

The Entrepreneurial Mind

Strategising For A New Venture



SYLLABUS

VU Amsterdam Summer School

July – August 2024



Any general questions for the Summer School support team? Contact amsterdamsummerschool@vu.nl.

Course Details

Title	The Entrepreneurial Mind: Strategising for a New Venture
Coordinator(s)	Drs. Christer Guldemon CCMM Dr. Kai Becker
Other lecturers	Drs Geert Jan Beekman Drs Mirna Geense
Study credits	3
Form(s) of tuition	On campus, excursions
Approximate contact hours	50
Approximate self-study hours	35

Teaching staff (in order of appearance)

Kai Becker is Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, department of Management and Organisation. Before joining the VU he was affiliated with the University of Amsterdam as a PhD candidate.

Christer Guldemon is a lecturer of Strategic Management at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, department of Management and Organisation. Christer holds a masters of business economics of Erasmus University Rotterdam and an executive master of change management of VU University Amsterdam. His other activities are sailing, playing bass in a band and reading.

Geert Jan Beekman was educated at the VU University, Amsterdam and Stanford University, Palo Alto, California. He possesses 20+ years of experience as a serial Entrepreneur, management consultant and project manager, working in the Americas, Western Europe and Australia. Since 2010 he is a lecturer with the Management & Organization group of SBE, teaching various courses, and advising thesis students. Spare time is spent on the practice of Japanese Martial Arts, nowadays Iaido and Jodo

Mirna Geense works in Finance and Banking. Recently she held roles in Private Equity, Investment Assessment and as an advisor. Previously she worked as a sector manager Healthcare at ABN AMRO. Before that she worked in Luxembourg on the establishment of RiverBank, a fintech organization aimed at providing (subordinated) SME loans in the Benelux and Germany. Until 2015, Mirna was Managing Director at NIBC Bank, where she

successively headed the Leveraged Finance, Infrastructure & Renewable Energy (Infrastructure & Renewables) departments and the Special Assets (Restructuring & Distressed Assets) department. Mirna studied business economics in Rotterdam (Erasmus University)

Course description

As the name suggests, this course emphasizes the entrepreneurial mind and how entrepreneurs strategize for startup success. "Ok", you might think, "but what does that even mean"? We will answer this and questions like:

- why and how entrepreneurs took advantage of an opportunity;
- how their strategic commitments allowed them to create a competitive advantage;
- how to handle uncertainty with real skin in the game;
- how to navigate group conflict and team dynamics;
- how to tell a compelling story and pitch to investors.

These are questions we ask during the course but let's start with the goals and topics of the course.

The *Entrepreneurial Mind* provides an integrated strategy framework for growth-oriented entrepreneurs. The course is structured and aims to:

- provide a framework for core strategic choices entrepreneurs face such as whom to found a startup with or where to obtain startup investments.
- understanding of the psychology of entrepreneurs including entrepreneurial well-being, coping, and decision making in uncertain environments, leadership, and team dynamics.
- introduce a framework for the development and implementation of entrepreneurial strategy in dynamic environments to further understand underlying entrepreneurs' ability to scale their ventures over time including topics such as storytelling, innovation, and change management.

Topics we cover are history of entrepreneurship, psychology of the entrepreneur, entrepreneurial well-being, decision making under uncertainty, strategizing, leadership, investment decisions, group dynamics, innovation and change and convincing storytelling.

We focus on interactions with other students and a lot of contact with experts and startups in the field.

The course combines interactive lectures, case analyses, guest speakers, and tons of out of class exercises and excursions. We focus on interactions with other students and plenty of experts and startups in the field.

Learning objectives

- Develop a self-image about being an entrepreneur, exploring entrepreneurial intentions, motivations, passion and persistence.
- Build a framework, the idea maze, for the development, validation, and implementation of entrepreneurial ideas in a dynamic environment
- Understand key strategic choices entrepreneurs face and how to navigate them using theory from the field of entrepreneurial strategy.

Assignments and Assessment

- Attendance is mandatory
- Students will be graded on teamwork, individual work and work in duo's (100 points)
 - Three Individual Reflection Assignments (15 points) on daily topics
 - Team Assignment (25 points): consisting of five progress team reports each workgroup
 - End report and pitch by team (30 points)

Reading list

- Camuffo, A., Cordova, A., Gambardella, A., & Spina, C. (2020). A Scientific Approach to Entrepreneurial Decision Making: Evidence from a Randomized Control Trial. *Management Science*, 66(2), 564–586. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2018.3249>
- Gans, J. S., Kearney, M., Scott, E. L., & Stern, S. (2021). Choosing Technology: An Entrepreneurial Strategy Approach. *Strategy Science*, 6(1), 39–53. <https://doi.org/10.1287/stsc.2020.011>

- Gans, J. S., Stern, S., & Wu, J. (2019). Foundations of entrepreneurial strategy. *Strategic Management Journal*, 40(5), 736–756. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.3010>
- Mintzberg, H., Ahlstrand, B. W., & Lampel, J. (2009). *Strategy safari: The complete guide through the wilds of strategic management* (B. W. Ahlstrand, Ed.; Second edition). Chapter 5. FT, Prentice Hall, Financial Times.

Course Schedule

Week I	Day1	Day2	Day3	Day4	Day5
Learning aim is to...	set the scene of entrepreneurship.	understand the entrepreneurs mind	manage your well being	make decisions under uncertainty	strategise for a venture.
Topic	Entrepreneurship	Psychology of Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurial Wellbeing	Decision Making	Entrepreneurial Strategy
	History of Entrepreneurship	Trait Theory and Assessment	Adversity	Decision Making styles	Strategizing
Question	Whaling Case <i>What community and lineage are we part of in entrepreneurship?</i>	Team Creation <i>Who am I as an entrepreneur?</i>	Coping strategies <i>How not to kill yourself starting and running a venture?</i>	Biases <i>How to handle uncertainty and make a decision?</i>	Pitching <i>How to combine ways and means to an end?</i>
	10 Meeting at Scheepvaart Museum	Lecture Psychology of Entr.	Lecture Wellbeing	Decision Making and Styles	Lecture Entrepreneurial Strategy
	10.00 Visit Scheepvaart Museum	Lecture Psychology of Entr.	Adversity	Uncertainty and Anxiety	Lecture Entrepreneurial Strategy
	11.00 History of Entrepreneurship	Trait assessment	Coping strategies	Heuristics and Biases	Case Entrepreneurial Strategy
	12.00 Whaling Exhibition / case	Lunch	Finish Program	Lunch	Lunch
	13.00 Roleplay Captain's Pitch	Individual Assignment		Duo Assignment	Team Assignment Presentation
	14.00 Retour VU	Role play Lost at Sea		To Demonstrator Lab	Reflection and Week Ahead.
	15.00 Finish Program	Team Creation		Guest Lecture Mywayfinder.eu	Finish the program
	16.00	Finish Program		Geert Jan Beekman	
	17.00			Finish Program	
Individual Assignment 1		Individual Reflection Ass. 1A			
# Credits		15 credits			
Duo Assignment 2				Duo Assignment	
# Credits				Work in Progress	
Team Assignment 3			Team Assignment		Team Assignment Presentation 3A
# Credits			Work in Progress		Work in Progress
Week II	Day6	Day7	Day8	Day9	Day10
Learning aim is to...	show entrepreneurial leadership	learn to invest.	understand groups and teams.	understand innovation and change.	pitch an idea for investors.
Topic	Leadership	Investment Decisions	Group Dynamics	Change management	Convincing
	Styles and traits	Skin in the game	Teams	Innovation	Pitching
	Social ventures	Uncertainty	Cooperation		Storytelling
Question	<i>How I make people follow, create a culture and have an impact?</i>	<i>How do I handle my skin in the game and handle a loss?</i>	<i>What is my role in a group doing a task?</i>	<i>How to handle change?</i>	<i>How to tell your story in order to inspire people?</i>
	09.30 Lecture Leadership	Lecture Investing	Lecture Group Dynamics / Teams	Lecture Change Management	Workshop Storytelling
	10.00 Lecture Mission/Vision	Risk and personal exposure	Workshop Influence	Lecture Innovation	Improve final presentation
	11.00 Lecture Social Ventures	Case Pieter Pot	Duo Assignment	Change Workshop	Coaching
	12.00 Lunch	Lunch	Game Group dynamics	Lunch	Lunch
	13.00 Individual Assignment	Team Assignment	Finish Program	Travel to A-Lab	Team Presentations
	14.00 Visit to Regenboog Groep	Visit to Nest Amstelveen		A-Lab Amsterdam Noord	Reflection and Evaluation
	15.00 Marijn van der List	Martijn Vreeman		Stef Galle, Bitz and Snoek	Finish Program
	16.00 Finish Program	De Huismeesters		Work on Team Assignment	
	17.00	Finish program		Finish Program	
Individual Assignment 1	Individual Reflection Ass. 1A				
# Credits	15 credits				
Duo Assignment 2			Duo Assignment		Duo Assignment 2
# Credits			Work in Progress		30 credits
Team Assignment 3		Team Assignment			Team Assignment 3B
# Credits		Work in Progress			40 credits

