

## The role of the arts in entrepreneurship education

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### Abstract

The research aims to bring about a change of mentality in training programs through innovative methods based on art. In this sense, it is committed to reformulating the role of creativity in education and defining it, more than an isolated competence among the 15 described in the European framework for entrepreneurship ("EntreComp"), as one that is transversal to all: creativity as an integral tool of profound change. The study proposes the opportunity to turn the failure of entrepreneurial projects into success, as well as highlight the value of the arts in entrepreneurship education and promote its development from an interdisciplinary approach.

*Keywords:* education, entrepreneurship, art, softskills, innovation.

## El rol de las artes en la educación para el emprendimiento

### Resumen

La investigación pretende provocar un cambio de mentalidad en los programas de formación mediante métodos innovadores con base artística. En este sentido, se apuesta por reformular el papel de la creatividad en la educación y definirla, más que una competencia aislada entre las 15 descritas en el marco europeo para el emprendimiento ("EntreComp"), como aquella transversal a todas: la creatividad como herramienta integral del cambio profundo. El estudio propone la oportunidad de convertir el fracaso de los proyectos emprendedores en éxito, así como resaltar el valor de las artes en la educación para el emprendimiento y promover su desarrollo desde un enfoque interdisciplinario.

*Palabras clave:* educación, emprendimiento, arte, softskills, innovación.

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## Introduction

The nature of failure in entrepreneurship education lies in internal conflicts and in relation to others, that is, in communication difficulties with oneself and with others. The deficit of entrepreneurial projects has its origin in the lack of knowledge and understanding of what the user wants; but, first of all, in what the entrepreneur really is and can offer: who am I? and what can I give? From the business area, there are various research studies on personal efficiency that explain that the area where entrepreneurs do not focus is on the optimal use of internal resources. This affects all individuals in a company, starting with senior managers. In addition, it is known that the development of human activity depends on 15% aptitude and 85% attitude, (Samsó, 2020). Hence, in the educational environment, the teacher teaches more about what “is” than about what he “knows” (Herrán, 2020). These data show that in entrepreneurship training programs it is necessary to focus primarily on aptitude skills (creative thinking, motivation) than on attitudinal skills (logical thinking, cognitive abilities). Current training programs place more emphasis on the objective resources or disciplines of the company (tools, processes and specific skills) than on the subjective resources of the individual (personal and environmental beliefs, emotions and values), although the latter influence undoubtedly in the upper layers. In short, in the professional sphere, obstacles reflect internal problems, according to the holistic vision of Edgar Cayce (2004), which are currently not dealt with in depth in training programs for entrepreneurship education.

## The artistic methodology: the educational commitment to entrepreneurship

Our research is based on a strategic plan for entrepreneurial training from the arts: an innovative methodological model that fuses art and business success. Within the institutional and political context that concerns us, the research proposal is validated by the European Union protocol according to the diagram of the competencies of “EntreComp Wheel (European Union)” (Bacigalupo *et al.*, 2016) (vs. Fig. 1). Faced with the problem of burnout in entrepreneurial projects, the solution we propose focuses on the implementation of the so-called soft skills and on facilitating empowerment processes through artistic strategies. Although current soft skills are focused on communication techniques, negotiation, pitch, role play... with a vision that is more external than internal to the individual, this study analyzes the reverse direction, that is, operating from the outside in through the strategy creative. The “inside-outside” formula constitutes a more innovative and disruptive expressive form that takes the subject as its epicenter.



Figure 1. EntreComp Wheel (European Union)

In this way, we start from the application of the 3 main blocks of the European diagram but observed from the centrality of the individual. Thus, we understand that from the artistic methodology it trains the entrepreneur more efficiently insofar as all the competences corresponding to each block of “EntreComp Wheel” are covered, according to the following statements (vs. Fig. 2): in firstly, the association of “Ideas & Opportunities” to what “I can” is proposed; secondly, “Resources” in relation to what “I believe” and, finally, “Into Action” referring to what “I innovate”. It is about using artistic production systems to facilitate creativity and, thus, critical thinking and problem solving. In terms of innovation, the novelty of the method lies in the adaptation of the artistic processes through the methodology of creative processes adapted to the demands of the entrepreneur, coming from any disciplinary area.



Figure 2. New versión of EntreComp Wheel (artistic methodology for entrepreneurship)

In short, the added value of the proposal is the application of artistic methodology to training programs, through the development of what are known as “strong skills”, replacing the usual “soft skills”. All this in order to deepen the processes of intra/interpersonal communication through the strength of creative processes. In this way, a dynamic directed from the inside out (“strong skills”) is facilitated, inversely to how training programs for traditional entrepreneurs are carried out, from the outside in (“soft skills”). At a psychological level, we feel emotionally but we act based on non-conscious factors that begin in the internal dialogue before manifesting externally (Kramer, 2011). The use of artistic methodology in entrepreneurship education manages to empower people to create and innovate successfully, that is, to improve society. When it is undertaken, whoever knows himself better (self-knowledge of internal resources), better understands the needs of others (efficiency in communication processes). However, if “I can” give, “I believe” value; so, “I innovate” to “add value to people”, in the words of R. Buckminster Fuller (1992).

### Reflecting in future

The projection of the project is based on the versatility of the artistic methodology for projects of any business nature. Thus, the working method is aligned with transdisciplinary knowledge in that it covers all areas of knowledge transversally. The project is aligned with a revolutionary conception of the arts as a backbone of knowledge, not exclusive to the humanities. We know that art is an incomparable transformative form of expression because it facilitates changes mobilized from internal exploration in the first order, and the consequent social impact. Creativity is the key strategy for social progress and not a mere personal capacity (Sternberg, 2012; Amabile, 2013; Csikszentmihalyi, 2014), with the aim of turning individual value into social benefit and redefining the concept of success (Lackéus *et al.*, 2020). Entrepreneurship education demands creative innovation with social and ethical value, that is, providing the entrepreneur with methods to connect with what someone is and, thus, efficiently influence the environment. In this sense, the key to success lies in the synergy of the relationships between entrepreneurship and usability, in continuous feedback and based on the authentic understanding of the demands of society from the individual conscience.

## Conclusions

To sum up, the main result of the research is the fundamental role that artistic methodology occupies in entrepreneurship education, based on the efficient implementation of all 15 competencies, according to the European protocol. In this sense, the commitment to new skills, different from the common soft-skills, are proof of the capacity of the proposed method to turn failures into business success. Under the coined strongskills, we have referred to the development of the essential creative processes of human potential and of any educational process consisting of adding value to people with the value of oneself. Although what fails the most in entrepreneurship projects is communication, both at an individual and social level, the application of all the competencies turns the artistic strategy into an incomparable communication tool, internally and externally. For this reason, the quality of ideas is the key to success, and imagination is the agent for building new realities. The study has focused on demonstrating the importance of specific methodological applications in the field of practice and artistic education from the theory based on creative experience. In general, education contributes to creative synergy because it guides the entrepreneurial mentality towards greater harmony with the environment, that is, towards responsible and sustainable entrepreneurship from the creative will and individual, social and environmental awareness.

Likewise, the numerous learning outcomes derived from the 3 main areas of The EntreComp Wheel (“Ideas”, “Resources” and “Putting into Action”) stimulate us, as teachers and researchers in the arts, to rethink new strategies and methodologies between disciplines, aware of the impact of creative processes in terms of innovation. Ideas, resources, execution, management and dissemination of results are involved in artistic production, all of which are key to entrepreneurship. The creative attitude implies reflection, critical thinking, experimentation and formal and technical resolution. We can conclude that the artist is an entrepreneur by nature because he encourages entrepreneurship of any kind. Thus, the artist works with the 3 basic pillars of the 3 main areas of the EntreComp diagram, homologous to the basic phases of artistic creation: the first block (“Ideas&opportunities”), where concepts reside as a source of inspiration and new possibilities from the exercise of intimate introspection and immersion in autobiography to connect with who we are (“I can”); the second block (“Resources”), referring to materials, techniques and technological and human procedures, that is, the agents of creative development (“I create”) that influence the specific sociocultural and geopolitical context, where it takes place the action, the third and last block (“Into action”), that is, the start-up, the movement created from the individual will (“I innovate”), as a result of co-evolution with the physical environment and social environment, according to the more or less lasting impact over time and social behaviour.

Finally, the promotion of creative ways of thinking helps to think aesthetically. Art is a key generator in the evolutionary development of consciousness; the human being creates his reality through individual and social consciousness. In this sense, an attempt has been made to propose results (advantages, emotional brain) rather than promote what is done (objectives, logical brain), according to the concept of “Deep Practice of Success” (Coyle, 2018). Art contributes to the entrepreneurial mindset because it improves the ability to perceive the world sensitively. Working creatively implies working in the first place, with the “creative force” or impulse (Cayce, 2004), that is, transforming the individual psyche for better performance, leading to the achievement of personal and professional objectives (personal self-discovery and knowledge of business values, the capacity for practical and emotional management...). In short, the role of art is to facilitate creative activities in the entrepreneur that will help to strengthen capacities and talents (know internal and emotional resources, the belief system and values), know obstacles (fears) and what someone is passionate about (the meaning of life) to realize a vision of individual, professional life (self-realization).

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