

AC 2007-788: LEARNING IN ACTION! (LIA): A PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR DEVELOPING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

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Learning in Action! (LIA): A Problem Based Learning Experience for Developing the Entrepreneurial Spirit

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Abstract

We have developed a series of experiences that teach students to expand their thinking to be outside of “right or wrong answers” and linear thinking. We want students to learn to deal with chaos, uncertainty and to see new opportunities that come from a changing world. But yet, most of our formal educational systems teach students how to work and live in a stable and structured organizational world. Most curricula teach structure, order, linear thinking and certainty, while the world is filled with chaos, ambiguity and uncertainty. Thus we have developed a learning environment to include new idea development, creativity, humor and entrepreneurship as a way of thinking about life in the 21 century. Our work is divided into 4 different Action Groups and is designed to be cross disciplines and across different learning environments.

In this paper, the *Learning in Action!* pedagogy will be discussed and learning experiences will be outlined in details. Reactions to 11 University and 4 Public School learning experiences will be discussed and selected final projects will be shown. For example, we will demonstrate how the Santa Fe case can be used to redevelop a small down town area where the “big box stores” and interstates have created ghost towns and we will investigate other engineering cases related to power sources and homeland security systems.

Our process is designed to be a creative force to help students see new and different ventures in life and to help the US regain world recognition and redevelop a value system of business ethics and respect for life and the world environment. The guiding questions will be centered on the following questions: 1. Can Entrepreneurship thinking be infused into on-going courses? 2. Can authentic cases be developed that will encourage creative and entrepreneurial thinking? 3. Can several schools from different backgrounds work together to develop a creative learning environment? 4. Will the current learning pedagogy used in colleges and public schools produce the next way of entrepreneurial thinkers? 5. What changes in world events (political, environmental, technological, and social) are likely to occur that will affect worldwide business?

Introduction

We live in a changing world. The rate of change has greatly accelerated since 9-11. Chaos and uncertainty are now a part of our everyday life. At this writing we are in war in two places in the Middle East with no end in sight. We never know when the next terrorist will attack or when the next major world event will occur that will change our lives forever.

But yet, our learning systems continue to be essentially unchanged. In our rapidly changing world we need to understand and know how to live in an uncertain world. These concerns lead us to develop the **Learning in Action!** pedagogy.

The **Learning in Action!** process involves the development of learning experiences with entrepreneurship as the central theme of each case. Thus, we have included new idea development, creativity, humor and entrepreneurship as a way of viewing and thinking about a way of life. We want to maximize life by developing individuals who are self-sufficient, self-determined and who have a passion for new venture creation. We are concerned about the current educational system that teaches certainty, linear thinking and conformity. We believe that chaos and uncertainty is now a part of our every day lives and that current-learning systems will not produce the type of citizens needed in this century. Thus we have developed a learning process that leads to the application of knowledge through problem-based cases and learning activities developed in Humor, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship. A brief discussion of each process follows.

///Learning in Action! (LIA) is a process related to connecting learning with the framework of the learner. LIA is a holistic approach to the learning process involving the whole-part-whole teaching strategies that connects the learning to live cases written across several different disciplines to develop an authentic learning experience. Through a problem based case experience, the student learns multiple concepts and different disciplines simultaneously. LIA is developed through problem based learning cases that are multi-disciplinary in nature. The overriding theme is to produce students who can be creative thinkers in the 21st century. Our world is filled with uncertainty in our social, economic and political systems. Certainty and stability are no longer a given. In recent years, political systems have failed, terrorist activities have increased to be world wide, world energy systems are changing, world markets are changing, products and process development systems are being modified and natural disasters have occurred with worldwide impact. The world is unstable and uncertain. But yet, most of our formal educational systems teach students how to work and live in a stable and structured organizational world. Most curricular teaches structure, order, linear thinking and certainty, while the world is filled with chaos, ambiguity and uncertainty.

The question arises as to how we can deal with an environment of rapid change and uncertainty. We are, of course, uncertain about how to handle this changing and uncertain world, but we believe that individuals who are creative and entrepreneurial are more likely to succeed than those who are linear thinkers. Thus, we have developed a process to encourage creative thinking by developing the whole-part-whole process using resources designed for just-in-time learning and using a recursive curriculum design. Thus the LIA process has been developed to encourage creative and entrepreneur thinking. We want to influence students to make jobs rather than take jobs. We are interested in the ultimate reason for learning-- the application of knowledge thus creating *Knowledge in Action!*

///Ideas in Actions! (IIA)

This activity is designed to encourage students to think of new and different ideas and to share those ideas in small group settings in their classes and on the Internet with other students throughout the world who are interested in new idea development. Instructors may want to request students to list ideas that are of interest to the student. The concept here is to develop as many ideas as possible. A black board Discussion group and or Glob will be established and their ideas are added to the list.

///Entrepreneurs in Action! (EIA)

Entrepreneurs in Action! is a curriculum designed to teach entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation by using online cases. The curriculum is a vehicle for creating learning environments that foster entrepreneurial activities and develop a mindset for thinking outside of structured settings. The curriculum takes the position that every person has the potential to think creatively and entrepreneurially. The current cases are as follows.

Featured Cases

Universities Cases

The following eleven cases have been developed as a part of this research project. The cases are considered to be a work in progress until field-tested and revised. The cases are as follows:

Case 1 – Blackout in America – This case is about the great electrical energy blackout that began in the west and continued through the eastern part of the United States several few years ago. The case encourages students to look at multiple solutions to the electrical power energy business. The case deals with social, political and economic issues related to electricity. Students are encouraged to find new business ventures related to power cells, windmills, solar energy and nuclear power. We have been able to connect this case with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), which is the major supplier of electricity in the south. We have been able to secure video interviews with the director of the power transmission system for TVA. This greatly enhances and makes this project real and alive to students. This case is scheduled to be field tested this fall semester with a group of engineering students at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, Tennessee and with additional students in the spring semester 2005 at several locations including Vanderbilt University.

Case 2 – A Question of Power – This case is associated with the oil industry. At the present time, this is a very timely and meaningful case, since it deals with the rising cost of oil and the implications that this increase has on the world supply of oil. This case provides students the opportunity to look at the history of the oil business, the rise of the power in the Middle East and the shortage of crude oil. It encourages students to develop new sources of energy. We expect to test this case in an engineering class at Tennessee Technological University during the spring semester of 2005 and at Vanderbilt University.

Case 3 – Chasing the Dragon – This is an illegal drug related case. In recent months, we have seen an increase in methamphetamine labs developed in the Middle Tennessee area. The problems caused by this illegal activity are very troublesome. The impact of the drug industry on our society and the cleanup of harmful drug residues left in the path of the labs is a tremendous problem facing our country. Students from a wide range of disciplines can tackle this problem. We expect to test this case in an engineering class at Tennessee Technological University during the spring semester of 2005 and at Vanderbilt University. Hopefully, we will also, be able to test this case at Francis Marion University in South Carolina during the spring semester of 2005.

Case 4 – Not in My Backyard! – This is a recycling case. Our society in the United States is a throw away society. Frequently, we buy items where the cost of packaging is worth more than the item itself. We discard our beer cans on the side of the road and we leave our McDonald's styrofoam cups on the table to be disposed of. This case cuts across many different disciplines and offers many new opportunities for business ventures. We expect to test this case in the spring semester of 2005 at Vanderbilt University and Tennessee Technological University.

Case 5 – Music City Blues – This is a case about the music business. How does one write lyrics and find a means though which to support himself or herself? This case deals with the opportunities associated with creating your own music career. In addition to teaching creativity and entrepreneurship, this case also investigates copyright issues and other related legal matters. We expect to be able to test this case out at Tennessee Wesleyan, Francis Marion University and Vanderbilt University during the spring semester of 2005.

Case 6 – Talking to the Air – This is a wireless technology case. This case was written specifically for Tennessee Wesleyan College and proposes the opportunity for students to develop a business that would bring wireless technology to the Tennessee Wesleyan College campus. It also includes assisting the downtown area in rejuvenating itself by proposing to develop a wireless downtown community. We expect to test this case at Tennessee Wesleyan College and possibly Francis Marion University and Vanderbilt University during the spring semester of 2005.

Case 7 – The Santa Fe Effect – This case is designed to help rejuvenate the downtown area of Athens, Tennessee. It is designed to permit students to investigate new and innovative ways to bring business life back to small downtown areas. The concepts of this case could be related to any small town, USA. We hope to test this case at Tennessee Wesleyan College, Francis Marion University and Vanderbilt University during the spring semester of 2005.

Case 8 – The Phoenix – This case was written to encourage students to develop a cyber café where cross-disciplinary learning can take place in an informal environment that is not part of the university structure. This case is written specifically for Tennessee Wesleyan College but could be used elsewhere. The Tennessee Wesleyan College faculty members who are involved with this project are expected to use this case and other cases in a capstone Honors program in entrepreneurship during the spring semester of 2005. Other cases may also be used in the Honors class. (This case is not in the current Manual and Casebook).

Case 9 – Long Lines and Short Tempers (Homeland Security) – This case was written for engineering design classes interested in small device designs for homeland security and terrorism prevention. One of the most pressing problems facing the United States at this time is the threat of terrorist attacks, both on the homeland and on foreign soil. This case provides a scenario for students to develop Micro-Electro-Mechanical-Systems (MEMS) to help protect the security of the homeland.

Case 10 – Fashion, Fashion Everywhere and Nothing To Wear (Fashion, Design and International Development Case) – This case is designed to investigate the impact of fashion

on creativity, ethics, culture and international development. It is currently being tested in a public relations course at Western Kentucky University.

Case 11 – Night of Celebration (Wealth Distribution Case) – This is an introductory case to engage students in thinking creatively and entrepreneurially about a business venture. It also involves the transfer of wealth from generation to generation. This case is usually used as a teaching strategy to introduce the major concepts of entrepreneurship.

All of our cases are designed to follow a specified format that provides the student with an Introduction, a Learning Vignette, Text, Online Resources, Online Experts, and in some cases Video Clips that further explain the issues. In most cases, it takes 4-6 weeks to complete one of the cases. The cases can be used as an entire course, with sources from outside readings related to entrepreneurship, new venture opportunities, product pricing and future projections. As the cases currently stand, they are not all-encompassing and must have additional support to be most effective. They are designed to stimulate interest in the student and to connect learning with everyday life.

K-12 Cases

The Case of the Neighborhood Market Renaissance

The Case of the Disappearing School

Signs of a Storm

When Summer Sun Is No Fun

The Great Rollerblade Challenge

So, what are you going to do this summer?

///Entrepreneurs in Action! is our most developed section of *Learning in Action!* We have cases developed for k-12 learning environments as well as college and universities.

///Creativity in Action! (CIA)

The cases under development in this section are designed to create learning environments that will encourage creative thinking and thus lead to entrepreneurship. Our world is driven by the desire to maximize life by developing self-sufficient, self-determination and individuals that have a passion for new venture creation. These cases are designed to set the stage for future ventures.

There are several assumptions about the field of creativity. Some theories assume that you are just born with innate genes to be creative. Other assumptions indicate that you can create an environment and thus influence the creativity of individuals. When one observes a small child when he/she enters a school building for the first time, one observes an individual uncontaminated by many previous assumptions. In most cases, students who are ready for first grade are intrinsically motivated by the many different stimuli that they encounter in a learning

environment. For the most part, many students are eager to learn and eager to try new and interesting ventures.

Public schools are not established to deal with this kind of creative thinking and sometimes unrelated learning. Schools are designed to teach a highly structured myopic view of the world and to teach it in a confining, stable environment. By the time the bright child reaches the third grade, they have learned that creativity is generally not rewarded and in most cases not tolerated in the classroom. Therefore, the student conforms to school related norms and proceeds with his/her life.

The next major change in the student's life is when he or she leaves the elementary grades and enters the high school grades. Here again, the learning environment is structured around disciplines. Very little cross-disciplinary activity takes place. The student learns a concept or idea within the framework of a particular course and not in the framework of the world environment. The student adapts and finally moves on to the university. The university has the possibility of providing the student with an interdisciplinary approach to learning. But, in most cases, it does not do so. The student learns to solve problems frequently in a one-dimensional arena and learns facts and figures.

At last, the student finishes his/her formal education and enters the work world. He/she may take a job with a Fortune 500 company, with an international company, and/or with a mom and pop organization or may start their own business. Now, not only is the individual faced with the structure and culture of a new company but also with government regulations and bureaucratic structures.

Most of the people in the U.S. come out of this type of learning environment. If so, where will the new innovative and creative ideas come from in the next 10 to 20 years? What new inventions can we expect and what kind of organizational structures will be developed? Can we actually develop learning environments that can change the mindset of individuals? The following cases/learning vignettes may provide some stimulation to encourage creative and entrepreneurial thinking.

These learning exercises are designed to help create learning environments that will encourage creative thinking and thus lead to entrepreneurship. Our work is driven by the desire to maximize life by developing self-sufficient, self-determination and individuals that have a passion for new venture creation. These cases are thus designed to set the stage for future ventures. The storylines are taken from many different groups of students who have been in some way a part of the Entrepreneurs in Action! program which is a part of the Forum of Entrepreneurship Education at Vanderbilt University. The storylines come from real life experiences and credit is given to those persons who have contributed, however, the editor/developer assumes all responsibility for all cases. Cases/vignettes under development are as follows:

Cases Underdevelopment

Grease Monkey

Lifecare Family Services: An Elder Day Care for Organizations
The Seat Selection Kiosk
Brown Bag Workshops: Parenting for Professionals
Oven - Refrigerator
Teacher Performance Evaluation: A Proposal for Privatization

//Humor in Action!

Humor in Action! (HIA) is part of a process designed to teach students to think creatively and entrepreneurial. We believe that life should be fun and that humor should play a part in our personal and organizational lives. Thus, these (HIA) cases are designed to introduce the students to the field of humor and to help start creative thinking. These cases are designed to stimulate the thinking process and to make learning fun and exciting. Further more, (HIA) is a process that will help make-work fun and will help us deal with the every day personal and organization stress. We seek to develop learning environments that will encourage creativity and entrepreneurial thinking. The cases included are developed in part from colleagues who have been a part of the Learning in Action research. The cases are to be considered a “work in progress” and are undergoing changes and updating. For privacy reasons, pseudonyms or fictitious names have been given to all individuals and organizations mentioned in these cases. Cases are still under development. Many of the storylines come from real life experiences and credit is given to those persons who have contributed, the editor assumes all responsibility for a cases.

Current cases underdevelopment

Power and Paradox in Humor: Imitation Isn't Always Flattery
Humor Rings True: A Humor Case
Case of the Empty Vase
Case of Indigestion
Case of the Empty Vase
Waitressing Woes
Letting Your Boss Know How You Feel: An Example of Benign Humor
Did You say What I thought You said?
The red, red, rose or just the thorn in its side? The Story of a Flower Girl Flare UpCase Case 10
Carnival Capers
Corny Situations
Learning to Laugh
The Case of the Up-Tight Teacher
Sarah's Sore Ankles
Attempt at humor fails miserably and lands me in hot water
Elvis is a Social Lubricant
Cardinal Rule No. 1: Never Embarrass the Boss
Ricky, No Relation to Edgar
Hunter Found Himself Hunted: Ivory Coast Case

The overall objective of this research project is to develop an on-line entrepreneurship curriculum that builds on the infrastructure already in use at selected schools and investigating ways to infuse the entrepreneurship spirit into as many courses as possible. Infusing would occur through the development of *Learning in Action* cases with special emphasis on the *Entrepreneurs in Action!* cases.

This presentation will report on our progress during the Spring and Fall semesters of 2005 and Fall semester of 2006. The process of developing this model will be discussed as well as project outcomes to date. Topics to be discussed are as follows:

1. Cases used at each school
2. Projects developed from the cases
3. Infusement process

Brief Case Summaries From Universities

The following summaries were submitted from Universities and are listed to show how the entrepreneurship cases were used and to provide some qualitative assessment. Only EIA cases are reported in this paper.

Vanderbilt University

Professor: Dr. R. Wilburn Clouse

What part did the case play in the course? 20%

HOD 2760

Number of Students 90

Undergraduate

Reason for using the cases

1. Introduction to entrepreneurship +
2. Critical thinking about entrepreneurship +
3. To help develop the "e" spirit +
4. Building organizations for the future +
5. Addressing social issues +
6. Others

What part did the case play in the course? 20

Case outputs: Class presentations, role play & research papers

Case Name: Santa Fe

School: Vanderbilt University

Title: Dore to Door Consulting

Case summary:

The students of Dore to Door Consulting, proposed to revitalize and redevelop downtown Athens by implementing a plan that focused on bringing in a major retailers and chain restaurants in addition to revitalizing existing landmarks. The plan includes placing a Wal-Mart Super center in the heart of downtown and targeting restaurants and shops that appeal to various demographic segments of the population, i.e. families, college students, etc. The consultants took into account the age, socio-economic background, and educational level of the community and targeted businesses that would appeal to the greatest percentage of the population. The focus of their proposal is to bring individuals back to downtown Athens. They plan to accomplish this by creating a shopping strip, restaurant and bar district, renovating the historic Robert E. Lee hotel, establishing a Civil War Heritage museum, creating parks, and bringing in a movie theatre. The major element of their proposal is to use a Wal-Mart Super center as a draw to bring people into the downtown area. They hope that by having a popular low cost retailer in the midst of downtown it will expose people to the other attractions in the area. Dore to Door consulting created a marketing plan that focuses on hosting a series of community events to promote the revitalized downtown. The events range from an initial grand opening celebration to weekly parties held in the town square. The group also proposes creating a slogan and logo for the new downtown. The students operational plan begins with recruiting major retailers to establish a presence in the area, their next step is to begin renovating existing structures, and finally to create a park in the town square. The Consultants are seeking a loan of \$50,000 to be repaid over 5 years; they predict their risk to be moderate.

Please rate each Project with the following scale with 5 being the highest

Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Readability	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Math	1	2	3	4	5
Social issues	1	2	3	4	5
Policy issues	1	2	3	4	5
Economic issues	1	2	3	4	5
Political issues	1	2	3	4	5
Creative approach	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5

Case Name: Phoenix

Title: Phoenix Cyber Cafe

School: Vanderbilt University

Case summary:

The entrepreneurs of the Phoenix Cyber Café aim to fill a niche in the city of Athens by providing not only a coffee shop with vast technological resources but an environment that fosters educational and social interaction. The café will be housed in a former print shop near Tennessee Wesleyan College and will feature specialty coffees and drinks, wireless and hard line internet access, a variety of technological resources, and baked goods. The café will provide the

opportunity for social and educational interaction through open mike nights, guest speakers, and designated study space. The developers of the Phoenix Cyber Café sight the organizations uniqueness in the community as a major contributor to the success of their organization. The café's target market is members of the Athens community and those affiliated with Tennessee Wesleyan College which average approximately 14,000 people. The café will operate at a price point that reflects the demographics of the community it serves, which has an average income of about \$20,762. The organization's marketing plan is based on the size of the community they serve and focuses initially on direct mail and community flyers. The creators of the Phoenix Cyber Café predict moderate risk and request \$150,000 and predict a net profit of \$137,807 in the first year.

Please rate each Project with the following scale with 5 being the highest

Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Readability	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Math	1	2	3	4	5
Social issues	1	2	3	4	5
Policy issues	1	2	3	4	5
Economic issues	1	2	3	4	5
Political issues	1	2	3	4	5
Creative approach	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5

Case Name: Phoenix Case (2nd project)

Title: Ground Up, Inc.

School: Vanderbilt University

Case summary: The Nashville based coffee shop *Ground Up* seeks to combine entrepreneurship and artistic development in the heart of Music City. The group of entrepreneurs responsible for the project, propose to address the challenges facing music industry songwriters by providing them with flexible jobs in a creative and artistic environment. The coffee shop will feature an artist showcase, live recordings of performances, a variety of coffee and refreshments, and artist workshops. The organization's mission is to encourage "a holistic, creative, and interactive environment where the employees experience professional interaction, educational balance, and artistic development (EIA case)." Ground Up's products include coffee, tea, frozen drinks, and baked goods. The group plans to market through securing a location with high visibility and word of mouth close to their target audience of students, songwriters, and others in the music industry. The entrepreneurs are seeking \$100,000 for start up with total personal investments of \$150,000. They expect to see an income of \$187,200 on the low end to \$343,200 on the high end.

Please rate each Project with the following scale with 5 being the highest

Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Readability	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Math	1	2	3	4	5
Social issues	1	2	3	4	5
Policy issues	1	2	3	4	5
Economic issues	1	2	3	4	5
Political issues	1	2	3	4	5
Creative approach	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5

Case Name: **The Phoenix**
School: **Vanderbilt University**

Case summary: The idea is to create a coffee shop/ internet café in Athens, TN in order to capitalize on its location near Tennessee Wesleyan University. There is no immediate competition in the area which leaves an open niche for the café. Strategic planning has gone into the basic café design, the atmosphere, entertainment, and food provided. This café would be the first step in revitalizing this small downtown area.

Please rate each Project with the following scale with 5 being the highest

Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Readability	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Math	1	2	3	4	5
Social issues	1	2	3	4	5
Policy issues	1	2	3	4	5
Economic issues	1	2	3	4	5
Political issues	1	2	3	4	5
Creative approach	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5

Francis Marion University

Professor: Dr. Joe Aniello

School of Business

MGT 758 – New Venture Creation

Total number of students: 15

Business course MGT454 – Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management.

23 Business Students

MBA requirement

Reason for using the cases

1. Introduction to entrepreneurship +
2. Critical thinking about entrepreneurship +
3. To help develop the "e" spirit +
4. Building organizations for the future +
5. Addressing social issues+
6. Others —

What part did the case play in the course? 10%

SRW Inc. Consultants (Santa Fe Effect Case)

This group proposed a comprehensive revitalization and development plan for downtown Florence. Their plan was very attractively written and proposed a series of actions that would revitalize the downtown area through the development of entertainment. The revitalization plan was designed to attract a multitude of residents and commuters to the downtown area. The group proposed several projects to make it more attractive to the general public and to make the area more than a place of convenience. They proposed a portfolio of an Italian dining and shopping activities. Some examples include an opera house, arcade, park, comedy theatre house, a French bakery, wine and cheese shop, pastry and coffee shop for stimulating thinking and boutiques for shoes, clothing and accessories and a bistro for multicultural cuisine. The group realized this would need major sources of startup funds from several different areas. In addition to state and local funding to stimulate creativity and innovation, the group also would seek venture capital to help build and revitalize the downtown area. This group had excellent pictures of the downtown area as related to how the revitalization would take place. The group emphasized imagination and ambition to bring people downtown.

ACR (Santa Fe Case)

This project emphasizes the revitalization of downtown Florence by embracing its traditions and historical value. The assumption behind this report was that people want a simple and safe way of life in a friendly and productive neighborhood. The group first of all indicated it would be necessary to clean up the downtown area before businesses would be willing and eager to open and or relocate to the area. The group felt that this was a necessary prerequisite to attracting businesses to the downtown area. They indicated if this could be done, venture capitalists maybe willing to invest in new apartment and condo living in the downtown area. The group wanted to create a more sophisticated cultural area that would incorporate the historical value of Florence. The group further indicated that there would be some attempt to clean up, revitalize, renovate and beautify the area before building new buildings. Vacant property would be sold to infuse new ideas and new businesses in the area. This group also indicated that it would take a substantial sum of money to revitalize the downtown area. They estimated it would take between 50 and 70 million dollars to begin the renovation.

Main Street—New Downtown Florence (Santa Fe Case)

Main Event is a restaurant/bar proposed to be located in downtown Florence. The group developing this business plan indicated that this new venture would provide quality food and services in a relaxing vibe, dance club venue. The group indicated that the Main Street restaurant would be the initial investment in the developing the downtown area. The group proposes a high-energy concert theme venue for the restaurant. Of special interest, the restaurant will offer an assortment of fine beverages including beers and wines from around the world. The group intends to draw primarily from the Florence market but will also try to encourage guests from surrounding towns and cities. The plan also shows the forecast for the next year and provides startup costs.

Aquarium Pee Dee (Santa Fe Case)

This group also recognizes the need to revitalize the downtown area. They decided there was a need to change the area by renovating buildings and developing attractive landscaping. This group proposed a downtown Aquarium. Through this project the group aspired to create an area that encompasses a community of enlightened minds and high morale. The Aquarium will offer recreational activities for students to enjoy as well as an educational approach that would increase the community's awareness of Florence life. The group estimated it would take approximately \$5 million to start this venture. This would be South Carolina's only inland aquarium. This project is well thought out and provides many details for implementation.

GCP Downtown (Santa Fe Case)

This group proposes to improve the downtown area of Florence by building and developing the biggest bar in Florence, South Carolina for people of all ages. The restaurant will feature steak, chicken, hamburgers, seafood and many side orders. They propose to sell the finest of beers and wines. They also proposed to have a video arcade within the restaurants. This group also wants to have a place where kids can come and get off the streets. They want this to be attractive place for both adults and young adults to attend. They have already identified a location in downtown Florence. They have developed a very, comprehensive startup costs and have identified liabilities statement.

Florence downtown revitalization plan (Santa Fe Case)

This group proposes a place of entertainment for mature audiences. This plan proposed to attract college students, commuters who are going to the beach and working class people. The plan is to design the city for several groups of people. The group would like to make downtown Florence a cultural hotspot. The group has identified several other locations around Florence that would be sources of competition. The group proposes expanded and redesign sidewalks, convenient parking and improved public transportation as a starting point to rejuvenate the downtown area. The group also identifies several sources of revenue for their plan. The plan calls for support funding from National Trust grants and loans for historical preservation trust grants and loans for historical preservation, and HUD grants. This proposal is more of a social entrepreneurship venture than a capitalist idea.

Lottery --Downtown Florence (Santa Fe Case)

This group has taken a unique approach to revitalizing downtown Florence. The group proposes the development of the lottery. The group states that the lottery has been proven to be a way to revitalize downtown areas. The goal for the project is to change Florence from a rundown city to a vibrant historical city. In order to get more businesses to come downtown, the group proposed to get the customers more interactive with business in Florence. The group believes that the lottery would provide the income to revitalize the downtown area. They would like to make the downtown area a place where natives and tourists could come together for an exciting experience in a joyous atmosphere and new social environment. They estimate it would take \$4 Million to generate the lottery. However, they believe the lottery would generate \$500,000,000 over the next ten years. The study also has developed a marketing strategy that would support their arguments. Breakeven analysis and support documents are presented to support their plans.

Providence-Consulting Agency Incorporated (Case Report 1) Athens, TN

This group has proposed a consulting firm to study and redevelop small downtown areas. The agency will be located in Knoxville, Tennessee with other offices in Athens Tennessee. The culture of this organization is built around an equity, fairness, stability, and commitment to honesty. This company will provide consulting services to small downtown areas for redevelopment. The first assignment for this company will be the renovation and development of the Robert E. Lee Hotel located at north Jackson Street in downtown Athens, Tennessee. The plan has identified a number of organizations that may have an interest in the revitalization of this downtown facility. The old rundown Robert E. Lee Hotel is a historical landmark in Athens, Tennessee. This is a very good approach to the Santa Fe affect case.

ABC Consulting Firm (Downtown Maryville, Tennessee revitalization proposal) (Santa Fe Effect Case)

This group's proposal developed a consulting firm to investigate and propose strategies for revitalizing small downtown areas isolated by major interstates. The group chose the town of Maryville, Tennessee, which is located in the foothills of the Smokey Mountains. The project does a good job of identifying the characteristics of downtown Maryville and identifying the strengths of the city. The plan identifies a process to increase a sense of community, to generate local revenue and increased employment, the development of an in-depth action plan for project development and a method to infuse art and culture focuses into the downtown area. The plan would be a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The plan identifies a number of strategies to revitalize the downtown area, develops a comprehensive cost analysis to do so and provides a milestone schedule for downtown revitalization. The plan provides limited resources to carry out the proposed activities.

Ground-Up (Music City Blues Case)

This group chose to call their business venture "Ground-Up," and their title page shows coffee beans. This proposal was written in response to our Music City Blues case. The group proposed a coffee shop atmosphere that would provide part-time jobs that would give songwriters the opportunity and stability of an income and also provide them a creative environment to create and distribute their music. The Ground-Up Coffee Shop would provide songwriters the

opportunity to have musicians come in and play their music onstage and to experience a live performance atmosphere. The Ground-Up Atmosphere encourages a holistic, creative and interactive environment where the employees experience professional interaction, educational balance and artistic development. The café provides the songwriters the flexibility to make money and practice and strengthen their talents. This was a well thought out, well developed approach to the Music City Blues case. The proposal provides support documentation for their approach, as well as estimated financial budgets.

The Phoenix Cyber-Café (The Phoenix Case)

This proposal was written in response to the Phoenix Case, which was originally written for Tennessee Wesleyan College in Athens, Tennessee. This group did an excellent job identifying the strengths and weaknesses of Athens, Tennessee, and developed a strong target market for the Phoenix Café. The project developed a reasonable assumption for a revenue stream and start-up expenses. The Phoenix Cyber-Cafe venture is directly targeted to a need in the community for advanced Internet access and for a creative social learning environment. The café is targeted for Tennessee Wesleyan College students (but also would be open to the community at large). This could be the forerunner of the development of the historical downtown Athens area that would be totally “wireless.” In addition to being a coffee shop to encourage creativity and entrepreneurship, the Phoenix Café would also feature live entertainment and performance for local artists as well as an avenue for Tennessee Wesleyan students. This project is very feasible for downtown Athens, the city in which we held our first *Entrepreneurs in Action!* Summer Institute in the summer of 2004.

Phoenix case (TWC)

The primary focus of the Honors class was to respond to the Phoenix case. The students were instructed to develop an Internet Cyber Café that would draw students from Tennessee Wesleyan College and the community at large. The primary focus of the Cyber Café was to develop a creative environment where new ideas could germinate and new business ventures could develop. Some previous thought had been given to the Cyber Café by professors and students at Tennessee Wesleyan and a former print shop had been secured as a facility for the Cyber Café. The students conducting the project decided to call the Cyber Café the “Warehouse.” This was a fitting name, since the building resembled a warehouse environment. The “Warehouse” was designated a limited liability company and the six-member team decided to invest \$3,000 each as operating capital.

Before starting the “Warehouse”, the students did a comprehensive research analysis on current competition. They identified ER Video as an attempt to start a Cyber Café in a city close by, named Madisonville. The group also tested out some coffees at Starbucks and investigated other similar business ventures in and around the Chattanooga and Cleveland, Tennessee areas.

The “Warehouse” was designed to be a place for live entertainment, Internet and TV access, board and card games, video games, and well as food and coffee. The “Warehouse” programming was designed to encourage people to enter the doorway of new knowledge and to use the current facility to stimulate interesting and live conversation. The group also recognized that there would be certain risk factors related to this business venture. The group also developed

a comprehensive pro forma that took into consideration cost analysis, break even, and revenue stream. Overall, this group seemed to learn and practice the skills necessary for an entrepreneur.

Prelude Music Promotions (Music City Blues Case)

The group that selected Music City Blues developed an LLC called “Prelude Music Promotions.” They developed a very attractive logo and slogan called “Big Dreams, Big Possibilities with Prelude Music Productions: Promoting Songwriters Across the Nation.” This group had a very interesting introduction to their business, playing off the early life of Gretchen Wilson, who had the award winning song “Redneck Woman.” Their scenario describes a mentor relationship between Gretchen Wilson and John Rich. It was out of this mentor idea that the Prelude Music Promotions group developed their business venture. They decided to provide the same kind of mentoring services to young developing stars as would be provided by a role model or mentor. The group recognizes that there are many creative, talented people in the world, but many never find their way to stardom. The group developed a very synergistic marketing approach using the 80/20 Rule.-- That 80% of the revenue is generated by 20 % of songwriters and record companies. The group plans to have its home office in Nashville, but to have sessions, in New York, Atlanta, Miami, Chicago, Dallas and Los Angeles. The plan presents a realistic growth potential and identifies talented management group. The plan also has an excellent pro forma and balance sheet. The plan is very attractive, including pictures and calling card designs. It is obvious that this group has spent a lot of time thinking about this business venture. They also have agreed to self-fund the project with investments from each of the four entrepreneurs of \$250,000 each and with another \$650,000 from two investors. (I think this is a hypothetical budget.)

Livewire (Santa Fe Effect Case)

Livewire, LLC, is a business venture derived from the Santa Fe Effect case. This group proposed a restaurant- entertainment business venture that would be placed down town in Athens, Tennessee in an old CBS building. The group discusses the movement of businesses closer to the Interstate and the dying of the downtown area. So, they have proposed a restaurant club type of entertainment business. A comprehensive discussion centers on the operational characteristics of the restaurant, including employees and salary arrangements. The four owners plan to invest \$28,000 from their own funds and borrow \$300,000 from a local bank and secure another \$200,000 from prominent business people in the community.

The group conducted a competitive analysis, including similar restaurant/club enterprises located in larger cities such as Knoxville and Chattanooga. Furthermore, they recognize the risk involved in this type of business venture. The group uses the 4 P of marketing in order to establish a marketing strategy. The plan provides a menu, a balance sheet and a pro forma.

Western Kentucky University

Professor: Dr. Wilma R. King

Course title and Number: J453 Public Relations Research

Number of students: 29

Undergraduate

What part did the case play in the course? 25%

Case outputs: Class presentations & research papers

Reason for using the cases

1. Introduction to entrepreneurship +
2. Critical thinking about entrepreneurship +
3. To help develop the "e" spirit +
4. Building organizations for the future +
5. Addressing social issues+
6. Others —International

Case Name: The Phoenix

Western Kentucky University

Case Summary: Bowling Green, Kentucky is the ideal test market for Latte Login, the city's first Internet café, because it is a city with a need, and none of the services in the marketplace today meet that need and offers an atmosphere, conducive to gathering over a bite to eat and stimulating conversation. Kentucky lags behind other states in technology, making Latte Login a beneficial partner in this community and a business suited for expansion into university communities such as Lexington, Owensboro and Murray. Similar services can be found in cities with populations far exceeding Bowling Green's population of 50,000.

Our building's design, unique in itself as it breaks the typical box-like mold, is a main attraction to the business. The light brown brick exterior, shaped as a "to-go cup of coffee including the lid," shoots machine-produced steam sent through ducts, and then released out the top of the building, creating a retro look. This will be a visual display people will not overlook. Especially on cold mornings, this will make Latte Login a landmark.

What medium did the students use to present the project: PowerPoint presentations

Number of students involved in the case: 5

Case Name: Music City Blues

Case Summary: With the motto, "Raw Talent, Real Results," Raw Talent Consulting strives to give hopeful musical artists all of the tools, information, and know-how that they will need to break into the music industry and most importantly be successful in the industry. The partners feel that there is a general lack of information offered to prospective artists about the music industry as a whole. Many artists don't know what steps they need to take to make their presence known, and also don't understand the business and legal aspects of it.

What we do . . .

- The firm offers services such as legal consulting, media communications training, making contacts for artist within the music industry, showcase/booking opportunities, promotional and album cover photography, and publicity to local and national media.
- Raw Talent Consulting teaches prospective artists professional skills such as how to conduct themselves in a professional manner when giving interviews or anytime they are in the public eye as well as in important meetings. They act as a “middle man” by supplying artists with possible contacts that could possibly help them in the future if a good relationship is built.
- Raw Talent Consulting organizes lessons and workshops on songwriting, guitar lessons, drum lessons, dancing, and singing. The firm hosts an annual Showcase in Nashville, TN where all of their clients have the chance to perform their music and talk to executives and talent scouts from the top record labels in the area as well as other smaller labels.
- Provide all the information and resources that an artist needs in order to establish themselves as an artist and a professional while also maintaining a positive image.

What medium did the students use to present the project: PowerPoint presentations

Number of students involved in the case: 6

Case Name: The Santa Fe Effect

Case Summary: Our mission is to bridge the community through artwork and freedom of expression. We aim to provide an outlet for local artists to display and sell their work. We want to educate people on the history of our community through pictures, music, video, displays, and any other means accessible. Also, our mission is to do all this while entertaining either as a rented space or serving others through the soda fountain.

The idea for our soda fountain gallery spawned from the lack of nostalgia that small town Americas possess. The town we chose to locate in, Franklin, Kentucky, is rich in beauty and history, but the downtown has needs. We feel our business can positive contribute to the down town growth by drawing crowds to the old-time soda fountain for refreshments and showing community history through art, photos, music, videos and memorabilia. We want to be a positive, contributing member of the community by providing a space to showcase local artists, including school children, and have a community museum open to the public. We will contract with a local framer to have our artwork framed for a discounted price in exchange for advertising in our business. A small admission fee of \$3 will be charged to enter the museum. Also, we will host field trips and educational tours on appointment.

Another aspect of our business, apart from the museum is the soda fountain. Patrons will be welcomed by a blast from the 1950s when entering our front door. We will employ a soda jerk, who can make all the fountain favorites, like milkshakes and malts to banana splits. We will only offer a limited menu of soda fountain treats, limited only to drinks and ice cream, but not food items to keep down costs. This is an area of opportunity for our business.

The third aspect to our un-named business is the space for rent. We have found through our market research that many citizens of small towns feel their towns lack a nice area that can be

rented. We will offer our space rent, by reservations, for events such as holiday parties, wedding receptions, luncheons, etc. We will offer the services of providing our space, tables, chairs and certain decorations to go along with the charm of our business. Also, we can help renters contact and find catering services. We fill this will fill a valuable need in the community.

What medium did the students use to present the project: PowerPoint presentations
 Number of students involved in the case: 6

Case Name: Santa Fe Franklin Fountain and Gallery
School: Western Kentucky University

Case summary: The mission is to bridge the community through artwork and freedom of expression. They aim to provide an outlet for local artists and sell their work. They also want to educate people on the history of our community through pictures, music, video, displays, and any other means accessible. This is all to be done while entertaining either as a rented space or serving others through the soda fountain.

Please rate each Project with the following scale with 5 being the highest

Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Readability	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Math	1	2	3	4	5
Social issues	1	2	3	4	5
Policy issues	1	2	3	4	5
Economic issues	1	2	3	4	5
Political issues	1	2	3	4	5
Creative approach	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5

The Phoenix --Latte Login
School: Western Kentucky University

Case summary: Latte Login is an internet café introduced into the Bowling Green area that offers internet connection in a coffee shop type setting. This is a new idea to introduce to the area, but careful research and planning should lead to its successful implementation. It will be marketed to the students of Western Kentucky due to its location near the university.

Please rate each Project with the following scale with 5 being the highest

Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Readability	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Math	1	2	3	4	5
Social issues	1	2	3	4	5

Policy issues	1	2	3	4	5
Economic issues	1	2	3	4	5
Political issues	1	2	3	4	5
Creative approach	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5

Case Name: Music City Blues **Raw Talent Consulting**
School: **Western Kentucky University**

Case summary: There are two major issues facing the music industry today: the legalities within the business and big executives who take advantage of and overwork artists only to drop them after their first album. The mission of this business is to help artists achieve their ultimate goal—a record deal. Every client is guaranteed to receive all the tools needed to polish themselves as an artist and as a professional, but the implementation of those skills is left up to the artist.

Please rate each Project with the following scale with 5 being the highest

Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Readability	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Math	1	2	3	4	5
Social issues	1	2	3	4	5
Policy issues	1	2	3	4	5
Economic issues	1	2	3	4	5
Political issues	1	2	3	4	5
Creative approach	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5

Tennessee Wesleyan College

Case Name: **The Warehouse**
School: **TWC**

Case summary: The goal is to introduce an internet café entitled “The Warehouse” to create an environment that provides both social and business opportunities. There will be live entertainment and competitive game events in addition to food being provided. The location will be downtown Athens, TN in an effort to re-invigorate the area and cater to Tennessee Wesleyan students.

Please rate each Project with the following scale with 5 being the highest

Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
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Readability	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Math	1	2	3	4	5
Social issues	1	2	3	4	5
Policy issues	1	2	3	4	5
Economic issues	1	2	3	4	5
Political issues	1	2	3	4	5
Creative approach	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5

Case Name: Music City Blues **Prelude Music Promotions, LLC**
School: **TWC**

Case summary: They will seek out new and talented songwriters and provide educational services, which will help prepare them and increase their chances of success in the music industry. They will be dedicated to promoting their musical abilities to all recording labels in the music industry. The location will be Nashville, TN and participants will be chosen through interviews and auditions. This organization is meant to provide a “stepping stone” into the recording industry for new talents and to both provide guidance and promote creativity.

Please rate each Project with the following scale with 5 being the highest

Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Readability	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Math	1	2	3	4	5
Social issues	1	2	3	4	5
Policy issues	1	2	3	4	5
Economic issues	1	2	3	4	5
Political issues	1	2	3	4	5
Creative approach	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5

Case Name: Santa Fe **LiveWire LLC**
School: **TWC**

Case summary: The mission is to provide citizens of Athens, TN and the surrounding area with a place to eat good food and enjoy a variety of entertainment. This is to be done in an ethical, safe, and friendly environment for both customers and employees. The hope is also to expand the downtown area and promote community unity in reaction to the “Wal-mart effect” which has hurt local businesses. They will create a theme-based club, which will change based on the evening—including comedy, open mic, senior’s night, country western dancing, etc. The intention is to be family oriented and alcohol will not be served.

Please rate each Project with the following scale with 5 being the highest

Appearance	1	2	3	4	5
Readability	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Math	1	2	3	4	5
Social issues	1	2	3	4	5
Policy issues	1	2	3	4	5
Political issues	1	2	3	4	5
Creative approach	1	2	3	4	5
Overall case	1	2	3	4	5
Case Application	1	2	3	4	5

Conclusion

The Learning in Action program is a holistic approach to teaching and/or encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit to several different groups including business, human development, education, public relations, marketing, nursing and other disciplines. The Universities and/ or Schools involved are located in Tennessee, Texas, South Carolina, New York, Oklahoma, Louisiana, New York and Kentucky. This presentation is only about 3 cases which are used to rejuvenate small down towns that have been by passed by the current economic trends such as the ‘big box’ companies and super high way such as Interstates across the United States.

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