

Relevant National Content Standards for Entrepreneurship Harvesting

Entrepreneurial Skills The Processes and Traits/Behaviors associated with entrepreneurial success.	
A	Entrepreneurial Processes Understands concepts and processes associated with successful entrepreneurial performance
Harvesting	
A.35	Explain the need for continuation planning
A.36	Describe methods of venture harvesting
A.37	Evaluate options for continued venture involvement

In the book, *Small Giants, Companies That Choose to Be Great Instead of Big* the very first chapter focuses on “Free to Choose.” The common message that the author heard from every one of the Small Giants was that if the business survives, an entrepreneur will sooner or later have to decide how far and how fast to grow. There is no warning signal, no one really prepares you for it, and it’s not exactly certain when the moment arrives.

The companies featured in the book took the path less traveled, as poet Robert Frost described in his famous poem, *Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—*

*I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*



The payoff from taking the road less-traveled, both in life and in business, can be tremendous. And, because the work life of an entrepreneur is so intertwined with his/her personal life, making thoughtful, well-considered choices is crucial to happiness and prosperity. The choice to grow big or to stay “small” can impact every aspect of an entrepreneur’s life, as well as the lives of key employees.

But, like most of us, it often takes a crisis of some kind to force us into choices. It involves making transitions, changing in order to move forward, and having the inner strength to make tough decisions.

And, another lesson mentioned in terms of the Small GIANT companies is that the entrepreneur/owners all faced enormous pressure to grow bigger and bigger—from customers, employees, investors, suppliers, competitors, family members. It could be called entrepreneurial peer pressure, just like students, teachers, and everyone faces on various levels and to differing degrees.

Teacher Guide:

- ☑ Have your students read the Targeted Teaching Topic, “Harvesting” on page 7 of Nebraska E-News Monthly-May 2006).
- ☑ Write the three-line quote from Robert Frost on your whiteboard or overhead transparency or have it ready in a PowerPoint slide for them to read.
- ☑ Ask one person to volunteer to read the quote aloud.
- ☑ Open the class to discussion. How does this quote relate to their everyday life? How do they perceive it’s meaning to an entrepreneur? Have them consider if an entrepreneur will face one or many such crossroads and ask them to explain and give examples of crossroads that they believe local or national companies they know about might have reached and the impact of a decision they made on their growth, decline, or failure.

- ☑ Group the class into seven small discussion groups of 3-4 students (more or fewer students in each group may be necessary based on your class size).
- ☑ Distribute a copy of the **Harvesting** activity handout so that everyone in the class has a copy. Have the group choose a spokesperson/recorder.
- ☑ Give a different Harvesting Principle Card to each team.
- ☑ Ask each group's spokesperson/recorder to read their group's principle aloud and request that each person in the class either write it down or paraphrase it to capture the main intent in the designated area of their Harvesting activity handout.
- ☑ Give the groups 10-15 minutes to answer the key questions on the Handout individually. Assess how quickly they are able to complete this and move on to the discussion phase whenever it appears that everyone has filled in the handout to the best of their ability.
- ☑ Allow 10-15 minutes for the groups to compare and discuss their responses to the questions.
- ☑ As the culminating discussion, have the spokesperson/recorder for each group stand and read their group's principle and provide a short synopsis of how his/her group responded and the examples they gave. Allow other class members not in that group add examples or comments to enrich the discussion.

Reference Source: *Small GIANTS, Companies That Choose to Be Great Instead of Good*, Bo Burlingham, Penguin Group Publisher, 2005

