

Description for the general public

There is still no consensus in studies on entrepreneurship as to the type of knowledge and skills that contribute to the decision on self-employment (becoming an entrepreneur). In particular, there is a discussion on whether general versus expert knowledge and skills are needed for entrepreneurial ventures. According to the "Jack-of-all-trades hypothesis", entrepreneurs are people with skills and knowledge covering various fields, while the experience of full-time (or contract) employees focuses on a narrower area.

In this project we try to go further and verify the relationship not only between the diversity of knowledge, skills and experience and the foundation of the company, but also the link between wealth of experience of entrepreneur and whether the company after a fixed period of time is still present on the market or entrepreneur decided (or was forced to) to cease the business. The project assumes a survey covering Poland-wide sample of individuals including subsamples of people who were in their professional careers all-time employees, next to a group of entrepreneurs operating for at least five years, and current employees (former entrepreneurs), who in the last 10 years were running their businesses, but stopped it.

Taking into analysis individuals who did not perform well as entrepreneurs, or ran the company successfully, but decided to stop the business for other reasons, will allow us to gain knowledge regarding the optimal "equipment" of the potential entrepreneur from the business formation and continuation point of view. Knowing the answer to the question on the role of knowledge, skills and experience in becoming and remaining entrepreneur may be an important cue in choosing the right career path. It can also significantly affect teaching of entrepreneurship, in particular the program and type of teaching methods in business education. From this point of view, the study will contribute not only to entrepreneurship theory, but also its results will have a meaning for a discussion on the objectives, contents and methods in entrepreneurship education.