Critical thinking

This activity supports students in strengthening their critical-thinking, analytical, and problem-solving capabilities by examining examples of failed commercialisation attempts, business ideas, or entrepreneurial pitches. Through guided critique, students identify where assumptions, strategy, design, ethics, or evidence were insufficient, and then work collaboratively to propose remedies or alternative pathways. This activity helps learners develop the judgement required to evaluate opportunities, anticipate risks, and redesign ventures for more viable, responsible and sustainable outcomes.

Description	Students analyse a real or constructed case involving a commercialisation process, entrepreneurial idea, pitch, prototype, or venture that went wrong (e.g., flawed assumptions, poor product–market fit, ethical oversights, technical missteps, communication failures). Working individually or in teams, students identify critical issues, articulate what should have been done differently, and propose practical actions or remedies to strengthen the concept or pivot the venture. The activity builds evaluative judgement, reflective practice, and applied entrepreneurial reasoning.
Learning outcomes	By the end of this activity, students will be able to: 1. **Analyse** the underlying causes of failure within an entrepreneurial or commercialisation context. 2. **Evaluate** the assumptions, strategies, and decisions that contributed to the unsuccessful outcome. 3. **Formulate** evidence-based remedies or alternative actions to improve the commercialisation pathway. 4. **Communicate** critical insights and recommendations clearly and persuasively. 5. **Reflect** on how entrepreneurial judgement, ethical considerations, and risk assessment influence venture outcomes.
How it works	1. **Introduce the Scenario** Present students with a case study (real or fictional). Cases may include failed product launches, unsuccessful pitch competitions, unmet commercialisation milestones, or innovations that encountered serious ethical or adoption barriers. 2. **Individual or Small-Group Analysis** Students examine the case and answer guiding prompts such as:

	◦ What assumptions did the team make? ◦ Where did the commercialisation or pitch process fall short? ◦ What signals or risks were ignored? ◦ How might customer, stakeholder, or market feedback have changed the outcome? 3. **Identify Points of Failure** Students map the "failure points", strategic, operational, ethical, design, or communication-related. 4. **Propose Remedies / Actions** Students develop practical recommendations, such as: ◦ new experiments or evidence needed ◦ recommended pivot strategies ◦ stakeholder consultation approaches ◦ revised value propositions ◦ improved pitch structures or communication techniques ◦ ethical or sustainability considerations 5. **Share & Discuss** Groups present their critiques and proposed remedies. Instructor facilitates comparison across teams, highlighting patterns, assumptions, or alternative interpretations. 6. **Reflective Wrap-Up** Students complete a short individual reflection on what they learned about entrepreneurial judgement, uncertainty, and responsible decision-making.
Resources required	• Case study materials (text, video, pitch decks, mock artefacts) • Worksheet or template for analysis • Whiteboards, sticky notes, or collaborative digital tools (Padlet, Teams, etc.) • Optional: guest entrepreneur or researcher to discuss a lived experience of "ideas gone wrong"
AI considerations	• Explicit boundaries should be set so AI supports but does not replace critical reasoning. • Consider designing a task where students compare their own analysis with an AI-generated critique and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each, building AI literacy and critical evaluation skills. • If the assessment is summative, require students to declare all AI use and articulate their own reasoning beyond AI outputs.

Assessment	**Formative** • Short written critique (300–500 words) analysing key failure points • Group presentation of proposed remedies • Peer feedback on analysis and recommendations • Reflective journal entry on lessons learned **Summative** • Structured analytical report evaluating the case and proposing a justified set of remedies • Recorded pitch of an improved or redesigned commercialisation pathway • Comparative analysis: “What the venture did” vs. “What should have been done” with evidence-based justification • Portfolio component within an innovation, entrepreneurship or design subject