

## A Task-Based Approach to Learning Business English at the Fachsprachenzentrum (Language Learning Centre, LLC)

In the two week intensive language course, Business English II-III (UNICert® III – CEFR<sup>1</sup> C1), at the LLC, participants set up their own fictitious companies. They are first taught the business terminology and theory on a range of topics, including business ownership, marketing and accounting. After each lesson on a specialised topic, the participants work in small groups and put the acquired business and language knowledge into practice by writing a business plan for their own product or service. The content from Business English I, the previous course, is also put to good use in this project work. The concept is based on the very successful TV show Dragons' Den. The show gives entrepreneurs the chance to pitch their proposals to a panel of the most successful business people, who have pledged to invest their own money into the best ideas. The ideas pitched in the intensive course held in September 2012 included JuicyBooze, a cocktail delivery service; SOS Bus, a party service bus; Recipes4me, an individualised cookbook service; and CoralmAID, a coral naming service.



JuicyBooze: N.Bosse, J. Lang, M. Wallrapp, C. Röhrs



CoralmAID: C. Teuffel, M. Debus,  
M. Wösle, A. Weber



SOS Bus: B. Holzhausen, M. Winter, M. Thiel,  
S. Papavasiliu



Recipes4me: C. Fiebiger, J. Lehmann, J. Weber,  
L-S, Allramseder, F. Weißbecher

<sup>1</sup> Common European Framework of Reference, i.e. Gemeinsamer europäischer Referenzrahmen (GER)

The LLC concept has been well received by students:

*“I really liked the project and enjoyed working together on the business plan. On the one hand, I enjoyed the language experience. It was quite a challenge to do this work and only communicate in English. On the other hand, I liked the project because it was an opportunity to apply knowledge and vocabulary attained in the course to a real business idea” (N. Bosse).*

*“Considering the whole project, I would say that I have learned many things about our business topics and the content became less abstract. Although there was a lot of work that had to be done, I really enjoyed setting up our own company and having the possibility to be creative” (C. Fiebiger).*

*“All in all, I can say that the experience of working in a group and establishing our own business was definitely a personal enrichment for me. I have gained a real insight into the business world and how complicated it can be to set up your own business. I totally feel like I am better prepared to go out into the business world after finishing this project than before the course” (S. Papavasiliu).*

The students put a lot of time and effort into their business plans and pitches, but the million dollar question that remains to be answered is whether the students’ entrepreneurial ideas would really work on the market. In order to be able to answer this question the English Department is looking into possible ways to realise this. Maybe we can attract an entrepreneur to watch the pitches, or maybe we can contact someone who is specialised in start-ups. If anyone has any advice or any contacts which could enrich this project, please contact Eleanor Freer ([eleanor.freer@uni-tuebingen.de](mailto:eleanor.freer@uni-tuebingen.de)), English lecturer at the LLC.

Eleanor Freer, Fachsprachenzentrum.