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Entrepreneurship Knowledge Centers to Foster Innovative Entrepreneurship Practices in Education and Research



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Table of Contents

1. Objective:	3
2. Preparation:	3
a. Identify a business opportunity and/or problem:	3
b. Determine the resources needed to implement the selected innovative growth and/or product:	4
c. Formally agree on an innovative growth project/strategy:	4
3. Begin the Drafting Process:	5
i. Title and Executive Summary	6
ii. Client Information:	6
iii. Description of Case Study Challenge:	6
iv. In-depth Overview of the Proposed Solution:	7
v. Call to action:	7
4. Finalise the draft report of the case study	7
5. Creation of Public Pitch	7
6. Evaluation Criteria	9
6.1 Evaluation criteria for the case study report (60% of total score):	9
6.2 Evaluation criteria for the public pitch (40% of total score):	11
7. Evaluation Criteria for the social media video (to be evaluated separately):	11

Framework for the Implementation of a Case Challenge

1. Objective:

The objective of this case challenge is to have students undergo a realistic business entrepreneurship process that aligns with the goals and objectives of the Entrepreneurship Knowledge Centre (EKC). To make the case challenge feasible, realistic, and time-bound, this guideline serves to provide instructions as to how the case study will be carried out effectively and with adequate resources. This guideline provides a framework and methodology on how the case challenge needs to be developed and implemented. Additionally, the guideline contains information regarding case challenge preparation, student participation, support faculties, and business partners. Moreover, the guideline provides step-by-step instructions that will allow for high productivity, consistent output quality, and predictable process costs while students are creating their case studies.

2. Preparation:

a. Identify a business opportunity and/or problem:

Using the provided logistical resources by ERASMUS/EU, the institute will create a positive environment and support system for the students while they are working their case studies. This support system will include a mentor (entrepreneur with a relevant academic background) and an additional academic staff. The students will work closely with their mentors, the academic staff, and the entrepreneur to identify an innovative growth opportunity and/or business problem for the assigned business. It is the university's responsibility to identify enough entrepreneurs to work with the students and ensure matching. One entrepreneur can work with only one student and one university mentor can work with more than one student. This identification process will require the students to complete research on the assigned business's resources, challenges, current objectives, and trends. During this identification process, the student will learn how to effectively collect and analyse basic business information at both micro and macro levels. As a result, the students will have an advanced understanding of business subject matter that is critical to their assigned business and be in a position to work with their mentors to maximise the growth of the business.

Discussion questions for the student to ask their mentor at this stage should include the following:

- a. What is a specific challenge that your business faces? For example, does your business face issues related to distribution channels, access to customer groups, etc.? The selected business challenge must be specific in scope.
- b. Does your business have the current resources to support one of these business plans?
- c. Why has your business not yet implemented one of the mentioned strategies or plan?

b. Determine the resources needed to implement the selected innovative growth and/or product:

The student, mentor, and academic staff should work together to compile a list of the materials needed to implement the innovative business project. There are no costs involved for any participants. The student, mentor, and entrepreneur will work with the materials provided at the EKC.

c. Formally agree on an innovative growth project/strategy:

- i. The student, mentor, and academic staff should all agree on the innovative growth project that the student will pursue. This will require the mentor and/or academic staff to deem the innovative growth opportunity as realistic and feasible given the period.
- ii. The student, mentor, and client, with the supervision of academic staff, will sign a non-binding agreement that outlines the agreed-upon selected innovative growth project. This agreement should outline the following:
 1. A brief description of the challenge. This description should include the below components:
 - a. Objectives of the project/strategy
 - b. Resources needed to implement the project/strategy
 - c. The participants involved in the project/strategy
 2. A basic timeline of the project
 - a. Start date
 - i. Date for when business opportunity/challenge is identified
 - ii. Date for completion of draft report
 - b. End date (final product)

3. Critical Considerations
 - a. Ethics
 - b. Research
 - c. Anti-plagiarism policy
4. Performance indicators
 - i. There will be regular online meetings between the academic mentor, student, entrepreneur, and European partner liaison during the research and writing stages of the case study challenge. During the meetings, the below questions (including but not limited to the following) can be discussed:
 - a. Will the project/strategy reduce business costs in any way?
 - b. Is it likely that the assigned business/client will report a high rate of satisfaction with the service?
 - c. Will the project/strategy stimulate business growth?
 - d. What could be adjusted and/or improved to advance the effectiveness of the project/strategy?
5. Feedback period
 - a. The student, mentor, and academic staff should meet at the end of the implementation of the strategy and/or project to discuss the following:
 - i. How can the project/strategy be improved in the future?
 - ii. What challenges occurred?
 - iii. How can the project be diversified to serve gender inclusion and empowerment?

3. Begin the Drafting Process:

Once a non-binding agreement is made, the student should begin producing a draft case study in the format of a report. This draft will compose of four sections, each detailed below. The final report should be a maximum of 15 pages (double spaced and in Times New Roman font). This page limit should provide the student with ample room to include pictures, graphs, and other relevant components.

i. Title and Executive Summary

1. The student should establish a title and provide a brief, yet informative, summary of the enterprise and business problem at hand. This summary should answer the following questions. This section is to be written only after

completing the whole write-up. Please note that the phrase “client” refers to the student’s assigned business.

- a. What is the background of the client and/or issue?
- b. Who is the client?
- c. What are your customer’s current challenges?
- d. Why is there a need for this new product, strategy, or implementation plan?
- e. How is this product, strategy, or implementation plan supposed to assist and improve the operations of the client?

ii. Client Information:

- a. In this section, the student should provide a detailed description of client information. This section should answer the following questions:
 1. What industry is your client from?
 2. Where is your client located?
 3. What products and/or services are being offered by your client?
 4. How many employees does your client have?
 5. Who are your client’s target groups?
 6. How is your client’s business financed?
 7. What does the cost structure of your client look like?
 8. What are your client’s current growth trends (where are they succeeding)

iii. Description of Case Study Challenge:

1. In this section, the student should provide a detailed description of their proposed case study challenge. This section should explain the following:
 - a. What is your client’s current challenge?
 - b. What type of challenge is your client facing? Is the challenge strategic or structural? Is it related to financial management, monitoring performance, regulation and compliance, competency, technology, reputation, customer service, etc.?
 - c. Why is it important to overcome this challenge? What would happen to your client if they did not overcome this challenge?

iv. In-depth Overview of the Proposed Solution:

This is the solution stage of the writing process. Here, the student should introduce their proposed solution, explain their business plan/strategy or product, and provide details on how their solution would be implemented. Important questions to answer here are provided below:

- a. What is the proposed solution (new product and/or strategy)?
 - i. What type of solution is being proposed? Is it structural or strategic? Does the solution involve information technology, artificial intelligence, strategic management and planning, etc.?
- b. What are the short-term, mid-term, and long-term targets and objectives, both qualitative and quantitative, of the product and/or strategy?
 - i. How will the project/strategy meet these targets and objectives?
- c. What performance indicators will be used to prove that the strategy/project is working effectively?

v. Call to action:

After detailing the above components, the student should convey the urgent need for the project/strategy in a call to action (CTA). The CTA should be convincing and highlight the importance of the innovative business plan/strategy.

4. Finalise the draft report of the case study

The students should review the draft report with their mentors and academic staff. At this stage, the students should ensure that their draft involves the use of graphics and images that enhance their project/strategy. Once the draft meets expectations, the mentor should sign off on the student's draft. This signature will allow the student to progress to the next stage(s) of the case study challenge.

5. Creation of the public pitch

- a. Once the case study report has been finalised, the students should begin creating their public pitch. The students should use their case study as the backbone of their public pitch. The public pitch must be presented using PowerPoint or Google Slides. The public pitch should be no longer than 7 minutes. The pitch should follow the format below:
 - i. **Title and introduction:**
 1. Here, the student should do the following:
 - a. Introduce themselves
 - b. Introduce the client and provide a brief description of the client

- c. Describe the specific challenge faced by the client
- d. Describe the solution to the specified challenge

ii. Call to action (CTA)

1. Here, the student should focus on selling the case study. The student should briefly answer the following:
 - a. Why is the proposed solution the best?
 - b. What consequences will result for the client if this solution is not implemented?
 - c. Why must it be implemented now?
 - d. What end goals of the project are significant and how will the innovative project/strategy help the client in the long run?

iii. Client information and decision-making process:

1. Here, the student should:
 - a. Provide deeper background information on the client
 - b. Provide a brief description of the thought process and discussions that led the student and mentor to agree on the innovative growth project/strategy

iv. Details on the solution:

1. Here, the student should:
 - a. Outline the short-term and long-term goals (both qualitative and quantitative) of the innovative project/strategy
 - b. Provide basic information on the resources and total cost needed to implement the project. Here, the students must ensure to incorporate data that shows that the total cost and amount of resources that the project/strategy requires will 1) not deprive the client in the long run and 2) foster overall gains.
 - c. Summarise how the innovative project/strategy will meet short-term and long-term goals.
 - d. State the short-term, mid-term, and long-term impact of the project
 - e. Provide a timeline of the project
 - f. Summarise the indicators that will be used to measure project success and identify and respond to possible challenges

v. Brief Conclusion

Here, the student should do the following:

- a. Briefly reiterate their CTA
- b. Briefly describe how their research contributes to the field of business (both policy and implementation)

b. General tips and advice:

- i. The PowerPoint or Google Slides presentation should include images and charts. The slides should not be filled with text and should instead include short and concise sentences and/or bullet points.

6. Evaluation Criteria

6.1 Evaluation criteria for the case study report (60% of total score):

Category:	Criteria:	Score:
Reality Orientation	1. Is the implementation of the innovative project/strategy realistic within the provided time frame?	1. (0-3)
	2. Is it likely for the innovative project/strategy to facilitate the growth of the client?	2. (0-3)
	3. Is the innovative project/strategy based on accurate and truthful contexts and data?	3. (0-3)

Evidence-based Formulation	<p>1. Is the information presented in the report well researched?</p> <p>2. Does the information in the report convey an ability for the innovative project/strategy to achieve its short-term and long-term goals?</p> <p>3. Does the student use business theories and strategies to support the credibility of the innovative project/strategy?</p> <p>4. Does the student provide quality qualitative and quantitative based data to support the innovative project/strategy?</p> <p>5. Does the student properly cite and integrate sources throughout the report?</p>	<p>1. (0-3)</p> <p>2. (0-3)</p> <p>3. (0-3)</p> <p>4. (0-3)</p> <p>5. (0-3)</p>
Inclusion of guideline components	<p>1. Does the report effectively and successfully include all the sections outlined in the guideline (3i-3v.)?</p> <p>2. Is the report a maximum of 15 pages?</p>	<p>1. (0-3)</p> <p>2. (0-3)</p>
Clarity and structure	<p>1. Is the report clear to the readers?</p> <p>2. Is the report structured and formatted for easy reading?</p>	<p>1. (0-3)</p> <p>2. (0-3)</p>

6.2 Evaluation criteria for the public pitch (40% of total score):

Category:	Criteria:	Score:
Inclusion of guideline components	1. Was the presentation about 7 minutes long?	1. (0-3)
	2. Did the presentation successfully include all the sections outlined in the guideline (5i-5v)?	2. (0-3)
	3. Did the presentation involve the constructive use of graphs and visuals?	3. (0-3)
Delivery	1. Did the student make eye contact with the audience?	1. (0-3)
	2. Did the student speak clearly?	2. (0-3)
	3. Was the presentation organised well?	3. (0-3)
	4. Did the student display full knowledge of the business sector and their innovative project/strategy?	4. (0-3)
Quality of content presented	1. Was the student's presentation realistic, accurate, and convincing?	1. (0-3)
	2. Did the student support their presentation with strong evidence?	2. (0-3)
	3. Was the student's project creative, innovative, and present a novel way to promote the client's business?	3. (0-3)

7. Evaluation Criteria for the social media video (to be evaluated separately):

Category:	Criteria:	Score:
Timeframe	1. Was the student's social media video between 1-2 minutes?	1. (0-3)

Delivery	1. Was the student’s social media video engaging? 2. Did the student appear knowledgeable and confident in the social media video? 3. Was the student's voice clear throughout the social media video media? 4. Did the social media video display good use of creativity by the student?	1. (0-3) 2. (0-3) 3. (0-3) 4. (0-3)
Use of technology	1. Was the social media free of voice glitches, freezes, and/or blurry scenes? 2. If transitions were used, were they smooth?	1. (0-3) 2. (0-3)
Inclusion of guideline components	1. Did the social media video provide a brief description of all sections outlined in the guideline (3i-3v)? 2. Did the social media video pay extra attention to the student’s solution?	1. (0-3) 2. (0-3)

Explanation of the (0--3) Score Range:

Score of (0): The student’s product meets the learning objective at an **unsatisfactory level**

Score of (1): The student’s product meets the learning objective at an **average level**

Score of (2): The student’s product meets the learning objective at a **good level**

Score of (3): The student’s product meets the learning objective at an **exceptional level**