

Targeted Teaching Topic-Teaching Guide

Entrepreneurial Skills *The processes and Traits/Behaviors associated with entrepreneurial success.*

Relevant National Content Standards for Entrepreneurship

A	Entrepreneurial Processes Understands concepts and processes associated with successful entrepreneurial performance
Discovery	
A.01	Explain the need for entrepreneurial discovery
A.02	Discuss entrepreneurial discovery processes
A.04	Determine opportunities for venture creation
A.05	Assess opportunities for venture creation
A.07	Generate venture ideas
A.08	Determine feasibility of ideas

One of the best things we can do for students is to help them “inventory” their strengths, what they are passionate about, and how skills and knowledge in diverse areas can lead to successful careers and entrepreneurial ventures. Life has many twists and turns, and many young people need to be prepared for the realities of career-building.

The article that features an interview of Ryan Hunter, a graduate of a graduate of Gretna schools and the University of Nebraska, provides an opportunity for a rich discussion about assessing strengths and talents, aligning them with a career or entrepreneurial venture, and pursuing what you are passionate about or love to do. Ryan loved being involved in the performing arts while in high school. As he talked about in his interview, he participated in one-act plays, speech, and theater, which led him to pursue music education and theater arts while at the University. His ultimate goal was and still is to make acting and directing his full-time career.

After moving to Los Angeles, the high cost of living and the intense competition for acting opportunities became harsh realities that he had to face. Yet, like any true entrepreneur, he is using his talents and strengths to earn a living, while pursuing acting and directing, which are entrepreneurial by their very nature. Both acting and directing involve taking risk, maximizing talent, communications skills, lifelong learning, and much more.



A term that students may not be familiar with is “headhunter.” A **headhunter** is someone who is retained and paid by an employer to fill specific positions for a business or organization. Headhunters earn a fee for actually putting the right person and the right job together. They seek to match the knowledge, skills and attitudes of a person with a particular company or organization’s needs.

Grant writing may need further definition also. Grants are funds offered by foundations, government agencies and companies to fund specific projects. Each funding source has a specific set of guidelines and procedures that must be followed closely. A grant writer must be able to read these guidelines and procedures, capture the intent, and develop a creative and understandable proposal that responds to the goals of the grant. Annually, over a quarter trillion dollars, some \$240 billion from the government in project, discretionary and block grants with another \$10 billion from charitably-minded foundations, corporations and individuals is available. Good grant writers are “worth their weight in gold.”



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Classroom Discussion Guide

- ☑ Have your students read the Targeted Teaching Article, “Following Your Heart and Using Your Skills and Knowledge” featuring an interview of former Nebraskan, Ryan Johnston, a young man pursuing his dream of acting, while earning income as a free lance writer and “headhunter.”
- ☑ Open the class to discussion. Some questions you might pose to them include:
 - What talents and skills are being used by Ryan in his acting/directing passions that are also useful for him in his entrepreneurial ventures (grant-writing, headhunter)?
 - Answers may include such talents and skills as verbal communication, writing, creativity, listening,
 - What types of classes in high school and/or college do you think might be most important for developing the skills necessary for success as:
 - Actor
 - Director
 - Grant writer
 - Headhunter



Suggestion: Divide an overhead or section of the whiteboard/blackboard into four sections with the four careers mentioned above at the top. As the class responds with classes, have one of the class members act as your “scribe” to write responses into the correct section as you lead the discussion.

- Now, let’s look for commonalities and differences. Which classes are used in two or more of the careers? Which are unique to a particular career?
 - What new insights did you gain about being an entrepreneur from reading this article?
- ☑ After the discussion, have the students complete the handout, “Converting My Strengths and Talents into an Entrepreneurial Venture.”
 - ☑ Have the students work in small groups to share 2-3 of their top strengths/talents, things that they have a high level of interest in (passion), and the entrepreneurial ventures to which they might be applied. The group should then help them add to their list in both categories. Often we have “blind spots” where we don’t see talents or strengths we have, yet others do. And, the group may be able to think of additional ventures that could be created based on particular strengths, talents, interests.

Success Interview Guide

Exploring your own community and interviewing successful entrepreneurs is an excellent way of (1) bringing relevance to exploring entrepreneurship as a career pathway (2) reaching out to the business community in a positive manner (3) developing case studies for use in the classroom (4) building support for teaching entrepreneurship (5) enhancing your curriculum with “real world” stories that can be used in multiple ways over a period of time.



As a classroom assignment, have students choose local or regional entrepreneurs to interview. Interviews can be conducted in person, by phone, or even through e-mail correspondence. The choice is yours and that of your students. The process should emphasize positive communications skills, proper business etiquette, confidentiality of information (as appropriate), and reflection on the lessons that can be learned from the experiences of actual entrepreneurs. It should also lead to discussion of opportunities that are available in the community, the area, and the state.