

TRACCE — SUCCESS STORIES

ENTREPRENEURS

Questions for successful CCE (Cultural & Creativity Entrepreneurs): Architect, DI Christian Varetza

- In 2-3 lines, briefly describe your business.

I am architect. I plan and realize construction building projects.

- How did you become a CC Entrepreneur? Was there some kind of impulse / magic moment where you decided to become a CCE?

I became a CCE by studying architecture. It is a creative process over years and so you learn how to be a creative person. The idea and the decision to become a CCE developed over the high school time because of my very high interest in building. One day it was clear: I want to make such buildings.

- What was your biggest challenge as CCE and how did you handle it?

The biggest challenge for an architect is that designing a building is not only a creative process, but the job is to develop a building in real. The output is not a sculpture, but it is a building where people live or work. That means, that many requirements have to be addressed in order to ensure, that the building fulfills the intended values for the stakeholders who use the building or parts of it. Additionally, there are a lot of conditions and regulations of authorities. So, architecture is more than making nice buildings, it is about making possible buildings. And this is the real challenge. You always have to make compromises to fulfill the basic conditions and to find ways to ensure that the stakeholders are satisfied in the end. So, you have to find a consensus with them and this requires to know to work with people.

- What do you think: What is the secret to your success?

In the projects: to make the creativity real.

Concerning the success as entrepreneur: To become a successful entrepreneur you must be able to be visible with your business and to inspire and excite others by what you are doing. You must be able to convince clients, that what you offer is what they need.

Being successful as CCE means: having the competence and knowing your business and being inspired by your own business. Your customers will need to be able to trust you, that you fulfill their wishes – in my case, bringing the building in real life based on their ideas. This is the crucial point of success.

• What is the most essential knowledge or know-how for CCE? What do you recommend other CCEs or ongoing CCEs to learn as soon as possible with regards to:

- 1st Sprint – Opportunities & Idea Identification / ○ 2nd Sprint – Start-up /
- 3rd Sprint – Scale and Exit 7 ○ 4th Sprint – Case Studies

The most essential knowledge is not the own creativity and the individual talent, but it is the human resources and the interactivity between humans, that you can place your creativity, so that others can accept and understand it. To be able to interact with clients, partners or other stakeholders, CCEs have to learn about human behavior and also psychological aspects, as well as about motivational affairs and communication tools and skills.

Besides that, it is essential to have an attractive business model, that is recognized by customers. That means, that CCEs have to ensure, that their possible clients get to know about their existence and secondly: That they want, what the CCE offers. Otherwise, there is no business. An ongoing CCE should learn as soon as possible to pitch the own business within 2 minutes. Simulating customer meetings in advance with colleagues or within a training as role playing game can also be helpful.

Additionally, you need some basic knowledge in all the relevant fields for entrepreneurs like business administration, balance sheet, cost calculation (how do I calculate my costs and prices), but also marketing and financing as well as taxes and funding and the other things. I really recommend ongoing CCEs to learn those crucial things. In Austria there is an “Unternehmerakademie”, where you can learn it. It is very important to have good teachers in the relevant fields. They really need to know, what they are talking about. They need to have experience in their special fields and they have to have experience in real business, not only in theory.

Of course, you can take a consultant, that assists you in developing your business case or assists you in another way. But anyway – the entrepreneur needs a basic knowledge in all those fields to be able to choose a good supporter and to evaluate if the recommendation of e.g. a marketing agency or tax consultant is fine for the own business.

Finally, I think there is one crucial point among CCEs and that is, that they are afraid of “selling themselves”. They have to learn, that selling their goods or services does not mean selling themselves and they have to cast off their prejudices against selling and money making otherwise they will be artists who need some kind of patron and not CCE. But even then, they need to convince the patron and make their work interesting for him or her.