The Wall Street Journal Instructor Guide

An Overview for Entrepreneurship Professors
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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
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About The Wall Street Journal's Instructor Guide

We developed this guide to help you maximize The Wall Street Journal as a resource for your classes. You'll be able to energize discussions and engage students with tangible examples of course concepts that your students can apply in the real world. In addition, with the help of faculty partners, we've curated a special collection of our most popular and thought-provoking articles across management. For each of these readings, we provide a summary, correlation to course topics, classroom applications and questions suitable for launching discussions and conducting assessments.

Here are some of the many ways to incorporate WSJ into your courses:

- **Course Readings:** Assign articles as required reading alongside your textbook sections. For best results, include assessment questions on quizzes and exams.
- **Discussion Launchers:** Use articles to spur classroom and threaded discussions in online and hybrid courses on core concepts and current events.
- **Extra Credit:** Allow students to read optional articles and answer assessment questions for extra credit.
- **Group Projects:** WSJ is a rich source of real-world topics for group research and presentation projects.
- **Research Papers and Case Studies:** WSJ features provide timely citations for research projects.

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Uber Goes to Court to Fight for Its Future in London

Reporter: Sam Schechner (6/22/18)
Reviewed By: Bruce Barringer, Oklahoma State University

Topics: Business Startups

Summary: Uber is adopting a new approach to its PR problems. Last September Uber was deemed unfit to operate in London by British regulators, a decision Uber is set to appeal. But instead of rebutting regulators' complaints, which include a lack of corporate social responsibility in such areas as reporting serious crimes, people familiar with the case say Uber will try a different approach. The company plans to acknowledge mistakes and argue that it has made significant strides to address them by changing its governance, policies and top leaders. The stakes are high. Uber has been able to continue operating in London pending its appeal, but if it loses, it will have to stop doing business in a city where it claims 3.6 million riders are active each month. Uber's conciliatory approach underscores the shift for a company that only a couple of years ago promoted a philosophy by its former CEO called "principled confrontation."

Classroom Application: Ask your students to comment on Uber's new approach opposed to its former one. Speculate on why Uber is making the shift, and how effective it will be. Discuss the risks involved with a philosophy of "principled confrontation." Also, discuss the advantages of simply admitting mistakes and pledging to do better in the future. Also, talk about the work Uber has in front of it to prove that its new approach is sincere and genuine.

Questions:

1. Do you have a positive or a negative view of Uber? Explain your answer.

2. Comment on Uber's new approach to dealing with regulatory challenges compared to its old one.

3. Discuss the work Uber has in front of it to prove that its new approach is sincere and genuine.

4. Why do you think Uber has become one of the most fastest-growing startups in US history?

Scoot Over: A Two-Wheeled Gold Rush in Silicon Valley

Reporter: Eliot Brown (6/15/18)
Reviewed By: Bruce Barringer, Oklahoma State University

Topics: New Product Introduction

Summary: One of the hottest investments in the Silicon Valley may be a product that you've never considered. Venture-capital investors are pouring money into shared electric scooters. They're making a sizeable bet that these motorized two-wheelers will reshape how millions of people travel around cities. Two companies, Bird Riders Inc. and Lime, have reached $1 billion valuations less than a year and a half after they were founded, raising $400 million combined in recent weeks. Like children's Razor scooters, the vehicles have a platform attached to small wheels and a handlebar but are souped up with electric motors. Riders locate and unlock scooters with an app and drop them wherever they want for the next rider. VCs are excited by two central factors: strong demand and promising economics. The scooter craze kicked off in September when Bird, one of the first companies, scattered scooters around the streets of Santa Monica, CA. They became an instant hit, while also drawing the ire of residents and city officials upset with the clutter of scooters around the streets. Bird and Lime have told investors they plan to operate millions of scooters, hoping to replace many short trips by car and foot in cities around the world. A complication is regulation.

Classroom Application: Ask your students to comment on the article. Speculate on the extent to which the scooter startups, and their investors, will be successful. Talk about the factors that are most likely to be impediments to their success. Discuss how the scooter industry has gotten off to such a fast start.

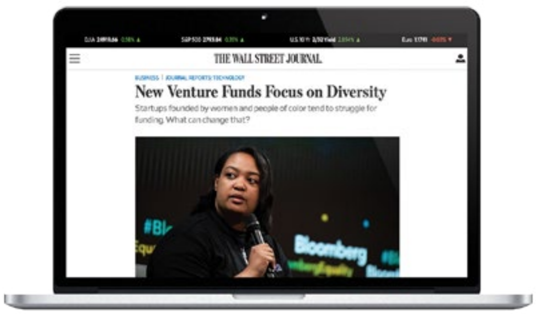
Questions:

1. Do you think the scooter companies will realize their ambitions of operating millions of scooters and reshaping how consumers make their way around cities? Why or why not?

2. If you lived in a city and made short trips frequently, would you use a scooter if it was available? Explain your answer.

3. Why do you think venture capitalists are so enthused about the business potential of shared electric scooters?

New Venture Fund Puts Focus on Diversity



Reporter: Yoree Koh (6/13/18)
Reviewed By: Bruce Barringer, Oklahoma State University

Topics: Business Startups

Summary: VCs recognize there is a problem in their industry. Because most VCs are male and white, they may unconsciously be looking to invest money in people who look just like themselves. The facts bear out this suspicion. In 2017, $68 billion went to companies founded by men, versus $14.2 billion to startups started by at least one woman. The tendency for people to be more comfortable with others who are most like them becomes less of an issue in founding when a company gets bigger, an expert quoted in the article maintains. But many women and people of color don't get to that stage because they were looked over earlier. Now, a growing number of venture firms are trying to level the playing field. Precursor Venture is among those that are making a concerted effort. As a rule, a quarter of Precursor's portfolio companies must have a female founder, and another quarter must have at least one person of color. Others are following Precursor's lead. In May, Backstage Capital announced a $36 million fund that will invest solely in black female entrepreneurs, writing $1 million checks at a time. Melinda Gates says venture capitalists who overlook women and people of color are hurting themselves. She says her company, Pivotal Ventures, focuses on diversity in its investments in startups and in acting as a limited partner in venture funds led by women.

Classroom Application: Ask your students to comment on the article. Discuss Melinda Gate's statement that venture capitalists who overlook women and people of color are hurting themselves. Ask your students to do some Internet research to identify VC firms that are making a concerted effort to invest more money in firms started by women and people of color. Discuss the advantages to having more diversity in founding teams.

Questions:

1. Discuss Melinda Gate's statement that venture capitalists who overlook women and people of color are hurting themselves.

2. Discuss the advantages to having more diversity in founding teams.

3. Identify at least one example of a venture capital firm, not mentioned in the article, that is making a concerted effort to invest in startups led by women and people of color.

Rising Venture-Capital Firms’ Strategies for Success

Reporter: Katie Roof (6/13/18)
Reviewed By: Bruce Barringer, Oklahoma State University

Topics: Venture Capital

Summary: This article begins by saying that some venture capital firms have a knack for picking winners. Among the firms in this category are Sequoia Capital, Benchmark, and Lightspeed Venture Partners. The article zeros in on the qualities that Lightspeed co-founder and managing director Ravi Mhatre looks for in the startups he invests in. He first looks for entrepreneurs with “a vision about how to fundamentally create a new market or meaningfully change it.” Put another way, he says he and his partners try to determine if a “company can really become iconic and dominant in its space.” They look for a growing customer base and a trajectory that puts it on a path to become the market leader. They also are mindful of the personal qualities of the founders. Mr. Mhatre says Lightspeed spends time “trying to really understand the people we should believe in and get behind.” The article provides the perspective of one other VC. Mike Volpi, a general partner at Index Ventures, says the best entrepreneurs “have the personality to be able to overcome long odds.” The most successful founders, he adds, are good at recruiting, leading, learning and have “a strong sense of self-determination.”

Classroom Application: Discuss the qualities of high potential startups and high potential entrepreneurs discussed in the article. Ask your students if there are additional qualities that should be added to the list. Urge your students to learn more about Lightspeed Venture Partners and the companies they have invested in.

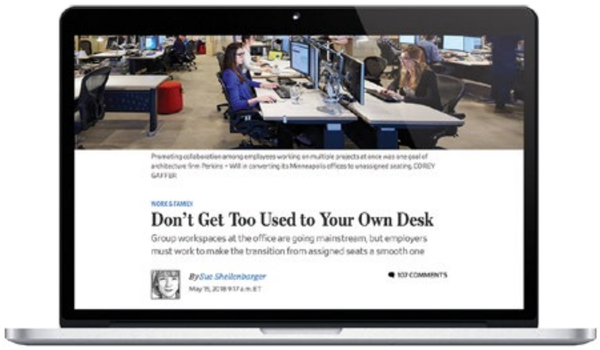
Questions:

1. Why is it important for venture capital firms to identify and invest in startups that eventually go public or are acquired by a larger firm?

2. Which of the qualities of successful entrepreneurs identified by Ravi Mhatre do you think is the most important? Explain your answer.

3. Spend some time researching Lightspeed Venture Partners. Identify three of the companies they have invested in and briefly explain each of their business models.

Don’t Get Too Used to Your Own Desk



Reporter: Sue Shellenbarger (5/17/18)
Reviewed By: Bruce Barringer, Oklahoma State University

Topics: Human Resources

Summary: Many workers, who now work in open-space environments, miss their desks. Now companies are taking the next step: They’re taking away your desk too. A growing number of employers are replacing traditional one-desk-per-employee setups with a smaller number of first-come, first-served desks, plus additional workspaces with names like huddle rooms and touchdown spaces. While some employees embrace changes like this, others say it takes some getting used to. At one firm that switched to the shared desk model, each employee has a personal locker, where they can keep personal items like family photos. Anyone who takes a desk and leaves it for more than two hours is expected to pack up and wipe it down with sanitary wipes from one of several office-supply carts. Employers reap savings on real estate by reducing average space per employee. In addition to shared desks, companies are taking a cue from the co-working spaces popular among young workers by adding a variety of seating and décor. The new designs give people a variety of places and spaces to work—some quiet, some for group work or for socializing.

Classroom Application: Ask your students if they would be comfortable working in a “shared desk” environment. Talk through the examples provided in the article, and discuss the pluses and minuses of how each company is executing on its shared desk model. Talk about the applicability of a shared desk model in a young, entrepreneurial firm.

Questions:

1. Would you enjoy working in a shared desk environment? What would you have the hardest time getting used?
2. What are the pluses and minuses of the shared desk model, for both the company and the employee?
3. Is a shared desk model more appropriate for a larger or small firm? Would it work for a new entrepreneurial firm?