

Psychological literacy is important for entrepreneurs

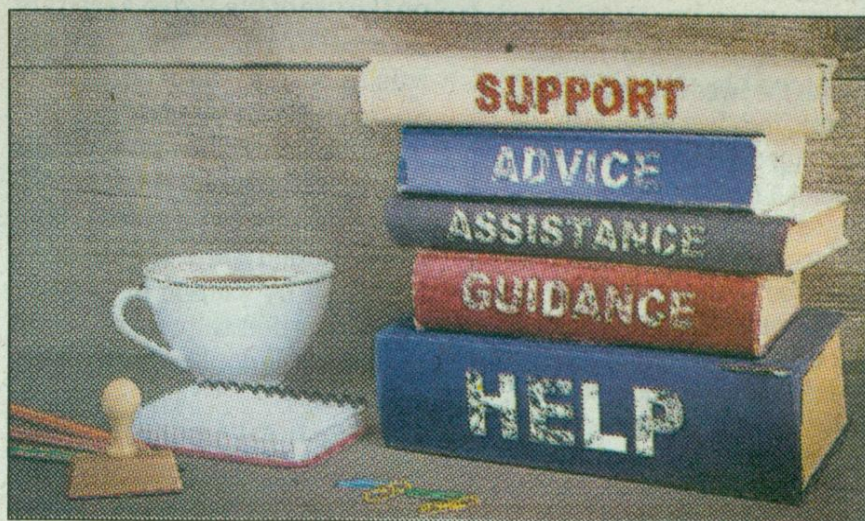
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Many people think that psychology is mostly about mental health, but this is just a small aspect of psychology. In reality, the discipline is hugely diverse: behaviour and the mind can be studied and investigated in pretty much any situation in which humans act and interact. Psychology is relevant to the workplace, business, education, computers and the internet and many other areas of society.

Psychology is a very versatile degree that trains students in a range of skills and domains that are relevant to many employers. Psychology graduates are able to think critically and scientifically, use computers and software packages, analyse statistics, write analytical reports, discuss and reason complex arguments, solve problems at many level, work in teams, show initiative and leadership and so on. The capability to adaptively use psychology for personal, social and professional gain is called psychological literacy and the main aim of many undergraduate psychology programme is to develop graduates who can use psychology in these different areas of life.

Entrepreneurial learning is not only about creating new business ventures but also about seeing new opportunities and using your own resources to meet these new opportunities. As mentioned above, psychology students are equipped with a large number of intellectual resources so we also want to give our students the chance to use these skills in different situations, to best prepare them for the workplace. In our enterprise challenges, we collab-



✱ A psychology degree trains students in a range of skills ISTOCKPHOTO

orate with external organisations and ask students to use their subject-specific knowledge and skills to develop and then pitch an idea to support specific client groups. Our challenges so far have been developed in collaboration with local and national charities to provide realistic and authentic settings and to address real needs. For example, in our most recent challenge, we worked with a local charity called "Escape interventions" that supports children and young adults in developing their social, emotional and vocational competences. The challenge asked our psychology students to develop a service, product or intervention that would help young adults develop their resilience to bullying. The winning team's idea was to provide an online resource pack for students and teachers that provides information and exercises to build resilience.

Working in this way, psychology students start thinking outside of the box, they can start using their psychology to develop new ideas, to apply their theories in real life and sometimes even start new business ventures.

Moreover, financial and ethical constraints need be considered and a business plan developed.

The enterprise challenges help our students develop the psychological skill in preparation for the own employment after graduation. Of course, we support the employability of our students in other ways as well: students can do professional placements to gain experience working in psychology. Or, if they wish to develop a career outside of psychology, for instance in marketing, finance or teaching, they can do a work placement in these areas. Employers look very favourably on psychology graduates, as they bring a broad range of knowledge and skills to their chosen careers: 96% of our recent graduates in 2016 were either in further study or in employment 6 months after they graduated. In the UK, psychology is one of the most popular university subjects – the subject is intellectually stimulating and highly relevant to our modern world.

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