the Cambridge MBA 2010-11

Entrepreneurial Team Problem Solving and Innovation

Randy Haykin & Gregg Fraley

Overview

This intensive week-long seminar on Team Problem Solving for Entrepreneurs, hosted at Cambridge Judge Business School, is created for students who will be contributing their skills as part of a start-up. The course will teach methods and skills for working in a team, identifying problems, defining the scope of a problem, analyzing /researching, ideation, narrowing down a solution, and implementing a course of action.

The Instructors for this course are practitioners – each has worked with scores of companies in the US and Europe at a variety of stages, in an entrepreneurial or investor role. Thus, the course is designed to provide learning through active participation and observation about one's own capabilities as well as skills for identifying group strengths and weaknesses. The course will provide a series of examples and on-the-job tools that students can use in later settings.

Fit within the Cambridge MBA

This course helps future entrepreneurs learn how to bring their best skills and talents to a team environment. Students will have had practice working in teams throughout the MBA, but this course looks at these issues from a practical entrepreneurial point of view. The course is focused on those students pursuing an entrepreneurial career or already working on a company start-up, as it provides a framework and practical tools for use in day-to-day problem solving with that start-up.

Students will also have the opportunity to re-visit the Belbin assessments that they have taken at the start of the year and utilize it in learning more about the team process in a start-up environment.

Learning Objectives

- Acquire skills for problem solving that can be used in many situations in life and in business
- Learn about the "creative problem solving" and "design thinking" methods and understand how these can be applied to an entrepreneurial situation
- Learn and practice fundamental facilitation tools and techniques applicable to problem solving and other group/team meetings, and get exposure to more advanced methods
- Utilize two assessments: StrengthFinder and FourSight in personal development
- Identify personal strengths and how they best fit into team/group problem solving
- Learn the behaviours of highly effective creative people, and understand more about access to their own creative source

Teaching Methods

This class will contain a combination of readings, lectures, discussions, exercises and a live creative challenge with a real company. We will also use several personal assessments to provide students with insights about themselves and others.

Students will be asked to participate in several improvisation games. These games are designed as stimulus for idea generation in their team challenges.

Students will be divided into small teams and will be expected to work during the evening, after course hours, in order to complete a creative team challenge. Each team will choose an existing company problem (ideally a company one or more of the students are already working on) or work from a fictional problem set provided by the instructors, and apply principles and tools taught during the class. Students will work in teams during the week and will present their process, findings and learning on the last day of class.

Assessment Criteria

Students will be graded 40% based on their participation in classroom discussions and 60% on their final presentation and report on personal/team learning.

Course Structure & Selected Readings

Preparatory Reading

Fraley, G. (2007)	*Jack's notebook: a business novel about creative problem solving.* Thomas Nelson Publishers	**Printed book at: On order**
Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996)	*Creativity: the flow and the psychology of discovery and invention.* New York: Harper Collins Ch. 1-3	**Study Pack** **Printed book at: BF408.C94 1996**
Brown, T. (2008)	"Design thinking". *Harvard Business Review,* 86(6): pp.84-92	**E-article via** <u>Business Source Complete</u> **Printed article in Mezzanine Journals**
Richardson, A. (2010)	"Living in an x-problem world". In: Richardson, A. *Innovation X: why a company's toughest problems are its greatest advantage.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Pp: 17-36	**E-chapter via** <u>InnovationXbook</u>
Johansson, F. (2006)	*The Medici effect: what elephants and epidemics can teach us about innovation.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press	**Printed book at: On order**
Haykin, R. (2009)	*Netflix*	**Study Pack**

Preparatory Assessments

Don Cliffton	StrengthsQuest	**Online assessment**
Gerard Puccio	FourSight	**Online assessment**

Optional Reading

De Bono, E. (1990)	*Lateral thinking: a textbook of creativity.* Harmondsworth: Penguin	**Printed book at: BF408.D42 L3**
McCracken, G. (2010)	*Chief culture officer: how to create a living, breathing corporation.* New York: Basic Books	**Printed book: On order**
Gladwell, M. (2005)	*Blink: the power of thinking without thinking.* London: Allen Lane	**Printed book at: BF448.G52**
Gray, D., Brown, S. and Macanufo, J. (2010)	*Game storming: a playbook for innovators, rulebreakers and changemakers.* O'Reilly Media Inc.	**E-book via** <u>Dawsonera</u> **Click on 'institutional login'**

Cameron, J. (1993)	*The artists way: a spiritual path to higher creativity.* London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd.	**Printed book at: BF408.C35 1993**

SESSION OVERVIEW:

DAY ONE: (5 hours) Intro to Innovation and Entrepreneurial Teams

We are dividing this first class into 3 segments:

A) **Models for Creativity, Innovation and the Team** – broadening one's definition to include problem solving and decision-making; the role of diversity within a team; assessing one's own strengths as a team-member.

B) **Models for Entrepreneurial growth** – knowing what issues one's team must tackle together.

C) **A Process for Structured Problem-Solving** – learning how to identify problems and structuring an approach to team-work on them; the Creative Problem Solving Process and Design Thinking.

Note: We ask that students **hold the dinner hour (6-8:30 pm)** for a special gathering that we are planning in which students will get a jump on their group projects under coaching from the class Instructors (further details to be provided by email prior to first class).

Expected Outcome: Students will learn new ways to think about creativity and group innovation; the opportunities within a company life-cycle to apply innovation; several problem-solving approaches; and understand their unique strengths as entrepreneurial team members.

DAY TWO: (3 hours) Tools for Team Creativity & Innovation

We are dividing Day Two into 5 mini-segments, each on some aspect of divergent and/or convergent team thinking:

A) **Teams: initial problem statements** – each team will share their initial problem statements with the class.
B) **Tools for Research and Fact-finding –** using customer interviews, ladder-of-abstraction, observation, etc.
C) **Tools for Problem Re-Framing –** using tools for re-stating the problem ("In What Ways Might I" and "How Might I" stems, creating the problem statement/platform, perspective shift tools)
D) **Tools for Ideation, Convergence and Facilitation** -- (brainstorming, forced association/lat thinking, clustering, etc.)
E) **Team Learning** – using the FourSight and Belbin assessments

<u>Expected Outcome</u>: Students will learn skills and approaches to divergent and convergent thinking for each stage in the problem-solving method.

DAY THREE: (4 hours) Presentation and Critique

In this final session, we will focus on the presentations, results and key findings from each group.

The session is divided into 4 segments:

A) **Team presentations and findings –** each team will have an opportunity to present their problem-solution set, along with an action plan that came from application of the course process to a specific start-up problem.

B) **Tools for Implementation –** students will learn a tool call PPCO for refinement of solutions and planning.

C) **Case study: "Keeping Google Googley"** – using a model of the iOrganization developed at UC Berkeley, we will work through a case study from a company that is accomplished in innovation, and apply course learnings to the company.

D) **Wrap-up** – we will discuss final thoughts from the class, make some commitments to our future, and gather up some inspirations for the journey.

<u>Expected Outcome</u>: Students will synthesize their learning from this class as well as increase their understanding of course materials so they can be used later in business and life.

Teaching Staff

Randy Haykin	Department:	Professor, UC Berkeley; Chairman, Haykin Capital
	Email:	Haykin@haas.berkeley.edu
Gregg Fraley	Department:	Founding Partner, Kiln Principal, Gregg Fraley Associates

	Email:	gregg@greggfraley.com

Biographies

Randy Haykin

Randy Haykin is a well-known American entrepreneur, angel and venture investor. He is currently Chairman of Haykin Capital (www.haykin.net), a hands-on "mentor capital" firm and is Managing Director of Outlook Ventures (www.outlookventures.com), an early-stage venture firm with $200+ million under management, which he co-founded in 1996. Prior to Outlook, Randy served as founding VP of Marketing & Sales at Yahoo and played early roles at Overture, NetChannel, Electric Minds, and AOL's Greenhouse program, a successful venture incubator. He has also held management roles at Apple Computer, Paramount/Viacom. Haykin holds a BA in Organizational Studies from Brown University, magna cum laude, and an MBA from Harvard. In addition being on the professional faculty at UC Berkeley's Haas School of Business, and The Judge School, Randy has taught classes at U. of Edinburgh, Brown, Harvard and Baylor. Randy can be followed on Twitter at <randyhaykin>. His regular blog on innovation & entrepreneurship is at http://innovationsparks.com.

Gregg Fraley

An innovation consultant to Fortune 500 companies, and a serial entrepreneur, his consulting specialty is new product idea generation. He led the PR and marketing effort that took US-based start-up Advanced Health Corporation public in 1996. Gregg co-founded Med-E-Systems, a software firm that developed "Smart Scripts" the first pen-based, wireless prescription system. He was the founder of NobleQuest, which developed medical kiosk software. An early entrant in interactive television in the 1980s, Gregg and his fellow team members at Warner Cable's QUBE interactive television earned Emmys and a cable ACE award for innovation. Gregg is also a published author. His business book is a novel, Jack's Notebook, that rightly earns its place on many MBA syllabuses. A prominent blogger in the creativity and innovation space (http://www.greggfraley.com/blog). Gregg recently founded KILN, a UK company that fires up innovation with trend intelligence.