

Teaching Entrepreneurship Through Experiential Learning

PanSIG 2021 May 14-16, 2021



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Abstract

The rate of women entrepreneurs in Japan is abysmally low compared to other nations. In fact, Japan ranks last among OECD countries, and data indicates that a mere 17% of Japanese women declared to have knowledge about starting or growing their own business. The current situation indicates the need for learning materials that not only introduce the topic of entrepreneurship to all students but also showcase female models of business success. To this end, the presenters have created a series of experiential learning materials centered around a strong female character, Mirai Takahashi, who is in the process of launching a business start-up with the guidance of her mentor, Catherine Sakamoto. Through Takahashi's successes and failures, students experience the risks and rewards of starting their own company. The purpose of this session is to highlight how the presenters are currently using these materials and to introduce a series of academic studies regarding how material design can influence perceptions of entrepreneurship, gender equality, and digital transformation in business. The presenters will describe their current efforts to gather both quantitative and qualitative data for these studies and share their initial results. Active participation from audience members is strongly encouraged.

Why This Matters

Female university graduates are often ushered into less challenging positions at companies upon getting hired. Most intend to work for a few years until they get married. Yet, women are marrying later in life, and a growing number are not marrying at all. Until now, there has been a dearth of materials to teach about female entrepreneurship at the university level. This research proposes to change that mindset, and teach young women that starting and owning a business is a more ideal way to create financial independence and a higher quality of life.

Textbook Characters



Mirai Takahashi is a 25-year-old entrepreneur from Kyoto, Japan. After graduating from university with a degree in Business Management, she began working at a large Japanese automobile company. Mirai has recently decided to realize her dream by starting her own business.



Catherine Sakamoto is an experienced business owner. Throughout her career, she has started several businesses. Not all of them have been successful, but she has learned a lot along the way. She is happy to serve as a mentor to Mirai and wants to see her succeed.



Rodney Smith is originally from Los Angeles, CA, but completed his business degree at a university in Japan. He works as a personal assistant to Ms. Sakamoto. Along the way, he has learned many things about starting new businesses. One day he hopes to start a business of his own.

Textbook Overview

Example Unit Themes

- Planning the Future
- Job Skills
- Managing the Product Cycle
- Motivation & Productivity
- Socializing for Business
- Finance 101

Unit Contents

- Start-Up Academy
- Introduction
- Four Skills
- Language Use & Critical Thinking
- Information Gap
- Skill Up

Additional Content

- Project 1, 2, 3 & 4
- Unit Reviews
- Grammar Focus

1 Planning the Future

START UP ACADEMY

Mirai, when do you think you will be the best person to sell products in the market?

You need to know the market. You need to know the biggest economy.

That's right, Mirai. You need to know the biggest economy in the world. You need to know the biggest economy in the world.

How can I find out more about that?

Instructions: Match the number on the left to the projected population on the right.

Country/Region	Projected Population (2045)
1 Europe	1,525,365,350
2 U.S.A.	1,419,672,039
3 Brazil	958,322,254
4 China	354,760,286
5 India	314,066,324
6 Japan	202,102,214
7 Indonesia	121,338,671

Check your answers. Go to the following webpage to see the correct answers.
<https://www.brookings.edu/population-projections/world-2045/>

Listening

First Listening: Listen to the conversation between Daniel, the host of a business podcast, and Tomoko, a business owner. Write "T" for Tomoko and "D" for Daniel next to each sentence. Then, check your answers with a partner.

1) Health kiosks would eliminate the need to see a doctor. T F

2) Customers can have their height and weight measured at a kiosk. T F

Second Listening: Write in the missing words and circle the best choice in parentheses to complete the conversation below. Then, compare your answers with a partner.

Daniel: Hi Tomoko, thank you for joining us on the Think Big Podcast.

Tomoko: Hello, thank you for having me.

Daniel: To start, could you give me an overview of your company?

Tomoko: Yes. The focus of our company is health kiosks. These are automated, self-service centers, usually in convenience stores, where customers can check their health status.

Daniel: What's a real _____ so there is no need to go to a doctor anymore?

Tomoko: Not exactly. We see our _____ as a small part of the health care industry. The kiosks allow patients, patients to check their health frequently. Then, this information is sent to their doctor.

Daniel: I see. So, if you have more frequent check-ups, you can identify problems before they happen?

Tomoko: Yes, that's what we're hoping.

Daniel: Your company is really thinking _____ when it comes to health care. What health information can be checked at these kiosks?

Tomoko: Our kiosks currently check customers' weight, height and blood pressure, pressure, but we are always _____ to come up with new ideas. We have to add blood work and collaborating with health professionals through video calls in the future.

SKILL UP!

A Diversified Portfolio

After talking to her financial advisor, Mirai has decided to invest a portion of her salary into the stock market every month. Her advisor has suggested that she divide her investment into the following funds (collection of stocks).

40% US Fund
30% Japanese Fund
20% International Fund
10% Real Estate Fund

Instructions: Mirai has \$1,000 set aside each month for her investments. Look at the funds that she can choose from. Then, write how much of that \$1,000 she should invest in each fund based on the advice she received.

Name of Fund	Amount Mirai Should Invest
S&P 500 (US Fund)	
Nikkei (Japan Fund)	
Mitsui (Intl Fund)	
Pan World International Fund	
Total REIT (Real Estate Fund)	

How much money did Mirai make? If Mirai invests \$1,000 a month consistently for the next 25 years, and earns an 8% rate of return, she will retire with \$1.5M! **Wow!**

Balance Accumulation Graph

Breakdown

Project 2 The Pitch Deck

Go Faster Scooter

Mirai students use a scooter to get around. However, some students are too afraid to drive the Go Faster self-driving scooter.

The Go Faster is very affordable, costing only \$1,000. While this might be a little more expensive than your average scooter, it comes with many exciting features. First, the auto-pilot function allows you to relax while you travel to your destination. Second, the scooter can be guided by your location by remote control. Therefore, if you are ever stranded somewhere and need a lift, you can call your scooter to you. Finally, you always feel safe with the Go Faster scooter because it has a number of safety features. In our tests of the product, the scooter only ran into objects or people 5% of the time. So, why don't you go to your nearest motorcycle shop and pick one up today?

Instructions: Please read the description of "Go Faster Scooters" above. Then, try to fill out the chart below using what you learned in the reading. Check your answers with a partner.

Company Name: *Go Faster Scooters*

1) Please describe this product.

2) How much does it cost?

3) Where can you buy it?

4) What are its special features? What is a disadvantage?

5) Would you buy this product? Why or why not?

21st Century Skills

"The term 21st century skills refers to a broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits that are believed—by educators, school reformers, college professors, employers, and others—to be critically important to success in today's world, particularly in collegiate programs and contemporary careers and workplaces." (The Glossary of Educational Reform, 2016).



Learning Skills

- Critical Thinking
- Creativity
- Collaboration
- Communication

Life Skills

- Flexibility
- Initiative
- Social skills
- Productivity
- Leadership

Literacy Skills

- Information Literacy
- Media Literacy
- Technology Literacy

Critical Thinking

Instructions: Choose a product with which you are very familiar. Then, write a review for this product explaining both the good points and bad points. Use the sentences below to organize your thoughts. Next, read your review to your partner but don't tell them what you are reviewing. See if they can guess which product you are talking about.

Product	Why do you like it?	What could be improved?	Who would enjoy this product?
My product is ...	One thing I like about it is ...	But, I think it could be improved if ...	The type of person who would enjoy this product most is ...
	Another thing I like about it is ...		

Your Turn

Instructions: Now, with your group members, answer the same questions about your start-up. When you are finished, share your ideas with the other groups in the class.

Company Name: _____

- 1) Why do you think this business will succeed?
- 2) Who is the target market?
- 3) If it is a product, where will it be made? If it's a service where will it be provided (at the client's home? Place of business? Etc.)
- 4) What kind of skills do employees need to work at your company?
- 5) How much money will you need to start your company?

Socializing for business tips:

Mirai's mentor has suggested 3 tips for socializing for a business. For each tip, write down why you think it is important.

1. Listen more than you talk
This tip is important because _____
2. Avoid sensitive topics
This tip is important because _____
3. Be yourself
This tip is important because _____

Interviewer: Hello. Please tell me a _____ about yourself.

Job Applicant: Well, I (come, came) from a small town outside of Tokyo, and I study business marketing at university.

Interviewer: I see. What do you like about marketing?

Job Applicant: I like analyzing _____ and making (service, surveys) for customers.

Interviewer: That sounds really good. What would you say are your _____ points?

Job Applicant: Hmm, _____ me see. I guess my strong points are that I'm a very hard worker, and I have good communication skills.

Interviewer: OK. How about your _____ points?

Job Applicant: I have trouble saying (know, no). Also, I sometimes _____ too much on small details.

Interviewer: I understand. Which job do you think would best _____ you?

Job Applicant: I think working in marketing or sales would best _____ my personality.



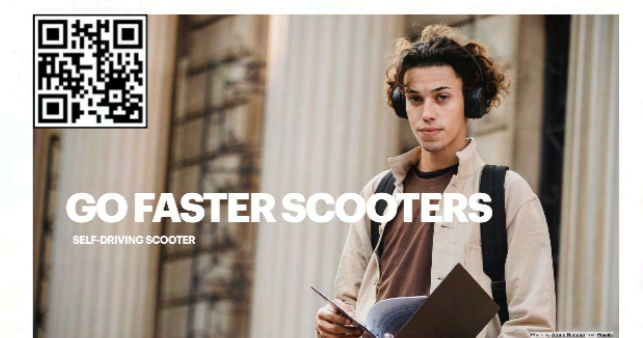
The Pitch Deck



What is a pitch deck?

A pitch deck is a slide show about your business that can be delivered in person or through a recording to a potential investor. It must "hook" the attention of the viewer and convince them to invest in your idea.

Instructions: Watch the pitch deck video below for "Go Faster Scooters." Then, watch again and write which information was found in the introduction, body, and conclusion of the presentation. Information was found in the introduction, body and conclusion of the presentation write what information was found in the introduction, body and conclusion of the presentation.



Company Name: *Go Faster Scooters*

Introduction: Description of the product and "hook" to capture the listeners attention.

Body: Explanation of the three main features of your product or service.

Conclusion: Tell the listeners the price of your product and service and where they can buy it. End with a call to actions.

Future Research

- **Student Satisfaction:** Collect data using Bolliger and Halupa's 2012 survey instrument on student satisfaction with online courses adapted for this research. Their survey examines overall satisfaction as well as the subscales of instructor, materials, set-up, interaction, and outcomes.
- **21st Century Skills:** Research how the use of the textbook affects students' development of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication using a survey instrument developed by Mills and Thanyawatpokin (2020).
- **Gender Perceptions:** Conduct a qualitative study (interviews or focus groups) to understand students' perceptions of women's role in business before and after using the textbook.

References

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