

Innovative entrepreneurs: Guests

Inviting a founder or executive into the classroom provides students with authentic insights into the entrepreneurial mindset, decision-making under uncertainty, and the realities of venture creation. This activity leverages lived experience to deepen understanding of theory, spark curiosity, and foster critical reflection on the skills and attitudes required for innovation. Through structured interaction, students connect classroom concepts to real-world practice and explore how entrepreneurial thinking can be applied in diverse contexts.

Description	Students engage with a guest speaker such as a startup founder, social entrepreneur, or corporate innovator who shares their journey, challenges, and lessons learned. The session emphasises entrepreneurial mindset, resilience, and adaptability. Students prepare questions, participate in an interactive Q&A, and complete a reflective or applied task to consolidate learning.
Learning outcomes	By the end of this activity, students will be able to: 1. Describe key characteristics of an entrepreneurial mindset demonstrated by the guest. 2. Analyse how real-world entrepreneurial experiences align with or challenge theoretical frameworks. 3. Reflect on personal attitudes toward risk, innovation, and opportunity recognition. 4. Apply insights from the guest's experience to a hypothetical or real entrepreneurial scenario.
How it works	[1-Hr structure] Pre-Session (Optional) For Students: Research the Guest's Background (15–20 minutes) • Explore the guest's company website, LinkedIn profile, and any media coverage. • Identify their entrepreneurial journey: ○ What problem did they aim to solve? ○ What industry or market do they operate in? ○ What notable challenges or pivots have they faced? • Note any innovations, partnerships, or impact areas relevant to your discipline. Prepare 2–3 Thoughtful Questions • Questions should go beyond "What inspired you?" and focus on mindset and decision-making. • Examples:

	○ <i>What was the most difficult decision you made when scaling your venture, and how did you approach it?</i> ○ <i>How do you balance risk-taking with evidence-based decision-making?</i> ○ <i>What role did failure play in shaping your entrepreneurial mindset?</i> For Instructor: Provide a Short Primer on Entrepreneurial Mindset (10 minutes) • Define entrepreneurial mindset: adaptability, resilience, opportunity recognition, risk tolerance, creativity, and value creation. • Link these traits to course objectives and real-world relevance. • Share a simple framework (e.g., “The 5 Dimensions of Entrepreneurial Mindset” or UQ Ventures’ model). • Encourage students to listen for examples of these traits during the guest’s talk. Optional Prep Materials: • A one-page summary of entrepreneurial mindset concepts • A short video or reading (e.g., “What is an Entrepreneurial Mindset?”) • A template for students to jot down research notes and draft questions During Session 1. Introduction (5 min) Instructor introduces the guest and links their expertise to course themes. 2. Guest Presentation (20–25 min) Guest shares their entrepreneurial journey, focusing on mindset, challenges, pivots, and lessons learned. 3. Interactive Q&A (15 min) Students ask prepared and spontaneous questions. 4. Applied Reflection (10–15 min) Students complete a quick activity: ○ Identify 3 entrepreneurial traits demonstrated by the guest. ○ Write one actionable insight they can apply to their own context.
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	Optional: Discuss in pairs or share on a collaborative board.
Resources required	- Guest speaker (founder, executive, or innovator) - AV setup for presentation (or video conferencing tools for remote guests) - Reflection worksheet or digital platform (Padlet, Teams) - Optional: background reading on entrepreneurial mindset
AI considerations	Students may use AI to: - research the guest's company or industry before the session - generate potential questions for the Q&A - summarise key takeaways after the session Emphasise that AI should support preparation and synthesis, not replace personal engagement or critical thinking.
Assessment	Formative - Submission of 2–3 prepared questions before the session - Short reflective post (150–200 words) on key insights - Peer discussion board contribution Summative - Reflective essay linking guest insights to entrepreneurial theory - Application task: "How would you apply one insight to a venture idea?" - Group presentation summarising lessons learned and implications for innovation practice