



## MobI<sup>UP</sup> - Transfermaterial No. 3

### ***Target group „Conditional Willing Students“: Description and Suggestion for the Utilization of Starting Points***

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## Transfer Mobil<sup>UP</sup> – Materials

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### Material 3: Target group „Conditional willing students“

- ① The present material provides an overview of specifics of the target group of business start-up conditional willing students, based on the research results from the project „Mobil<sup>UP</sup>“. The implications for the mobilization of start-up potentials in this target group derive from the research results, but are to be examined in their effectiveness, and in this respect they are to be conceived as initial suggestions. Particularly, the results that describe the conditional willing students are based on small samples, as this target group builds the smallest of all target groups. It should be considered that the results are solely based on the examination of mainly German students from technical and economical fields of study. A transferability of the results to other fields of study as well as student populations from other countries is also yet to be examined.
- ① Conditional willing students are students, who express the intention to establish their own business at some point, but no or an ambivalent intention to do so within the next few years. They differ from the target groups of the waverer (with a negative or ambivalent view of the possibility to establish their own business at some point in their life) and the manifest willing students (with the intention to establish their own business within the first five years after graduation).
- ① The denomination of target groups goes back to the designations of Braukmann and Schneider (2007)<sup>1</sup>, since the denomination appears to be very accurate in the light of the empirical project results generated here. In future, it has to be clarified to what extent the target groups may be considered as analogous.

### ADDRESSEE OF THE MATERIAL

The material addresses those, who want to promote entrepreneurship within universities on many levels and who want to initiate, support or conduct entrepreneurship promoting measures, which particularly reach those students, who would like to found an own start-up business, but not within the next few years.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE UTILIZATION OF THE MATERIAL

- Superordinate objectives
  - Awareness rising for the scope of entrepreneurship
  - Promotion of entrepreneurship at universities
  - Target group specific measures, which meet particular needs and apply to specific requirements
- Individual objectives
  - Support the career chances of graduates with needs based measures.
  - Provide basic principles, in order to create established measures for the large-scale support and examination of entrepreneurship. In this case, large-scale means to reach preferably all students via target group appropriate measures which build upon group specific requirements and needs.
  - The first step to create measures is the analysis of the target subjects and their study needs (analysis of conditions). This step has been achieved by the aforementioned research project. The results for the target group of conditional willing students are described here. The description serves as a background to derivate particular measure targets and the respective steps to reach these measure targets.
  - Knowing conditions and specifics of the target group “conditional willing students”.

## General description of the conditional willing students

- Conditional willing students are defined by the fact that they have a global (lifetime-related) entrepreneurial intention but they have no specific (related to the next few years) entrepreneurial intention.
- Proportionately, this is the smallest group of students.
- Within this target group, there are conspicuously many women compared to the proportion of men.
- Within this target group, only few gender differences are identified. According to the results, it seems not reasonable to further differentiate the target group in terms of gender. The several gender differences that were identified are ambiguous in terms of their frequencies and directions. Gender differences which concern women in general are presented in the Material 2.
- The conditional willing students are between both other target groups for many of the examined range of keys. Regarding some attributes they resemble the waverer; regarding other attributes they resemble the manifest willing students.
- Implicated measures for the conditional willing students point to one of two directions: (a) To qualify them to build their own business in the not foreseeable future and (b) to encourage the formation of more specific entrepreneurial intentions.

## In-depth description of the conditional willing students

- Conditional willing students have hardly considered their own professional track so far. Here, they resemble the waverer. The contemplation about the options of own entrepreneurial activities took place to a larger extent compared to the waverer and to a lesser extent compared to the manifest willing students. That is to say, that the refusal of this career option (business start-up in the next few years) occurs without the substantiated reflection about this professional chance.
- Self-efficacy values lie between both other target groups. As in general, conditional willing females perceive themselves as less self-effective than conditional willing males.
- Conditional willing students indicate that they do have business ideas, with an extent between both other target groups. Their willingness to pass them over to other persons who are interested in company foundation is comparable to the waverer.
- They express a positive overall attitude towards their own business foundation; whereby this attitude is not as high as for the manifest willing students.
- In the personal beliefs of which consequences their own entrepreneurial behavior might have, female and male students of this target group are very similar. No gender differences occur regarding the evaluation of possible consequences. Compared to the other target groups, they evaluate the consequences in the intermediate range, with frequently non significant differences to both of the other target groups. For several consequences (burden demands, mastery of challenging demands, autonomy) the conditional willing's evaluation is more unfavourable than the manifest willing's evaluation.
- In the personal beliefs of which consequences their own entrepreneurial behavior might have, several negative consequences (disappointments, occupational risk, to spoil opportunities, burden of high responsibility) are evaluated as more likely than in the target group of the manifest willing.
- The conditional willing female students evaluate the likelihood of autonomy as well as burden demands by trend as more likely than the conditional willing male students.
- Taking into account the perceived likelihood multiplied with the evaluation of consequences, for both the conditional willing and the waverer a negative consequence reaches the high score (financial-entrepreneurial risk). Only for the manifest willing students a positive consequence reaches the high score (autonomy).
- Students of this target group hardly perceive any social pressure in favour of a business start-up. They are less persuaded than the manifest willing students, that their family and friends would endorse their own entrepreneurial behavior. Nevertheless, they are by trend more persuaded than the waverer, that their family would endorse their own business start-up.
- Conditional willing female and male students perceive lesser behavioral control for entrepreneurial actions than the manifest willing students.
- They evaluate the supportive and inhibitive effects of the control factors very similar to the other target groups.

- In comparison to the males, the female students of this target group perceive the control factors creativity, ambition, and assistance as more supportive. Both gender resemble each other in their evaluation of the likelihood of occurrence.
- The target group tends to evaluate several of the enabling control factors as less likely occurring, compared to the evaluation of the manifest willing students.
- The question, whether entrepreneurship-related topics should become part of the regular teaching at universities is rather approved –even when it is to a lower extent than by the manifest willing.
- The conditional willing women express the descriptive lowest extent of study needs for most of the examined needs. They express the need to stronger broach the issue of entrepreneurship-relevant factors in the entrepreneur itself as well as in the environment. The conditional willing men would like to get more information about the attitudes of others towards own start-up behavior as well as information about the entrepreneurial process.

## Implications to the mobilization of entrepreneurial potentials of the conditional willing

- Illustrate the diversity of career possibilities and show that career paths are not about “either... or”, but can also run parallel or that different paths which are at staggered intervals can be pursued.
- To force both the stereotypical attribution of characteristics of “the entrepreneur” and the definite meaning of a certain personality profile in the context of entrepreneurship (cf. Material 2).
  - Demonstrate the variety of real entrepreneurs, present diverse role models of female and male entrepreneurs as well as team start-ups.
  - Point to the convertibility of characteristics, for example via behavioral trainings. Point also to the changing significance of attributes within the entrepreneurial process (cf. e.g., Baum et al., 2007<sup>2</sup>).
  - A promising measure to dispose students to concentrate on such questions is the announcement of respective term papers or final year theses.
- As for the waverer, support the conditional willing’s considerations and reflections about their own professional careers. This involves not only the exploration of own life goals and general occupational chances, but also the examination of the possibilities of own business foundations.
  - For instance, support offers at own universities, which inform about general career opportunities and chances, including the options of entrepreneurship.
  - For example, motivate and promote faculties to address the topic of career chances actively – and most of all gender-equitable – in and outside the courses and to present manifold career paths.
- Impart and train business-related and entrepreneurship-enabling competencies that are applicable beyond the current time and context.

- By all means, the conditional willing students express a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship, just this is far in their not foreseeable future. Thus, qualification measures should impart basic knowledge that is transferable and indefinitely applicable.
  - Furthermore, qualifications that are directly linked to the subjective beliefs of this target group (in particular the internal enabling control factors as creativity, work-related attitudes, ambition and achievement motivation, as well as the trust in own decisions/intuition) should be accomplished.
  - Competence trainings also should qualify in terms of planning and conceptualizing as well as managing businesses, as those competencies were perceived as one main explanation factor of anticipated entrepreneurial failure in general. In particular, students' self-efficacy and self-confidence regarding those competencies should be strengthened.
- Highlight the diversity of consequences of entrepreneurship and point out, that specific consequences depend on each individual business terms and conditions.
  - Create opportunities for students to reflect own entrepreneurial beliefs.
  - Illustrate positive consequences of start-up behavior. Furthermore, create opportunities for the "relevant others" to speak and to represent their views on entrepreneurship.
  - "Collect" the entrepreneurial ideas of the conditional willing students, because they mentioned their willingness to pass over their entrepreneurial ideas. Editing of collected ideas for interested students and thus demonstrating that (good) business ideas must not always come from oneself.
  - Business foundation and entrepreneurship should be tied to the universities' philosophy as basic and valued topics; an entrepreneurship-friendly attitude of the university should be actively communicated.
- Strengthen self-efficacy, particularly the self-efficacy of the women.
    - For instance, offer appropriate trainings, workshops, and coachings.
    - Support self-serving attributions (see Material 2).
    - The speech has to uncover the accomplishments of women (see Material 2).

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<sup>1</sup> Braukmann, U., & Schneider, D. (2007). Didaktische Zielklassen der Entwicklung unternehmerischer Kompetenz. In R. Bader, G. Keiser & T. Unger (Eds.), *Entwicklung unternehmerischer Kompetenz in der Berufsbildung. Hintergründe, Ziele und Prozesse berufspädagogischen Handelns* (pp. 157-180). Bielefeld: wbv.

<sup>2</sup> Baum, J. R., Frese, M., Baron, R., & Katz, J. A. (2007). Entrepreneurship as an area of psychology study: An introduction. In J. R. Baum, M. Frese & R. Baron (Eds.), *The psychology of entrepreneurship* (pp. 1-18). Mahwah; New Jersey; London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.