

Brilliant

BRILLIANT EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

FRANCES TROUGHT 2nd Edition

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employability skills

‘Packed full of practical, easy to understand tips to demystify the process of preparing yourself for your future career. An essential read for all students starting uni!’

*Gemma Kenyon, Head of Careers,
City Careers Service,
City, University of London*

‘The most direct, to-the-point and easy to read book on what employers are looking for in the graduates they recruit and the skills you will need to develop in order to stand out. This is a must-read for all students.’

*Gareth Lewis, Head of Careers,
Employability and Enterprise,
Coventry University London*

The benefits of volunteering are far-reaching for both the volunteer and the beneficiary. Additional examples of volunteering possibilities include the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

brilliant example

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award and volunteering

The DofE Award is widely known as the world's leading youth achievement award, with over 300,000 young people currently doing their DofE in the UK every year. Over three award levels – bronze, silver and gold – there is the opportunity to learn and develop skills that will be invaluable throughout life and will open doors to work. Achieving a DofE Award demonstrates that a young person is willing to commit, is driven and determined. This lays a great path for their future, fostering a work ethic and attitude that many employers look for in applicants.

Other work-ready skills that young people develop doing their DofE come from being pushed out of their comfort zones and facing new and exciting challenges. While each young person chooses their own skill to learn, physical goal to achieve, volunteering activity to do and expedition aim (and for gold a residential purpose), the common framework of a programme is structured to develop vital skills and characteristics needed to succeed in life, such as team-working, communication and resilience. An added and important benefit is that young people can demonstrate that they have these skills when applying for jobs and at interviews.

Claire Miles, Managing Director, UK Customer Operations, British Gas, says: 'The DofE develops the skills we look for in our employees like initiative and a determination to learn and progress. It also helps our new recruits to relate to our customers and their lives through the time they spend volunteering in the community – vitally important in a customer-focused business like ours'.

Here are five reasons to start your DofE:

- The DofE gives you the chance to try something completely new and improve on things you are already doing.

- It takes you out of your comfort zone and into a place where you'll push yourself and have amazing new experiences.
- You'll build confidence, resilience, skills and friendship groups – all while having fun.
- It is completely personal to you, with a common framework, meaning it can support you in developing vital skills to help you succeed in life and work.
- The DofE can help to carve out a better future. Employers regard a DofE award very highly.

Peter Westgarth, Chief Executive,
The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Enterprise opportunities

Have you got what it takes to run your own business? University provides an excellent environment to start your own business. Most universities provide training and support for students to explore business ideas, through academic study or extracurricular activities. Facebook and Dell were both started at university and then expanded upon.

Do you have an idea you want to explore? Now is the time to do it as there are experienced advisers willing to provide support. Universities will often have an enterprise centre to support and develop your idea as well as help you start your own business. There are also a number of organisations ready to support student entrepreneurs to start their own business.



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The National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs

The National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs (NACUE) is one of the UK's leading organisations for engaging students in enterprise, set up by students for students. The idea was formed in 2008 by 12 enterprise



society presidents who were already playing a leading role in the development of student entrepreneurship at their institutions. They realised that together they could create something bigger.

Those original 12 societies were catalysts for an extraordinary movement in student entrepreneurship. That initial group has grown into a national non-profit organisation and a thriving national network representing 260 college and university enterprise societies. NACUE is still a passionate advocate for the enterprise society model, as it enables students to practise entrepreneurship in a safe environment, gaining the valuable soft skills needed to thrive in a competitive job market.

Enterprise societies come in all shapes and sizes. Some provide funding, business incubator space and pop-up shops for student start-ups, while others run 'hackathons' to create solutions to business problems, bring leading speakers to campuses, and even create policy thinktanks.

NACUE also champions the need for students to connect, share ideas and network with like-minded peers. It achieves this by hosting a variety of national and regional events, such as the Student Enterprise Conference that brings hundreds of students together for an energising weekend of talks, workshops and networking. It also hosts an annual Leaders Summit that brings together enterprise society committees to share their achievements from the year.

CEO Johnny Luk, National Association of
College and University Entrepreneurs

While at university test your business ideas. Conduct the market research and see whether your idea is really viable. Your university campus represents a good opportunity to conduct this research, with between 20,000 and 30,000 students this is a great opportunity to see if it is a winning idea.

Investigate the level of support offered by your university to start your business while you are still studying. Universities offer not only support while you are a student but also the opportunity to join an incubator upon graduation. There is a range of resources before a start-up

and for start-up businesses. There are also a variety of organisations that provide support to start-ups. For instance, Google Campus in London provides, support, networking and mentoring opportunities.

Before students commence on this journey, the first question to ask is ‘do you have what it takes to be an entrepreneur?’ Being an entrepreneur requires great determination: the ability to face numerous challenges and still have the resolve to start all over again the next day.

Risk-taking is an inherent part of starting a business. The path is not smooth and paved with gold. On the contrary, the road is rough and lined with thorns, but if you are able to survive the journey the rewards and the sense of accomplishment are priceless.

Essential to developing your business idea is building your network and developing relationships. Your ability to connect with people and your likeability become an important factor in the success of your business.



brilliant tip

Levi's top ten roots of success

Levi Roots is a successful entrepreneur, chef musician, author and speaker. If you have a business idea, use these tips to explore your ideas further while you are at university:

- 1 Feel the power of your passion:** You will need passion for your business idea, as you will face many challenges along the way, but it is your passion that will propel you forward to your success.
- 2 To succeed you must know your market:** Knowledge is key. Do your research about your product, your market and your potential consumers.

Levi Roots Entrepreneur, Chef, Musician,
Author and Speaker



- 3 The plan is your key to success:** Nelson Mandela said: 'It always seems impossible until it's done'. It is important to plan your journey, so that you arrive at your final destination.
- 4 Find yourself a mentor:** Mentors can help you navigate some of the pitfalls of business and provide you with invaluable support and guidance.
- 5 Make yourself and your business special:** What's your unique selling point? Whether you are selling a business idea or applying for a job, you need to stand out from the crowd.
- 6 Never be afraid to make mistakes:** Mistakes are inevitable but don't make the same mistake twice.
- 7 Surround yourself with like-minded people:** Build a network or people who not only challenge you, but complement your skill set.
- 8 Focus on finances:** Look after the pennies and the pounds will look after themselves. The ability to budget is a valuable skill both in business and in life.
- 9 Stay true to your values and yourself.** Be brave, be passionate, be confident, but never lose sight of who you are.
- 10 Be in it for the long term:** Nelson Mandela also said: 'A winner is a dreamer, who never gives up'. Believe in your own magic and don't let anyone tell you any different!

Finally, Levi says: 'Your future success depends upon the strength of your self-belief and the choices that you make'.

Levi Roots, Entrepreneur, Levi Roots

A future strategy that can help you sell your business for a million pounds is worth planning. Here are business leader Yvonne Thompson's seven steps.

**brilliant tip**

Seven steps to a seven-figure exit based on the seven Ps

Passion: If you want to achieve something great, you need to have passion in your heart. Your hard work and commitment combined with this passion is sure to lead you to success.

Product: The product needs to be in a position to attract the potential buyers. It must be unique and matchless but be careful not to work on something that is too specialised or difficult.

People: A company or a business is nothing without people. You need to have a strong management team along with passionate and experienced employees.

Preparation: A considerable amount of preparation is required for the most successful seven-figure exit. The more you focus on this step, the more likely it is for you to have a rewarding exit.

Pipeline: Pipelining involves different stages in which you show the opportunities, do research, compile data and go on with the proposals.

Promote: What can be more tempting for potential buyers other than some attractive promotions? You need to carefully target your audience and follow a proper strategy to inspire customers.

Post-success: The last P is the prayer. Do not underestimate the power of prayer as it is a sure-fire way to help you find a successful seven-figure exit.

Dr Yvonne Thompson, CBE, Author,
Marketing Guru and International Public Speaker

And here are more tips on developing a business idea.