WP2.1.1. Mentors' CV

How to be a digital mentor: NEWDIGISHIP model

Guidelines

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1. Introduction of the Project

In list below you can find the main goals of the project related to digital entrepreneurship tools curriculum: NEWDIGISHIP. This project is co-funded by the European Union and is aimed at fostering digital entrepreneurship between youth. More info is available in our website: **newdigiship.eu**
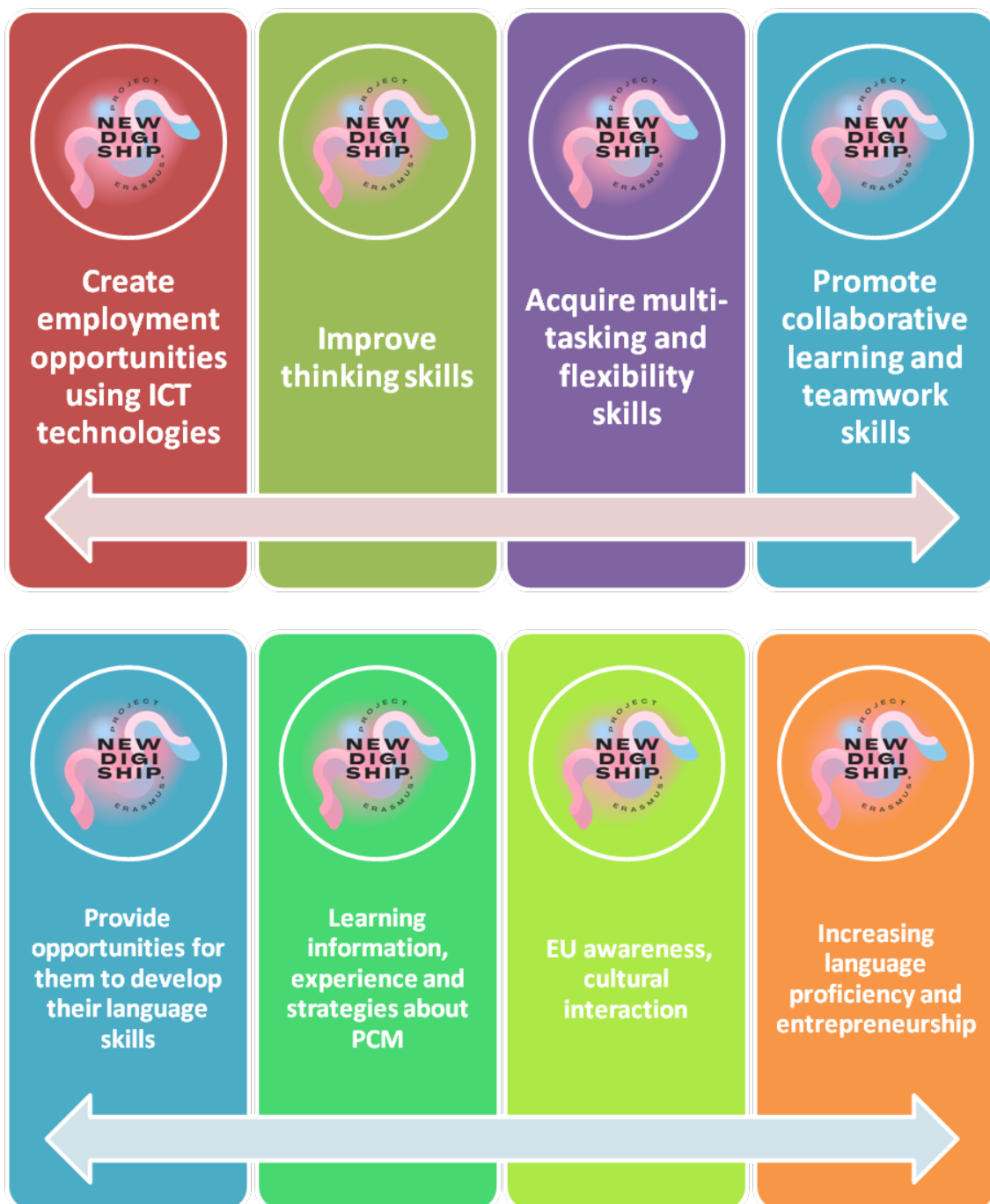

Figure 1.- Main goals of NEWDIGISHIP Project

2. Introduction to digital entrepreneurship

In the digital age, entrepreneurship is now more in demand than ever before. However, digital entrepreneurship is not limited to holding online meetings, paperless office or communication on social media. Rather, it must be seen as a holistic approach to thinking that encompasses all processes of an organization, including communication and service provision. If we succeed in "thinking digitally", such as integrating digital process support at all levels, we can experience long-term success and keep uprising competitors at bay.

Data, information and knowledge are the new factors of success that lead to new market opportunities and business models through their intelligent combination and networking with operational performance and service provision. This ranges from latform economics to support systems, as well as the use of new technologies to make processes more effective and elegant. It is precisely the exploration of promising opportunities and the creation of unique ideas that offer digital entrepreneurs the potential to successfully develop their business. The design of business models, the planning of the architecture of software and hardware components, as well as the storage of individual data, information and knowledge components, form the core of the new digital entrepreneurial approach.

There has been much discussion of agility, disruptive processes and the constantly increasing speed of market developments. Therefore, the digital entrepreneurial personality must maintain the following competencies:

- Creativity, organisational skills and a feel for market opportunities
- Strong knowledge of the technical requirements and the competitive environment
- Courage to apply the process of creative destruction to their own business or its processes at any time.

In doing so, new ideas and their implementation must be kept in view, as well as one's own service offerings, and the way they are created. In particular, the demands on quality, efficiency and speed of the processes force entrepreneurship when updating and revising internal processes.
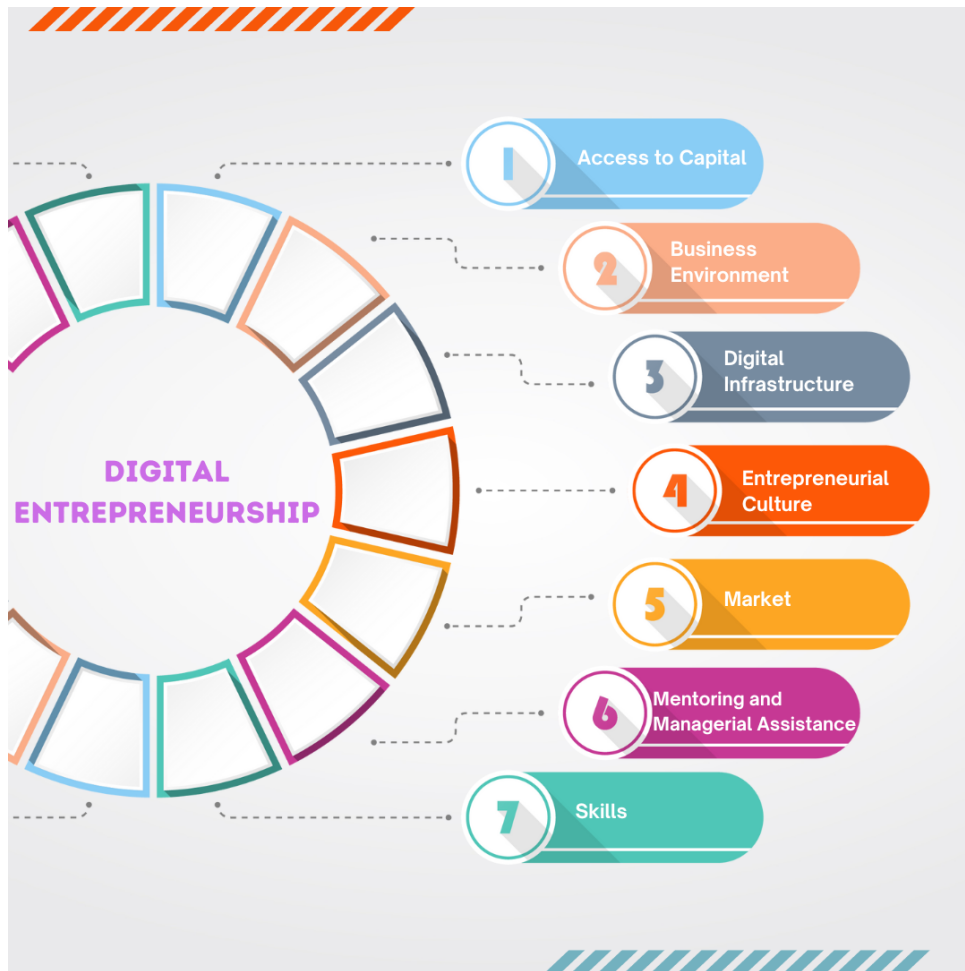
Definition of Digital entrepreneurship

Figure 2.- Definition of Digital entrepreneurship

Digital entrepreneurship is reshaping business and communication with cloud services, augmented and virtual reality, artificial intelligence and blockchains as some of the technologies that comprise our increasingly digitised world. This book examines these and other digital developments for their impact on entrepreneurship. In our understanding, digital entrepreneurship focuses on leveraging digital technologies or digital business models to explore and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. Our quest in this book is to shed new light on digital entrepreneurship, understand the critical factors in successful digital entrepreneurship and understand the context sensitivity of digital entrepreneurship efforts, including, but not restricted to, the individual, the firm and the international business contexts. To achieve these elements, this book contains contributions from scholars from all over the world, consistent with how digital entrepreneurship brings global challenges to entrepreneurs, firms, public institutions and governments. A cornerstone of our book is the effort to bridge the theory–practice divide. Each of the chapters provides two contributions: First, each chapter is embedded in theory and literature on the phenomenon of interest; second, each chapter contains digital entrepreneurship vignettes as insightful cases into digital entrepreneurship practice. Each chapter strives to connect research and practice with cases, insights and tools.

A key component of digital entrepreneurship is how digital technologies and the process of digitisation transform how entrepreneurs can create new sources of value and wealth. However, digitalisation is also transforming what it means to be entrepreneurial and the skills and capabilities required. Our further objective with this publication is to shed light on the entrepreneurial process and its content in various digital contexts.

The entire entrepreneurial process can focus on a digital venture as the content of an entrepreneurial journey. Some of the authors in this book investigate the impact of technologies, such as artificial intelligence, distributed ledger technologies or the industrial Internet of things, on new or established business models. Others discuss the influence of digital technologies on the entrepreneurial process of generating an idea or leveraging digital options to finance the entrepreneurial journey. Throughout the entrepreneurial process, we believe that a deep understanding of digital creativity can help an entrepreneur create the right ideas at the right time.

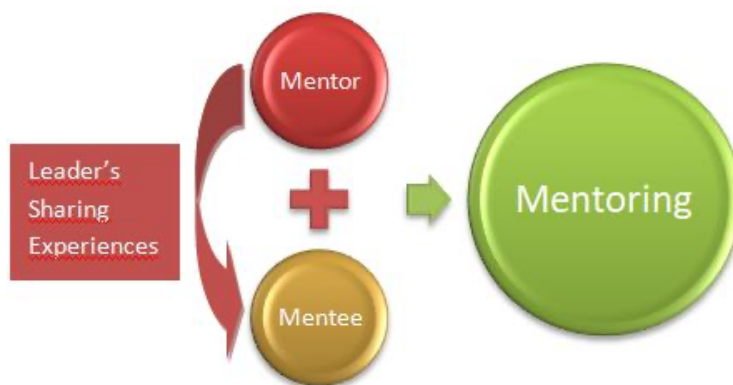### 3. How to be a mentor in digital entrepreneurship

Figure 3.- Process of mentoring

Mentoring is the process of transferring experience from people who are experienced in a field (mentor) to people who are less experienced (mentee). Mentors contribute to the mentees to continue their initiatives with fewer mistakes with their experiences.

There are certain qualities that a good mentor must have in order to be useful to the mentee. The qualifications that should be found in people who will mentor digital entrepreneurs are as follows:

® Knows all the components of digital entrepreneurship.
® Has knowledge about the opportunities offered by the digital world.
® Can create online targets. Knows the techniques of creating and marketing the entrepreneur's presence on the internet.
® Knows how websites work and their basic elements. Can create a website in line with business goals.

- ® Can tell what should be considered in the design of a user-friendly website to be established for an enterprise.
- ® Has the ability to plan online strategies. He masters the techniques of moving a business online, understanding customer behavior of the business and making the business stand out from other competitors on the internet, setting goals and tracking.
- ® Competent in using search networks. He knows how search engines work and what organic and paid search means. Knows systems such as Google Search Console, where webmasters monitor their website visibility.
- ® Knows the meaning and importance of search engine optimization (SEO). He is proficient in keyword selection and setting realistic SEO goals.
- ® Can create web page as search friendly. He knows how to use different websites to his advantage.
- ® Has knowledge of search engine marketing.
- ® Competent in developing search campaigns.
- ® Knows how to market locally.
- ® Competent in advertising locally and reaching mobile devices locally using digital channels.
- ® Knows how to use social media for entrepreneurship. Recognizes social media for his field. Can set goals for social media.
- ® Makes a long-term social media plan. Advertises on social media. You can follow the success status on social media. He knows how to avoid the pitfalls of social media.
- ® Has knowledge of mobile applications. It can create search, display, social media campaigns for mobile devices.
- ® Can do content marketing. Recognize the structure and nature of online customers. He can write content for online audiences and increase the visibility of the content. It can measure success in content marketing.
- ® Has the ability to do marketing via e-mail. Can run successful email campaigns and measure success.
- ® Has the ability to produce and share content for the digital world.
- ® Has knowledge about web analysis. Has knowledge about SEM measurement tools. It can drill down into data to find valuable information.
- ® He is competent in establishing an online store. Has knowledge of selling, receiving payments and managing orders with e-commerce.
- ® Dominates international marketing processes. Has knowledge of acquiring new markets. Knows ways to advertise beyond borders.

4. Digital business lives – characteristics of digital business

Digital business is the process of applying digital technology to reinvent business models and transform a company's products and customer experiences-innovating products that create new value and connecting people with things, insights and experiences.

The age of the internet and digitalisation has completely changed the global business sector. According to some studies, this is the transition to the third industrial revolution and, according to many studies, the beginning of the fourth industrial revolution. The new digital world and Industry 4.0 are redefining and breaking down the verbal boundaries of industries and developing new sectors, making working and employment practices more flexible. Digitalisation is one of the most relevant trends producing revolutionary changes in society and business. That's why, in order to walk on Digital World on your foot, all sectors need to design a digital business ecosystem for their firms and even institutions.

The digital entrepreneurial ecosystem; A summary of the concept of the digital entrepreneurial ecosystem was created in 2002 by adding the word 'digital' in front of Moore's 'entrepreneurial ecosystem'. It is true that Moore (2003) himself used the term "digital entrepreneurial ecosystem" in 2003, but only with a focus on developing countries. What was new was that the term was generalized to mean a new interpretation of what is meant by "ICT-catalyzed socio-economic development", emphasizing the simultaneous evolution between the entrepreneurial ecosystem and its partial digital representation: the digital ecosystem. The term Digital Business Ecosystem can be "unpacked" as follows (Fig. 1):
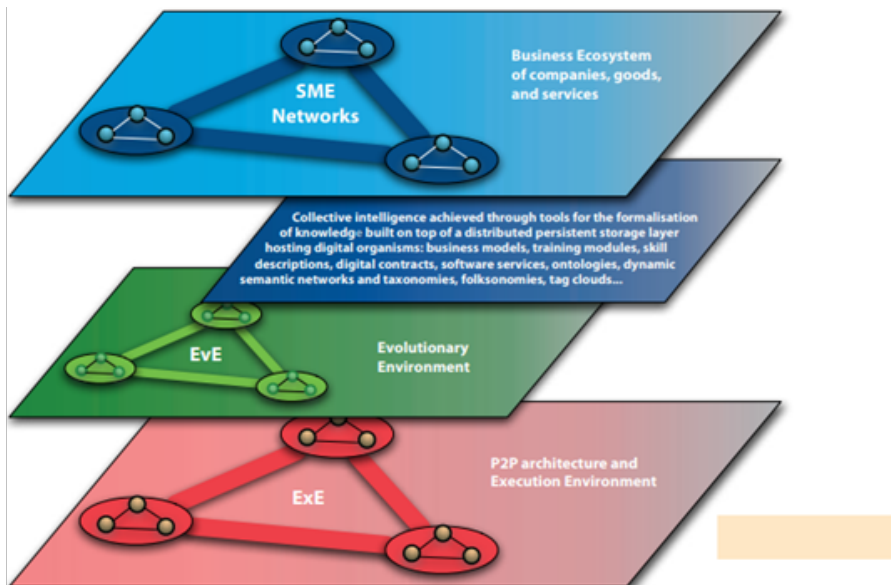
Figure 4.- The stack view of the Digital Business Ecosystem[1]

Digital Business (ecosystem): A technical infrastructure based on distributed P2P software technology that transmits, discovers and interconnects services and information over Internet connections and enables network operations and distribution of all digital 'objects' residing in the infrastructure. Such 'organisms in the digital world' include all useful digital representations expressed through languages (formal or natural) that can be interpreted and processed (by computer software and/or humans), e.g. software applications, services, knowledge, taxonomies, folksonomies, ontologies, skill descriptions, reputation and trust relationships, learning modules, contractual frameworks, laws.

Business (ecosystem): 'An economic community supported by a base of interacting organisations and individuals - "business organisms". This economic community produces valuable goods and services to customers who are themselves members of the ecosystem." A thriving ecosystem recognises the balance between cooperation and competition in a dynamic free market.

The ecosystem: a biological metaphor emphasising the interdependence of all actors in a business environment who "develop their skills and roles together". In the context of the digital business ecosystem, there is also an isomorphism between biological behaviour and software behaviour, based on the theoretical implications of computer science and leading to an evolutionary, self-organising and self-optimising environment (Evolutionary Environemnt or EvE)[2].

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[1] *Inspired by work of Thomas Kurz, Salzburg University of Applied Sciences*
[2] *Now Networked Enterprise and RFID Unit, Directorate General Information Society and Media*

Networks

Digital ecosystems are made possible by the convergence of three networks: ICT networks, social networks and knowledge networks. Knowledge networks have emerged from the network connections created by the Internet and the World Wide Web.

They exist and are supported by social networks, professional networks, collaborative networks and business networks. Governments, researchers, companies, friends. The world of computers has expanded in a similar way. First it expanded from a single computer to a local area network (LAN) and eventually to a worldwide network. Web Computers facilitated the development of distributed architectures and shared resources, culminating in the peer-to-peer (P2P) model. The faster and more widespread communication enabled by this technology reinforced the already established peer-to-peer model.

The transition from a material-based production economy to a knowledge-based service economy Production and distribution value chains.

Structural Principles of Digital Ecosystems

Because the digital ecosystem is structurally linked to the socio-economic system of its users, its architectural design depends on depends on the socio-economic characteristics it is intended to promote or enable. This decision relates to how the world will be organized and what values will take precedence. The initial general objective of economic development economic development was refined through an online consultation and two rounds of workshops in 2002 and 2005. It was formulated as follows:

Technologies and paradigms to enable SMEs and innovators to participate in the knowledge economy, enabling their integration into local/regional/global socio-economic ecosystems and giving rise to dynamic and unstructured clusters. Clustering for increased competitiveness in the global economy.

As discussions have continued, this concept has evolved into the mutualisation of clusters. The concept of clustering has been further developed into a 'nervous system' that promotes a participatory society in which public and private organisations, experts and individuals compete and interact.

The public consultation process produced a research agenda that is kept regularly updated and a set of initial principles (EC 2005b)[3] that have to be translated and embedded within the ecosystem architecture. Some principles are general, whilst others depend on the policy aims or are specific to the structure of the local economy.

- ® No single point of failure or control
- ® Digital ecosystems should not be dependent upon any single instance or actor
- ® Equal opportunity of access for all
- ® Scalability and robustness

Some principles are of a general nature, while others depend on policy objectives or are specific to the structure of the local economy.

Digital Business Models characteristics to know

Many organisations aspire to become digital-first companies, true digital enterprises or embark on a digital transformation. Maturity in digital adoption offers many strategic advantages and opens up many long-term and short-term benefits. In addition to providing a competitive advantage, it is likely to have an impact on profitability. It is also a factor to consider for the long-term survival of a business.

1. Digital innovation culture:

Digital technology is a catalyst for innovation. Truly digital organisations often have an innovative culture, with a willingness to experiment and develop new services, products and ways of working. Furthermore, digital maturity provides significant opportunities for innovation. Digital maturity also provides employees with new tools to put different ideas into practice. Successful digital innovation uses the right approaches, processes and tools to create widespread digital innovation.

2. Less hierarchical culture and flatter organization:

Organizations mostly are hierarchical having multiple management layers. Thus, it results in developing risk-averse culture making it tough to become agile while reducing

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[3] *European Commission, DG-INFSO (2005b) "Towards Business Cases and User-Oriented Services in Digital Business Ecosystems", Conclusions of the FP7 Workshop on Needs and Requirements of Regions, Bruxelles, 8 April 2005.*

fast decision making abilities. Digital organizations to enhance customer experiences tend to invest in the latest digital platforms. This is mostly in internal communication and collaboration tools. Senior management can directly communicate with lower levels using the latest digital tools and etc.

3. Use analytics and data for continuous improvement:

So companies can use dashboards and analytics to gain better insight and think about improvements. The opportunities are even greater when you combine data from different sources and systems. Digital businesses tend to make the most of their data.

4. Leaders are harnessing the power of digital:

Implementing a digital business strategy can be challenging. It requires a strong leadership team with a clear vision. Leaders must embrace digital power without hesitation. Digital platforms should be leveraged both internally and externally. Approaches and strategies with digital at their core should also be encouraged.

5. Digital Upskilling and literacy:

It is important to ensure that your employees are "digitally literate". To maximise the use of digital tools and optimise the experience for your target audience, your employees need to be equipped with the latest knowledge, skills and resources. Digitally-focused companies typically invest in ongoing support, education and training for their employees. This automatically improves overall productivity and reduces problems in the workplace.

6. Super automation of processes :

Artificial intelligence (AI) and automation offer future and current opportunities and increase productivity. Companies that have embraced digital technologies are undergoing a significant transformation. By digitising manual processes, they gain efficiency, save time and reduce costs. Truly digital companies are constantly automating their processes to improve service and overall productivity. Improved processes provide the overall benefits of hyper-automation.

7. Optimising the digital employee experience:

There is a close relationship between employee and customer experience. If your employees do not have a good experience in their daily tasks, this is likely to lead to inefficient internal processes and dissatisfaction. This in turn can have a negative impact on customer satisfaction. True digital companies tend to invest heavily in providing excellent digital experiences for their employees. They recognise that this affects everything from profitability to employee turnover and customer attitudes towards their brand.

8. Customer-centric approach:

Digital business strategies focus primarily on increasing customer satisfaction. Businesses interact more and more with their customers through various digital platforms. The focus on customer service and digitalisation are therefore closely related. Businesses prefer to invest in different digital platforms, mainly because they help them develop more digital touch points with their customers. Customer centricity is about capturing good data and understanding customers better in order to improve the customer experience.

Therefore, the above digital business models, when clearly understood and implemented, can help companies to gain an edge over their competitors[4].

What elements are needed to make digital business a reality?

AI.

Artificial intelligence enables businesses to anticipate market changes, predict customer desires and make faster and more accurate predictions than their competitors. It can understand what is happening and why, and make the best decisions. And even in the most complex environments, it can shape every aspect of operations to address every outcome.

Digital Engineering

Digital Engineering enables rapid innovation that changes the customer journey and launches new brands and industry-first technologies that change customer expectations.

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[4] https://www.tycoonstory.com/business/8-characteristics-of-digital-business-models-for-new-technology/

Digital Strategy

As digital tools grow, so do customer demands and internal pressures to deliver products and services with digital technologies. Implementing an effective digital strategy in the IT front, middle and back office environment is critical to staying relevant.

Interactive

A great interactive experience starts with aligning the story with the company's systems. This process is based on the philosophy that every human experience is based on what people need, beyond what they feel and want, and what it takes to make it happen.

The Internet of Things. Smart products and solutions, enabled by the Internet of Things (IoT) and the advent of 5G, will soon touch every aspect of our lives. Some of them will even do our thinking for us. Across industries, companies are connecting products, operations and businesses to create actionable intelligence to increase efficiency, improve productivity and transform products[5.]

5. NEWDIGISHIP model of mentoring

a. Spotting opportunities and threats in digital business

The opportunities and threats in the digital entrepreneurship sector are numerous and changing, but here are some that may be relevant:

Opportunities in the digital entrepreneurship sector:
- ® Broad global reach: Digital entrepreneurship allows you to reach global audiences with a relatively low investment.
- ® Lower start-up costs: Unlike traditional businesses, digital ventures require lower initial investments in infrastructure, machinery, and personnel.
- ® Constant innovation: Technology changes rapidly, allowing digital entrepreneurs to constantly innovate and improve their products or services.
- ® Workplace flexibility: Most digital businesses can be operated from anywhere, as long as there is an internet connection.
- ® Scalable business models: Digital ventures have the ability to grow rapidly, since incremental costs are lower when the scope is increased.

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[5] https://www.cognizant.com/us/en/glossary/digital-business

Threats in the digital entrepreneurship sector:
- ® Fierce competition: Digital entrepreneurship is a highly competitive sector, which can make it difficult to enter the market.
- ® Changes in regulations: Government regulations can change rapidly and affect the business model of digital startups.
- ® Cybersecurity: Online security is a major concern for any digital business, and a cyber attack can have devastating consequences.
- ® Technological dependency: Technology is the foundation of digital business, which means that any interruption or technological failure can have a significant impact on the operation and income of the company.

b. Best practices of digital mentoring

Perhaps during the development of your company you had a mentor or guide that you turned to for advice. Or maybe he did not run into that luck and his path was more solitary.

Have you thought about becoming a mentor to other entrepreneurs in order to support them in their growth, or even to the employees of your SME?

Here are some tips and best practices to be a better guide:
- ® Set clear goals: Before beginning mentoring, it is important to set clear goals for what you hope to achieve. Goals can be short-term or long-term and must be specific, measurable, and achievable.
- ® Be a good listener: A good mentor must be a good listener. Must be able to listen carefully to the entrepreneur's concerns and challenges and offer helpful solutions and recommendations.
- ® Provide guidance and constructive feedback: A mentor should provide guidance and constructive feedback to the entrepreneur. You should be able to point out the entrepreneur's strengths and weaknesses and offer recommendations on how to improve.
- ® Sharing experiences and knowledge: A mentor should share his experiences and knowledge with the employer. It must be able to offer practical advice and useful tools to help the entrepreneur grow and develop.
- ® Be a role model : A mentor should be a role model to the entrepreneur. Must be an example of leadership, hard work and success in the digital entrepreneurship sector.
- ® Establish a relationship of trust: A mentor must establish a relationship of trust with the employer. It must be a confidant and a friend that the entrepreneur can trust.
- ® Be accessible and committed: A mentor must be available and committed to the success of the entrepreneur. You must be willing to invest time and energy in mentoring and be available to answer questions and provide guidance when needed.

In summary, mentoring can be very valuable for entrepreneurs in the digital entrepreneurship sector, as long as a series of guidelines and good practices are followed that make it possible.

c. Personal strategy

In order to mentor digital entrepreneurs, a series of skills are required that are essential to be able to give the best support to young digital entrepreneurs. These competencies must be developed in the context of a strategy at the personal level of the mentors.

Some of them are:

- Technical knowledge: it is essential that the mentor has a deep understanding of the digital technologies and tools used in the business environment. You must be up to date with the latest trends and developments in the digital industry.
- Business experience: the mentor must have experience in the creation and management of digital companies to be able to advise entrepreneurs on aspects related to business strategy, finance, marketing, human resources, among others.
- Communication skills: The mentor must be able to communicate effectively with the entrepreneurs and transmit their knowledge clearly and concisely.
- Empathy and active listening: the mentor must be able to put himself in the place of the entrepreneurs and understand their needs and concerns. Active listening is essential to be able to understand the needs of entrepreneurs and offer solutions adapted to their situation.
- Ability to set goals: The mentor must be able to help entrepreneurs set realistic and achievable goals and design an action plan to achieve them.
- Flexibility: The mentor must be able to adapt to the changing needs of entrepreneurs and the challenges of the digital business environment.
- Motivation and enthusiasm: the mentor must be able to motivate and enthuse the entrepreneurs to keep going and not give up in the face of obstacles and difficulties that may arise along the way.

In summary, a digital entrepreneur mentor needs to have technical knowledge, business experience, communication skills, empathy, ability to set goals, flexibility and motivation.

d. Digital activities to be designed for NGOs / firm

We present two great platforms with resources where you can access tools, analysis and activities that you can put into practice with your mentees:

- https://online-environment.ensoed.eu/in-class-tools/
- https://www.masterclassplatform.org/lessonslearned

e. Piloting

The testing process is crucial for any entrepreneur, as it allows them to get valuable feedback on their product or service and make improvements before launching it on the market. A mentor can guide the entrepreneur in this process as follows:

- Ⓡ Help the entrepreneur set clear goals for the testing process: The mentor can help the entrepreneur set specific goals for the testing process, such as identifying the main problems customers have with the product or service, gaining insight into customer preferences, market or measure the level of customer satisfaction.
- Ⓡ Identify the appropriate channels for the testing process: The mentor can guide the entrepreneur in identifying the appropriate channels to carry out the testing process. This could include organizing focus groups, conducting online surveys, or conducting field tests with a select group of customers.
- Ⓡ Help the entrepreneur to design relevant and specific questions: The mentor can help the entrepreneur to design relevant and specific questions that allow them to obtain useful information during the testing process. These questions should be designed in a way that they are easy for customers to understand and answer.
- Ⓡ Providing guidance and resources: The mentor can help the entrepreneur understand testing best practices, identify useful tools and resources for the testing process, and provide a clear testing roadmap.
- Ⓡ Providing valuable feedback: The mentor can be a constructive critic and provide valuable feedback on the entrepreneur's test results. This can help the entrepreneur identify areas for improvement and make informed decisions about how to improve the product or service.
- Ⓡ Sharing their experience: The mentor can share their experience testing similar products or services in the past and provide practical advice based on their experience.
- Ⓡ Helping set testing goals: The mentor can help the entrepreneur set clear goals for testing, identify the right metrics to measure success, and assess progress along the way.
- Ⓡ Providing emotional support: The testing process can be challenging and stressful for the entrepreneur. The mentor can provide emotional support and motivation during this process.

f. Feedback and evaluation

1. <u>Contextualization of the feedback</u>

Feedback is information , which must be based on facts and objective data, provided by one person to another with the aim of reinforcing and/or redirecting results and/or specific behaviors. Feedback (+) is the essential tool for the development of people and organizations.

Feedback is not reserved exclusively for situations of confrontation or dissatisfaction , it is more than indicated to praise, express satisfaction, appreciation, gratitude ...

Giving and receiving Feedback is a powerful opportunity, even if it is sometimes a difficult conversation. Any fact, action, behavior, is good to give Feedback that contributes to the development of a mentee.

Feedback is a very powerful conversation for:
- Change ineffective behaviors or actions.
- Share information.
- Reinforce achievements.
- Develop and evolve people.

« Feedback is a gift to the person who receives it and it belongs to him. If we don't give it to them , we'll take it away."
What characteristics should feedback have?
- Descriptive.
- Specific.
- Applicable.
- Personal and direct.
- Prompt.
- Positive, constructive and future-oriented.
- Checked.

There are two main types of feedback depending on their level of formality:
- FORMAL FEEDBACK: Carrying out follow-up meetings based on the defined objectives and action plan. When and where to give feedback to the entrepreneur? It is delivered in the established periods such as mentoring sessions .

- INFORMAL FEEDBACK : It happens in daily situations in which positive and/or negative events occur to be commented on based on the vision of the future. It comes up on the fly. It is given at any opportune moment by both parties, without it being a date set for it. **When and where to give the Feedback ?** If the goal is to recognize a behavior (eg congratulate an achievement), it can be done in public or in private. But if it is to discuss aspects that the person should improve, the conversation should be kept private.

2. Recommendations for giving feedback :
- GIVE RECURRING FEEDBACK: It is much more advisable to give constant Feedback and with notes on real and specific circumstances, instead of doing it semi-annually or annually, since talking about negative points on time contributes to the improvement and identification of problems more fast and efficient.

- NEVER GIVE FEEDBACK IF YOU ARE ANGRY: Feedback should not be confused with a scolding, for the feedback to be correct and understood by the recipient there must be a neutral attitude and dialogue, otherwise it can become an explosive meeting dominated by feeling and not for reason.

- ALWAYS START WITH THE POSITIVE POINTS: Highlighting only the negative points of the entrepreneur and forgetting about his virtues puts the receiver in a position of inferiority, the idea is not to affect his self-esteem, but to empower him to improve and encourage him to continue with his positive actions.

- WHEN POINTS FOR IMPROVEMENT ARE IDENTIFIED, EXPLAIN WHAT WOULD BE THE APPROPRIATE ATTITUDE TO TAKE: It is useless to identify areas for improvement if possible solutions, both operational and in attitudes, are not suggested. It is necessary to give proposals and expose in a practical way possible measures that guide and cause growth in the entrepreneur.

- LOOKING FOR THE ENTREPRENEUR TO HAVE CONTROL OVER THE GROWTH OF HIS COMPANY, IS THE OBJECTIVE OF A GOOD FEEDBACK!: The purpose of the feedback is to cause the entrepreneur to have a constant and judicious growth that allows him to have more and more independence and that one Go noticing the areas of improvement and the positive points. In a mentoring relationship , feedback is absolutely necessary in order to establish a climate of trust.

- WHEN YOU SEE SOMETHING GOOD: SAY IT!: Be specific, expressing appreciation and encouraging more of it. "What is rewarded, is repeated." Never let a good job go unnoticed : acknowledge it!

- WHEN YOU OBSERVE ANY ANOMALITY: ASK! Instead of giving answers or affirming, ask. Be direct, but kind.

3. Reflections prior to the feedback conversation

It is necessary that before formally giving feedback we prepare and design our conversation. Asking ourselves these questions will help us to be more accurate and professional . Let's not forget that bad Feedback can have a very negative impact on who receives it, even if it is positive!!

BEFORE GIVING FEEDBACK ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:
- What aspects will I focus the Feedback on ?
- Do I have objective facts/data that support it?
- What standards do I use? What do I compare with? (Rating scale).
- Could you validate the contrary opinion?
- What possibilities are opened or closed for the receiver, for me and for others with this Feedback ?
- Why am I going to give this Feedback ?
- What do I want to get?

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Give adequate positive feedback to RECOGNIZE. Rules:
- A SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR IS EXPLAINED. Example: "Hey, I loved the way you had to mediate the discussion ."

- BENEFITS OR ADVANTAGES OF THAT BEHAVIOR ARE EXPLAINED. Example: "The anecdote you told was funny and people have forgotten about the conflict . Then you managed to redirect to the main theme of the meeting".
- THE REASONS WHY IT IS BENEFICIAL ARE EXPLAINED. Example: "I think that without your contribution the meeting would have ended badly."
- CONGRATULATES AND ENCOURAGES YOU TO CONTINUE ACTING. Example: "Congratulations. That is the way to collaborate in the midst of a conflict of this type."

CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK
Give adequate constructive Feedback to ACT. Rules:
- A SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR IS EXPLAINED. Example: "It is important that you inform me as soon as possible of the calls that I have throughout the day."
- THE PREJUDICES OR DISADVANTAGES OF THIS BEHAVIOR ARE EXPLAINED. Example: "If you forget any or you do not collect all the data, it could be an entrepreneur who wants to close a deal or request information."
- THE REASONS WHY IT IS HARMFUL ARE EXPLAINED . Example: "If I don't call soon that can mean one less business."
- OTHER ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIORS TO BE PERFORMED ARE INDICATED. Example: "If I'm not here, call me on my mobile or leave me a message on my voice mail . If I'm around, write down the data on these call sheets."
- THE PERSON IS ENCOURAGED TO DO THEM. Example: "If you do this, it would help me a lot and I would appreciate it."

4. Guidance on feedback
Guidelines for giving feedback effectively:
- Be specific, not general. "Your report lacks supporting data" instead of " your work is inadequate".
- Be descriptive, not evaluative. "You've been late three days in a row" instead of " obviously you don't care about punctuality."
- feedback to the person, not about the person. "Roberto, when…" Instead of "look what Roberto has done…".
- Good feedback is timely. This orientation has two facets. First, the closer the feedback is to the event it refers to, the greater its impact will be . Second, effective feedback is given when and where the person is ready to hear it.
- Give constructive feedback in private. As additional guidance, some people prefer to receive positive feedback in private as well.
- Don't give people more feedback than they can take in. When a person is bombarded with feedback , positive or negative, they will start to feel uncomfortable and stop listening.
- Be responsible for feedback . "Well, I think that…" Instead of "Well, the whole group thinks that…"
- Give the person an opportunity to check the feedback . It is important to recognize that our feelings are often the result of our own perceptions, which may or may not match the perceptions of others . Whenever possible, the person

should be given the opportunity to check the accuracy of their feedback with other people.
- feedback has been understood . People who receive feedback , especially constructive feedback , often let their own defensive reactions get in the way of accurately listening to what is being said.
- Do not rush. It is often easier to hold off on feedback until you get to the point where you "have something to say" and then "let it all out."

Guidelines for receiving feedback effectively:
- Ask you if you want to receive it. The best way to ensure you get the feedback you want and need is to ask for it.
- Listen, don't explain. Even if you have an excellent reason for behaving the way you did, your explanation can easily be interpreted as evidence that you're not willing to listen, don't care, or justification.
- Request clarification. If you're not sure what exactly you want to say to the other person , ask!!
- Check your interpretation. Before you respond to feedback you've received, check with the other person to make sure you understand what the other person really meant.
- Check with other people. Just because someone has given you feedback doesn't mean you're right. One way to see if other people have similar reactions to your behavior is to ask them.
- Ask for suggestions. If the feedback you have received is constructive, ask the person who gave you the feedback to suggest alternative behavior that would be more acceptable to them.
- Reply. A quick way to limit the amount of feedback you receive in the future is to not offer any response to the feedback you receive today. A response that works well for both positive and constructive feedback is a simple "thank you."
- Not deny. Even if you think that the other person has misinterpreted you or your behavior , to them their interpretation is correct. An outright denial is also a denial of the other person's reality.

5. Emotional impact of feedback

The stages through which a person can pass when receiving negative feedback are the following:
- Anger: Does the feedback make you angry?
- Denial: of what they are telling us.
- Blame others: or the situation itself, avoiding our responsibility.
- Rationalization: the causes that justify the behavior are sought, sometimes even generalizing.
- Acceptance: we integrate the feedback , being prepared for the change.
- Commitment: finally, we show our commitment to change.

6. The feedforward

It is the feedback that looks to the future.
It focuses on a positive future: the feedforward will allow us to work on building a promising future.

It is based on requesting suggestions, ideas for the future.

- anticipate vs. react: while feedback is based on reacting and correcting what was done wrong, Feedforward focuses primarily on anticipating events, behaviors, etc. (even sometimes from past learning) that allow establishing a future action plan, the key is action planning, choosing an option and testing, putting it into operation.
- Assertive and positive communication: it is based on assertive and positive communication that helps employees to do the right thing without having to defend themselves or make judgments.
- Feedback was given depressed, sad, unmotivated? The feedforward does not intend to issue judgments or criticisms about the person but to seek their development through learning and reflection.
- Don't take it personally: unlike feedback , feedback does not involve criticism or personal judgments because it is based on listening carefully without making assessments and focusing on the future, on something that has not happened.

Marshall Goldsmith, main exponent of feedforward , stated: «no to the feedback of the past, you cannot change it, therefore, let it go. You don't want to change everything, choose just one behavior, to make a positive difference in your life.

6. Tools to be used with mentees (e-learning opportunities)

There are different digital tools that are useful for entrepreneurs and mentors:

Tools for entrepreneurs:

® Master Class Platform : Platform developed by the Erasmus+ Down To Business Project through which you can contact entrepreneurs in different countries and topics. Easy registration and fast feedback .

® MICROMENTOR.ORG: It is a free online service that connects small business owners with volunteer business mentors. The program has made it possible to link more than 6,000 entrepreneurs with mentors. It also offers advice and information on mentoring relationships and how to make them more effective, as well as a series of success stories. Both entrepreneurs and those volunteers who want to be mentors can register on the MicroMentor website and create a profile to start participating in the program.

® StartupNation : This website offers a wide variety of resources for entrepreneurs, including articles and podcasts on business strategies, business success tips, and much more.

® SCORE: SCORE is a non-profit organization that connects entrepreneurs with experienced business mentors. SCORE also offers a wide variety of online resources and tools to help entrepreneurs succeed.

® Inc.com: Inc.com is an online magazine that focuses on news and trends in the business world. It also offers a wealth of resources for entrepreneurs, including articles and videos on starting and growing a business.

® LinkedIn Learning – LinkedIn Learning offers a wide variety of online courses on a variety of business topics, from digital marketing to finance to team management. Mentors can use this platform to learn new skills and improve their existing skills.

® Mentoría.org: It is a platform that connects mentors and mentees , and offers resources and tools for mentoring.

® SCORE: A non-profit organization that provides free mentoring to entrepreneurs. Additionally, they offer a wealth of online resources and tools to help mentors support their mentees .

® Udemy: Offers a large number of online courses on entrepreneurship and leadership that can be useful for mentors.

® Khan Academy : Although this platform is best known for its focus on education, it also offers online courses on entrepreneurship and leadership that can be useful for mentors.

® hubspot Academy : Offers free online courses on marketing, sales, and leadership that can be useful for mentors working with entrepreneurs.

® MIT OpenCourseWare : The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) offers a wide variety of free online courses on entrepreneurship, leadership, and business that can be useful for mentors.

Tools for mentors:

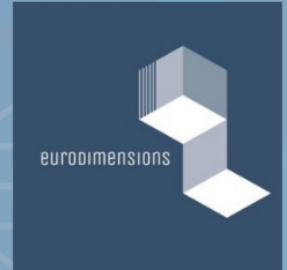There are many digital tools that can be useful for mentors. Here are some options:

® Zoom : This video conferencing platform can be useful for virtual meetings between mentor and mentee , and to enable real-time collaboration.

® Google Drive: Google Drive is a useful tool for sharing documents and collaborating on projects online. It can be useful for the mentor and the mentee to work together on a project.

® Slack : Slack is a communication platform that allows the creation of message channels and communication in real time. It's a useful tool for keeping in touch with mentees and collaborating on projects online.

® Trello: Trello is a project management tool that allows for the creation of boards with lists and cards. It can be useful for planning and organizing projects online.

Calendly : Calendly is a scheduling tool that allows mentees to schedule meetings with the mentor. It can be useful to manage appointments and save time.

 LinkedIn Learning – LinkedIn Learning is an online learning platform that offers a variety of courses. It can be helpful for the mentor to recommend relevant courses for the mentee .

 Grammarly: Grammarly is a grammar and spell checking tool. It can be useful for reviewing and correcting the mentee 's work .

These are just some of the digital tools that can be useful for mentors. The choice of tools will depend on the specific needs of the mentor and the mentee .