

Chapter 7

The More Aging, The More Managing?

Examples of Senior Entrepreneurs and Managerial Practices in Poland

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ABSTRACT

The contemporary world is continuously changing. These changes are dynamic and take place under the influence of some social, economic, political, and cultural processes, subject to a global economy. Its further active development will depend both on their ability to compete more and more based on non-cost factors as well as existing external constraints, including regulatory barriers. Based on anonymous surveys, the chapter aims to present an analysis of motives, fears, problems, support, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of creating and running startups by people aged 50+.

INTRODUCTION

The thesis about recognizing the leading role of entrepreneurship in the dynamics of economic growth is widely known in Europe and the world. Entrepreneurship, as the main driving force of economic development, has become one of the elements of the EU 2020 Strategy for smart and sustainable and inclusive growth (European Commission, 2010). Along with defining the new time horizon of the EU development strategy, the European Commission also adopted a document entitled Action plan for entrepreneurship development up to 2020 (European Commission, 2013), targeted, among others on unlocking the entrepreneurial potential in Europe by, on the one hand, removing existing obstacles,

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and on the other hand creating facilitation in creating new enterprises. The priority is to create a more friendly environment for self-employed people. Europe needs more entrepreneurs to return to the path of economic growth and achieve a high level of employment, as it is in small and medium-sized enterprises that the newest jobs are created.

Individual entrepreneurship is one of the essential factors of the socio-economic development of regions in various scales of spatial systems and a meaningful way to make the labor market more flexible. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of research into the determinants of individual entrepreneurship related to self-employment, self-employment, and tiny and small enterprises. Such enterprises face various barriers that hinder their formation, functioning, and development, and often lead to bankruptcies. European statistics indicate that the percentage of failing enterprises is highest among companies based solely on self-employment and micro-enterprises, although the owners' goals and needs strongly determine their formation, and therefore, theoretically, they should be expansive and innovative. However, if a company is created only to be a place of employment for the owner and his family, it can only be treated as a place of work, and not a real enterprise: focused on the development and seeking opportunities for the expansion of new markets.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MAIN FOCUS

Understood as a manifestation of resourcefulness and initiative, entrepreneurship is recognized as one of the pillars of economic development and what is connected with it - development of societies. It can be considered in different dimensions. The essence of entrepreneurship lies in initiating the creation of projects, as well as new forms of activity that would meet the needs and generate profits and enable reproduction and development of entrepreneurship (Kožuch, & Dyndalewicz, 2004). These are all activities that include the identification, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities for introducing new products and new services or ways of organizing, new markets, raw materials (Shane, 2003).

Entrepreneurship, usually defined as a set of traits, predispositions, attitudes, talent, economic initiative, innovative activity, has various faces. Using the division due to the organizational and legal form and the type of inspiration understood as a stimulating factor, three types of entrepreneurship are distinguished: individual, corporate (internal), and family (Kožmiński, 2004; Chodyński, 2008; Chyba, 2015). Among them, the role of an essential initiator of economic development in various scales of spatial systems is attributed to individual entrepreneurship, which by self-employment is considered an important strategy to make the labor market more flexible¹ (Lemańska-Majdzik, 2008, 2013; Czerniachowicz, 2011; Szepelska, 2013). Individual entrepreneurship as an alternative way of employment prevents the escalation of unemployment. People who look for wage labor unsuccessfully allow them to return to the group of employees. Those entrepreneurs who created jobs (switchers) increase the demand for work (Kaczorowski, 2011; Tyrowicz, 2011).

The state of the state economy is strongly dependent on the dynamic entrepreneurial sector. This dependence takes place at all stages of economic development, but it may take on various intensities and character. Entrepreneurship from coercion, especially in less developed economic regions or those suffering from a temporary increase in unemployment, can support the economy when employment options are limited. In turn, more developed economies create a more significant number of entrepreneurial opportunities as a result of their wealth and innovative potential. On the other hand, they offer more jobs for people who could become entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurial potential of the economy is also

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