a real partner or customer with their concept. Or because the students, while preparing a pitch for the simulated panel, actually do contact what would be the real world-panel members, who then invite the students for a meeting.
Exploit journalism students' big advantage: Swift and direct collection of data	Audience research Real-life approach On-site data collection	It is an accepted entrepreneurial truth that the answers are found outside the building. Meaning you are not able to find them solely in literature or existing data. Journalism students (and journalists) are extraordinarily good at picking easy research solutions, which gives them an advantage compared to other students (and professionals) working with concepts and innovation: In general, journalists are good at asking questions and approaching people. We collect data and quotes swiftly and easily,

To do	Topic	Teaching method
		<p>in order to tell our stories. This skill can be exploited in j. entrepreneurship training, the main difference being that here, we collect data and quotes to understand the audiences and improve the ideas and concepts.</p>
To avoid	Topic	Why?
<p>Don't introduce entrepreneurship too early; the students must have a professional basis</p>	<p>Entrepreneurship training Students levels</p>	<p>From their first days, journalism students should develop their skills related to innovation and the development of ideas. They must also understand the basics about the media and journalism markets. However, in order to engage in true entrepreneurial training and in the development of journalistic products for a real audience, they must have obtained a reasonable proficiency in basic journalistic skills, such as observation, interviewing, research (skills that also significantly improves their audience/market analyses).</p>
<p>Avoid large groups; 3-4 students is optimal</p>	<p>Size of groups</p>	<p>3-4 students is the optimal group size; with 5 or more in a group, co-ordination and project management overshadows the economy of scale and the added value of more brainpower and manpower. This warning is based on the students' comments and the teachers' experiences; our students are not trained in the management of projects with many team members.</p>
<p>Be careful with the screening of guest speakers.</p>	<p>Guest speakers, industry experts</p>	<p>Not all good innovative entrepreneurs are good speakers/lecturers. Some may not be able to explain their own success stories. We have experienced outright bad advice coming from guest speakers due to bad screening or inadequate briefing.</p>
<p>Don't allow students to get locked too early.</p>	<p>Staying in uncertainty as a way to explore new land.</p>	<p>Some groups will look for a safe path too early, which will preclude their possibilities of discovering anything new. The counselling of students involves encouraging them to maintain high levels of ambition, to stay open for new input. Many feel uncomfortable dealing with the widespread uncertainty in entrepreneurial phases.</p>

To avoid	Topic	Why?
Discourage same-type groups; mix different competencies	Groups Entrepreneurship training	Force the students to consider carefully how they form their working groups. Consider establishing a procedure ensuring that groups contain different competences and strengths. If the composition of groups is left with the students without guidance, they will establish groups where members know each other and all think in the same way - which does not benefit the process.
Contact:	Instructor/Contact person: Ass. professor Kim Albæk, e-mail: kax@dmjx.dk .	
Bonus material:	Short quote from instructor The mindset is the most important part "As a teacher in this: Remember that the most important aim of journalistic entrepreneurship training is to change the mindset of the journalism students – get them to a point where they agree that they must develop the profession, and that they must paint the new picture, not just fill in the frames."	