



Business Jumpstart

Every entrepreneur starts with an idea! Ideas can come from observing your surroundings and being curious about how things work. Everyone has the ability to come up with an idea—it's what you do to bring it to life that makes you an entrepreneur.

Steps

1. Create a prototype that solves a problem
2. Get feedback
3. Revise your prototype
4. Come up with a pitch
5. Pitch your idea to an audience

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I will have come up with an idea, gotten feedback on it, and pitched it to others—just like an entrepreneur!

You Are a Cookie Entrepreneur™!

When you sell Girl Scout Cookies®, you belong to the largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world! The skills you use—setting goals, making decisions, and talking to people—are all part of being an entrepreneur.



Every step has three choices. Do ONE choice to complete each step. Inspired? Do more!

STEP 1 Create a prototype that solves a problem

Entrepreneurs solve problems and make our lives better by creating something new or looking at familiar products to find possibilities. Be an innovator by checking out existing products and talking to people around you. Is there something you could change to solve a problem? Once you find your idea, create a prototype. If it's a product, you can build a model or draw a plan describing what your service or technology will provide.

CHOICES—DO ONE:

- ☐ **Look around where you live.** What are some things you could improve or ways that you could help? Maybe a family member is always losing their glasses or keys, or small items keep falling out of your bicycle basket. Come up with an idea and make a prototype.

OR

- ☐ **Look around your community.** Could you do something to improve your community? For example, you could come up with a way to make a playground more fun for kids with physical challenges or a way to make a street crossing safer. Come up with an idea and make a prototype.

OR

- Talk to a female entrepreneur or innovator.** Ask an adult to help you meet a woman who started her own business or created her own product. This could be a woman who sells homemade soup at a local farmers market, developed an app, or created a line of organic pet food products. Ask her why and how she came up with her idea. Find out how she handled success and roadblocks along the way. Use what you learn to brainstorm ideas and make a prototype.

Idea Sparks

Here are some ideas for products and services that came from kids like you!

- After seeing her cousin stash her phone in her boot because her leggings did not have pockets, a girl created a business selling socks and leggings with pockets.
- A girl came up with a way to microwave bacon in a hanging position to catch the drips of fat.
- Another girl started an app to help kids rate hotels, restaurants, and attractions.



EMBRACING



Luz Cristal Glangchai grew to appreciate failure because she realized it was an important part of learning. “When I was in graduate school, I was developing a new method of targeting cancer cells. I had been working on an experiment, sometimes until 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning. When I analyzed my results, I found out that my experiment did not work. Of course, I was frustrated and disappointed because of all of the late nights and the effort I put into it. However, I was very determined and felt that what I was doing was important. I knew that at some point I would find something that worked. So I went back and studied some scientific papers about the materials I was using, tried to guess why it may not have worked, and then performed another experiment. It took several attempts, but each time I learned what did not work and was able to narrow it down. And when it finally did work, I felt a great sense of accomplishment.”

Luz Cristal Glangchai is a scientist, entrepreneur, and founder of VentureLab, a nonprofit that develops programs for young entrepreneurs

Words to Know

Brainstorm: A fun word that means coming up with new ideas and different ways to solve a problem.

Entrepreneur: Someone who creates something or finds a way to help people and solve problems. Entrepreneurs

use their ideas to create a business.

Entrepreneurial mindset: A way of thinking that can help you try something new or solve a problem. You can think like an entrepreneur every day by being curious, embracing challenges even when things

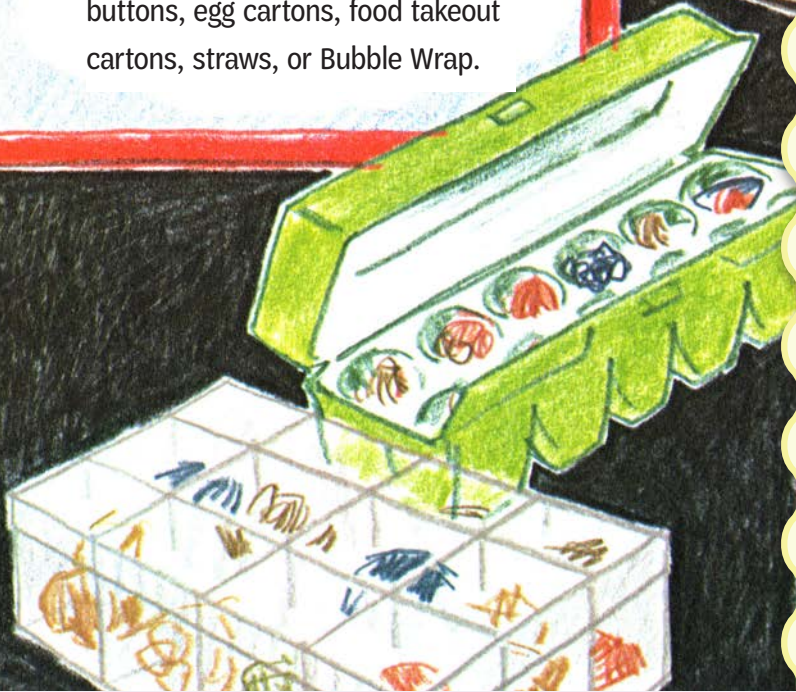
are difficult, and by trying again when something doesn't work.

Feedback: An opinion, or what someone thinks about your idea.

Innovator: Someone who creates new products or changes something that already exists. For example,

Prototype

Creating a prototype of your product will help your idea come to life! Don't worry, though, it doesn't have to be perfect. You can use craft supplies, such as clay, craft sticks, and colored markers. You can also look for things that are about to go in the recycling or trash bin, like corks from bottles, cardboard paper rolls, shoeboxes, plastic bottles, milk cartons, buttons, egg cartons, food takeout cartons, straws, or Bubble Wrap.



*Adapted from Become the CEO of You, Inc.
by Susan Bulkeley Butler*

Be the CEO of You: Keep a Journal

Write your ideas, goals, and feedback in a notebook. Here are some things to include:

- Your ideas, problems, and solutions
- Goals you want to meet
- Feedback about your ideas
- Brainstorming notes
- Changes you want to make
- People you admire (entrepreneurs, inventors, and innovators)
- Inspiring quotes
- Names and contact information of people you are working with
- Names and contact information of people who have helped you or may help you in the future

you can innovate a new app and then use your entrepreneurial skills to turn it into a business.

Model: Something you build to show another person what your idea will look like.

Pitch: When you share your idea with people in a way that

gets them excited and eager to support you as you bring your idea to life.

Product: Something that is made to be sold or used.

Prototype: A quick way to show others how your idea works. It can be as simple as a drawing or it could be a 3-D

model made with things like cardboard, paper, string, or rubber bands.

Service: To provide someone with something that is needed or wanted.

Technology: Devices, apps, or tools that make people's lives easier.

STEP 2 Get feedback

When someone gives you opinions or information, or offers you a way to make something better, that's called feedback. Share your prototype to find out what people like and don't like about your idea. Ask them what they might do to improve it. Bring your journal to take notes about what you learn.

CHOICES—DO ONE:

- ☐ **Show your ideas to your friends, family, or someone in the community.** If you can, try to include someone who owns a business or has been part of starting up a business.

OR

- ☐ **Talk to your future customers.** Who would be most likely to use your product? Those are the people you want to talk to! Get feedback about what they like about your product, service, or technology, and where they see room for improvement.

OR

- ☐ **Conduct a survey.** Show your prototype to at least ten people and have them answer a survey. By asking each person the same questions, you will be able to compare the comments and see the biggest opportunity to improve your idea.

How to Get Feedback

Avoid questions where the answer could be “**yes**” or “**no**.” Instead, ask:

What do you like about this idea?

What would you change about this idea?

What would you do to make this idea better?

Survey Helper

Step 1: Create the questions. You can type these on a handout. Write questions like: Is this something you would buy or use? What can I do to improve this idea?

Step 2: Ask the questions. Have people fill out your survey or ask them the questions and take notes.

Step 3: Study the results. What do the comments tell you about how you can change your product?

STEP 3

Ideas are almost never perfect the first time. This means you can keep improving on them! Gather the feedback and come up with more ideas. Invite a friend or a small group to help you look at the feedback and brainstorm improvements. It always helps to have a team of people who support your vision.

CHOICES—DO ONE:

- ☐ **Make a change to improve your prototype.** Take a look at the feedback you received and make the changes you think will improve your product. Your changes might include things like adding something new, rearranging your design, or substituting one thing for another.

OR

- ☐ **Come up with two different prototypes and test them.** You might have heard one or two fixes that you want to try. Create two separate prototypes and then find out which one people prefer by getting more feedback.

OR

- Start over!** If your feedback reveals new ideas or problems to be solved, start fresh and redo it! Many entrepreneurs start out thinking their product is solving one problem—and then find out it is solving something completely different. Or they realize their customers' needs are different than they imagined.

Build a Team

You might like working alone to come up with your idea, but you'll want a team behind you to help bring your idea to life. If you're developing an app, you might need someone to help you code. If you know someone who is great at design, get ideas about improving how your product looks. If you have a friend who is a top cookie seller, ask for tips on how to talk to people about your product.





SCAMPER Method



Alex Osborn, an advertising executive who came up with “brainstorming,” wrote a checklist of questions to help people solve problems. Educational expert Bob Eberle turned Osborn’s questions into S.C.A.M.P.E.R., an acronym for the techniques below. You can use SCAMPER to help rethink your prototype:

Substitute

Is there part of your product, service, or technology that you could replace to improve it? Could you use different materials for your product or better technology to provide your service?

Real-life example: Using different materials to make running shoes lighter

Combine

Sometimes you can combine several ideas or products into one. Can your product or service be used for another purpose?

Real-life example: Combining a cell phone and a camera

Adapt

What other product does something similar? Is there something you can borrow to improve your product? Could your idea solving one problem also solve another? How can your product or service function better—be faster or easier to use?

Real-life example: A DVD rental service that became an online streaming service

Magnify

This means changing your situation or problem by exaggerating it to see if you get

a new idea. Could the shape or appearance of the product be changed? What can be added? What if the product was twice its current size, or your service or app was created for an entirely different audience?

Real-life example: Calculators with large display buttons and screens for people with impaired sight

Purpose or Put to Another Use

Who else could use your product? What are other ways to use it? Can it be reused or recycled for another use? Could someone older, younger, or with different abilities use it?

Real-life example: Material for making water bottles that was originally intended for building storage tanks

Eliminate

How would your product look if you simplified it? Is there a part you can take out and still have it work? Could your service or technology be easier or faster to use?

Real-life example: Computers that no longer have a CD/DVD drive

Rearrange or Reverse

What would happen if you turned your product backwards, upside down, or inside out? Any improvement? Would it make a difference to assemble your product in a different order?

Real-life example: Putting concrete mixers on the front of trucks instead of the rear, which made it easier for drivers to back into a site

Once you've made at least one revision for your prototype, come up with a pitch to get others excited about it. When you see a salesperson explaining a product and asking you to buy it, that's called a pitch. Decide who your customers are and make a list of all the reasons they will want your product.

☐ **Create a poster or an ad.** Include everything that you believe will sell your product, service, or technology.

Watch or listen to an entrepreneur's video or podcast. You might seek out a show or a documentary about a female entrepreneur. Remember, an entrepreneur can be a businesswoman, engineer, inventor, or someone else you admire. If possible, observe how they pitch ideas and get inspired before making your own pitch list.

☐ **Write a pitch with friends and family.** If possible, include someone in the group who has sales experience or knows how to give a pitch. Make notes about all the things you could say or do in a pitch.

2.
Show
your idea using
whatever you made
in Step 4 and talk
about what it
does.

STEP **5** Pitch your idea to an audience

In Step 4, you created a pitch. Now pitch it to a group. Be sure to hold a question-and-answer session at the end of your pitch. Remember, it's important to invite feedback about how to make your idea or your pitch better. It's never too late to keep making changes and improving. That's part of being an entrepreneur!

CHOICES—DO ONE:

- ☐ **Pitch your idea to your family or someone in your community.** If possible, include someone in the group who has sales experience or knows how to give a pitch.

OR 

- ☐ **Pitch your idea to your Girl Scout friends.** Ask your troop leader if you can present your idea at a meeting. Or, if your Girl Scout sisters are also earning this badge, suggest a meeting where you all present your ideas to each other.

OR 

- ☐ **Pitch your idea at school.** Ask your teacher if you can pitch your idea in a classroom to other students or maybe at a table during lunch or break time.

3.
Describe
who will use
your product and
why. (Who are your
customers?)

4.
Share
where customers
might buy your
product and how
much it should
cost.

5.
Invite
your audience
to ask
questions.



Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Using my entrepreneurial skills to teach younger girls how to improve their cookie business
- Showing a friend how to make a prototype for an invention
- Sharing the best ways to pitch an idea with my family

I'm inspired to:

Made possible by a generous gift from Susan Bulkeley Butler, author of *Become the CEO of You, Inc.*

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