

Cultivating your teenpreneurial spirit

In this unit you are going to

- talk about different business ideas (*Speaking B1*)
- discuss the importance of recycling (*Speaking B1*)
- present a promotional video for a smartphone app (*Speaking B1*)
- write a company description (*Writing B1/B2*)
- write a blog comment giving advice on how to make a start-up successful (*Writing B1*)
- read an article about a teen entrepreneur (*Reading B1*)
- read an article about challenges teenpreneurs have to face (*Reading B1*)
- listen to an interview with a young entrepreneur giving start-up tips (*Listening B1*)
- practise trouble-free grammar: Phrasal verbs and prepositions (*Language in use B1*)
- boost your vocabulary: Presenting a business idea.

Warm-up

Different business ideas



Get into pairs. Have a look at the VocabBooster and discuss the questions below.

VocabBooster

offering academic tutor service ■ offering child care service ■ selling handmade goods ■ promoting products / services online ■ starting your own blog ■ starting a mobile car washing service ■ offering errand service ■ offering photography service at events ■ offering personal shopping service

- 1 What are the main tasks and duties when doing these jobs?
- 2 Which business promises the greatest success? Give reasons.
- 3 Which of the businesses can / cannot easily be implemented into the everyday life of a teenager? Explain.
- 4 Which business opportunity would you choose to get your entrepreneurial career started? Why?



Reading

Challenges teenpreneurs have to face

1

Have a look at the VocabBooster. Match the words in A with their appropriate definitions in B. Then get into pairs and compare your results.

VocabBooster

	A	B	
start-up	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	so. or sth. that has the same purpose as another one in a different place or organisation
to face sth.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	the power to do sth.
entrepreneur	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	to get sth., to gain sth.
to acquire	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	to be confronted with sth.
barrier	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	showing unwillingness to do sth.
capability	6	<input type="checkbox"/>	a person who starts their own business
to compete	7	<input type="checkbox"/>	a business that has just been started
counterpart	8	<input type="checkbox"/>	a rule, problem, etc. that makes sth. difficult or impossible
reluctant	9	<input type="checkbox"/>	to try to be more successful than other businesses



Read the article about challenges teenpreneurs have to face when founding a start-up and take notes in the grid on page 58. Then get into pairs and compare your results.

1 When he was 16, Javier Agüera co-invented the *Geekspone*, at the age of 19 he already had three start-ups behind him and was considered by *MIT Technology Review* one of the *Innovators Under 35* in Spain. However, he faced challenges because of his youth that grown-up entrepreneurs cannot imagine. If it's hard for adults to create a successful company, imagine trying to do so at the age of 16. But this is everyday life for a growing number of teenage entrepreneurs like Javier Agüera.

According to the *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor*, people are starting businesses at younger and younger ages. Why are younger people deciding to go into business, often before they have acquired work experience? What are the challenges they face, and what are the skills they need to create a successful start-up?

To better understand this growing phenomenon, we carried out a research study to identify and analyze the skill sets of teenpreneurs.

First, we identified several important barriers that teenpreneurs face in their entrepreneurship journey. The first being financing: in most of the countries we looked at, teenpreneurs cannot legally borrow money or even register a company. Or as Erik Finman, founder of the online education project *Botangle*, explained: "Fifteen-year-olds are not allowed to hire employees." They're also not allowed to borrow money or sign commercial contracts.

Despite the difficulties they face, what struck us about these teenpreneurs was that they are smart, have a sense of humor and an appetite for risk, and most importantly, have developed capabilities to meet the challenges outlined above. They show strong self-direction, independence, and willingness to take responsibility for their own learning.

For example, when Javier Agüera was 14, he



purchase accessories for smartphones, he offered to translate it into Spanish and thus widen the website's market, at the same time as teaching himself web programming and the logistics of mobile devices.

We also found a few things that set these young entrepreneurs apart.

Most of the teenpreneurs we spoke to are competing in technology and innovation-based industries, where key knowledge can be learned in a short time. Some of these industries have only been in existence for a few years. This suggests that while a year's experience in a sector may not seem like much, in relative terms it can be considerable when combined with teenpreneurs' characteristic proactive approach to learning. It should also be remembered that we are talking about a generation with easy access to Internet technology from their early years. Exposed to smartphones and social media and educated in the use of computers, for them, using technology is part of everyday life.

Like older entrepreneurs, they also recognize the importance of networks – but teenpreneurs' networks are a little bit different. Lacking access to the adult world of entrepreneurs, teenpreneurs create their own networks. As a result, teenpreneurs are highly connected and help each other more than their older counterparts. Our experience is that it is easier to work with a teenpreneur than an older entrepreneur: They are eager to learn from people with industry

75 often more reluctant to let experienced people take a look at their projects.

Teenagers are also natural risk takers, a characteristic that often frustrates parents.

Our survey showed that teenagers are typically 80 unafraid of risk, but less decisive, as criteria and goals are still not clearly set. Another reason teenpreneurs may be more willing to take risks is that they still live with their parents, who essentially are providing an important safety net.

85 The teenpreneurs we studied are also more

globally-minded than their elders. Having grown up in an Internet connected world, they do not see geographic boundaries. Most of the teenpreneurs we interviewed speak a second language. 90

Teenage entrepreneurs are neither born nor made, but a combination of both. As Javier Agüera told us when explaining the secret of his success: “It’s a little bit of luck and a huge amount of hard work,” something that entrepreneurs of 95 any age will confirm.

questions	my notes
1 Why is it hard for teenpreneurs to found a start-up from a legal aspect?	
2 According to the survey, what capabilities do teenpreneurs often have?	
3 What advantages might teenpreneurs have over their adult counterparts when working in the field of IT?	
4 Why is it sometimes easier to work together with a teenpreneur than with an adult entrepreneur?	
5 In how far do parents support their children when founding a start-up?	



3 Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- 1 What barriers mentioned in the article are in your opinion the most difficult ones to overcome when starting a business as a teenager? Give reasons.
- 2 What skills do teenpreneurs need to have in order to be successful? Which ones are the most / least important ones? Give reasons. Use the phrases from the VocabBooster.

VocabBooster

to think outside the box ■ to be creative ■ to be willing to take risks ■ to be willing to work hard ■ to believe in yourself ■ to be decisive ■ to think logically ■ to show passion ■ to manage time effectively ■ to work independently ■ to be able to take criticism ■ to be open-minded ■ to have a high level of self-esteem

- 3 Should teenpreneurs be supported by adults when founding their start-ups? Why? / Why not?

Listening

Teen entrepreneur start-up tips

- 1 Have a look at the VocabBooster. Match the verbs with the appropriate nouns. Write the matching phrases in the middle column. The first one (0) has been done for you. Sometimes there is more than one possibility. Then get into pairs and compare your results.



		VocabBooster
verbs		nouns
0 to launch	<i>to launch a start-up</i>	A the cheapest possible route
1 to learn		B a company
2 to make		C marketing budgets
3 to take		D a marketing plan
4 to skimp on		E a mistake
5 to represent		F teenagers
6 to develop		G an estimate
7 to target		H a start-up
8 to give		I Internet marketing
9 to focus on		J the essentials of marketing



- 2 You are going to listen to an interview with Ben Carters on teen entrepreneur start-up tips. While listening, match the beginnings of the sentences (1–6) with the sentence endings (A–I). There are two sentence endings that you should not use. Write your answers in the spaces provided. The first one (0) has been done for you.

0 Soon after launching his first business, Ben Carters	A do not know anything about their target market.
1 At the age of 19, Ben	B work out a well-thought marketing plan.
2 According to Ben, entrepreneurs sometimes	C attend business management courses.
3 In order to be successful, teen entrepreneurs need to	D research needs to be done.
4 Researching the target market is essential to	E offer assistance in estimating the marketing costs.
5 Market research companies might	F launched his third start-up.
6 If sales numbers are not satisfying,	G employed ten people.
	H lost much money.
	I help understand customers' needs.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>G</i>						



3

Complete the sentences. Use an appropriate preposition from the box. Then get into pairs and compare your results.

at ■ for ■ from ■ of ■ on ■ out ■ to

- 1 Ben Carters' first business was aimed [] teenagers.
- 2 At the moment Ben is a student [] the *Boston University School of Management*.
- 3 Ben says it is important to focus [] some of the common mistakes teen entrepreneurs make in order to learn the essentials [] successful marketing.
- 4 The main thing Ben sees is that entrepreneurs very often do not know who they are marketing [] .
- 5 Ben never got a response [] some of the companies.
- 6 Ben is absolutely sure that entrepreneurs cannot just rely [] one source.
- 7 If entrepreneurs take success [] granted, their business will probably fail.
- 8 Online marketing is the most effective way [] teenage entrepreneurs to market their businesses.
- 9 If people are not buying your product, entrepreneurs have to do some research to find [] what the problem might be.

Speaking



1

A revolutionary app

Get into pairs and discuss the following questions.

- 1 How many apps have you installed on your smartphone? Name them.
- 2 What are your favourite apps? What do you use them for?
- 3 Have you ever paid for an app or do you stick to the freebies? Explain.



2

An Austrian technology company has announced a competition asking young people to come up with ideas for smartphone apps for teenagers. Participants have been asked to send in videos explaining their apps.

Step 1: Get into pairs. Think about an app which you would like to have. Answer the questions and take notes in the grid.

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | What should the app do/be used for? | |
| 2 | Who are the target users? Why? | |
| 3 | What are the benefits of the app? | |

Step 2: Now prepare a promotional video presenting your app. In your video you should

- explain what the app is used for
- say who the target users are
- point out the benefits of the app.

Speak for about four minutes. Make sure that each of you has the same amount of speaking time. Use the phrases from the LanguageBox.



LanguageBox

Hello and welcome everybody, I am ... (*name*) and this is ... (*your business partner's name*).

Today we would like to present a revolutionary app, which you definitely need to have on your smartphone.

The app's name is ... and it is a / an gaming app / educational app / fitness app / business app / lifestyle app / entertainment app ...

This app helps you to get increasingly productive / get in shape within a few weeks / save money ...

We had the idea for the app when ...

There are of course some other apps which do the same, however ... (*name of app*) is the better one / best one as ...

Now let us tell you more about the details: The app features ... On top of that, it is possible to ...

App users have also told us that they especially like that ...

So what is best about the app?

It is ... and it is for free / available for download at a reasonable price ...

So, smartphone users out there, don't wait any longer. Go online and download ... (*name of app*)

It's definitely worth it. Thank you.



Step 3: Get together with another pair and present your promotional video.

Writing

Writing a company description



Go online and do some research on a successful Austrian start-up. Take notes in the grid.

<i>name of start-up</i>	<i>my notes</i>
<p>1 company overview (What does the start-up do? / In which branch does the start-up operate?, etc.)</p>	
<p>2 company history (Who founded the company? / When was the company founded?, etc.)</p>	

name of start-up	my notes
3 management team (Who runs the start-up? / Who has a key role in the company?, etc.)	
4 legal structure and ownership (How is the company structured? / Who owns what percentage of the start-up?, etc.)	
5 location and facilities (Where is the start-up located? / What kind of facilities does the start-up offer?, etc.)	
6 future prospects (What are the plans concerning expansion?, etc.)	



2

Get into pairs. Inform each other about the Austrian start-up you have done some research on. Use your notes from activity 1. Take turns.



3

You have seen the following advertisement of *AustrianStartups*, an independent and non-profit platform of, by, and for the Austrian start-up community.

It's your start!

Have you ever dreamed of working for a successful Austrian start-up and gaining business expertise? Then we offer the right possibility for you.

***AustrianStartup* is offering a 6-week internship in an Austrian start-up of your choice.**

The only thing you have to do is to write a company description of the start-up you want to do your internship at and send it to ***internship@austrianstartups.com***

If your company description is among the best 10, you will be invited for an interview.

You have decided to send in a company description. In your description you should

- give a brief company overview
- present details of the company's history
- outline future prospects for the company.

Use the phrases and the structure from the LanguageBox. Write about 300 words.

LanguageBox

Company description: ... (*name of company*)

Company ownership

... (*name of company*) is owned by ... and operates in the field of ...

The company is recorded under the name of ... in the commercial register.

The start-up is run by ... / CEO of the start-up is ... He / She holds a 20 / 50 ... percentage share ... of the company.

... (*name of person*) also has a key role in the company, he / she is responsible for ...

At the moment the start-up has ... employees and its headquarters is located in ...

Description of the products / services

... (*name of company*) produces ... / offers ...

The product/service is unique because ...

The product/service offered is better than those of the competitors because ...

Company history

The start-up was founded in ... by ...

In the beginning the company was not very successful / quite successful because ... / The company was successful right from the start as ...

In ... the company was taken over by ...

After two / three ... years ... (*name of person*) sold his / her share of the company / bought shares of the company.

The company started being operated by only one person / two people ...

The company's future prospects

In the near future ... (*name of start-up*) wants to increase productivity / increase sales numbers / relocate / employ more staff ...

... (*name of start-up*) is also excited to relocate to / increase ...

In about ten years' time the company hopes to ...

Please note: How to write a company description

- A company description or company overview should contain the most important information of the company.
- Briefly describe the products or services offered.
- Include the business's legal status and the name(s) of the owner(s).
- Try to structure your description clearly and use concise language.
- Do not include your personal opinion.

