

International Entrepreneurship Educator's Programme

Entrepreneurial Learning - Pedagogical Note Series

7. Use of Drama

1. What is Use of Drama?

It is the creation and performance by an individual or group of an incident, scenario or sequence of events designed to portray the emotional and relationship as well as cognitive aspects of the scene. Its use can serve a number of purposes:

- It is a reminder that no information received from interviews and research approaches (no matter how good the checklist) is truly objective. The results always reflect the values and beliefs of the person interviewed and often their recent experiences and emotions. For example, a person who has recently been convicted by police of a speeding traffic offence will have a different response to questions about the role and value of the police force in general than someone who has just been saved by the police from an assault. A dramatic presentation of interviews will demand interpretation of the emotions behind the message.
- It demands of the creators of the drama that they must put themselves in the shoes of the provider of information and see the results from their point of view. The conventional academic process of data collection often makes little or no demand upon understanding the data from the providers' point of view.
- Drama demands that individual characters in the drama are understood through the eyes of the other characters. The dramatist makes the character believable by portraying him/her through the eyes of other characters in the drama.
- Messages and information delivered in innovative ways will make a bigger impact and can create wider understanding. Entrepreneurs often need to use creative ways of delivering messages. TV advertising is for example drama. A presentation can be dramatic to make an impact.
- Drama provides training in acting skills. It builds confidence and ability to personally project.
- Developing a drama demands the use of creative ability – often the need is to develop a metaphor to enhance the impact of a message or indeed generalize it.
- Developing drama in groups also is a powerful bonding process.

2. How is the exercise constructed?

Use of drama can take a number of forms including Role Play and Hot Seating which are the subject of separate Pedagogical Notes. Participants can be asked in small groups to create a scene portraying a single message often through metaphor. For example, in the entrepreneurship context they can be asked to prepare a short scene portraying one of a number of entrepreneurial behaviours or attributes for example: entrepreneurial risk taking; opportunity identification; initiative taking; strong sense of autonomy; networking; learning by doing; and so on. The 'audience' of other participants is then

invited to guess the message, to score the creativity of the metaphor and the degree of entertainment delivered.

The drama can also be constructed around a piece of research. Elsewhere in the IETP its use will be demonstrated in the context of dramatizing a series of interviews as a method of enhancing insight into the results of formal data collection. In this case the key issues arising from the research are discussed in a group and the messages to be delivered are set out. A metaphor is then created and dramatized under guidance and later performed. The audience is then asked to record the key messages of the drama and to score the presentation for creativity and entertainment.

4. Relevance to Entrepreneurial Learning

Entrepreneurs need to be able to act different roles in different situations. A good entrepreneur is a good actor. In building relationships with different stakeholders the entrepreneur will need to act different roles – with a banker, venture capitalist, government official, employee, regulator, customer and so on. It is a key essence of entrepreneurship to see oneself through the eyes of major stakeholders. As well as building personal confidence there is a strong emphasis upon being creative under pressure, making collective decisions rapidly and working together as a team.

5. Outcomes

Participants gain understanding of the emotional aspects of knowledge and how difficult it is to be truly objective. They understand the importance of gaining empathy and insight into the passions, emotions and contexts of situations. They learn about the process of consolidation of ideas and of the importance of presenting these creatively but in a form that they will be easily understood.