

LEARNING EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

JA Company Program[®]

► Entrepreneurship ► Work and Career Readiness

JA Company Program empowers teens and young adults to fill a need or solve a problem in their community and teaches them practical skills required to conceptualize, capitalize, and manage their own business venture. Upon completion, participants are eligible to earn JA's Essential Work Skills Credential which can be shared with employers or colleges.

Throughout the process of building their own company, participants collaborate, make crucial business decisions, communicate with multiple stakeholders, and develop entrepreneurial knowledge and skills. Community volunteers and mentors provide real-world guidance and experience to the participant-led startup.

The learning experience is available for both in-school and after-school settings and may be completed during one semester or throughout an entire school year.

This learning experience is part of the JA Entrepreneurship Pathway and is designed for Grades 9–12 and post-high school, in-school or after-school/out-of-school. The learning experience has recommendations for volunteer delivery or educator delivery for each session.



LEARNING EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- JA kit with digital options plus educator-led and volunteer-led opportunities, supporting flexible implementation options
- Includes self-guided learning topics in a flipped model to maximize hands-on learning time with the lead instructor
- Subject Matter Expert volunteer guides
- Robust support materials for educators, including a pacing guide for semester-long implementation
- Streamlined financial management with accompanying step-by-step, walk-through tutorial videos
- Includes interactive, self-guided topics for sales, leadership and management, supply chain, finance, and marketing
- Successful learning experience completion qualifies students for the Essential Work Skills credential skills test

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CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Meeting	Overview Participants:	Objectives Participants will be able to:	Activities
MEETING ONE Start a Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are introduced to the <i>JA Company Program</i> experience and explore ways to raise capital for their business venture. • Analyze their personal strengths to help inform their individual roles in their company project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the <i>JA Company Program</i> overall objectives by reviewing the major milestones. • Describe the importance of setting goals and developing a vision as first steps toward entrepreneurial success. • Identify the roles and associated skill sets that are integral in a company structure. • Assess personal strengths against the designated company roles to determine a potential business role. • Identify different means by which to raise capital for a start-up business. • Differentiate between facts and myths about entrepreneurs. • Reflect on personal and professional vision, and set some immediate goals for becoming an entrepreneur. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice Breaker • <i>JA Company Program</i> Overview • Program Milestones • Go Be an Entrepreneur • Identifying Personal Business Strengths • Capitalization • Entrepreneurial Myths and Facts • Envision Yourself as an Entrepreneur <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JA National Student Leadership Summit
MEETING TWO Solve a Customer's Problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use creative problem solving to brainstorm ideas for a business service/product, with the goal of identifying their top choices to research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how brainstorming several ideas and then picking the best option will lead to creative problem solving. • Describe the Design Thinking model and the steps involved in the process. • Describe the advantages of applying the Design Thinking model to new ideas or problem solving. • Describe the Empathize, Define, and Ideate steps in the Design Thinking model. • Apply the Empathize, Define, and Ideate steps of the Design Thinking model to identify a customer need and some plausible solutions. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem/Solution Thinking • What Is Design Thinking? • Solving Customer Problems • Brainstorming a Business Idea

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MEETING THREE Evaluate the Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply their personal entrepreneurial skills while exploring good decision making and vetting the viability of a venture, using a SWOT analysis tool to narrow their decision on their company's final product idea. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain why innovation is an integral factor for a company's health and growth. Explain how failure leads to success and how using a growth mindset can provide the appropriate perspective in challenging situations. Define the entrepreneurial mindset. Describe the key characteristics that a successful entrepreneur embodies. Explain the uses and benefits of a SWOT analysis for a start-up venture. Apply a SWOT analysis to each product/service the company is considering. Define the terms <i>pivot</i> and <i>persevere</i> related to business venture startups. Use data to make informed decisions about the direction of the business. Execute a final decision about whether to proceed with the team's chosen product/service using data-informed decision making. Demonstrate that entrepreneurs have accountability by completing a Product Approval application to submit to JA. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure Leads to Success Characteristics of the Entrepreneur's Mindset SWOT Analysis Pivot vs. Persevere Vetting a Viable Venture Innovation
MEETING FOUR Create a Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate the company's structure by establishing roles, commence planning within business teams, and finalize capitalization decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the five functional roles of the company and the essential responsibilities of each role. Relate the sections of the Business Snapshot with the business planning information necessary to identify for a start-up company. Evaluate personal strengths aligned to each role, and select team members for business teams. Evaluate the different means for raising capital, and select an option for the company's start-up venture. Identify essential tasks for different roles in the startup by drafting Business Team task lists for each functional role. Discuss collaboration and communication strategies within and between business teams. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Roles Business Planning Overview Selecting Business Roles Raising Capital for Your Company Countdown to Launch

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MEETING FIVE Launch the Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore corporate leadership roles and responsibilities, evaluate personal leadership skills, elect leaders for the business venture, and document a Code of Conduct. • Organize their business teams, start deep dives into business team roles, and complete work on the Business Snapshot and Company Charter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate different leadership styles and the most positive leadership influence for companies in different situations. • Assess personal leadership styles and reflect on what considerations might be important in decision making as a leader of a start-up company. • Describe the significance of accountability as an entrepreneur and a student as it relates to a company venture and JA experience. • Evaluate the different leader candidates, and elect people for the company leadership positions. • Demonstrate basic business planning by completing the Business Snapshot which outlines all of the key elements to launch a business. • Express the legal and social need for a company's guiding principles by developing and agreeing to a company charter. • Define core values, professional behaviors, and principles of integrity that will shape the company's culture and guide employee conduct. • Create a clear and actionable Code of Conduct that reflects ethical standards and aligns with the company's mission. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selecting Company Leaders and Business Teams • Business Snapshot • Company Charter • Leadership • What Kind of Leader Are You? • Accountability and Entrepreneurship • Code of Conduct
MEETING SIX-ELEVEN Business Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch their business, work in their business teams to run the business, and share weekly progress with Leadership, over the course of several meetings. • Have access to self-guided content to support their specific roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the five functional roles of the company and the essential responsibilities of each role. • Describe the steps involved in a company status update report. • Present status updates from each business team of the company. • Identify the purpose of each element of the Finance Workbook and when each will be used in company operations. • Establish a functional startup through completing tasks related to the management and running of their company. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Management Overview • Sales Overview • Finance Overview • Marketing Overview • Supply Chain Overview • Team Status Updates • Finance Workbook Overview

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MEETING TWELVE Liquidate the Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize their company's operations, initiate the steps necessary to liquidate their company's assets, and complete the steps to close out their company. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the liquidation process for the company and the associated tasks. Demonstrate the liquidation process of a business by executing the tasks to complete the student company. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liquidation Liquidating the Company
MEETING THIRTEEN Create a Personal Plan of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the necessity of networking as an entrepreneur. Work on a personal action plan to develop their personal network and to refine their entrepreneurial skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the importance of networking related to their business and overall entrepreneurial success. Execute an introductory plan to initiate networking by determining immediate people and organizations they can connect with. Execute a personal action plan to detail the next steps they will take in their entrepreneurial journey. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Your Network <i>JA Company Program</i> Reflection Developing a Personal Entrepreneurial Action Plan
MEETING FOURTEEN Develop an Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an annual report as a summary of their company experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe an annual report and its purpose. Develop a summary annual report project to complete the business venture experience. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Report