



## **DIST PROJECT**

### **O7-A5 E-TRAINING COURSE ADDRESSED TO ASPIRANT ENTREPRENEURS**



## Index and Structure

The course is structured with 1 unit base and 4 units:

**Unit base** : *Introduction*

**Unit 1** : *Thinking a business*

**Unit 2** : *Starting a company*

**Unit 3** : *The qualities of an entrepreneur*

**Unit 4** : *How to manage the life*

In accordance with the DIST Application Form, **this e-course will be 40 hours** of direct delivery plus work in autonomy. Each unit includes many PPT slides with the explanation of main contents, suggested learning materials, such as links and articles, information from the videos. After for each unit will be planned an Assessment activity and different recommended activities.





- **Unit base:** [Introduction](#)

A general explanation of DIST project and the training course

- Who is addressed
- Aim of the courses
- Moodle platform



# Who is addressed?

- **DIST project:** <http://www.distproject.eu/>

DIST is a project funded by ERASMUS+ programme, Key Action 2 “Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices” Action “Strategic Partnership”, which started on September 2015 and will end on August 2018.



- **Objectives of the project:**

DIST project aims to **promote the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (SIE)** by increasing entrepreneurial education and training **based on the methodology of storytelling.**

DIST promotes the innovative use of the digital storytelling for:

- spreading sense of initiative and entrepreneurship among unemployed;
- supporting aspirant entrepreneurs to set up their business;
- supporting entrepreneurs to improve their performance.



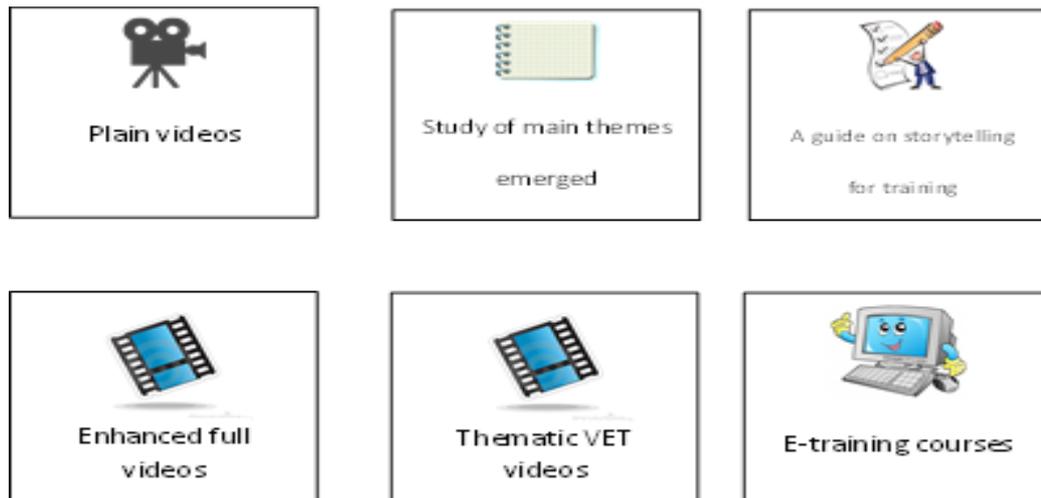
**Entrepreneurship is a competence for everyone, helping people to be more creative and self-confident in whatever they undertake.**



## Results of the project

Digital storytelling will be used by creating a set of **open educational resources**.

Main Intellectual Outputs produced during project:



The tools developed within DIST project could be used directly at a distance by the final target groups and mediated by the trainers in face to face training setting.



## Target group

This project will benefit the following main target groups:

- lay people, aspirant entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs willing to improve their SIE
- VET trainers willing to improve their skill in developing the SIE of their learners
- VET organizations and organizations supporting entrepreneurs and aspirant entrepreneurs such as employers' associations, decision makers, involved with entrepreneurship,
- researchers of the field of entrepreneurship, etc.

**This e-training course is addressed to  
ASPIRANT ENTREPRENEURS**



# Aim of the courses

The e-courses referred on the content of the **Guide Storytelling for Training** and on the videos , explaining how to improve the **Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship (SIE)**. The aims of the e-courses in the project are to assure a better exploitation of the Guide and to offer an **overview of the entrepreneurship world** explaining the most of the aspects of an entrepreneur, those characteristics to be owned and those to be improved.

Be careful, because **in these e-courses there are slides originated from videos** (you can read at the bottom of the slide "source : the interviews from videos") in which we express the opinion of the entrepreneurs interviewed. **The bigger the ball with the phrase, the more responses were given by the interviewed entrepreneurs.** When the color of the balls becomes clearer , it means that also the number of answers also decreases.



# Moodle platform

Moodle is a free, online Learning Management system enabling educators to create their own private website, filled with dynamic courses that extend learning, any time, anywhere.

([www.moodle.org](http://www.moodle.org))





## • **Unit 1: Thinking a business**

What must be evaluated thinking about a business and personal motivation to create a company

- a) Motivations / Reasons for creating a company
- b) The educational and professional path
- c) The development of the business idea



## a) Motivations / Reasons for creating a company

### Establish a company

An aspirant entrepreneur establishes a company for creating and managing his / her business or a business idea.

An aspirant entrepreneur must pay attention to evaluate the strength of his / her motivation / reason to establish a new company.

Any aspirant entrepreneur must be a researcher of ideas , strategies to identify a new business , for creating his / her own company.

Any aspirant entrepreneur must accurately evaluate the necessary investment.

An aspirant entrepreneur must consider that his / her dedication must be total.

We must consider that with an own company the responsibilities increase significantly.

Nevertheless there is the satisfaction for the construction of something, to be the boss of ourselves, to have the opportunity to get better payment leaving something concrete for own sons and daughters.



## Ten tips for starting your own business

1. Do what you love;
2. Keep a source of cash;
3. You need a team;
4. Get some clients, make a contacts;
5. Write it and plane it;
6. Do the research;
7. Get professional help;
8. Build your cash reserve;
9. Right from the blow of the whistle, be professional;
10. Solidify your legal framework.



## Motivation/Reason to create an entreprise

**Vocational**

people who has  
entrepreneurship spirit and  
the wish to work for  
themselves, or to create a  
business.

**For necessity**

people who has lost their  
job and consider self-  
employment as the only  
way to work



When motivation/reason are weak the risk is failure

**There is  
a serious  
failure  
risk  
when.....**

1. There isn't a careful business plane
2. You create a company for the wrong reasons
3. The management of a company is insufficient, unsatisfactory and ineffective
4. There isn't enough capital to manage a business
5. You choose the wrong location and propose an offer uncompetitive
6. You ignore the importance of internet
7. The entrepreneur becomes a victim of uncontrolled growth
8. There isn't an accurate control on the financial position of the company
9. You hire the wrong persons
10. The attention of company's marketing is unsatisfactory



## What is entrepreneurship spirit?

It is the attitude and the skill to create a business, combining risk, creativity and innovation, with a solid management, in a new organization or in an already existing one.

The entrepreneur is focused to start the change, to contribute to the society growth, its productivity, providing technology, products and services.

Who has an entrepreneurship spirit is in-tune with own passion. Passionate people know what it's like to dive deep into a subject and completely understand it.

The person who has an entrepreneurial spirit is always thinking how it can be done better. Those people often consider how the ordinary things could be made better or improved.

Who has an entrepreneurial spirit is optimistic about all possibilities, doesn't spending time to think about what can't be done, but instead asking himself / herself "Why can't I do it?"

The entrepreneurs have a high tolerance to risk. Those with the entrepreneurial spirit make calculated moves although understanding that there are never any guarantees of success.

Who has entrepreneurship spirit likes to execute because he goes out and puts in act his / her ideas, because ideas are meaningless until they are acted on. The people with the entrepreneurial spirit put in place that execution.



Pros and Cons to be an entrepreneur

Pros	Cons
Boss of your time	Stress
Play your challenge	Uncertainty
More money	Mind always at work
Success of your idea	Not sure salary
Grow-up a company as your baby	Risks
Better labor conditions	The costumers are the boss
Employ people	Less personal time
Build something for the society	Bureaucracy
Adrenaline of risking	No cons if you are motivated



## b) The educational and professional path

The education profiles and skills that an entrepreneur needs to manage a company, are in general very similar and we'll see it better in the Unit 3.

Roughly speaking we can say that an entrepreneur has a good profile for creating a company when he / she has some skills and competences that facilitate leading new business ideas.

Many of these skills are linked to personality, but others come from their experiences and learning, and consequently can be enhanced and improved.

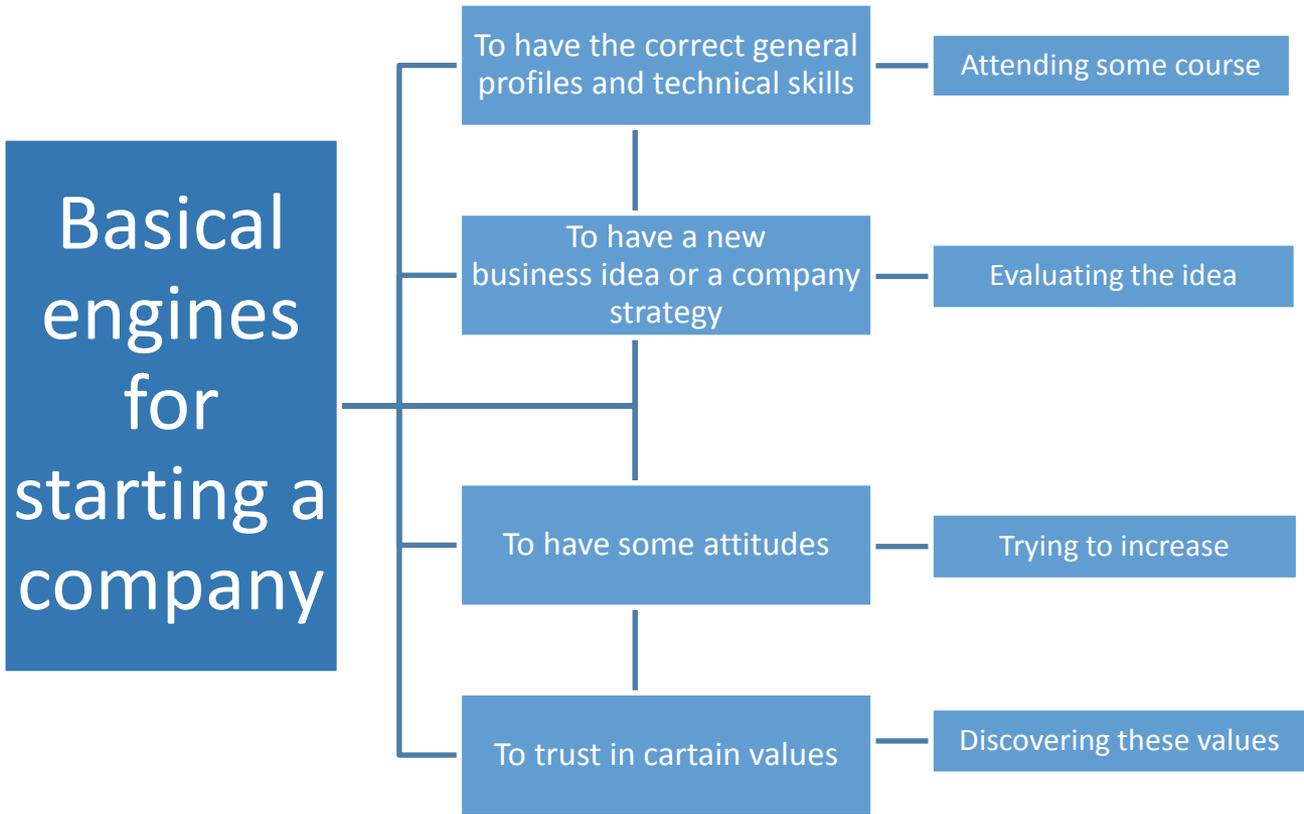
He / She should have some specific competencies into the new business.

When an aspirant entrepreneur decides to start a new activity he / she must recruit the adequate technical profiles, hiring them as employees or partners.

When an aspirant entrepreneur wants to establish a business model he / she must have very clear his / her new business idea.

It 's very important that the aspirant entrepreneur is highly motivated, also using the story telling to find the most appropriate source of motivation.





Skills to improve

The ability to manage money

The ability to increase money

The ability to relieve stress \*<sub>1</sub>

The ability to be productive

The ability to make entrepreneur friends

The ability to identify weaknesses and strengths

The ability to hire effective people \*<sub>2</sub>

The ability to train new staff

The ability to manage staff

The ability to conduct basic SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

The ability to connect via social networking

The ability to focus on the costumers

The ability to close a sale

The ability to spot new trends

The ability to deal with failure \*<sub>3</sub>

The desire to improve your world



\* 1 Seven ways to relieve stress :



\* 2 Five suggestions to hire the correct people



\* 3 Five tips to face a failure



## c) The development of the business idea

### Three simple questions to get inspiration

Sometimes to get inspiration for a new business idea is easier than we can image.

There are three simple questions that have to be always with us for finding the inspiration when and if it arrives.

These questions are:

- *How can I improve on this?*
- *Can I do this better or differently from how I'm doing it?*
- *Is there a market share not served that makes room for another business in this category?*

We must have always with us these questions, because inspiration can be anywhere. If we aren't a technological genius, another Bill Gates or Steve Jobs, trying to reinvent the wheel, is a big waste of time.

Good ideas can be simple but effective at the same time and get a satisfactory success as long as we can properly turn them into a business.



## Four steps to find out a business idea

How can we start the idea process? Here there is a simple way which can help :

1. Take out a sheet of paper and across the top, write "Things About Me." List five to seven things about yourself, things that you like to do or that you're really good at, such as I'm really good with people, I love kids, I love to read, I love computers, I love numbers, I'm good about marketing concepts, I'm a problem solver etc. Don't be anxious because it doesn't need to make sense.
2. In another sheet of paper, list things that you don't think to be good at or you don't like to do, such as I don't like to meet people or I don't like to stay with kids or I don't like to do public speaking or I don't want to travel. Do not overthink about it, just write down your thoughts.
3. When you're finished, in another sheet of paper write three to five products or services that would make your personal life better, what would they be? Determine what products or services would make your life easier or happier, making you more productive or efficient, or simply giving you more time.
4. Finally, write answers regarding a simple question on your business life. Examine what you like and you don't like about your work life. Finally, when you're done, look for a pattern to emerge (i.e., whether there's a need for a business doing one of the things you like or are good at.



# Sources of business idea from interviewees





## • **Unit 2: Starting a company**

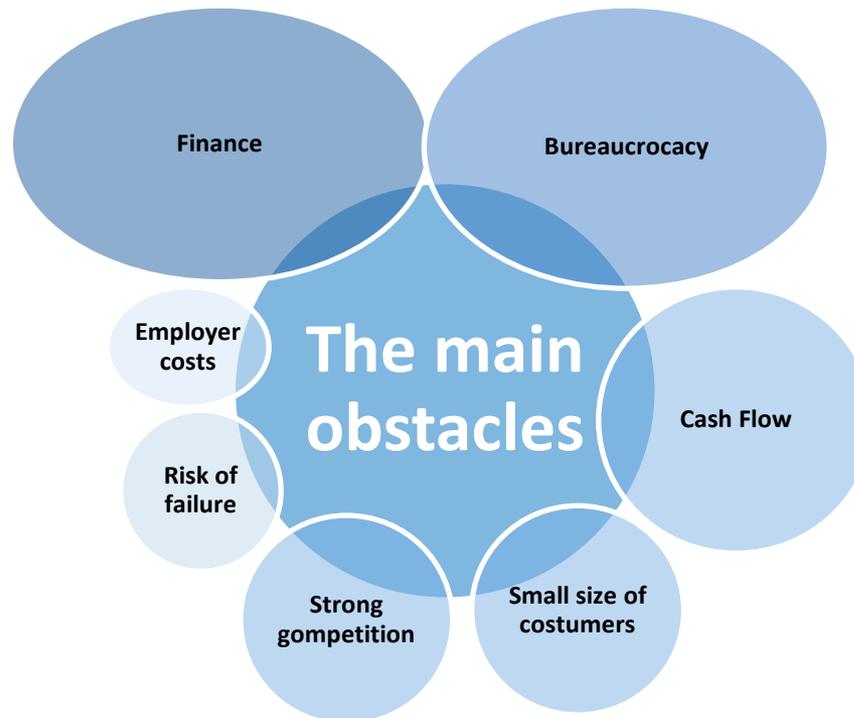
What to analyze and to know before starting a company

- d) The main obstacles incurred and kind of support received
- e) Personal competencies requested in developing and managing a business

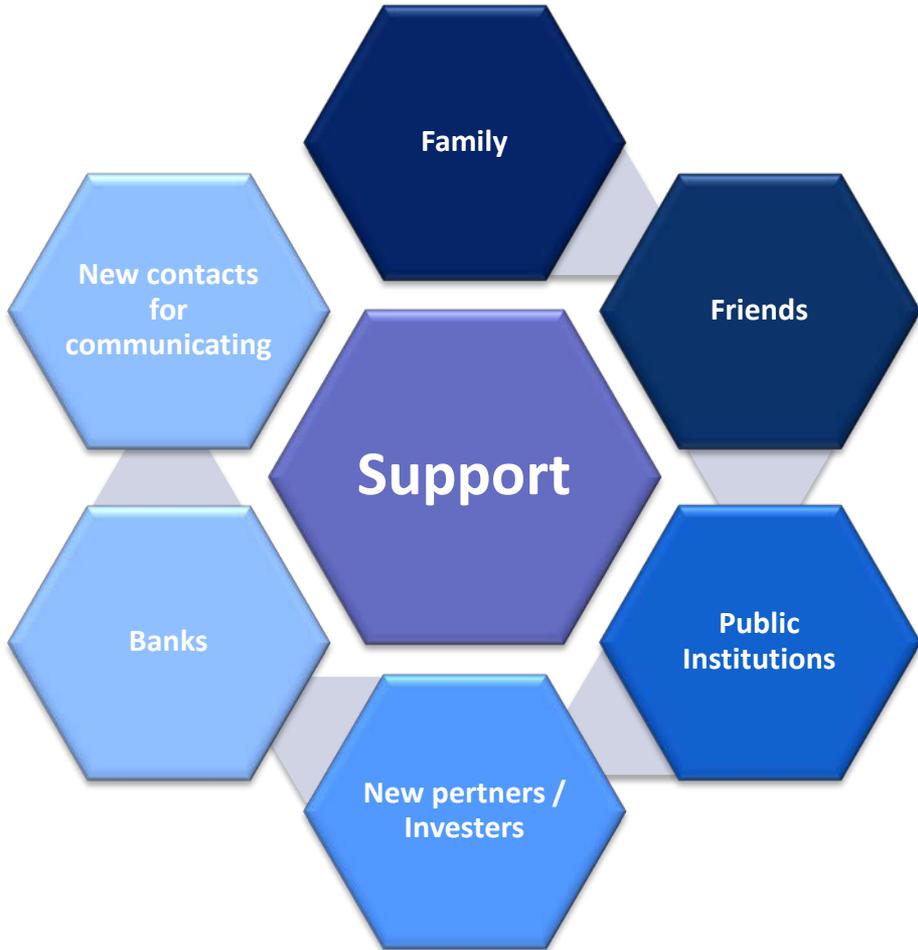


## d) The main obstacles and kind of support

### The main obstacles



Kind of support received



# e) Personal competencies required

## The main competencies required

Decision making

Creativity/ Problem Solving

Setting goals/ Planning

Communication/ Listening/ Negotiation

Leadership/ Team building

Monitoring/ Diagnosing

Learning from experience

Managing

Recruiting



Other profiles and technical skills of an entrepreneur are:

**Commercial spirit**

**Intuition and  
future  
anticipation**

**Market analysis**

**Analysis and  
synthesis skill**

**Knowledge of new  
techniques,  
methods and  
materials to use**

**Flexibility**

**Business criterion**

**Innovator**

**Adaptability**

**Resilience**

**Ability to focus**

**Ability to define  
and achieve  
objectives**



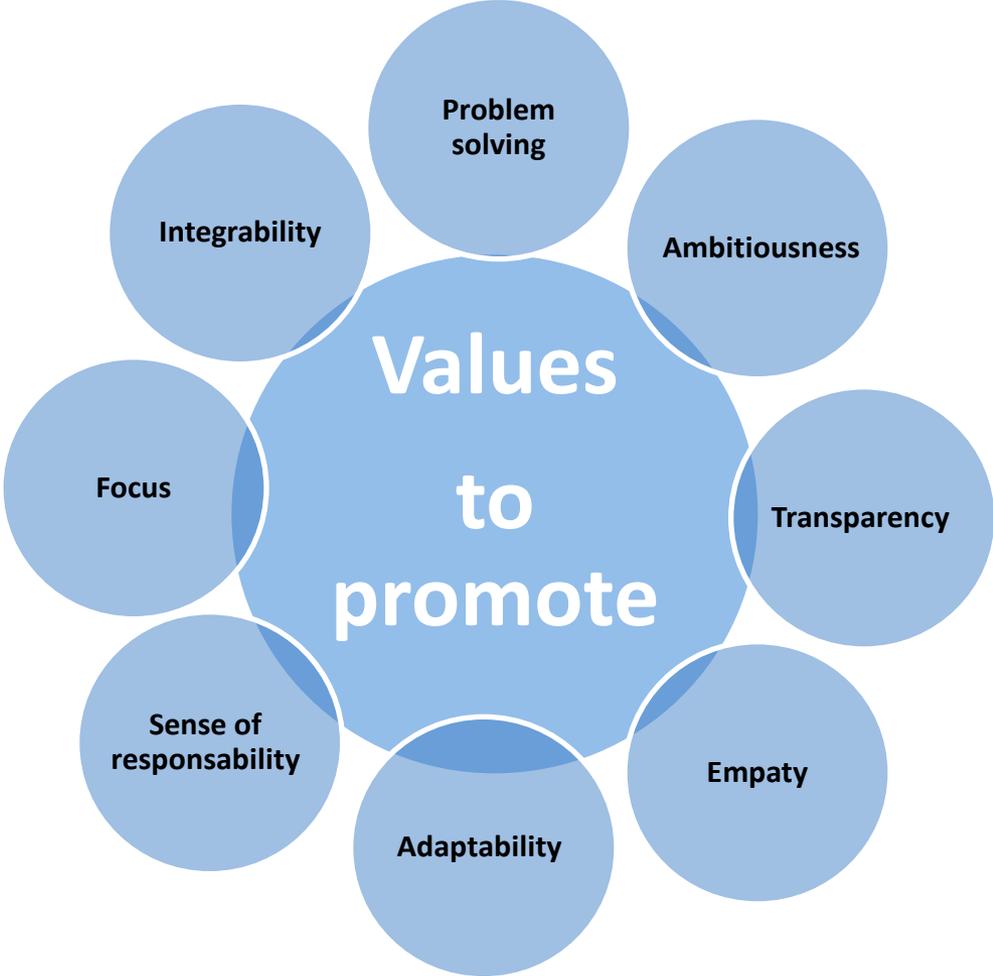
What an entrepreneur needs to develop a new business idea:



What an entrepreneur needs to manage a company:



Some values to promote, which are:





## • **Unit 3: The qualities of an entrepreneur**

Which are the main characteristics that an entrepreneur must have or improve

- f) Decision Making
- g) Creativity/Problem Solving
- h) Setting goals/Planning
- i) Communicating/Listening/Negotiating
- j) Leadership/Team Building
- k) Monitoring/Diagnosing
- l) Learning form experience



## Definition of entrepreneur

An entrepreneur is someone who exercises initiative by organizing a venture to take benefit of an opportunity and, as the decision maker, decides what, how and how much of a good or service will be produced.

He / She supplies risk capital as a risk taker, and monitors and controls the business activities. The entrepreneur is usually a sole proprietor, a partner, or the one who owns the majority of shares in an incorporated venture.

He / She has the aptitude and the method to create a business, combined with the risk, creativity and innovation with a solid management, in a new organization or already existing one.

He / She is focused to start the change, he / she contributes to society growth, its productivity, providing technology, products and services.

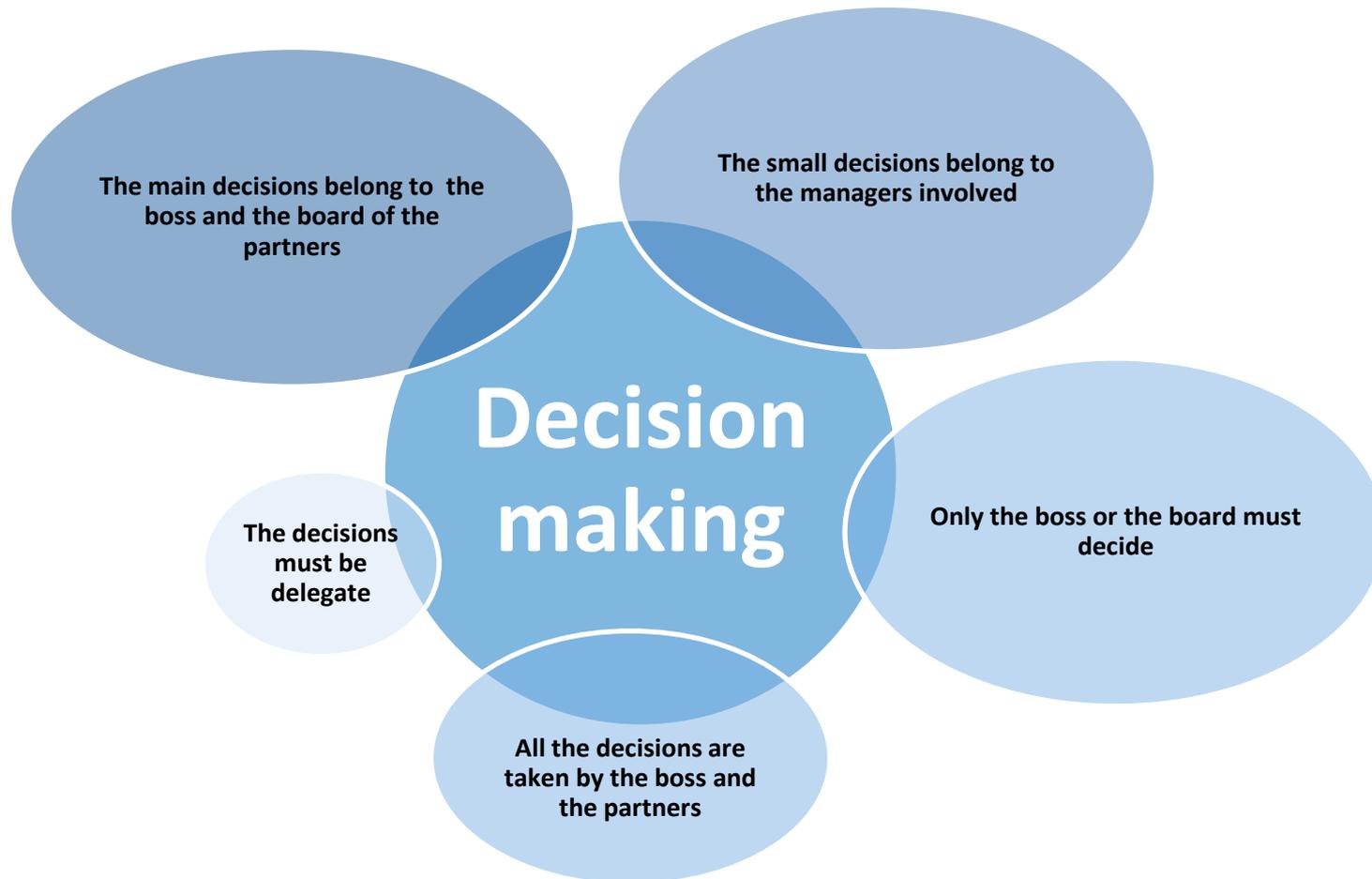


## f) Decision Making

Principles	Activities
Identify the decision	Define the nature of any decision to take, is the first step.
Gather information	Collect any pertinent information before elaborate the decision
Identify alternatives	List all possible and alternatives both desirable and not.
Weigh the evidence	Imagine what it would be like if you carried out each of the alternatives to the end and place the alternatives in a priority order, based upon your own value system.
Choose among alternatives	Once you have weighed all the evidence, select the alternative that seems to be best, also choosing a combination of alternatives.
Take action	Now take the positive beginning to implement the alternative you choose.
Review your decision	Final step considering the results of the decision, if it hasn't met the identified need, you may repeat certain steps of the process to make a new decision, such as gather more detailed or explore additional alternatives.

Link : <https://www.umassd.edu/fycm/decisionmaking/process/>

## Decision making in the enterprise from interviewees



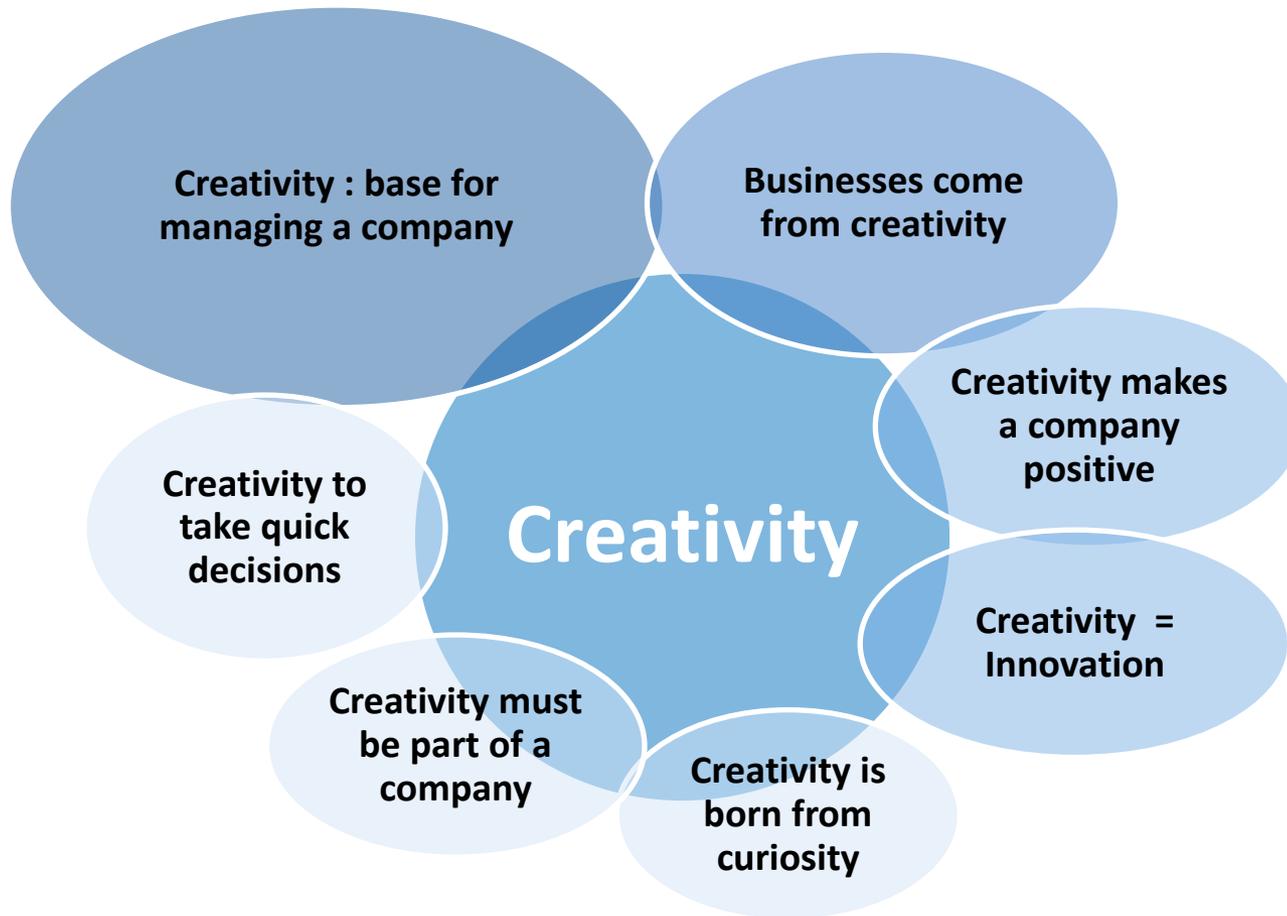
## g) Creativity / Problem Solving

### Creativity

- \* In the modern and globalized society, creativity become increasingly important.
- \* To follow the rapid changes in a competitive way, it's strategic to be creative, produce ideas, new learnings, new technologies, being innovative in general.
- \* Even modern social-economic transformations depend on the creative capacity of the human beings.
- \* Creativity is very often used to give answers to the majority of the complex problems of the modern society.
- \* Creativity into the technological progress can have two different aspects :
  - a) revolutionary when new technologies introduce a radical innovation first in a specific sector, but later, they also revolutionize in other fields of application;
  - b) adaptation and improvement when the new technologies are used for regulate a process and which, time by time, provoke a significant transformation.
- \* The individual's creative ability that produces fruitful ideas and the entrepreneur's ability to make him profitable and productive, are the combination that allows companies to position themselves on the market and compete with highly integrated systems.



## Creativity in the enterprise from interviewees



## Problem solving

Problem Solving is strategic in a company, and it can be defined as the art to solve difficult personal, interpersonal or from complex organization (such as a company) problems, by using techniques and tactics which have maximum effectiveness and efficiency.

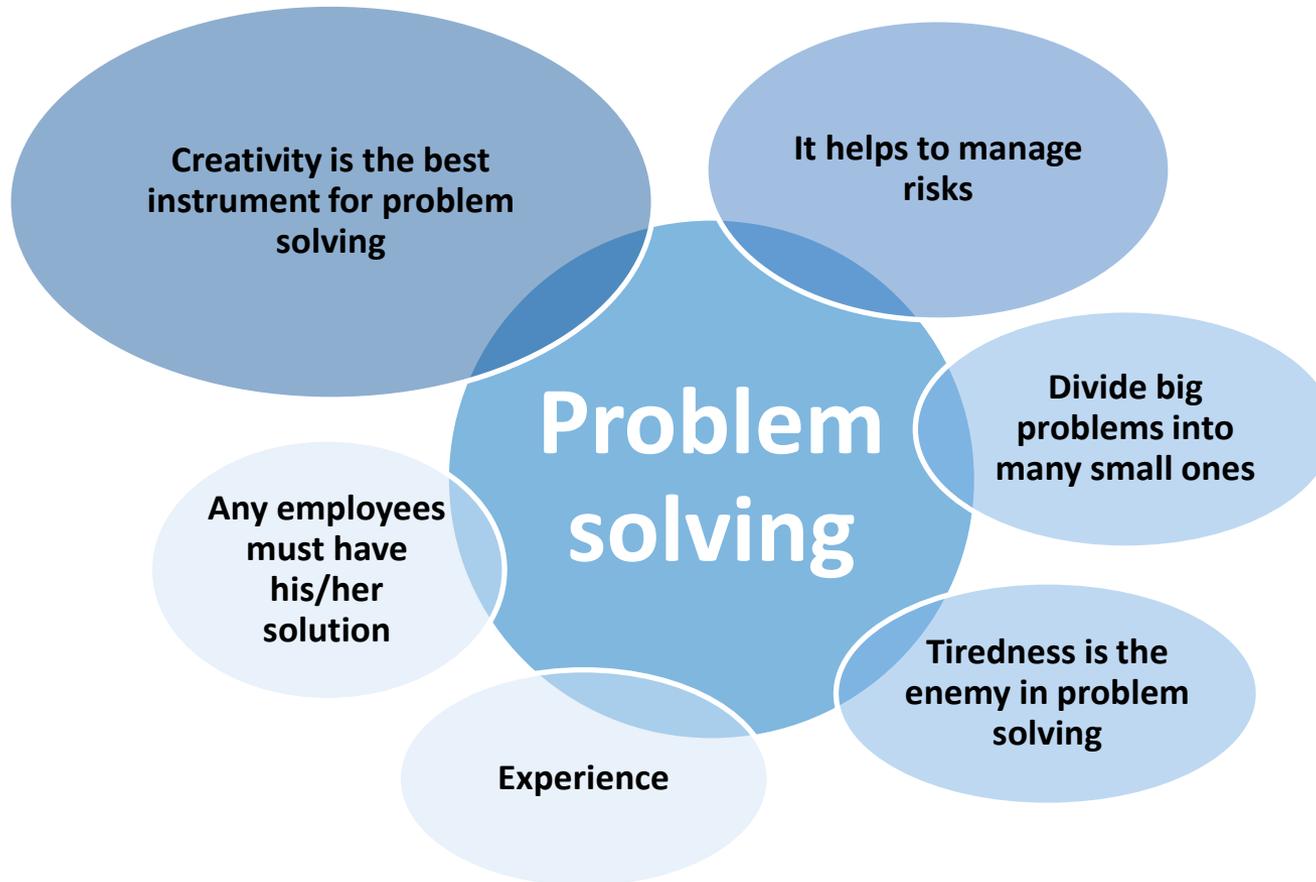
We could say that the goal is to get the best result with the least expenditure of energy. To solve the problems it's necessary to act basing on the specific characteristics of the problem at hand, rather than on the basis of a strong underlying theory.

### Decalogue of Problem Solving (Zurich University)

1. Do one thing at a time
2. Know the problem
3. Learn to listen
4. Learn to ask questions
5. Distinguish sense from nonsense
6. Accept change
7. Admit mistake
8. Say it simply
9. Be calm
10. Smile



## Problem solving in the enterprise from interviewees



## h) Setting goals / Planning

- \* All the companies which are in the business life cycle, needs goals to keep moving forward, being motivated to do more, and keep the success of their businesses.
- \* Goals provide direction, motivation and a clear way to measure progresses.
- \* Without goals, a company can suffer to find the path from where it is right now to where it wants to be.
- \* Strategic planning is the process for deciding company goals.
- \* A company needs strategic planning to define its objectives.
- \* The analysis of the possible future scenarios helps businesses, determine their future direction and future strategies.
- \* Strategic planning facilitates smooth operational activities in any organization.
- \* Planning and goal setting helps the organization see its long-term future and thus help managers take the necessary measures accordingly.
- \* Planning helps in policy formulation to clarify the goals of the organization.
- \* Whether a company is a 50-employees company or an “empire” of only one, the business success depends on its ability to set and achieve its goals.
- \* Don’t forget that a pleasant environment favors the success of the objectives.



## h) Setting goals / Planning



# i) Communicating / Listening / Negotiating

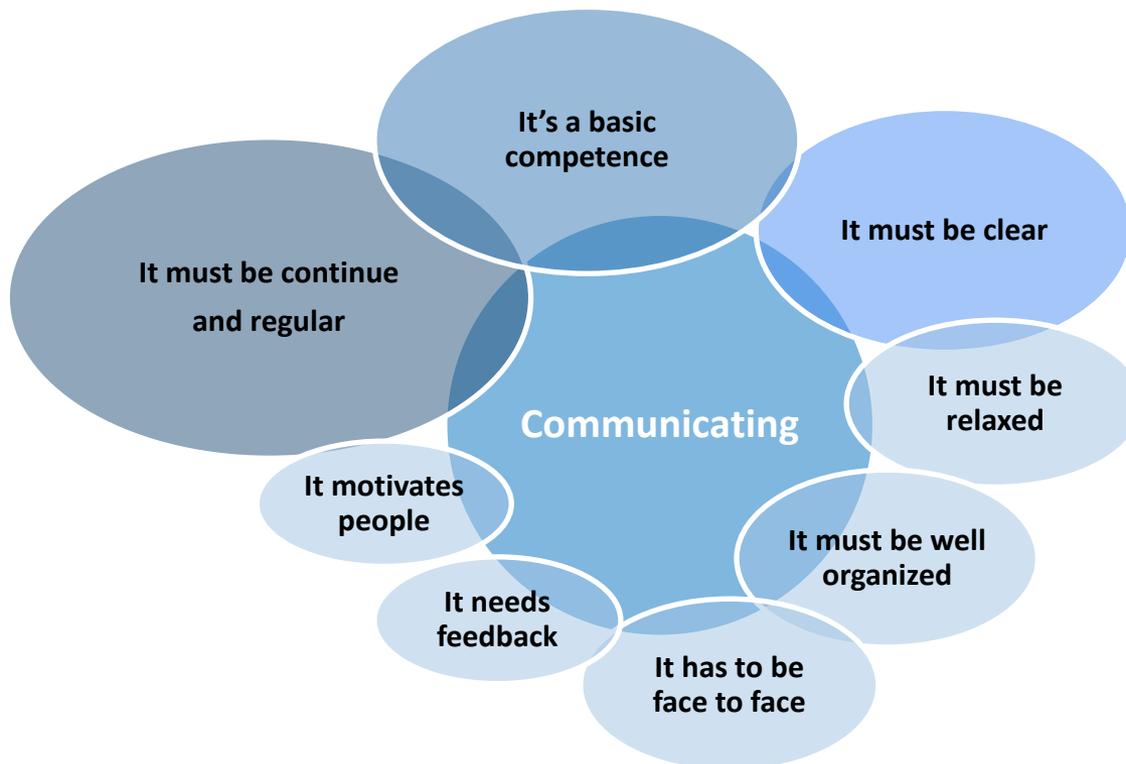
## Communicating

- \* The two main forms of communication are: **one-way** communication and **two-way** communication. **One-way** is when someone sends out a message but doesn't need or accept the answer. Advertising is one of the most common forms of one-way communications in the business world. **Two-way** communication occurs when there is a response to a message. Social media marketing is a form of two-way communication.
- \* There is a good communication when the message sent is received by the audience without any distortions in meaning.
- \* Good business communication helps get the job well done, on time and on budget.
- \* If the communication is clear, concise and coherent, it contributes to a company's success.
- \* Good business communication is simple and easily understood, because simple and concise language wins over language that is obtuse and hard to understand
- \* Good communication creates a win-win situation, but don't forget that perception plays a pivotal role in good communication.



# i) Communicating / Listening / Negotiating

Communicating from interviewees



# i) Communicating / Listening / Negotiating

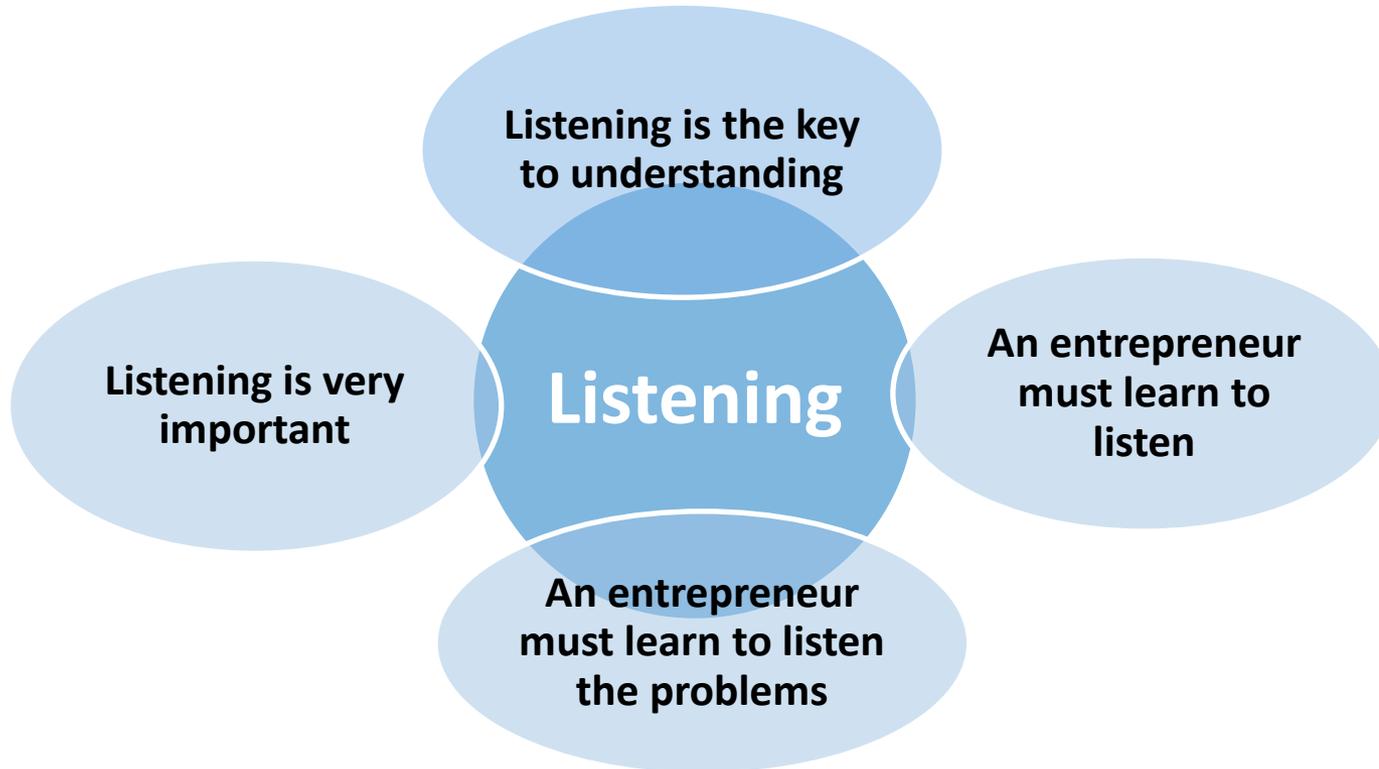
## Listening

- \* The ability not only to listen, but to listen actively, is essential to working creating a pleasant team environment.
- \* Active listening takes place when a listener focuses his full attention on the speaker.
- \* The attention is very important because it allows the listener to understand nonverbal clues of body language and facial expressions that sometimes may contradict verbal words.
- \* Listening is a key component in establishing effective working relationships between employees groups and between management and staff.
- \* Listening is an important part in creating efficient working relationships.
- \* The ability to listen can turn a disruptive situation into an opportunity for growth.
- \* Good listening skills can prevent misunderstandings, ensure a positive first encounter, create a positive impression and helps to maintain a good reputation.
- \* Listening is an important part of communication.
- \* Without listening there cannot be any negotiation.



# i) Communicating / Listening / Negotiating

Listening from interviewees



# i) Communicating / Listening / Negotiating

## Negotiating

- \* Negotiating is a part of everyday life, but in business it's absolutely critical to the success.
- \* An entrepreneur must negotiate regularly.
- \* A poor negotiation can cripple a company.
- \* To negotiate effectively, an entrepreneur must check his / her ego and keep the eyes on the “big picture” at all times.
- \* Know about the subject whom you're negotiating with, helps to capitalize on the strengths against the subject's weaknesses.
- \* Psychology plays a crucial role in the ability of negotiating.
- \* Every persons who's negotiating must believe to be the winner, so if you want to have a successful negotiation you must be ready to let the other winning in some parts.
- \* Before starting negotiating, an entrepreneur must know exactly where and what he can lose and where and what he wants absolutely win.
- \* To negotiating, an entrepreneur must have always something to give away without hurting his / her negotiating position.

# i) Communicating / Listening / Negotiating

## Negotiating from interviewees



## j) Leadership / Team Building

### Leadership

- \* A leaderless organization is like an army without generals.
- \* The four fundamental factors of production are: land, labor, capital and entrepreneurship.
- \* The leadership acts as the catalyst that makes all these elements working together.
- \* Without leadership, all the business resources lie dormant.
- \* Mainly, the leaders are responsible for:
  - a) training employees to perform their tasks effectively;
  - b) supervising the completion of the tasks;
  - c) inspire employees to get excited about the company and their work.
- \* There are three types of leaders:
  - 1) leaders with a command and control style, who dictate actions to their employees;
  - 2) collaborative leaders, who come up with ideas with the assistance of employees from all levels of the company;
  - 3) facilitative leaders, who delegate almost all productive tasks to the subordinates.
- \* Leaders and leadership styles may need to be changed to suit specific situations.

Link : <http://open.lib.umn.edu/principlesmanagement/chapter/1-4-leadership-entrepreneurship-and-strategy/>

# j) Leadership / Team Building

Leadership from interviewees



## j) Leadership / Team Building

### Team building

\* The five main reasons why team building is important in the workplace:

1. It facilitates better communication preventing discussions among employees, and between employees and management;
2. It motivates employees. Team leadership and team building go hand in hand. The more comfortable the employees are to express their opinions, the more confident they will become;
3. It promotes creativity. Working together with other team members can ignite creativity and fresh ideas, which are great qualities to use in a company;
4. It develops problem-solving skills. Teams that are able to determine when a problem arises and know what they can do about it, can effectively take charge when a real crisis occurs;
5. It breaks the barriers. Thanks to team, the leader has the opportunity to be seen as a colleague rather than a boss;

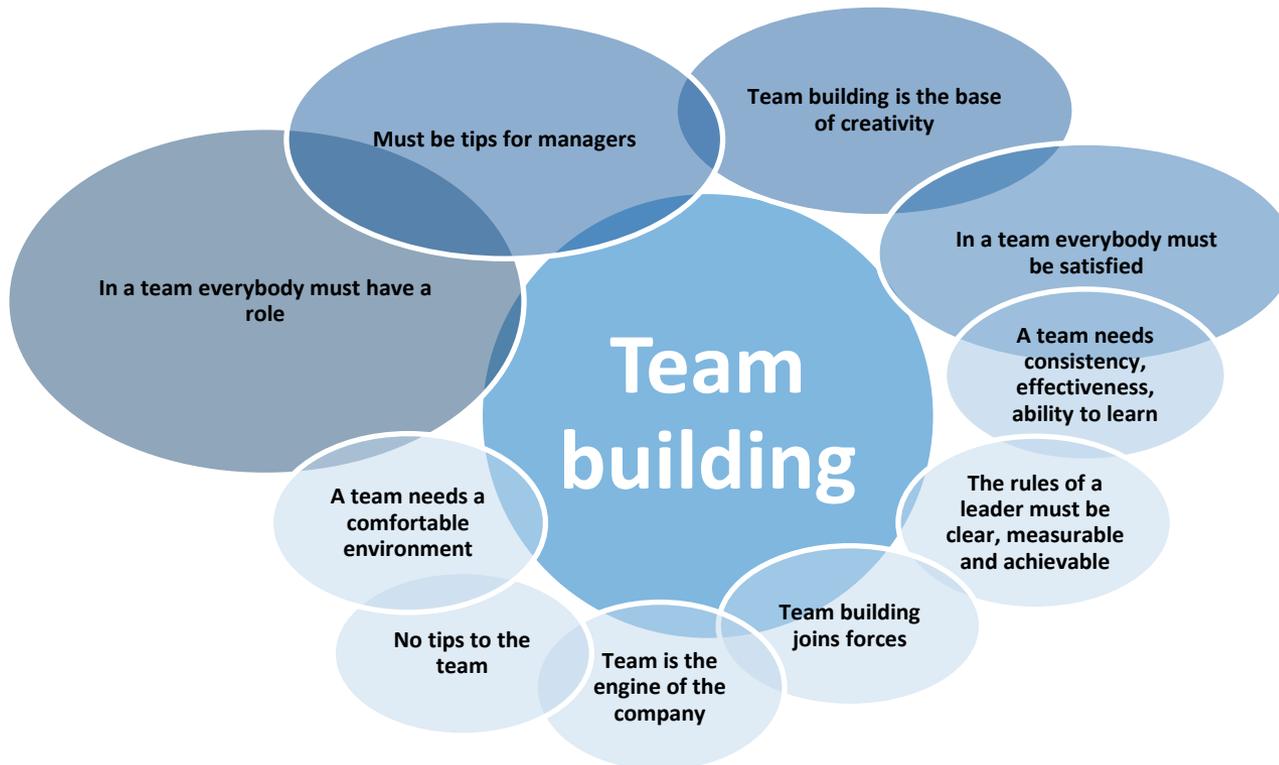
\* Team building and specially planned activities, not only boosts morale of employees, but it can also increase the success of the corporate business.



Link : <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brianscudamore/2016/03/09/why-team-building-is-the-most-important-investment-youll-make/#3e2f3b2617fc>

# j) Leadership / Team Building

## Team building from interviewees



## k) Monitoring / Diagnosing

### Monitoring and diagnosing

\* The top seven reasons why a company should implement a network monitoring system are:

- 1 - Document visually the network
- 2 - Doing more with less
- 3 - Monitoring from anywhere
- 4 - Troubleshoot issues more easily
- 5 - Planning the future growth
- 6 - Improve network security
- 7 - Track trends without hours of data digging

\* Any diagnosis is son of a good monitoring

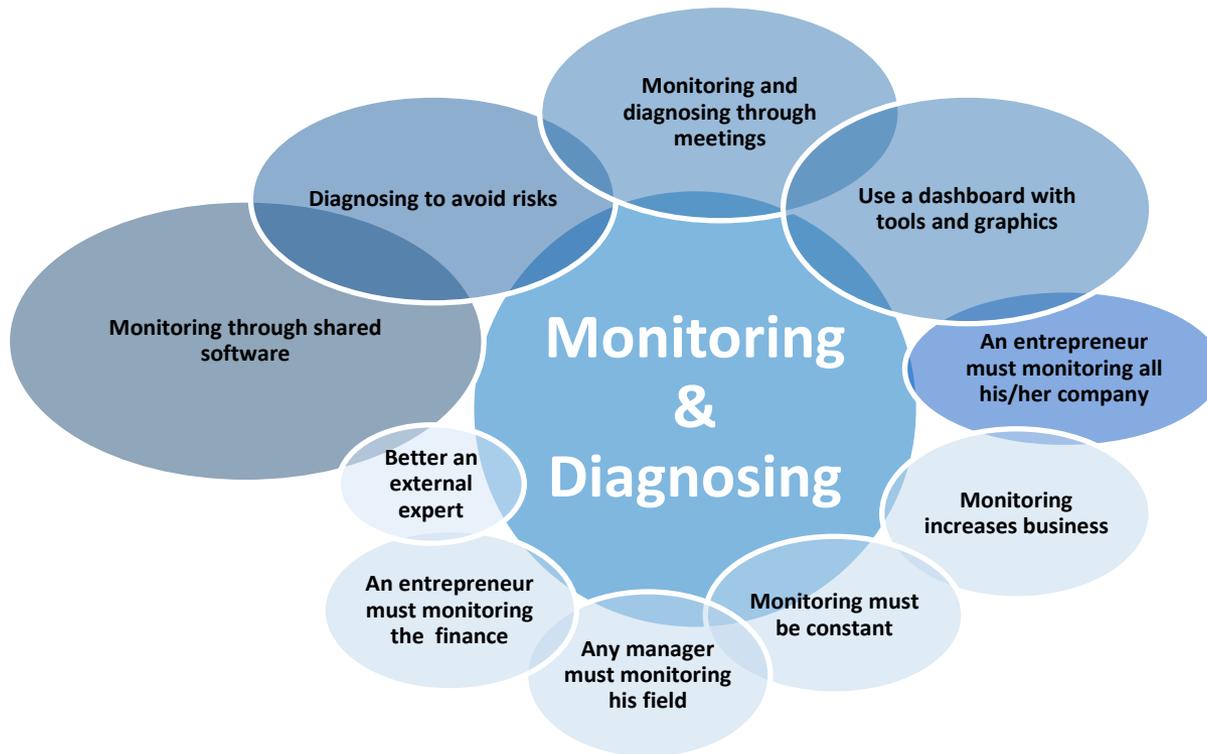
\* The four matters in which diagnosing is very important in a company are:

- 1 - Marketing
- 2 - Management
- 3 - Accounting and finance
- 4 - Leadership



# k) Monitoring / Diagnosing

Monitoring and diagnosing from interviewees



# I) Learning from experience





## • **Unit 4:** How to manage the life

The aspects of everyday life to manage when you have your own company

- m) Time management
- n) Stress management
- o) Life work balance



## m) Time management

- \* Time Management refers to managing time effectively so that the right time is allocated to the right activity.
- \* Effective time management allows individuals to assign specific time slots to activities, as per their importance.
- \* Time Management refers to making the best use of the time, considering that it's always limited.
- \* Time Management plays a very important role not only in a company or in an organization, but also in our personal lives.
- \* A big time-saver, is delegating and putting trust into your team.
- \* Remember that the job of an entrepreneur is to manage the team, not to make the finished product.
- \* A step to a better time management system, is to create, evaluate and spend time, revising the project plan.
- \* Set deadlines for ourselves and strive hard to complete tasks ahead of the deadlines.
- \* To achieve all the goals and become a successful entrepreneur, we must get our time under control.



# m) Time management



# m) Time management



## n) Stress management

- \* Stress in the workplace reduces productivity, increases management pressures, and makes people ill.
- \* Stress is dependent on personal reactions to pressures, and the person's reactions to pressures are influenced by many different things.
- \* Workplace stress affects the performance of the brain, including functions of work performance, memory, concentration, and learning.
- \* Therefore when stress is becoming a problem for staff, the entrepreneur should provide a stress-free work environment.
- \* The key to de-stressing in a specific moment, is getting away from the stressor, or removing yourself from it.
- \* Developing new habits which regularly remove you and distract you from stressors and stressful situations and pressures. What we can do then, is change and reduce our exposure to the stressful situations.
- \* Humor is one of the greatest and quickest devices for reducing stress.
- \* Going for a short quick really brisk walk outside, leaving the building or go getting a big cup or drinking bottle of water, can be good solutions.



## The cause of stress : THE STRESSORS

### External Stressors

1. Physical conditions (such as a very cold temperature)
2. Stressful psychological environment (such as working conditions)
3. Abusive relationship (such as bullying)

### Internal Stressors

1. Physical ailments (such as infection or inflammation)
2. Psychological problems (such as worrying about something)
3. Affective problems (such as family, friends, etc.)

sometimes

More frequent stress causes and more relevant consequences

Cause of Stress - Stressors	Consequence of Stress
long working hours, responsibilities and pressures disrupting life-balance	sleep difficulties and loss of appetite
excessive time away from home and family	nervous habits
bullying or harassment, by anyone, not necessarily a manager or a boss	poor concentration or poor memory retention
office politics and conflict among staff	performance drop
a feeling that one's reward is not commensurate with one's responsibility	uncharacteristic errors or missed deadlines
feeling powerless and uninvolved in determining one's own responsibilities	anger or tantrums
continuous unreasonable performance demands	violent or anti-social behaviour
lack of effective communication and conflict resolution	emotional outbursts
lack of job security	alcohol or drug abuse



# n) Stress management



## o) Life-work balance

The correct life-work balance is a comfortable state of equilibrium achieved between an employee's primary priorities of their employment position and their private lifestyle. You must always try to have the perfect work-life balance so that you do not get bogged down with either. Work/Life balance can be described as the 'fit' between multiple roles in a person's life. Source: [McCartney - 2002](#)

It is the need of all individuals to achieve and maintain the balance between their paid work and their life outside of work. Source: [Locket - 2008](#)

Work/life balance is generally associated with maintaining an overall sense of harmony in life Source: [Clarke - 2008](#)

Studies of work/life balance generally consider one's ability to manage simultaneously the multiple demands of life. The best results is lower stress in the work place and greater enjoyment in the home Source: [Guest - 2002](#)

Many work-life balance policies and practices rely on a more imaginative approach to everyday working conditions such as flexible working arrangements Source: [Hughes - 2007](#)

Work/life balance strategies enhance the autonomy of workers in coordinating and integrating the work and non-work aspects of their lives Source: [Felstead - 2002](#)



# o) Life-work balance

