



by Carla Fiorio & Debora Ferrero

**W**e are not university professors, and neither of us have a PhD. Okay, that may not have been the best way to introduce ourselves. On the other hand, it is a good way of explaining, that, for us entrepreneurship and its related mindset is not a school subject, but something that involves everyone, everyday. That is why, at a certain point in our lives, we decided we wanted to share our belief in the importance of an entrepreneurial mindset in every aspect of life, not just the field of work.

Let's start again. We are both journalists and writers. Together, we have written an essay on the importance of the entrepreneurship mentality: 'Human Spirits and Entrepreneurship Culture', published in Italy in 2012 by Guerini e Associati, and then in ebook form in English, by Austin Macauley in 2014.

## Our Story

Since then, we have been involved in the delivery and implementation of specific training projects in this field. We have studied the recent theories of cog-

nitve psychology developed by Professor Norris Krueger and others, and have attended a number of courses. We have created a course called 'The Orange of Entrepreneurship'©, which we have delivered and continue to deliver across Italy in schools, colleges, universities, corporate incubators and accelerators, companies and professional associations. We are freelance entrepreneurship educators.

## Why Focus on the Entrepreneurial Mindset?

There are plenty of courses that aim to transform people into entrepreneurs, and plenty of individuals offering advice, information, training and so on. This situation is perfect. We are currently living through a period in which individual pro-activity is encouraged and appreciated, probably due to the very long economic crisis that has changed the way we work.

But what these training activities (such as incubators, start-up challenges, venture accelerators, courses etc.) fail to do is to underline and deliver true experience and

## Definitions

### Entrepreneurship

*"an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation and risk taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This supports everyone in day-to-day life at home and in society, makes employees more aware of the context of their work and better able to seize opportunities, and provides a foundation for entrepreneurs establishing a social or commercial activity".*

(European Commission, Commission proposal for a Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning COM(2005)548 final)

### Entrepreneurial Mindset

*"Being an entrepreneur is a state of mind. It is about analyzing the world and what is happening in terms of opportunities and possibilities, trying to understand how an individual intervention can enter the economic and social system in terms of construction and progress. And then it's about putting into practice objectives and translating ideas into action."*

(Carla Fiorio and Debora Ferrero, Human spirits and entrepreneurship culture)

understanding of the attitudes needed to become an entrepreneur. This aspect of training is often ignored, because in many cases the entrepreneurial mindset is taken for granted. It is assumed that while you are learning how to write a business plan, how to set up a marketing campaign, or how to fund your new venture, you are automatically also learning motivation, resilience, creativity, and so on.

In reality this is not the case, and that's the first reason why we began to study and then to create a training methodology on the entrepreneurial mindset. The second reason is that entrepreneurial attitudes have value and can be helpful in every aspect of life, not just in the world of work. Even if I were an employee I could still be entrepreneurial; in my hobbies, in my private life, with friends, in my personal objectives, and in various ways that would improve my life. That is why we think that increasing one's awareness on this subject is a real and valuable investment for life.

## Learning Aims and Outcomes

The main aim of training on entrepreneurial attitudes is to increase our students' awareness of how helpful it might be to adopt such a mindset.

The learning outcomes we set for the course include:

- To be conscious that although anyone can have these attitudes naturally, they have to be trained to use them efficiently.
- To explore the different kinds of exercises that can help develop these attitudes.
- To be open to learning new ways to develop these entrepreneurial attitudes, at any time and at every stage of life.

Training is like the process of cultivation: With our students we first need to open their eyes to what it means to be entrepreneurial (sow the seeds) and then give them the tools to help them develop their attitudes (grow their mindset).

## The Learning Experience

The Orange of Entrepreneurship© methodology works on developing eight attitudes:

Motivation, Creativity, Resilience, Networking, Vision, Management of uncertainty, Target orientation, and Doing.

Each one is represented by hypothetical orange segment.

Why do we use the orange metaphor? Because if we work hard on each segment, developing that specific attitude, it will become more 'juicy', and the final,



Dweck, C.S., (2012) *Mindset: How you can fulfil your potential*. London: Robinson.



Doherty, F., (2011) *Superbusiness: How I started Super-Jam from my gran's kitchen*. London: Capstone.



Seelig, T. (2009) *What I wish knew when I was 20: A crash course on making your place in the world*. New York: HarperOne.



Agassi, A. (2009) *Open: An autobiography*. New York: Knopf DoubleDay.

freshly squeezed juice will be richer, tastier and full of energy. That is the eventual goal of developing an entrepreneurial mindset.

During the course, students explore:

- Their personal idea of success.
- Their personal development projects (for their job, their hobbies, their private life, etc.).
- Examples of other people who have been successful in reaching their goal, and who can be used as role models.

The assessment consists of a personal review of the different exercises carried out during the course, and we are currently working to prepare a test that will evaluate the level of development reached in each attitude, before and after the training.

## Lessons Learned

We have delivered The Orange of Entrepreneurship© course several times over the last two years, in secondary and high school classes, universities, incubators, trade associations and also to aspiring and established entrepreneurs. In all cases, the feedback from learners has been positive. School teachers have informed us that their students are now more aware of what is happening around them, and are trying to give more direction to their studies. Our work training teachers has produced very good results. In Italy, 99% of teachers are unaware of the EC definition of entrepreneurship, and of all Europe's efforts to share this kind of education. Adult participants have often given us immediate feedback, acknowledging that, before our training, they were far less aware of what an entrepreneurial mindset entails. Even after months, many have kept in contact, to thank us for our course, because they continue to apply and develop their atti-

tudes.

The biggest challenge we have faced is getting people to understand how an entrepreneurial mindset can benefit them. There remains a considerable bias against anything (such as terms like 'mindset', for example) that is not tangible or cannot be used as a concrete tool efficiently and immediately

Together we wrote the essay on the importance of entrepreneurship mentality 'Human Spirits and entrepreneurship culture', published in 2012 in Italy by Guerini e Associati and in 2014, in English, in ebook format by Austin Macauley. Since then, we have been involved in the implementation of specific training projects regarding the entrepreneurial mindset. We have studied the recent theories of cognitive psychology developed by Professor Norris Krueger and followed different courses, including those from the National Centre for Entrepreneurship Education in Coventry (UK) and the Entrepreneurial Learning Initiative (USA). We have delivered our course 'The Orange of Entrepreneurship©' across Italy in schools, universities, incubators and accelerators, companies and trade associations.



## Resources

If you are interested in finding about entrepreneurial mindset please take a look at our online compendium of learning resources and search for 'mindset'.

<http://www.coneect.eu>

You can find out more about our own ideas in the following ebook:

Ferrero, D. and Fioro, C., (2014) Human Spirits And Entrepreneurship Culture - A New Perspective In The Globalization Era [Kindle Edition]. London: Austin Macauley.

You might also enjoy the following videos:

Norris Krueger: The Experiential Essence of Entrepreneurial Cognition

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKYfrLiEcXI&index=10&list=PLyXAocQQ2XZAG1\\_-Fza3l5uoDzISjIFO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKYfrLiEcXI&index=10&list=PLyXAocQQ2XZAG1_-Fza3l5uoDzISjIFO)

Lesley Hetherington: Entrepreneurial Mindset

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwTsgEm\\_3sg&list=PLyXAocQQ2XZAG1\\_-Fza3l5uoDzISjIFO&index=27](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwTsgEm_3sg&list=PLyXAocQQ2XZAG1_-Fza3l5uoDzISjIFO&index=27)



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I am a journalist, writer, trainer, enthusiast and expert on dynamics related to the development of entrepreneurial culture and mindset. As part of my activities working for fifteen years as head of studies of the Biella Chamber of Commerce, I has carried out more than thirty socioeconomic monographs, studying, in particular, the behavior of entrepreneurs. I graduated from the University of Pavia, Faculty of Political Science. Currently I work in the communications department of the City of Biella, as

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I am a journalist, blogger, writer, and expert in communication and entrepreneurship, with a degree in Communication Sciences from the University of Turin. I currently works with the research and communications department of the Chambers of Commerce of Biella and Vercelli, with the Young Entrepreneurs of Confindustria Ivrea, and with foreign and Italian textile and fashion magazines. I began writing at age 17, and have

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