

Introduction

It would be too bold to claim that my previous recent work *Teaching Entrepreneurship to Undergraduates* (Jones, 2011) is the intellectual ancestor of this current work. It would be more accurate to state that having walked some distance in one direction on the left hand side of the road, it is now time to return to my original starting point a little wiser; and walk some distance in the same direction, but on the right hand side of the road. I anticipate that this alternative journey will be just as fulfilling in terms of creating moments of reflective opportunity. I sense the greatest challenge we will face is in giving our students sufficient credit for the entrepreneurial behaviours they have already demonstrated in their busy lives. Perhaps, the ultimate challenge for us all is to recognise that we all have the capacity to be entrepreneurs, just perhaps not the types who typically become famous.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner and micro finance pioneer Muhammad Yunus has been widely credited with observing that we are all in fact entrepreneurs. Staring out originally as cave dwellers we were all self-employed, responsible for finding food and feeding ourselves. His assertion being that we gradually lost these innate abilities as civilisation emerged and we increasingly became someone else's labor. As Labor we have forgotten that we were once all entrepreneurs; capable of solving all manner of problems related to our survival.

Putting to one side the potential implications of defining entrepreneurship in such a primitive manner, the point is well made; we are all innately capable of entrepreneurial behaviour. However, I find it easy to draw parallels between the participation of adults in entrepreneurship and love in society. On one hand, the challenge of love, accepting our inability to predict it and/or encourage it so as to sustain it. All we can state is that at any time in society love will be present, but we can't say with accuracy much more than that. Equally, the presence of entrepreneurship in society, while ever-present, remains a mystery as well. However, this book aims to consider the opportunities and challenges that educators collide with whilst interacting with postgraduate students of entrepreneurship; those studying at any level higher than a bachelor degree.

Whilst the primary context of this book is situated in Higher Education, it

is the intention of this work to view our adult students as learners embedded in specific and individual life journeys. My focus is not on the nature of the curriculum required to assist multiple cohorts learn to be more entrepreneurial. Rather, concern is given to allowing individual students make sense of their life, its constraints, opportunities and the process of reconnecting to their 'inner caveperson'.

In terms of starting this journey a little wiser, the process of writing *Teaching Entrepreneurship to Undergraduates* has made me both more appreciative and understanding of the various contexts of entrepreneurship education, hereinafter referred to as EE. From the conversations and invited interactions I have had with enterprise educators and students the world over; I gratefully acknowledge an intellectual debt. My past concerns for the legitimacy of our collective practice have been realised in my own backyard, further heightening my awareness of the fragility of our ability to practice our craft for the betterment of our students' development. The differences between this work and *Teaching Entrepreneurship to Undergraduates* arise from contextual differences directly related to the dissimilarities that exist between undergraduate and postgraduate students. It must be always remembered that in the absence of a single mode of selection (that is, regulatory best practice), there will be a natural tendency for increasing complexity of teaching and learning practice in EE. As I have stated elsewhere (Jones and Matlay, 2011), this is to be celebrated as it what makes EE so unique. However, it is critically important that we are all capable of explaining this diversity of practice, as it is germane to our contextual environment. That is the intended contribution of this work, to arm you with the ability to understand the various needs of your students and to be able to justify your approach to satisfying their needs.

The motivation for this work is to provide a distinct sister volume to *Teaching Entrepreneurship to Undergraduates*. The first volume sought to promote a learner-centred approach to thinking about how to teach entrepreneurship to undergraduates. This volume seeks to define the difference in thinking between teaching entrepreneurship to postgraduates as opposed to undergraduates. Therefore, a common structure is retained across both volumes, with attention given to both subtle and major differences between the motivation and process of learning related to entrepreneurship education for postgraduates and undergraduates. It is hoped that this sister volume will be as distinctive and innovative in terms of its constant focus on challenging issues, possible solutions to those challenges (based both the author's practice and that of other educators situated in various global contexts), and probing questions to prompt reflection of your own teaching practice. I will again be including the views of other entrepreneurship educators globally to gain a broad spectrum of opinions germane to the issues

under discussion. Before we proceed, let us first consider the purpose of each chapter.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

Chapter 1 Your Teaching Philosophy

The first chapter is focused on the educator's teaching philosophy. The key differences from the first volume will be the consideration given to how and why our teaching philosophies may differ between undergraduate and postgraduate situations. I aim to help you understand who you are relative to the process of EE and your students' aspirations. To assist this aim, I will also include the opinions of other educators within the first chapter and conclude with several reflective questions to provoke deeper thinking. I hope to ensure you adopt a reflective disposition during this chapter. A disposition that I hope you serves you well throughout the entire book.

Chapter 2 Nascent Entrepreneurship and Adults

The second chapter is focused on the nascent entrepreneur and adults as learners. The aim of this chapter is to situate the process of entrepreneurship within the lives of our adult learners. How have they been entrepreneurial thus far and how might they be entrepreneurial in the future? How do adults differ from adolescent learners? What motivations do they exhibit as mature learners? So the emphasis is on moving from pedagogy to andragogy. I hope to convince you that the use of fixed curriculums in EE reduces our ability to respond to our students' varied aspirations. I will again include the opinions of other educators within the chapter and conclude with an array of reflective questions to provoke deeper thinking.

Chapter 3 The Situational Dilemma

The third chapter deals with the situational factors that mature students uniquely share. The front cover of this book hints at an analogy of environmentally induced change. I hope to inspire you to see your students and your interaction with them in new and exciting ways. Your students have accumulated many life experiences and the diversity and experiences of each student you meet represent the raw ingredients of their profitable learning opportunities. The challenge therefore being to consider how we as educators can best use this diversity to their advantage in terms of developing and awakening entrepreneurial potential. To succeed, I argue that you must be

capable of facilitating transformational learning experiences. Essentially, I argue you must be able to motivate and challenge your students in the right way to be effective. I will again include the opinions of other educators within the chapter and conclude with a range of reflective questions to provoke deeper thinking.

Chapter 4 The Tethered Adventurer

The fourth chapter deals with what type of graduate are we might be trying to create? If the idea of the reasonable adventurer were not appropriate for postgraduates, what might be? I will explore the notion of the tethered adventurer, seeking to capture the reality of the lives from which many of postgraduate students are embedded in. My approach here is not to convince you of what type of graduate to create, rather I am urging you to step back and contemplate what type of graduate would be appropriate for your individual context. Again, issues related to the diversity within the class vis-à-vis their reasons for studying will be discussed. I will include the opinions of other educators within the chapter and conclude with several reflective questions to provoke deeper thinking.

Chapter 5 Exploiting Student Experience

The fifth chapter considers the experience that each student has accumulated and how this may be used to benefit the cohort's learning outcomes. Reference is made to what I call the *Harvard factor* to illuminate this issue. Unlike undergraduate students, postgraduates come equipped with a different range of vocational experience, experience that can be leveraged and exchanged throughout the learning experience. I want to challenge you to relinquish your authority in your classroom. I want you to enrol your students into leadership and educator roles. I will again include the opinions of other educators within the chapter and conclude with an array of reflective questions to provoke deeper thinking.

Chapter 6 The Extended Learning Environment

The sixth chapter considers the nature of the extended learning environment, students as learners who visit (or return to) the classroom, rather than students seeking to graduate from the classroom. There are many implications that arise from recognising the nature of the open boundaries that surround our students as mature learners. I want you to contemplate the challenging implications of employing experiential education approaches. I want you to consider the *places* where learning occurs. Further, to consider

what our learners will actually be *doing* when they are learning. I will again include the opinions of other educators within the chapter and conclude with an array of reflective questions to provoke deeper thinking.

Chapter 7 The Resource Profile

The seventh chapter continues the first volume's consideration of the students' resource profiles. Rather than merely considering the limitations of age, the challenges of auditing and creating awareness of whom and what is actually known is considered. Also, the nature of what capacity exists to access vital resources related to anticipated forms of entrepreneurial behaviour. I will again include the opinions of other educators within the chapter and conclude with an array of reflective questions to provoke deeper thinking.

Chapter 8 Seeing the World Differently

The eighth chapter considers the issue of how our students make sense of the world they live in. The environmental interaction framework I have developed is introduced and discussed. I contend the greatest gift your students will ever give you will be a glimpse of their dreams. The responsibility that comes with this gift is enormous. Overstate their likelihood of success and we risk causing them future pain, understate the potential value of the idea and we risk introducing future anxiety. While we cannot know the future in advance, we can surely move our students closer to their future, hopefully providing them with a clearer view of what may lay ahead. I will again include the opinions of other educators within the chapter and conclude with yet more reflective questions to provoke deeper thinking.

Chapter 9 Believing and Knowing

The ninth chapter seeks to bridge a gap between 'old style' 20th century opportunities and 21st century opportunities and the skills related to observing and exploiting such opportunities. The low-cost of web-enabled EE is discussed from the perspective of how we as educators can facilitate a shift in student confidence. Confidence related to how our students can embrace the raft of low-cost opportunities related to their potential entrepreneurial opportunities. Within this chapter I will present detailed accounts of how leading EE educators are exploiting technology to the advantage of their students.

Chapter 10 Ideas and Business Plans

The tenth chapter considers the evaluation of our students' ideas, of assisting them to step out and embrace the reality of their markets, communities and end-users. The aim is to present a non-prescriptive framework for enabling our students to act and then plan rather than planning to act. The benefits of not completing a business plan will be weighed against the potential gains from completing a business plan. The key issue of (study) time is accounted for in this regard with consideration given to the priorities of their educational outcomes; student choice being a critical issue to be contemplated. I will again include the opinions of other educators within the chapter and conclude with many reflective questions to provoke deeper thinking.

Chapter 11 Connecting for Action

The eleventh chapter deliberately sets out to be highly provocative through the initial introduction of Carlos Castaneda's *path with a heart*. Why haven't our postgraduate students entered the fray of entrepreneurial bedlam? What would compel them to do so post their interaction with their entrepreneurial educational experience? My experiences tell me that there are many paths our students could tread; yet there are only a few that they should (or could) travel. Returning to many of the issues canvassed in the first three chapters, factors of a personal nature to each student are reintroduced to propose a strong foundation for contemplating sustainable entrepreneurial behaviour. Throughout this chapter I will again share my students' feelings with you to provide a context of the adult learners I work with.

Chapter 12 You are not Alone

The twelfth and final chapter contemplates current and future challenges we as entrepreneurship educators face when working with postgraduate students. Unlike the mist that shrouds our undergraduates from the immediate reality of their future, our postgraduate students arrive seemingly simultaneously ensconced in their past, present and foreseeable future. Many seek assistance and knowledge that may have a very short shelf life. Our ability to mentor their development is paramount and we need to be either very talented or very connected to satisfy their needs. This chapter aims to revisit my personal observations of the challenges we face (teaching postgraduates), as discussed throughout this book. It is important to appreciate that every educator's practice is not developed overnight, but rather through trial and error processes occurring over many years. You are entitled to be less than perfect

in the development of your approach. I hope you enjoy the journey that awaits you. I offer my thoughts not as a suggestion of any form of best practice, but rather as a context against which you can reflect upon.