

BUSINESS GROWTH COURSE Syllabus
EIT DIGITAL Industrial Doctoral School & School of Innovation - UniTrento
University of Trento
Dec 18th - Sept. 22nd, 2023

“Conformity is the jailer of freedom and the enemy of growth.” – John F. Kennedy

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” – Lao Tzu

“For me, the most fun is change or growth. There are definitely elements of both that I like. Launching a business is kind of like a motorboat: You can go very quickly and turn fast.” – Tony Hsieh

“Amazon is not too big to fail. In fact, I predict one day Amazon will fail. It will go bankrupt. If you look at large companies, their lifespans tend to be 30-plus years, not a hundred-plus years.” – Jeff Besos

Main instructors:

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(joint sessions in black)

Guests speakers:

TBA

Tutors and Admin support:

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The course will take place in presence in Trento. No blended delivery is planned.

Place: SOI (UniTrento) - Via T. Gar 16/2 - 38122 Trento

Educational objectives and expected results

The aim of the ‘Business Growth’ seminar, in the IDSL education, is to give IDSL students an understanding of some of the strategic challenges his/her host-company is facing. In the case of digital-native startups, scaleups, SMEs, such key strategic challenges are related to business and international growth. It is the aim of this seminar to help students analyze the context along this perspective and draw conclusions that will be helpful for his/her host company and for him/her, in particular when it comes to valorizing his/her research results through his/her exploratory innovation activity for the company funding his/her ph.D.

This seminar will introduce participants to business growth and international/global growth-related strategic and management issues. After completing this seminar, the participant will understand better the business, management as well as financial issues of growing a business within companies and organizations of all sizes. Some specificities of scale-ups and large companies will also be covered.

Particularly, at the end of the course, students will improve their ability to:

- Plan and develop strategically & financially a business in a global growth phase.
- Organize and manage digital innovation.
- Analyse international / global business ecosystems.
- design international/global growth strategies.
- organize the management of a research, development and innovation portfolio and maintain innovativeness in a growing firm.
- forecast needs and secure the finance in a growing company or for a growing business.
- manage inflows and outflows of knowledge (ability to engage in open innovation).

Teaching methods and tools to support teaching

In this seminar, we will use lectures and case-based learning (based on real company cases), articulated around group or individual assignments, complemented with applied lectures and testimonials, as well as relevant guest speakers. Individual post-assignments will bring students to reflect on their host-company case.

Learning activities that will be required from the students

Work at your own pace on pre- and post-assignments. Students are expected to complete all pre-assignments in time and review all materials in due time before the start of the course. They are equally expected to complete all post-assignments for the recognition of course completion and grading.

Active participation. You will be asked during the course to actively contribute in class discussion with your personal opinion and your questions. Some activities will include group assignments which will require teamwork and presentation of results to the whole class. Even though some students feel uncomfortable presenting their point of view in a group setting, contributing to the discussion in the classroom is a fundamental part of learning and developing one's transversal skills. If there are

specific elements of personal difficulty you want to talk about, we will be happy to help you develop a strategy to increase your comfort and performance in participation in the class. Any suggestions for students to improve interaction will also be more than welcome.

Course schedule

Drive folder with all materials (TBP)

MON, Dec 18

MORNING

09:00 (slides 1-1) Welcome & Introduction to the course. Overview of the syllabus. Icebreaking

10:00 (slides 1-2) What is growth about? Growth strategies

11:00 Coffee break

11:30 Breakout session in pairs: peer discussion of pre-assignments

12:00 (slides 1-3) Venture Capital Logic: intro

13:00 Lunch break

AFTERNOON

14:00 (slides 1-4) Venture Capital Logic: continued

15:45 Introduction to the final assignment

16:00 Coffee break

16:00 Free networking session

18:00 End of session

4h

TUE, Dec 19

MORNING

09:00 (slides 2-1) Business Modelling for Growth

10:00 Business Modelling Exercise (in groups)

10:40 Coffee break

11:15 Discussion on the BM exercise

11:45 (slides 2-2) Negotiation

13:00 Lunch break

AFTERNOON

14:00 Breakout session: workgroup to prepare the "Meet the entrepreneur" module

15:00 Meet the entrepreneur: TBA

16:00 Coffee break

16:30 (slides 2-4) Examples of successful growth companies and epic failures - multimedia

17:30 Breakout session: workgroup for the final assignment (instructors available)

18:00 Wrap-Up and Conclusions

18:00 End of session

7,5 h

WED, Dec 20

MORNING

9:00 (slides 3-1) Corporate Venture Capital vs. VC

10:15 Coffee Break

10:45 Breakout session (but mostly Individual work): Intel case preparation

12:00 Case discussion (Intel64)

13:00 Lunch break

AFTERNOON

14:00 Breakout session: Workgroup for the final assignment

15:30 Individual work to prepare the "Meet the investor" module

16:00 Coffee break

16:30 Meet the investor: TBA

18:00 End of session

6h

THU, Dec 21

MORNING

09:00 (slides 4-1) KPI Concepts

10:00 KPI exercise

10:45 Coffee break

11:15 (slides 4-2) Valuation, exit strategies

12:00 Breakout session: Workgroup for the final assignment

13:00 Lunch break

AFTERNOON

14:00 (slides 4-3) Individual work to prepare the negotiation case

15:00 (slides 4-4) Negotiation Simulation (role-playing case) & debrief session

18:00 End of session

20:00 Working dinner

7h

FRI, Dec 22

MORNING

9:00 (slides 5-1) Intrapreneurship and innovation in large corporates

10:00 Individual work to prepare for the "Meet the large corporate" module

10:30 Coffee break

11:00 Meet the Corporate: TBA

12:00 Breakout session: Workgroup to prepare the final assignment

13:00 Lunch break

AFTERNOON

14:00 Breakout session: Workgroup to prepare the final assignment

15:45 Coffee Break

16:00 Group presentation for the final assignment

17:00 Discussion and feedback

17:30 (slides 5-2) Descriptions of post-assignments

18:00 Wrap-up and Farewell

This course will **take place in Trento in presence**.

Endorsements from previous editions participants

“The course is a great opportunity for future start-up founders and entrepreneurs to get insights directly from seasoned experts in start-ups and financing, work together with a team of passionate students, and meet CEOs of high-profile, high-growth start-ups. I really enjoyed the hands-on practice opportunities in negotiation, funding opportunities, growth strategy planning, and I feel empowered by having the knowledge and tools in my hand to turn my research into a successful project and plan ahead in the future. I feel I got so much from this course. Great job, and thank you also for all the motivation and enthusiasm!” – (L., male, Hungary).

“The course adds a great value to who wants to enter the startup world and the financial sector of investments. The broad content of the course illustrates the growing strategy techniques for startups and already established businesses, what are the processes involved in obtaining fundings and investments for a company and what are the different situations to deal with in the process of growing. The teachers are highly skilled and have a strong theoretical and applicative background, making the course very complete and valuable.” (G., male, Italy).

“This was a good course to review and expand knowledge about venture financing and how to scale and expand business ventures. I appreciated the mix of high-level views and some “nitty-gritty” details. The company visits/interviews were particularly good to map concepts explored in the class to the “real world”. I would recommend this course not only to PhD students, but to all students and professionals with an interest in how the business financing world looks like. Knowing common business patterns can be a good tool to better understand the industries with which we cross our paths, and is a key asset for anyone dabbling with growing businesses.” (L., male, Italy).

Suggested readings

Recommended books

- Scott Anthony et al., *The Innovator’s Guide to Growth: Putting Disruptive Innovation to Work* (2008).

- Stephen Blank, *The Four Steps to the Epiphany: Successful Strategies for Products that Win* (2007).
- Marty Cagan, *Inspired: How To Create Products Customers Love* (2008).
- Clayton Christensen, *The Innovator's Dilemma* (1997).
- Clayton Christensen and Michael Raynor, *The Innovator's Solution* (2003).
- Graeme Deans et al., *Winning the Merger Endgame* (2002).
- Anthony Elliott, *Reinvention* (2012).
- Nir Eyal, *Hooked: How to Build Habit-Forming Products* (2014).
- Seth Godin, *All Marketers Are Liars: The Underground Classic That Explains How Marketing Really Works—and Why Authenticity Is the Best Marketing of All* (2012).
- Mark Johnson, *Seizing the White Space: Business Model Innovation for Growth and Renewal* (2010).
- Guy Kawasaki, *The Art of the Start: The Time-Tested, Battle-Hardened Guide for Anyone Starting Anything* (2004).
- Edmund Lawler, *Lessons in Service from Charlie Trotter* (2001).
- Rita McGrath and Ian MacMillan, *Discovery-Driven Growth: A Breakthrough Process to Reduce Risk and Seize Opportunity* (2009).
- Geoffrey Moore, *Crossing the Chasm: Marketing and Selling Disruptive Products to Mainstream Customers* (2006).
- John Mullins and Randy Komisar, *Getting to Plan B: Breaking Through to a Better Business Model* (2009).
- Alexander Osterwalder & Y. Pigneur, *Business Model Generation* (2009).
- Eric Ries, *The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses* (2011).
- Richard Rumelt, *Good Strategy Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why It Matters* (2011).
- Daniel Shiffman, *The Nature of Code: Simulating Natural Systems with Processing* (2012).
- Anthony Ulwick, *What Customers Want: Using Outcome-Driven Innovation to Create Breakthrough Products and Services* (2005).
- Douglas Van Praet, *Unconscious Branding: How Neuroscience Can Empower (and Inspire) Marketing* (2012).
- Josh Waitzkin, *The Art of Learning: An Inner Journey to Optimal Performance* (2008).
- Noam Wasserman, *The Founder's Dilemmas: Anticipating and Avoiding the Pitfalls That Can Sink a Startup* (2012).

Recommended textbooks

- Steve Blank and Bob Dorf, *The Startup Owner's Manual: The Step-by-Step Guide for Building a Great Company* (2012).
- Thomas Byers, Richard Dorf, and Andrew Nelson, *Technology Ventures: From Idea to Enterprise* (2010).
- Marc H. Meyer and Frederick G. Crane, *An Innovator's Guide to Startups and Corporate Ventures* (2010).
- John Mullins, *The New Business Road Test: What Entrepreneurs and Executives Should Do Before Writing a Business Plan* (2010).

Recommended articles

- Porter, M., (1996): [What is Strategy](#).
- McGrath, R., (2013): [Transient Advantage](#).
- Olson, M., et al. (2008): [When Growth Stalls](#).
- Christensen, C., et al. (2007): [Finding the Right Jobs For Your Product](#).
- Johnson, M., et al. (2008): [Reinventing Your Business Model](#).
- Blank, S., (2013): [Why the Lean Startup Changes Everything](#).

Other

- [Technology, Media & Telecommunications](#) – Predictions 2014, Deloitte.