



伙伴法则： 商学院的学习如何帮助创业者找到理想的商业伙伴

The Partner Principle: How b-school study helps entrepreneurs find business partners

文/柯玟秀 By Janine Coughlin

谷歌、拜耳和通用电气都是各自行业的翘楚。这三家跨国企业还有一个醒目的共同点——它们都是由多位创始人联合创立的。谷歌的创始人拉里·佩奇和谢尔盖·布林是在斯坦福大学读研究生时相识的。拜耳如今是医疗、农业和高科技材料的领先制造商，其成立要追溯到150年前，德国人弗利德里希·拜耳与友人约翰·弗利德里希·威斯科特共同发明了一种制造合成染料的方法，进而创立了拜耳。著名科学家托马斯·阿尔瓦·爱迪生认识到自家的爱迪生通用电气公司的最佳出路是与最大竞争对手汤姆森-休斯顿公司合并，这才有了通用电气的诞生。

事实上，今天许多大型跨国企业的创立者都认为，与他人合作是“放飞梦想的最佳途径”。中欧国际工商学院战略与创业学系系主任、创业学教授方睿哲（Ramakrishna Velamuri）指出，这条成功之路绝非偶然。

“有充分的研究证据表明，由团队创立的企业表现更佳。比起那些由单打独斗的创业者所建立的企业，由团队创立的公司更有可能生存下来并取得成功。”方睿哲教授说，“在公认的创业圣地硅谷，有一个说法：你必须拥有优异的团队，方能打造伟大的组织。甚至在过去，一些知识产业的大公司也是由团队创建的，如惠普、西门子、赫斯特，等等。”

方睿哲教授说，团队创业还有几个明显的益处。“首先，想要在知识产业取得成功，就需要一整套多样化的技能，这不一个人能够掌握的。”他解释道，“特别是像投资者与战略伙伴这样的利益相关者，是不会轻易地将手中的资源托付给只有一位创办者的公司的，因为如果公司上下仅仅靠一人来打理的话，风险未免太大了。其次，创立新公司是一个压力重重的过程。企业家形容那就像是坐过山车，跌宕起伏常常就在一夕之间；如果有人和你一同承担压力、谈论挑战，那是一个非常重要的优势。”

Google, Bayer AG and General Electric are all top global players in their respective industries. Another notable commonality of these multinationals is that all were founded as partnerships. Google's Larry Page and Sergey Brin met when both were graduate students at Stanford. Bayer AG, which today is a leading manufacturer of materials for the healthcare, agriculture and high tech sectors, was founded 150 years ago in Germany when friends Friedrich Bayer and Johann Friedrich Weskott discovered an innovative way to manufacture synthetic dyes. General Electric was born when renowned inventor Thomas Alva Edison realized that the best way forward for his Edison General Electric Company was to partner with its biggest competitor, the Thomson-Houston Company.

In fact many of today's multinational giants were begun by entrepreneurs who decided that partnering up with others was the best way to make their ideas fly. Chair of the Department of Strategy and Entrepreneurship at CEIBS, Professor of Entrepreneurship Ramakrishna Velamuri, says this recipe for success is no accident.

"There is very strong research evidence that ventures set up by teams perform better. They have a higher likelihood of survival and success than those founded by single entrepreneurs," Prof Velamuri says. "In Silicon Valley, considered the Mecca of entrepreneurship, they say that you need very good teams to build great organizations. Even in the past, several great companies in knowledge industries were founded by teams – HP (Hewlett Packard), Siemens, and Hoechst, to name a few."

There are some obvious benefits to starting ventures in teams says Prof Velamuri. "First, success in knowledge industries requires a diverse set of skills, which no single individual is likely to possess," he explains. "In particular, stakeholders such as investors and strategic partners will hesitate to commit their resources to a venture that has a single founder, because of the risk of relying on a single individual for execution. Second, starting a new venture can be a very stressful experience. Entrepreneurs describe it as a rollercoaster ride, often with ups and downs on the same day; having someone who can share the stress with you, and whom you can talk to about the challenges is a very

important advantage."

Business school study is well known for the excellent networking opportunities it opens up for fledgling entrepreneurs looking to meet potential business partners. However, many may not realize that an even more important component of business school learning is self-study. CEIBS' professors say that knowing one's self well is the key to being able to find the right business partners, and make those partnerships work, especially when under pressure.

"In a typical business school programme, students get to know themselves and their operating styles through diagnostic tools, such as the 360 degree evaluation. They obtain insights on their strengths and weaknesses and develop self-awareness, which has been shown to be critical to career success, whether as a manager or as an entrepreneur," says Prof Velamuri. "They understand which types of personalities and styles are complementary to their own; this knowledge helps them seek the right personality profiles as partners."

The emphasis on teamwork and collaboration in the CEIBS MBA and EMBA programmes also provides students with many practical experiences for honing team work skills.

"The CEIBS MBA Programme provides a platform and various opportunities for students' collaboration and they value the learning experiences very much," says CEIBS Associate Dean and Director of the MBA Programme Chen Shimin. "In the first academic year, students are assigned to different teams with mixed nationality and background. The teams get reshuffled after each term, so they can study and work with different students on various case discussions, group projects and assignments."

The CEIBS MBA curriculum also includes an Integrated Strategy Project (ISP) that sees students forming teams by shared interests, and working together over several months to develop innovative and practical solutions that address real-life, challenging strategic issues provided by the top-tier companies within CEIBS' corporate partner network.

In addition to coursework and projects, there are a variety of extra-curricular activities available that give students additional collaboration opportunities. "Besides



从左至右: 陈杰平教授、陈世敏教授、方睿哲教授

From left: Professors Charles Chen, Chen Shimin, and S Ramakrishna Velamuri.

众所周知,商学院的学习也是拓展人脉网络的绝佳机会,刚刚起步的创业者可以在这里结识潜在的商业伙伴。然而,许多人恐怕还没有意识到,商学院学习的一个更重要的组成部分是对自我的探索。中欧教授们指出,良好的自我认知是寻找到理想商业伙伴的关键,并且能够让双方合作融洽,特别是在有压力的情况下。

“在典型的商学院课程中,学员们通过‘360度评估’之类的诊断工具来了解自己,了解自己的行事风格。他们洞察到自己的优势与劣势,增强了自我意识。无论对于经理人还是企业家,这些都是事业成功的关键因素。”方睿哲教授说,“他们明白哪种类型的性格和作风能与自己形成互补,这些认知有助于他们找到具有理想‘性格配置’的合作者。”

中欧MBA和EMBA课程中对团队协作与合作的侧重,也为学员们提供了许多磨练团队协作能力的实用经验。

“中欧的MBA课程为学生之间的合作提供了平台和各种各样的机会,大家对这样的学习体验评价很高。”中欧副教务长、MBA课程主任陈世敏教授说,“在第一学年,学员们被分入不同的组,组员们的国籍和背景都是多样化的。每个学期之后都会重新分组,因此每位学生都有机会与不同的人讨论各种案例、合作团队项目和完成集体作业。”

中欧MBA课程还包括一个综合战略项目(ISP),在该项目中,学生们结成一个有着共同利益的团队,协作数月,开发出适用于现实生活、既有创新性又切合实际的解决方案,以挑战由中欧的合作企业提出的战略问题。

除了课程与项目之外,中欧还组织了丰富多彩的课外活动,为学生们提供更多的合作机会。“我们有近40个学员俱乐部,供大家在增强领导力、积累管理经验的同时,彼此交

流兴趣,寓学于乐。此外,中欧的MBA学生还组织了两大年度盛事:企业社会责任全球论坛(BGRC)和创意中国挑战赛(InnovateChina)。”陈世敏教授说。BGRC是由商学院组织的亚太地区最大的企业社会责任(CSR)大会。创意中国挑战赛是面向全球商学院的商业创意年度竞赛,由中欧MBA学生于2008年发起。“通过这些活动,学生们得到了宝贵的机会去实践专业和管理方面的技能。”陈世敏教授指出。

录取过程的高标准,也让学员们更有可能在同学中找到潜在的合作伙伴。“我们的EMBA课程吸引了来自各行各业的素质优异、经验丰富的经理人和企业家。”中欧国际工商学院副教务长兼EMBA课程主任陈杰平教授说,“我们鼓励学员们向教授学习,也鼓励学员之间相互学习。有些学员已经是阅历丰富的企业家,有着很多人生故事和经验可以与大家分享。而从项目协作中获得的经验,对于学员来说也是非常宝贵,因为他们可以从真实感受到那种工作环境。”

当争执不期而至,沟通技巧就显得格外重要,这也是中欧课程的一部分。“由团队创建新公司的一大劣势是会有潜在的人际冲突,商学院的课程也为学员提供处理人际冲突的框架和沟通技巧。”方睿哲教授说,“在创业课上,我们强调要慎重选择团队成员,与他们的沟通要坦诚开放。我们还强调,必须用书面协议来明确职位、责任与报酬。”

你期望未来的商业伙伴具备怎样的品质呢?“你一定要找到与自己价值观相同、技术能够互补的拍档。”方睿哲教授说,“例如,如果你热衷于零售行业却没有这方面的经验,那么找一个有零售业经验的伙伴就很重要。团队成员必须是你精挑细选出来的,就像是选择人生伴侣一样,因为在新企业创建的过程中,团队成员带给你的影响往往超过你的配偶。”

the nearly 40 student clubs that offer students the chance to share interests and have fun while strengthening their leadership and managerial experiences, CEIBS MBA students organize two flagship events every year: the Being Globally Responsible Conference (BGRC) and InnovateChina,” explains Professor Chen Shimin. BGRC is the largest business school organized CSR conference in the Asia Pacific. InnovateChina is an annual global business plan competition that was started by CEIBS MBA students in 2008. “Students gain valuable practice in professional and entrepreneurial skills from these events,” he says.

The high standards of the admissions process also increase the likelihood that students can find a potential partner amongst their cohort. “Our EMBA programme attracts a diverse group of high level, experienced executives and entrepreneurs,” explains CEIBS Associate Dean and Director of the EMBA Programme Charles Chen. “Participants are encouraged to learn from each other as well as from faculty. Those who are already experienced entrepreneurs have great personal anecdotes and advice to share. The experiences gained by working on projects together are also an invaluable way for participants to get a practical feel for that kind of working environment.”

Communication skills, which are especially vital when disagreements crop up, are also a part of the CEIBS curriculum. “The major drawback of starting new ventures in teams is the potential for interpersonal conflict. Business school courses provide students with frameworks and communication skills to deal with interpersonal conflict,” says Prof Velamuri. “In the entrepreneurship courses, we emphasize choosing team members carefully and communicating with them openly and honestly. We also underscore the importance of written agreements that clearly specify roles, responsibilities and rewards.”

What qualities should you look for in a potential business partner? “You must look for a partner with shared values and complementary skills,” Prof Velamuri says. “For example, if you are passionate about the retail industry but have no prior experience in it, then it is important for you to find a partner who has retail experience. Team members must be chosen with the greatest of care, in much the same way as life partners are chosen, because the intensity of interactions between team members in the context of a new venture can often be greater than that between spouses.”

建立成功的商业合伙人关系

中欧国际工商学院战略与创业学系系主任、创业学教授方睿哲表示,创业团队要想取得成功,除了必须确保成员之间技能互补、价值观相同之外,还应该遵循以下几点:

- 团队成员之间必须坦诚交流
- 团队成员之间必须有详尽的书面协议,明确规定各自的职位、责任与报酬
- 特别需要注意的是:协议应该是动态而非静态的,必须有未来团队成员的境况和兴趣发生改变时的应对方案。团队成员必须考虑到如果将来他们中有一人或多人想要退出时的情况,并制定一套预后机制来应对股东退股;解决方案必须做到企业利益高于退股股东利益
- 团队必须有领导者,这对于那些是同窗好友共同创业的团队来说,可能不太容易

Building a Successful Business Partnership

Besides ensuring that team members have complementary skills and shared values, Chair of the Department of Strategy and Entrepreneurship at CEIBS, Professor of Entrepreneurship S Ramakrishna Velamuri suggests entrepreneurial teams have the greatest chance for success together when they do the following:

- Team members must practice open and honest communication with one another.
- There should be explicit written agreements between team members that clearly identify everyone's roles, responsibilities and rewards.
- In particular, agreements should be dynamic rather than static, and must expressly provide for the eventuality that team members' circumstances and preferences may change over time. The team members must take into consideration that one or more of them may want to leave at some time in the future and must work out a mechanism beforehand to deal with the outgoing shareholders. The solution must prioritize the interests of the venture over those of the shareholders.
- Every team must have a leader. This is not easy for some teams to accept, especially if the team is made up of classmates who have become friends during their studies.