



PROMISE

Professional Noticing to Improve
Entrepreneurship Education

Good Practices of Professional Noticing

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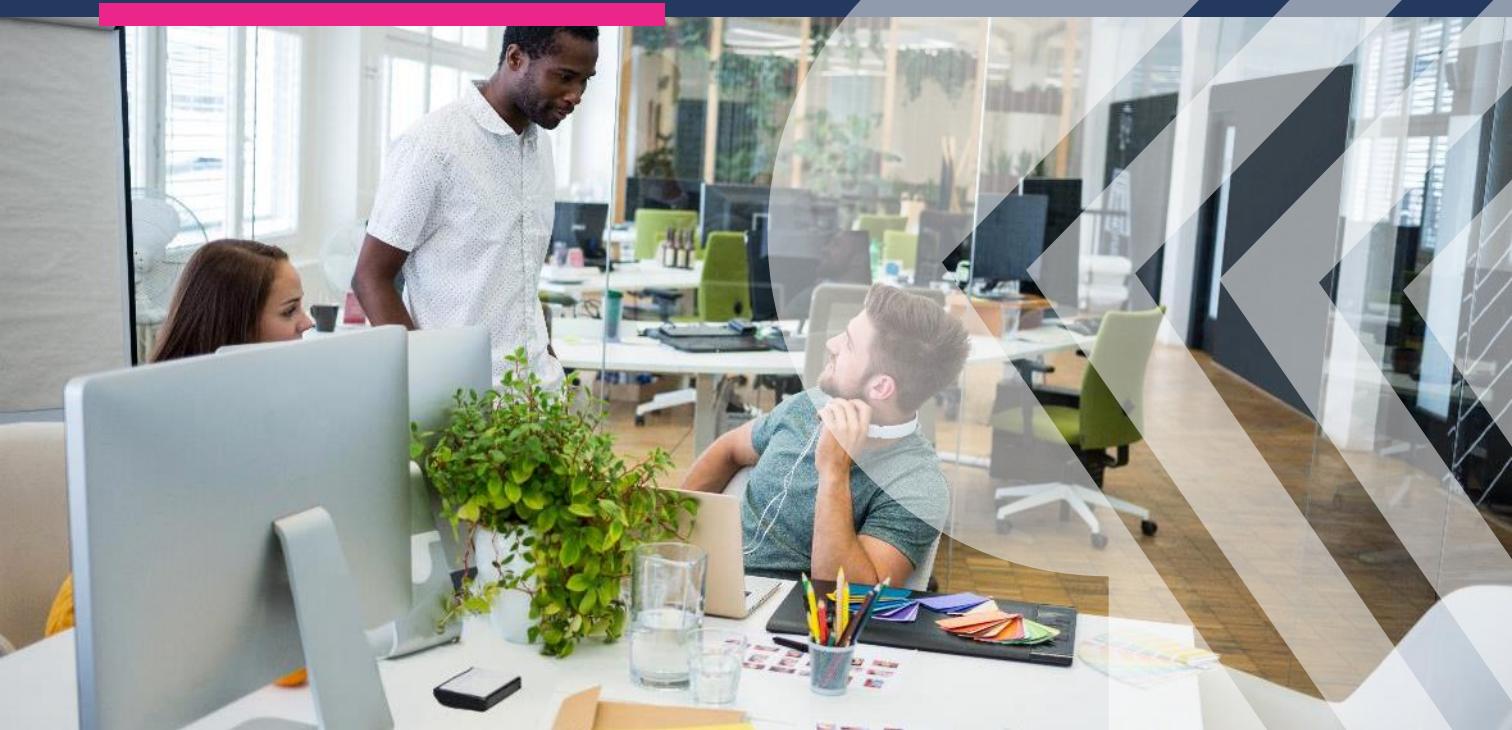
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01

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION



The good practices presented in this guide illustrate how Professional Noticing (PN) can be intentionally integrated into entrepreneurship education across a range of European contexts. While the institutions, disciplines and learner groups involved differ, all practices are based on a shared understanding of Professional Noticing as a process that links observation, interpretation, reflection and action. By encouraging learners to pay closer attention to entrepreneurial situations and to reflect before responding, PN supports more thoughtful, informed and context-aware decision-making.

Across the practices, Professional Noticing is embedded in active and experiential learning approaches such as project-based work, simulations, case studies, interviews, teamwork and peer observation. These activities place learners in situations where they must engage with real or realistic challenges and consider multiple

perspectives. Reflection plays a central role, enabling learners to make sense of what they observe, learn from others and develop greater awareness of their own assumptions, behaviours and responses to uncertainty.

Lecturers act as facilitators and guides in this process, helping learners understand what to notice, how to document their observations and how to reflect on them meaningfully. The case studies presented in the following sections show how these principles are applied in practice in different educational settings. Together, they offer concrete examples that can support educators in adapting and applying Professional Noticing within their own entrepreneurship teaching and learning contexts.



02

GOOD PRACTICES

OF

PROFESSIONAL NOTICING



01 Management and Entrepreneurship



Partner	Universidad Complutense de Madrid
Country	Madrid
Lecturer's institution	ESIC University
Field of specialization	Management and Entrepreneurship
Course / programme (short description, time, format)	Curso de Emprendimiento a nivel universitario
Educational level (VET / university)	Bachelor level and master level

1.1 Description of the professional

(PN) activities of the good practice

The professor considers that learning must be based on both experience and Project Base Learning. On the one hand, experiential learning supports the technical part of knowledge. This part is the one in which students are confronted with having to assume a series of attitudes and make decisions. And this is experienced through a project that has to be as real as possible; an example is a competition, a simulation, or a role-playing game.

In addition to these two pillars, the technique of observation is fundamental, both towards others and towards oneself.

1.2

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

Developing **role models** for students, which is brought by observation, has many benefits for the development of an optimal entrepreneurial spirit. The observation of role models helps to:

- Generate **inspiration and motivation** in the students about their own life projects;
- **Self-observation**, with which students can reflect on their own qualities and aptitudes;
- Disseminate the idea of entrepreneurship not only as a means to achieve wealth, but as a means to fulfill a personal and social cause;
- **Inculcate entrepreneurial values** such as empathy, effort and risk-taking.

1.2

Pitfalls and challenges of the activity

Especially in Spain, the question about positive role models is especially challenging due to the collective imaginary of the entrepreneur, who is socially despised. By contrast, in countries where this social legitimacy of the entrepreneur exists - and this comes from observation - entrepreneurs are considered observable and positive role models. It is a culturally rooted

problem since Spanish society does not tend to assume responsibility for its actions and its failure, but reflects it on external actors, which generates a culture of non-responsibility and non-action for the improvement of their own living conditions.

1.3

How did / can the “PN learning activity” contribute to being a successful entrepreneur?

For a business to be successful, it is essential to think through all **possible courses of action** and to **balance the risks perfectly**. Entrepreneurship develops around both of these elements.

Especially in these cases, business game simulations are very effective: with them, students learn to develop a good business plan but also the capacity for resilience, which is essential to be able to adapt to external circumstances that could hinder an entrepreneurial project. Therefore, it is also necessary to **learn to differentiate what a Business Plan** is from reality and to develop flexibility



1.4

Reflection

Professional Noticing is useful for students to develop skills and aptitudes that are fundamental for the success of a company. This is achieved through the observation of others and of oneself, the reflection based on personal experience and on the environment: this is the only way to plan a project that contributes something to the market.

In addition, it is very important to observe reference models to understand there are multiple motivations that push people to start a new business, so it is necessary to move away from the idea that one starts a business only with the idea of generating great economic benefits. It is necessary to learn to conceive the company as a tool to achieve a vital or social purpose.

All this must begin to be considered from the **lowest educational levels**, in order to permeate society with entrepreneurial awareness and skills.



02 Marketing



Partner	Universidad Complutense de Madrid
Country	Spain
Lecturer's institution	ESIC University
Field of specialization	Marketing
Course / programme (short description, time, format)	She teaches Business Models in the Entrepreneurship and Innovation degree.
Educational level (VET / university)	University

2.1 Description of the professional

(PN) activities of the good practice

The interviewee teaches Business Models within the Entrepreneurship and Innovation degree, focusing on how to structure a start-up. She works with both inexperienced students and entrepreneurs developing their own projects, supporting them to assess project viability by analysing the entrepreneurial ecosystem and identifying market opportunities through innovation trend reports.

Agile methodologies such as Design Thinking, Lean Startup and Scrum are used to support teamwork and validation. Observation is the starting point of the learning process and involves engaging directly with the public to identify real needs. This early observation helps students develop empathy and understand the value of what they are offering, which is essential for building and communicating a strong value proposition.

2.2

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

- The training provided consists of 12 credits and is taken over four years.
- Students usually take a double degree: the degree in which they are enrolled (e.g. Marketing, Advertising, etc.) and they also have credits associated with the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Degree.
- During the first three years they acquire theoretical and practical training and work in multidisciplinary teams (in the same classroom there are students from marketing, advertising, international, data science, etc.). These teams bring together students from different disciplines, following the model of real life: when a company is created, professionals from different fields, such as marketing, business administration, data science, etc., come together. If a student wants to be the CEO of a company, they need to have basic knowledge of the different disciplines to know what is needed to promote the project from the different areas.
- In the fourth year they create a real company, as a final individual internship.

2.3

Pitfalls and challenges of the activity

In other countries, when you have a good idea for a project, it is communicated, because the project is nourished and grows from the feedback that the ecosystem and the environment are giving you. In Spain we have internalised the idea of "I won't tell you about

my project because you'll copy it". In other countries they are much more open when it comes to sharing, generating, connecting and seeing, perceiving what the environment is telling you, to observe it, and they have to internalise that.

2.4

How did / can the “PN learning activity” contribute to being a successful entrepreneur?

One of the successful experiences is the holding of a "**Demo Day**". On this day, students compete with their startups and present them to a jury of experts in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

This jury is normally in direct contact with startups, validating these initiatives, either because they are investors or because they are entrepreneurs and know other entrepreneurs. To this end, in the first year of the first degree in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, the teaching staff asks students to draw up a list of 10 needs based on observation.

From there, the methodology involves comparing these needs, validating them, observing what people need and identifying where the first consumers are. And once that work has been done, the idea is communicated to the teachers/tutors for guidance on the next steps to be taken to build a minimum viable product that can have a market viability.

In this training plan, which involves moving from theory to practice, it also involves the **teacher in the classroom becoming a mentor**



It is common to see projects that start badly because they start with the idea of having a product because they sat down with two friends, and they think they are going to work on it and that it is going to work. It is not easy to make them see that they must also take into account the environment, that they cannot just start from an idea that arises from a personal interest, closely linked to being successful, moving forward and meeting their objectives. They need to have feedback from outside. And know that any project that does not have external feedback is a project that is not viable. An entrepreneur has to understand the product that is being offered in the market and has to understand what the differential value is. If they do not perceive that need internally, they are not going to sell it in the same way.



03 Entrepreneurship, innovation, start-ups, crowdfunding



Partner	University for Continuing Education Krems
Country	Austria
Lecturer's institution	Self-employed trainer/lecturer/coach
Field of specialization	Entrepreneurship, innovation, start-ups, crowdfunding
Course / programme (short description, time, format)	Not one specific course was addressed, but all experiences in the field of training and coaching in entrepreneurship.
Educational level (VET / university)	VET and bachelor level

3.1

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

The type of methodology and teaching activities differ based on the needs of the target group (learners):

- Young bachelor students with no or little entrepreneurship experience or work experience: Hypothetical venture idea/simulation, develop ideas based on their passions, work in teams, playful approach, no consequences when their venture ideas are “failing” or they are not noticing enough, except for bad grades.
- Experienced adults (work experience and/or entrepreneurial experience): Differently motivated, working with their “real” business ideas. They need the courses to “survive”, to generate an income for their lives. They often request or expect a „success recipe“ for entrepreneurship.
 - Some parts of the course are individual work based on their own venture idea/business plan.
 - Other parts of the course are done in pair work or teamwork. Developing business ideas together, learning how to give and receive feedback, how to develop solutions together, understanding the benefits of teamwork.
 - For some courses the participants are required to enter the course as teams already at the start of the course.
- School students: Working with hypothetical venture ideas, happy and motivated because of different activities compared with their usual school schedule. Working in teams.

The interviewee sees her role not as a “motivator”, but rather as a trainer or coach. She does not make use of a lot of lecturing (maximum 20 minutes talking at once) and rather develops and implements useful individual and team assignments for learning progress of the participants. Some examples of assignments:

- Check-in and check-out sessions during each synchronous learning/teaching session
- Business model canvas and how to adapt it over time.
- Target group analysis
- Feedback loops
- Models to develop and evaluate ideas (SWOT Analysis)
- Assignments to face the fear of failure and emotion “management”
- Entrecomp framework for self-assessment and reflection of own competences
- Peer-Coaching

These are all methods that students are asked to make a habit to support their learning and development and their ability to spot opportunities, limits, and risks.

Observation:

- “Active listening”
 - For activities as basis/prerequisite for constructive feedback, not reacting directing when receiving feedback, just listening.
 - In brainstorming
- Observing pitches from others (students are asked to observe specifics of the pitch, e.g. body language, etc.)
- Identifying successful entrepreneurs in their environment/online (looking for/observing/looking into information about entrepreneurs), students are asked to make up their mind around a set of questions.
- Observing oneself and the learning process through check-in and check-out questions.



3.2

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

Expecting/hoping that learners have „aha“-moments, a moment of enlightening. That they learning about themselves, change their ideas, transformation can happen.

- As an entrepreneur, you need to be alert. An entrepreneur's day has several phases, in which they observe, reflect, and react. If you are not alert, you cannot observe, interpret, reflect, and therefore react appropriately. You cannot choose suitable reactions without having an alerted mind in the first place.
- A prerequisite for this is understanding the benefit of professional noticing: To continuously learn, adapt and survive.
- The world of entrepreneurs is like a wild and vivid jungle. You need to be alerted to spot threats as well as opportunities.

3.3

Pitfalls and challenges of the activity

- **Adult learners with artistic or entrepreneurial experience observe different features and ask different questions than novices.**
- **Still, also experienced adults sometimes have issues with observing, noticing, reflecting and reacting.** Some of them are not used to observe and learn from others, they are blind for opportunities, risks, or limits of their venture idea. They are too much “in love” with their venture idea to see important aspects in their environment and within themselves, especially when these aspects could cause cognitive dissonance. It needs an incremental learning and development process, based on observations and reflection on what the target group needs and the competition in the market is doing. It takes resources (time, money) to learn how to incrementally develop oneself and one's business.

Tools for observation:

- Survey questions
- Questionnaires for target group
- Interview guides for interviews with target group, taking notes
- Assignments with guiding questions
- Business model canvas
- Entrecomp “flower”
- Oral communication
- In writing for assignments, business plan, etc.



3.4

How did / can the “PN learning activity” contribute to being a successful entrepreneur?

- It contributes to surviving, to making a living at the first place. As soon as this is ensured, you and your business can grow and blossom. The main aim should be not only to survive but to have a good, satisfying, meaningful life.
- Entrepreneurs need to notice early enough to set the right measures for survival and growth in this fast changing, uncertain, ambiguous, complex and globalized world, we are living in.
- It is important that entrepreneurs develop a passion for observing, interpreting, learning with others. Being on their own, shying away from the “real world” other people is not enough when you want to be an effective entrepreneur.
- Out of observations you can spot opportunities and innovate. Where is a need? Where is something missing? What do people need?
- It is important that you are not afraid of change and that entrepreneur grasp change as a chance, not a threat.

3.5

Reflections

- Having the skills for survival of your business and making a living, staying agile, innovative and being alert regarding your customer's and the planet's needs. You are able to develop business solutions that are good for the entrepreneur/yourself, good for your customers and good for the planet.
- You need to be alerted, observant, aware.
- You need to be brave to try something new. You need to be able to manage your fear of reaction from others and to overcome this fear in order to try something new.
- You need to take new steps, observe the reaction of the environment and incrementally adapt the steps into the right direction, that is beneficial for you, the customers and the planet. It is a cyclic learning process, always considering your environment and feedback.



04 Internationalization of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises



Partner	University for Continuing Education Krems
Country	Austria
Lecturer's institution	University for Continuing Education Krems
Field of specialization	Internationalization of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
Course / programme (short description, time, format)	There was not described one course in specific, but several courses that the lecturer is giving in the field of "Internationalization of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises"
Educational level (VET / university)	Bachelor level and master level

The type of methodology used is depending both on the students and the topic.

- Regarding students, it depends on their background, and their willingness to be engaged (how to get them involved, motivated)
- Continuing education students are easy to engage because they have a strong intrinsic motivation.
- Full time students need more preparation regarding instructional design.
- The interviewee uses simulations and online games with bachelor-level students.
- The interviewee uses case studies (fictional and real case studies) for both types of students. Sie invites people from her network to the lectures to explain real cases from practical work environments.
- Continuing education students already have real jobs and work experience, they do not necessarily need simulations.
- The interviewee has good experiences with inviting former students to talks and circles to share their experiences in entrepreneurship with the novice students. They act as testimonials and good practice examples. This method has a lot of impact.

Observation

- Observations are often not intentional in class.
- These are the activities, students do in class: Listening to people, watching something, hearing out some moments in between the lines – observation goes hand in hand with it, according to the interviewee.
- An example, when observation was planned and intentional: International marketing course, where students observed the reactions/behaviours of peers. They discussed the observation in focus groups.
- Focus groups are useful for quick feedback on observed situations.
- Text assignments and reflection in written form is more suitable if observation is going on over a longer period.
- After reflection, students are asked to produce their own, adapted scenario based on the reflections they have made during the observation. This method can be used for intended as well as unintended observation in case studies or spontaneously used

Students usually

- Write down observation notes.
- Take videos of observation notes.
- Record audio about observation notes

4.2

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

- Noticing save time, money, stable and successful in entrepreneurial activities if entrepreneurs notice salient aspects at an early stage of an expanding company.
- It is important for novices as well as experienced entrepreneurs.
- Most entrepreneurs don't notice early enough.
- Intentional noticing helps entrepreneurs to get to a higher level of reflection.
- Helps entrepreneurs to act in advance, act prepared.

4.3

Pitfalls and challenges of the activity

Responding depends on the cultural environment. Talking out loud, commenting, sharing the opinion is differently valued in different countries.

Students from parts of the world, where talking out loud, commenting, sharing the opinion are not common or polite, are difficult to motivate to engage in class. It needs a good relationship and trust.

Full time students (students with no or little work experience) can discover the value but lecturers need to explain it differently. Continuing education students (who are already working next to studying and have several years of work experience) get it faster usually.

4.4

How did / can the “PN learning activity” contribute to being a successful entrepreneur?

International markets are not very predictable, you must revisit the capacities, resources, and the goals all the time. You can prepare yourself for an unpredictable situation.



Professional noticing helps entrepreneurs as well as students to become more reflective. This consequently helps them to get another perspective, to see situations from another angle, to reconsider their decisions. It depends on personality if the use it and how they use it, and at which point of their career they discover it for themselves. Some people need specific situations to rediscover the value of observation and noticing.

This is depending on the personality. It could be:

- Writing
- Listening
- Watching
- Recording

Some students don't collect evidence of observation or take notes, but they reflect deeply in their mind and do not need tools



05 Entrepreneurship



Partner	University of Turku
Country	Finland
Lecturer's institution	University of Turku
Field of specialization	Entrepreneurship
Course / programme (short description, time, format)	University level Entrepreneurship courses
Educational level (VET / university)	University

5.1 Description of the professional

(PN) activities of the good practice

The lecturer consistently incorporates three key components into her courses. Firstly, she ensures that theoretical lectures are concise and to the point. Secondly, she provides students with the opportunity to directly engage with the subject matter through practical experiences, which can take various forms such as case studies, interactive lectures, role-playing, and real-world problem-solving. Lastly, at the conclusion of each course, students are encouraged to reflect on and consolidate what they have learned. This approach is a common thread in all of her courses.

5.2

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

Furnishing students with a solid theoretical framework not only provides them with a structured basis for their observations but also helps enhance their professional noticing skills. On occasion, they receive well-defined questions that serve as a guide for their exploration of entrepreneurial behavior. These questions prompt them to keenly observe the conduct of entrepreneurs, the actions they undertake, and the motivations driving their choices, thereby honing their ability to professionally discern and analyze such behaviors.

5.3

Pitfalls and challenges of the activity

For certain students, the process of observing and analyzing entrepreneurial behavior comes naturally, possibly due to their personal experience with entrepreneurship, either through their own endeavors or within their families. However, the art of observing and analyzing, professional noticing can be acquired and refined through practice. This can be quite challenging, especially when compared to the more straightforward, black-and-white nature of knowledge in many natural science disciplines.

5.4

How did / can the “PN learning activity” contribute to being a successful entrepreneur?

In general, entrepreneurs typically learn and improve by observing the actions of other entrepreneurs as well as their own, gradually honing their skills. These learning activities involving professional noticing contribute significantly to the development of students as potential successful entrepreneurs.



In higher education entrepreneurial programs, the emphasis is placed on action as the cornerstone of effective learning. Without practical experience, students may struggle to grasp the concepts. Consequently, the instructor consistently incorporates practical elements into her courses, providing students with opportunities to witness entrepreneurship in action. Subsequently, students are tasked with observing and analyzing these experiences, which they then report on as a course requirement. They are given the flexibility to provide feedback in written form, through podcasts, or by creating videos, allowing them to express their insights in diverse ways.



06 Entrepreneurship



Partner	University of Turku
Country	Finland
Lecturer's institution	Turku School of Economics at University of Turku
Field of specialization	Entrepreneurship
Course / programme (short description, time, format)	Social Value Creation
Educational level (VET / university)	University

6.1 Description of the professional

(PN) activities of the good practice

In the Social Value Creation, which she personally designed, a multifaceted approach is employed to facilitate learning. The course spans six weeks, with each week centered around a distinct theme. At the onset of each week, a lecture delves into the theme, and during the second session of the week, students collaborate in groups of 4 to 6 individuals to present their work related to that theme.

The group work tasks intentionally feature somewhat open-ended instructions, encouraging students to explore how they can apply the concepts covered in the lectures. When each group presents their work, it becomes an interactive session, where fellow students provide feedback and engage in discussions about the presented work. There are two teachers simultaneously, which further facilitates the introduction of various perspectives into the topics under consideration.

Additionally, within these groups, one student is responsible for crafting a reflection text based on the theme assigned at the start of the course. This text is then reviewed and commented upon by two other students within the same group of 4 to 6 members, fostering a collaborative and insightful learning experience.

6.2

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

Students are encouraged to consider how to effectively apply theoretical concepts within their group work. This prompts them to develop a critical mindset, avoiding the acceptance of information at face value. For instance, they are challenged to discern between genuine environmental initiatives and mere marketing ploys, such as "greenwashing," prevalent in the market. Moreover, active and stimulating discussions occur within the groups, where students challenge one another. This dynamic interaction often leads to the discovery of novel insights during group work presentations and discussions.

6.3

Pitfalls and challenges of the activity

The teaching method may not be as effective with first-year students as it is with those who possess knowledge and, in some cases, prior experience in entrepreneurship. In general, the students' capacity to make pertinent observations varies due to their differing stages of study.

6.4

How did / can the “PN learning activity” contribute to being a successful entrepreneur?

They are encouraged to employ the theories they've acquired, and as they progress, they will develop the ability to professionally notice and discern the ethical and social dimensions of business.



6.5

Reflection

The students express their observations by actively participating in discussions and creating reflective texts. They reflect their own learning in writing, but in some of the group work they have the freedom to choose their preferred means of reflection, whether it's in written form, as a Power Point presentation, or through videos. These diverse reflection methods play a vital role in nurturing the growth of their professional noticing skills.



07 Entrepreneurship



Partner	MOMENTUM
Country	Ireland
Lecturer's institution	Munster Technological University
Field of specialization	Entrepreneurship
Course / programme (short description, time, format)	General, Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence
Educational level (VET / university)	University

In the context of entrepreneurship education at Munster Technological University, the integration of Professional Noticing (PN) within teaching methodologies embodies a comprehensive approach that fosters critical observation, reflection, and responsive action among students. The lecturer, who also contributes significantly to the Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence, incorporates PN activities that emphasize understanding cultural and gender dynamics in entrepreneurship. These activities are designed to cultivate an environment where students can observe and reflect on varied entrepreneurial scenarios, thereby enhancing their ability to recognize opportunities, identify needs, and make informed decisions.

Key PN activities described include:

- Diverse Case Studies and Role Models: Utilizing a range of examples from different genders, ages, cultures, and professional backgrounds, students are exposed to a wide spectrum of entrepreneurial journeys. This variety helps students to see beyond economic success and appreciate personal satisfaction, community contribution and environmental impact as equally valuable outcomes of entrepreneurship.
- Reflective Exercises on Personal Experiences: Encouraging students to reflect on their own family backgrounds and personal experiences helps them to identify potential role models and barriers to entrepreneurship within their immediate environments. This personal approach to PN enables students to connect more deeply with the material and fosters a sense of relevance and urgency in their learning.
- Critical Observation of Non-Verbal Cues and Environmental Context: Students are taught to note not only the verbal answers during interviews and case studies but also to observe body language, engagement levels, and environmental distractions. This practice of observing beyond the spoken word is crucial for decoding the full context of entrepreneurial interactions and for understanding the underlying dynamics at play.
- Adaptation of Research Methodology Based on Observations: The lecturer highlights the importance of adapting research methodologies in response to observations. This flexibility allows students to tailor their approaches to better capture the complexities of the entrepreneurial landscape, ensuring that their findings are both relevant and robust.
- Classroom Discussions and Group Reflections: By creating space for open discussions and group reflections, students are given the opportunity to share their observations and insights with peers. This collaborative aspect of PN activities encourages a shared learning experience, where diverse perspectives can broaden the understanding of what it means to notice professionally within an entrepreneurial context.

7.2

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

The activities and methodologies used in entrepreneurship teaching at Munster Technological University support the development of Professional Noticing (PN) by strengthening students' ability to observe, analyse and respond to entrepreneurial situations. By embedding PN in the curriculum, students learn to make more informed decisions and take purposeful action based on what they notice, supporting effective entrepreneurial practice.

Through case studies, reflection and discussion, students develop sharper observational and critical thinking skills. They learn to notice subtle aspects of entrepreneurial behaviour, including non-verbal cues and environmental factors, and to look beyond surface-level information. Reflective activities encourage students to question assumptions, identify patterns and recognise opportunities or risks within complex entrepreneurial contexts.

A key learning outcome is understanding the consequences of not responding effectively to observations. By examining cases where warning signs or feedback were ignored, students recognise that noticing alone is not enough. Effective entrepreneurship requires the ability to reflect, adapt and act on observations in a timely and appropriate way, helping to avoid missed opportunities and flawed decision-making.

7.3

Pitfalls and challenges of the activity

While developing PN offers clear benefits, it also presents several challenges that can affect teaching and learning. These challenges need to be recognised in order to integrate PN effectively into entrepreneurship education.

One key issue is scale. Large class sizes can limit opportunities for close observation, discussion and active participation, making it harder for students to engage deeply. Student engagement can also vary, as differences in background, confidence and experience influence how willing learners are to observe critically and share insights. In addition, observations are often shaped by personal biases, requiring guidance and reflection to help students recognise and question their assumptions.

Further challenges include helping students move from observation to action, managing the time required for reflective activities within a crowded curriculum, and assessing PN skills in a meaningful way. Addressing these issues requires flexibility in course design and teaching approaches. Despite these challenges, integrating PN remains valuable for preparing students to deal with the complexity and uncertainty of entrepreneurial practice.

7.4

How did / can the “PN learning activity” contribute to being a successful entrepreneur?

The PN learning activities at Munster Technological University support the development of key entrepreneurial competences by strengthening students’ ability to observe, analyse and respond to complex situations. Through PN, students become more aware of patterns, behaviours and contextual factors in entrepreneurial environments, helping them adapt to change and make more informed decisions.

By encouraging reflection on real situations, PN supports critical decision-making, problem-solving and innovation. Students learn to recognise customer needs, manage risk and respond to feedback, while also developing empathy and awareness of interpersonal and network dynamics. Learning to reflect on both success and failure helps build resilience and adaptability.

Overall, PN equips students with transferable skills that are essential for successful entrepreneurship, enabling them to navigate uncertainty, act thoughtfully and respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

7.5

Reflections

Integrating Professional Noticing into entrepreneurship education strengthens both student learning and teaching practice. By focusing on observation, reflection and informed action, educators can design learning experiences that better prepare students for the complexity and uncertainty of entrepreneurial contexts.

PN is effectively developed through a combination of case studies and role models, reflective journals, simulations, role-playing, and structured group discussion with peer feedback. These approaches help students recognise patterns, consider multiple perspectives and reflect critically on real or realistic entrepreneurial situations. Active learning, cross-disciplinary connections and an open, reflective learning environment are central to supporting this process.

For lecturers, embedding PN enhances student engagement, deepens critical thinking and increases the relevance of learning for future entrepreneurial practice. It also supports reflective teaching, enabling educators to continuously refine their course design in response to student learning and experience.



08 Entrepreneurship



Partner	MOMENTUM
Country	Ireland
Lecturer's institution	Technological University of the Shannon
Field of specialization	Entrepreneurship
Course / programme (short description, time, format)	General, Faculty of Business and Hospitality
Educational level (VET / university)	University

8.1 Description of the professional

(PN) activities of the good practice

Students are encouraged to look beyond spoken responses and pay attention to non-verbal communication and environmental factors during activities such as interviews. By noticing body language, levels of engagement and possible distractions, they develop a deeper understanding of interpersonal dynamics within entrepreneurial and business settings.

These observations are then explored through guided discussion and reflective exercises, which help students critically examine what they have noticed. This process encourages them to consider underlying motivations, possible biases and the wider implications of entrepreneurial behaviour, supporting more thoughtful interpretation and analysis.

Students are also supported to adapt their research approaches in response to what they observe. This flexibility reinforces the importance of responsive strategies in dynamic business environments. To support this process, students are encouraged to document their observations carefully, using notebooks or other tools to capture both verbal and non-verbal details, enabling richer reflection and more informed analysis.

8.2

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

The methodology and activities focused on Professional Noticing (PN), as outlined in the September 29, 2023, interview with the Director of Research Development for the Faculty of Business and Hospitality, offer substantial benefits for developing crucial entrepreneurial skills. These practices not only enhance the observational capabilities of students but also refine their analytical and responsive skills, integral to identifying and capitalizing on entrepreneurial opportunities.

Examples of Good Noticing Practice

- Enhanced Capacity for Detailed Observation: The emphasis on decoding non-verbal cues and environmental factors equips students with the ability to notice and interpret subtle but significant details in business interactions. This skill is crucial for understanding stakeholder needs, negotiating effectively, and building strong professional relationships.
- Improved Analytical Skills: Reflective analysis of observations encourages students to critically assess the information they gather, enabling them to distinguish between surface-level perceptions and underlying realities. This critical thinking ability is vital for making informed decisions and identifying viable entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Adaptability in Research and Strategy: Teaching students to adapt their methodologies based on observations fosters an agile mindset, allowing them to pivot quickly in response to new insights or changing market conditions. This adaptability is a key attribute of successful entrepreneurs, who must navigate an ever-evolving business landscape.

Learning Outcome of Not Responding Effectively

A significant learning outcome highlighted in the interview is the understanding of the consequences of not responding effectively to observations. The Director discusses instances where students or entrepreneurs fail to act upon critical observations, leading to missed opportunities or flawed decision-making. For example, an entrepreneur may overlook crucial feedback due to confirmation bias, resulting in a product or service that does not meet market needs.

This discussion serves as a valuable lesson for students, emphasizing that successful entrepreneurship requires not only the ability to notice important details but also the willingness and capacity to respond appropriately. Learning to balance observation with action, and recognizing when and how to pivot based on new information, are essential skills developed through the practice of PN.

The benefit of integrating PN activities into entrepreneurship education lies in the comprehensive development of observational, analytical, and responsive skills. By providing students with practical examples of good noticing practices and illustrating the potential consequences of inaction, educators can prepare future entrepreneurs for the challenges of the business world, ensuring they possess the skills necessary to identify opportunities, navigate complexities, and make strategic decisions with confidence.



8.3

Pitfalls and challenges of the activity

Integrating Professional Noticing into entrepreneurship education involves a number of practical and pedagogical challenges that educators need to consider. One key issue is ensuring active student engagement, as not all learners feel equally confident in observing critically or sharing their insights. Creating an inclusive learning environment that encourages participation is therefore essential. Educators must also balance the time required for meaningful observation and reflection with broader curriculum demands.

Further challenges include assessing PN skills, which are inherently subjective and difficult to measure using standard assessment methods, and supporting students to recognise and manage personal biases that can influence their observations. In addition, PN activities can be resource-intensive and require regular updating to remain relevant in fast-changing entrepreneurial and business contexts. Addressing these challenges calls for flexible course design, reflective teaching practice and continuous adaptation to ensure that Professional Noticing is developed effectively.

8.4

How did / can the “PN learning activity” contribute to being a successful entrepreneur?

The interview highlights how Professional Noticing (PN) learning activities contribute to the development of successful entrepreneurs by strengthening observation, critical analysis and adaptive action. By learning to notice what is happening in and around entrepreneurial situations, students are better prepared to navigate complexity, uncertainty and change.

PN supports opportunity recognition by encouraging learners to observe beyond verbal information and pay attention to non-verbal cues, environmental factors and interpersonal dynamics. This deeper level of observation helps entrepreneurs identify unmet needs, recognise emerging opportunities and respond more effectively to market and stakeholder signals. Through reflective analysis, students learn to assess risks, question assumptions and make more informed decisions.

The ability to adapt strategies and approaches based on observations is a key outcome of PN learning. Students become more agile in responding to feedback, changing conditions and new insights. In addition, reflecting on both challenges and failures helps build resilience, supporting long-term entrepreneurial development. Together, these competences enable aspiring entrepreneurs to communicate effectively, act strategically and respond thoughtfully within dynamic business environments.



8.5

Reflection

The interview highlights the importance of Professional Noticing in entrepreneurship education and identifies practical ways to support its development. PN is effectively fostered through activities that focus on observing non-verbal communication, analysing environmental influences, keeping reflective journals and engaging in structured peer feedback. Together, these approaches help students develop stronger observational skills and a more nuanced understanding of entrepreneurial situations.

Strengthening PN involves exposing learners to a range of entrepreneurial contexts, encouraging active engagement through real or simulated projects, and drawing on perspectives from different disciplines. For lecturers, embedding PN in course design enhances student engagement, supports critical thinking and problem-solving, and contributes to more reflective and rewarding teaching practice.



09 Marketing and International Business



Partner	eucen
Country	Spain
Lecturer's institution	UPF Barcelona School of Management
Field of specialization	Marketing and International Business
Course / programme (short description, time, format)	He currently teaches International Business Culture and Organisation, Business Simulation and International Marketing, and is the Academic Coordinator of the Master's Degree in International Business.
Educational level (VET / university)	University

At the methodological level, in the field of entrepreneurship, he makes use of different tools and methodologies. These are the main activities which are relevant to professional noticing:

- **Project development.** Through the course, the students develop a project, allows them to apply all the theoretical knowledge they have gained in a practical way and to develop the necessary competences to work in businesses. On this project, the students have to conclude some interviews, which also enable them to improve their observational competences. To prepare for the interview the students have to develop a questionnaire, this teaches them to think beforehand what information is relevant and what they have to be aware of. After the interview they are tasked to do a recompilation of the information, through this activity they are learning to think about what they have noticed and reflect on it.
- **Identification of business ideas in conventional literature.** In this activity, the students engage in a systematic analysis of various text types, particularly those found in conventional literature, such as newspapers, magazines, or other written materials. The primary objective is for students to identify and extract potential business ideas from these texts. With this activity, he helps the student develop their observational and noticing capacities, so that they learn to have a more of an analytical perspective.
- **Speakers.** During the course, he invites speakers of the entrepreneurial and business sector to share their experiences. After the session, the students summarize what they have learned, and what they can extract that would be relevant for their project. Through this activity, he teaches his students how to notice and extract relevant information.
- **Peer observation.** Another activity which he uses is tasking some students to observe and analyse the teamwork of other groups. When they are conducting group activities, for each of these groups he tasks a student to follow their process and work methods and afterwards to present what they have observed. This helps both the group and the students at the same time. The student improves his noticing and observational competences regarding third parties, and the group becomes aware of their behaviour and become more attentive of noticing their own actions and how they can affect or improve.

9.2

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

Project development helps students to:

- **Apply theory and develop competences.** Project work links academic learning with real-world practice, allowing students to develop competences that emerge through experience rather than formal instruction.
- **Strengthen observational skills.** Interviews and field research encourage students to notice relevant details in real contexts. Preparing interview questions helps them focus on what information matters and what to observe during interactions.
- **Develop reflective and analytical competences.** Compiling and analysing interview data supports reflection and helps students turn observations into meaningful insights.

Identifying business ideas in conventional literature helps students to:

- **Develop observational and analytical skills.** Students learn to spot subtle cues in texts, recognise relevant information and identify trends, market needs and potential business ideas.
- **Strengthen critical thinking.** By distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant information, students learn to evaluate significance and viability, a key skill in entrepreneurial decision-making.

Inviting speakers from the entrepreneurial and business sector enables students to:

- **Gain industry insight.** First-hand accounts provide practical knowledge, problem-solving strategies and awareness of skills valued in the sector.
- **Build networks.** Interaction with speakers offers opportunities to connect with potential mentors, collaborators or employers.
- **Improve observation, listening and critical thinking.** Students practise active listening and learn to extract key messages and insights from professional experiences.
- **Increase motivation.** Entrepreneurial stories can inspire creativity and confidence in developing new ideas.

Peer observation activities support students in:

- **Enhancing observation and analysis.** Observing other teams sharpens attention to group dynamics and working methods.
- **Developing self-reflection.** Feedback helps teams recognise strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Building noticing, collaboration and conflict management skills.** Students become more aware of how behaviour affects teamwork and learn to identify and address challenges effectively.

9.3

Pitfalls and challenges of the activity

The challenge of professional noticing revolves around the fact that some students have the capacity to observe and learn through this process. Not all students have the same level of observation skills or the ability to notice and extract the relevant information.

It's the teacher's role to help students develop their noticing skills by guiding them in what they need to notice and how to reflect on what they've learned. Teachers need to be aware of the differences in their students' abilities to observe and understand concepts, and guide them through the noticing process.

9.4

How did / can the “PN learning activity” contribute to being a successful entrepreneur?

Professional noticing is a critical skill, especially in the early stages of entrepreneurship. The ability to be aware and to notice subtle hints of information can be a defining factor that sets apart an entrepreneur from a successful one.

Entrepreneurship is not just about starting a business; it's about identifying gaps in the market or innovative solutions to existing problems. Successful entrepreneurs possess the capacity to recognize these gaps and opportunities, which allows them to create something unique or to enhance existing offerings in a way that distinguishes their venture from the competition.

Professional noticing becomes a value-added skill, enabling entrepreneurs to bring something new or improved to the market, making their ideas and businesses stand out and succeed.

The importance of professional noticing extends beyond the entrepreneurial journey's initial stages. It's a skill that remains relevant throughout an entrepreneur's life. The world is constantly changing, and markets evolve. The ability to stay attuned to these changes and to continue identifying opportunities for improvement or innovation is essential for sustaining success and personal growth. In this way, professional noticing becomes a lifelong tool for entrepreneurs to enhance their capacities and adapt to ever-changing circumstances. It enables them to be in a constant state of evolution, a key factor in long-term entrepreneurial success.

9.5

Reflection

Mentoring students through the reflection process is vital, and one effective tool is to provide them with a guide on the critical elements that they should observe and focus on. By following this guidance, students can develop a more systematic approach to their learning, ensuring that they don't miss essential details and can make the most of their educational experiences.

Equally important is the post-reflection phase, the best activity would be an open discussion where students have the opportunity to present their findings and insights. Through these discussions, students can clarify their understanding, share their perspectives, and help each other notice things that they have missed.



10 Work Based-Learning



Partner	eucen
Country	England
Lecturer's institution	University of Chester
Field of specialization	Work based learning
Course / programme (short description, time, format)	Doctoral supervision and work based learning project supervisor
Educational level (VET / university)	University

10.1 Description of the professional

(PN) activities of the good practice

In natural settings, as opposed to formal educational environments, the way people learn is different. Consequently, the pedagogical approach should not solely rely on didactic instructions; it should encompass activities and content tailored to address the specific learning needs of the students. The teacher's role is to evaluate these needs and assist students in bridging the gap between their practical experiences and the formal knowledge available in higher education.

It is unrealistic to expect students to move easily into observational learning, particularly if they are used to traditional education methods. An introductory phase is therefore needed to introduce reflective learning and link theory with practice. This can combine relevant reading with practical exercises that encourage critical thinking, supported by clear guidance on what to look for, expect and record. Learning through observation involves managing large amounts of information at once, which can be difficult to track. Encouraging students to keep a regular learning log helps them record key observations and reflections, supporting both retention and later understanding of what they have observed.

10.2

Benefit of the activity / methodology in terms of developing PN skills

The benefits of learning through observation could be summarized in:

- **Awareness.** When students learn through observation, they become conscious learners. This means they are actively aware of not just what they are learning, but also how they are learning. This self-awareness can be essential for effective learning and retention
- **Platform for Lifelong Learning.** Learning through observation provides students with a platform for informed lifelong learning. In other words, it equips them with the skills and competences needed not only for academic qualifications but also for continuous learning throughout their lives.
- **Development of competences.** A clear distinction exists between skills, which are often role-specific, and competences, which possess a broader and transferable nature. Competences are frequently undervalued, overlooked, or underestimated. However, these competences are crucial to succeed. In entrepreneurial contexts, competences like understanding markets, customers, and suppliers are crucial. These competences are not easily learned in a traditional classroom setting because they are highly context dependent. Instead, they can be effectively acquired through observation and real-world experiences.
- **Development of aptitudes.** There are some aptitudes, like enthusiasm or motivation which are very important, that cannot be taught, but can be learned. You cannot teach somebody to be enthusiastic, but they can learn it by observing others and by analysing their own experience. They can learn how to act in order to succeed.

10.3

Pitfalls and challenges of the activity

Familiarity with both the people and the environment, along with well-defined entrepreneurial objectives, plays a vital role in sharpening students' observational skills. Students who possess prior familiarity with a business context are equipped with a foundation that provides them with valuable context, knowledge, and confidence. Conversely, those lacking such prior experience, especially in real-world entrepreneurial environments, may encounter greater challenges in adapting to this new terrain.

Furthermore, the presence of clear, well-articulated objectives is of paramount importance for students' enthusiasm and dedication. These objectives serve as beacons, guiding and motivating students to invest their efforts and excel in their learning journey. In the absence of such objectives, sustaining motivation and a strong commitment to learning and achievement can become a formidable task.

Having familiarity with the people and environment and clear entrepreneurial objectives can help students be more aware of what they notice. When students have familiarity with a business, they have a background that gives them context, knowledge and confidence. Those students that don't have this past experience and moreover don't have any real-experiences in these environments can have a harder time to adapt. Having clear objectives, is crucial for students to be enthusiastic and work hard, without them, it can be difficult to keep motivated to learn and succeed.



10.4

How did / can the “PN learning activity” contribute to being a successful entrepreneur?

Professional Noticing is the means in which people can gain experience, new knowledge and competences. Through noticing and observing, they can learn those competences that make for successful entrepreneurs, and that cannot be learned in formal education.

10.5

Reflections

Rather than the teacher saying what they need to reflect on, it is in the student's hand to decide what they want to reflect on. The student should have freedom to find their own way to reflect, as it has to be important for them.

The difference between reflecting in the everyday life and reflecting in an academic context, is that there has to be a way of getting away from your own thoughts. There has to be a dialogue to get away from your own perspective, and that can be achieved through a tutor or formal reading.





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