Creating a Future that is Not Just Different, But Better: Designing and Directing a High School Entrepreneurship Diploma Program

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ABSTRACT This paper briefly identifies the 21st century landscape as one comprised of globalized, hyperconnected, and technologically integrated systems. These systems create new problems and challenges, resulting in a different context for the roles of entrepreneurs and creative, sustainable change leaders. This paper introduces the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset as a new framework of entrepreneurship education (EE) and leadership development that prepares individuals to solve these problems, tackle these challenges, and serve as creative change leaders. The Entrepreneurship Diploma (ED) is a high school diploma program that promotes the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset. The methodology used to develop this mindset is an approach that draws from literature on systems thinking, self-actualization, leadership, creativity, and innovation, and from the researcher's own academic and professional experiences as an entrepreneur and creative change leader with a non-linear career path. This paper promotes the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset as a highly experiential, learner-centered curriculum model for EE, leadership development, systems thinking, self-actualization, creativity, and innovation. Given the 21st century's challenges of scale and sustainability, the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset meets the need of preparing individuals to launch and lead creative change as they navigate non-linear careers or become entrepreneurs.

Keywords: entrepreneurship education, leadership, self-actualization, creativity

Introduction

'The fourth industrial revolution, combined with a more globalised, competitive world, is changing the way we all work – both now and in the future' (Cox, 2017, para. 1). These factors not only have changed the way we work, regardless of our chosen field, but also have created our 21st century reality of interacting problems, or messes (Ackoff & Greenberg, 2008). The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals address solving these interacting problems (United Nations, n.d.). What skills are needed to prepare entrepreneurs and leaders of creative, sustainable change to clean up these messes, solve these problems, and achieve these goals?

This paper briefly surveys the 21st century landscape as one comprised of globalized, hyperconnected, and technologically integrated systems. These systems create new problems and challenges, resulting in a different context for the roles of, and skills needed by, entrepreneurs and leaders of creative, sustainable change. This paper introduces the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset as a new framework of en-

trepreneurship education (EE) and leadership development education. The CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset empowers individuals to develop the skills of systems thinking, self-actualization, adaptive and transformational leadership, creativity, and innovation, in a coherent and connected way. The Entrepreneurship Diploma (ED) is a high school diploma program that promotes the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset in high school students, more purposefully preparing them to solve these problems, tackle these challenges, achieve these goals, serve as creative change leaders, navigate non-linear careers, and create and participate in jobs that do not yet exist. Before describing this mindset and the literature that informs it, this paper briefly states the methodological approach for developing this framework, as well as examines the 21st century landscape.

Methodology

The methodology used to develop the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's mindset is an approach that draws from a review and analysis of the literature on the 21st century landscape, systems thinking, self-actualization, leadership, creativity, and innovation. It also draws from the researcher's own academic and professional experiences as an entrepreneur, mindfulness practitioner and instructor, educator, and creative change leader with a non-linear career path. The curriculum of Drexel University School of Education's Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Management also influenced the development of the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset. This doctorate focuses on teaching the skills needed for sustainable leadership. This doctorate program prepares graduates to 'meet the challenges of diverse educational environments [and] to serve in a variety of educational leadership roles' (Drexel University School of Education, 2018).

The 21st Century Landscape

The second half of the 20th century and first decades of the 21st century have seen exponential growth in globalization and technological advancements (Beetham, 2013; Reisman, 2017; U.S. Department of Labor, 1999). Further, technological advancements, such as artificial neural networks and machine learning (Villa et al., 2016), mobile platforms, social networks, and data management and collaboration systems 'have revolutionized the way we live, work, and communicate—and the pace is only accelerating' (Bersin et al., 2017, p. 2-3). With these advancements in technology, as well as increasing globalization, our world has become one complex system (Howell, 2018). This one complex system is comprised of numerous, integrated, and complex sub-systems (Howell, 2018) in which information flows in dynamic and non-linear ways, as well as connects cultures, organizations, societies, and ideas. According to the OECD Global Science Forum, complex systems are characterized by adaptability, emergence, non-linearity, phase transitions, and self-organization (cited in Howell, 2018). To create sustainable change in this landscape, as an entrepreneur or leader, individuals must be able to identify, perceive, and understand how individuals share, interpret, and manage information. Accordingly, individuals must develop, practice, and apply systems thinking skills.

Systems thinking

What do systems thinking skills involve? Systems thinking skills enable individuals to identify events, uncover the underlying reasons for and characteristics of these events, and observe the patterns and relationships that link these events. Goodman's (1997) Iceberg Model is a helpful tool for uncovering the underlying thought patterns, mental models (Senge, 1992), and structures that influence patterns of behavior, observable events, and actions in a system. A way to understand the concept of a system is needed. Boulding's (1963) definition of a system as a big black box, governed by flows of inputs that result in outputs, is helpful:

> A system is a big black box
> Of which we can't unlock the locks,
> And all we can find out about
> Is what goes in and what comes out.
> Perceiving input-output pairs,
> Related by parameters,
> Permits us, sometimes, to relate
> An input, output and a state.
> If this relation's good and stable
> Then to predict we may be able,
> But if this fails us—heaven forbid!
> We'll be compelled to force the lid!
> (cited in Meadows, 2008, p. 87-88)

The image of a big black box evokes a clearly bounded object or place with unknown internal processes that mysteriously change inputs into outputs. It also evokes secrecy, perhaps indicating that as observers of, or participants or leaders in, the system, we are not able to understand the system's essence. However, Boulding suggests we can understand how the system works, by examining the systems' inputs and outputs.

The characterization of systems as families (Senge, 2013) helps us picture how inputs might influence a system. This characterization also helps us see how the rules that govern a system might influence and produce its outputs. A family unit, in many ways, is a locked system: The rules, customs, and traditions governing the behavior and relationships of individual family members may not be visible to external observers who are not members of the family. Further, family leaders or members may not know or understand these rules. Yet, to authentically understand the family values and how these values inform family actions and behaviors, family members and leaders must identify, understand, and share their own beliefs and mental models (Senge, 1999). Much like observing the behaviors of family members or leaders is the first step to understanding how these family values inform family behaviors, so too observing the behaviors of members of an organization is the first step to understanding how the organization's values inform its behaviors. In this regard, Senge's analogy of systems as family is highly apt.

In his poem, Bouldling also suggests that if our predictions are not correct, we must force the box's lid open to see inside. This is analogous to exerting force to see inside the system, so we observe how the system internally works. But, much like forcing the lid has the potential to break the box, so too exerting force on the system can break the system. Our task, then, as entrepreneurs and creative change leaders – especially as educational leaders training novice entrepreneurs and the next generation

of creative change leaders – is to determine how to unlock the locks that keep the system's essence inaccessible and hidden. In doing so, we position ourselves to determine the rules, parameters, and relationships that govern the system, without breaking and disrupting the system.

How do we unlock the locks? Keeping with this analogy, before we can unlock the box's locks so we can see inside, we must unlock and understand our own skills and potential as careful and consider locksmiths, leading and making key decisions in the unlocking process. We must also understand how we work with others who are involved in the unlocking process, to collaboratively approach unlocking the locks. To do this, we must step outside or away from the locked box and consider different perspectives on ourselves and our roles. So too, when understanding a system, we must identify not only our own individual work styles and character traits, but also how we collaborate with other system members and stakeholders who influence the system as well. Self-actualization, adaptive and transformational leadership, and creativity and innovation are skills that position entrepreneurs and change leaders to understand themselves and others, as well as their own, and others', roles.

Self-actualization

The individual's quest to understand and make meaning of her- or him-self has fascinated humans since Ancient Greek times and before. *Know thyself*, the maxim written on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, is frequently quoted and referenced throughout history and pop culture. One such reference is a pivotal scene in *The Matrix*, when Neo visits the Oracle to ask if he is The One. Self-actualization is the process of fully knowing oneself, to leverage and actualize one's fullest potential (Maslow, 1943).

Self-actualization enables individuals to unlock their fullest potential. Self-actualization prompts a strong sense of self-awareness and identity. A strong sense of self-awareness is needed to identify core values and creative leadership skills (Puccio et al., 2011). According to Runco (2014), Rogers (1995) and Maslow (1971) explicitly tied creativity to self-actualization. For Maslow, self-actualized individuals accurately and authentically understand themselves and their world, and are spontaneous, independent, and creative (Runco, 2014). Entrepreneurs and creative change leaders demonstrate these traits in designing and directing sustainable change.

Developing self-actualization skills in high school better enables individuals to understand internal values and characteristics, empowers students to listen to their inner-self, and positions students to realize their purpose earlier and more concretely (Zwilling, 2017). When high school students understand their internal values and characteristics, they empower themselves to link their personal values to their education process and to solving real-world problems. In this way, school becomes a place in which students not only test, extend, and strengthen their own values and character traits, but also apply their values to solving real-world problems, tackling real-world challenges, and achieving real-world goals. Identifying their own core values positions students to be more purposeful creative change leaders while still in high school. It also enables students to more intentionally recognize mentors around them who model authentic and desirable leadership behavior, as well as model this type of leadership behavior themselves (Kouzes & Posner, 2008).

How do high school students develop self-actualization skills? Mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn, 2013), presencing (Scharmer, 2016), and feedback sharing skills are three tools that help individuals unlock their fullest potential identity and better understand themselves. Mindfulness is 'paying attention . . . on purpose, in the present mo-

ment, and non-judgmentally' (Kabat-Zinn, 2013, p. xxvii). Presencing is the dialogue between the past self and emergent self (Scharmer, 2016, pp. 41-42). In this process, individuals identify and surface their own mental models, biases, and assumptions as their past-selves and emergent-selves dialogue. Mindfulness and prescencing also enable individuals to pause their routines and thought patterns so that individuals stop 'listening from habits' by downloading information (Scharmer, 2015). Once individuals create this pause, individuals can start 'listening from outside' to notice and observe, 'listening from within' to practice empathy, and 'listening from [the] source' to connect to an emerging future through generative listening (Scharmer, 2015). Constructive, relevant, and specific feedback highlights individuals' strengths and growth areas. Feedback is essential to learning, development, and skill and content mastery (Lynch, 2018; Philippakos, 2017; Talwar, 2018; University of Reading, n.d.; Vander Ark, 2018). When individuals share and apply immediate, constructive, and specific feedback, they empower themselves as self-evaluators, evaluators of others, and critical and iterative thinkers.

Mindfulness, presencing, and feedback sharing skills promote nonjudgmental curiosity, empower individuals to understand their own identity and personal brand, and develop the metacognitive skills to know their passion and purpose. Mindfulness and presencing also enable individuals to develop a growth mindset, grit, and coping skills to manage stress and view challenges as opportunities. A growth mindset helps students develop self-efficacy. Perceived self-efficacy is the degree to which individuals believe they can produce desired effects by their own actions (Bandura, 1999). Self-efficacy is foundational to being an entrepreneur and creative change leader (Zimmerman, 2014, p. 292). Self-efficacy also relates to effort, self-directedness, persistence, motivation, and drive (Bandura, 1999; Lee & Mao, 2016; Pink, 2009). Motivation and action are also related to behavior, innovation, and social change (Bandura, 1986). Since self-efficacy links self-directed motivation to achieving challenges, self-efficacy also relates to sense of purpose and promotes metacognition. Individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to engage in metacognition and understand the rationale and motivation for their own and others' actions. These skills and methods not only position individuals to *fail forward* – to make and learn from mistakes – and to use failure as feedback as they continue pursuing their goals, but also help individuals lead and collaborate with others to accomplish a shared vision.

Adaptive and transformational leadership

In applying systems thinking to create and lead sustainable change in the globalized, hyperconnected, and technologically integrated 21st century landscape, individuals must apply their self-knowledge and understanding of their own core values and traits to motivate and inspire others to accomplish a vision. This is leadership, which Bolman and Deal (2008) define as: 'a subtle, holistic process of mutual influence fusing thought, feeling, and action to produce cooperative effort in the service of purposes and values embraced by both the leader and the led' (p. 37).

In this process, collaboration, active and generative listening (Scharmer 2015), feedback, and negotiation skills are needed to accomplish a shared vision. Leaders also must demonstrate strategic decision-making, navigate uncertainty, and assess and manage risk. Adaptive leaders comfortably navigate this process by observing events and patters, interpreting observations, and designing interventions based on their observations (Heifetz et al., 2009).

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The first step in accomplishing a shared vision is diagnosing what actual problems exist, how these problems manifest in the system, and how these problems are perceived by system members and collaborators. Diagnosing problems, or seeking and identifying thorough analyses and understandings of problems, informed by multiple perspectives, is crucial to successful adaptive leadership (Heifetz et al., 2009). Diagnosing problems enables adaptive leaders to develop an ongoing pulse on collaborator and stakeholder concerns. With this pulse, adaptive leaders can identify blind spots (Scharmer, 2016). Without knowledge of blind spots, adaptive leaders have limited and siloed views of concerns, perspectives, and challenges that could hinder the shared vision (Scharmer, 2016). Adaptive leaders' blind spots also block leaders from 'direct access to the deeper sources of creativity' (Scharmer, 2016, p. 99). Understanding these blind spots is foundational to successful collaboration and creative problem solving.

To diagnose problems and uncover blind spots, creative change leaders must dialogue with and listen to others and take the balcony perspective (Heifetz et al., 2009). To surface authentic perspectives, this dialogue must be grounded in nonjudgmental, receptivity, empathy, and trust. This type of dialogue is a powerful method of collaborating, generating new learning, and creating solutions (Ackoff & Greenberg, 2008). Emotional intelligence is crucial to collaborating empathetically. Emotional intelligence goes beyond knowing 'one's makeup, proclivities, moods, and emotions [and] being able to recognize personal strengths and weaknesses' (Goleman, 1995, cited in Mirvis & Ayas, 2008, p. 128). Emotional intelligence also involves the dynamic process of 'understanding the impact one has on others' (Goleman, 1995, cited in Mirvis & Ayas, 2008, p. 128). Emotional intelligence enables adaptive leaders to get an accurate pulse on the people and events that comprise the system. With this pulse, individuals can collaborate to create more sustainable, system-specific, and needs-based change. This pulse also provides accurate information on the system. This information positions adaptive leaders to make tough decisions (Heifetz et al., 2009). Information also helps adaptive leaders, stakeholders, and collaborators navigate uncertainty and assess and manage risk.

Adaptive leaders are better positioned for transformational leadership. Transformational leaders raise themselves and their followers to 'higher levels of morality and motivation' (Mindtools, 2018). According to Bass (1985), transformational leaders also model integrity and fairness, set clear goals, hold themselves and others to high expectations, encourage and support others, recognize and celebrate the efforts of others, motivate and inspire others, propel others to look beyond their own self-interests, and inspire others to reach for the improbable (cited in Mindtools, 2018).

How do high school students develop adaptive and transformational leadership skills? Engaging in experiential, collaborative, student-driven and problem-based learning activities helps students develop and practice adaptive and transformational leadership. In these activities, students co-create their own learning process and design solutions to real-world problems. Students drive the process of creating group norms and rules so they can achieve desired outcomes and the group's shared vision. With these activities, students develop greater agency, competency, voice, and choice (Vander Ark, 2017).

Role-play is a method that facilitates collaborative learning (Stevens, 2015). Role-play invites students to apply their content knowledge to acting out a role and solving a problem that requires that knowledge. Since role-play invites students to make decisions and imagine what would happen in a given situation, from the perspective of their assumed role, role-play also builds leadership and followership skills.

Role-play activities in a collaborative environment 'make abstract problems more concrete and real, [enable] immediate feedback, [facilitate] expression of attitudes and feelings, [and enable students to wrestle with] uncertainties' (Reisman, 2017, p. 174). These skills and methods not only enable individuals to link their understanding of themselves to their identity as creative change leaders, but also position individuals to diagnose problems and collaborate empathetically and authentically with others to accomplish a shared vision.

Creativity and innovation

Creativity and innovation underlie systems thinking, self-actualization, and adaptive and transformational leadership. Creativity 'involves the production of novel, useful products' (Mumford, 2003, p. 110), 'something original and worthwhile' (Sternberg, 2011, p. 479), the communication of a new concept (Rhodes, 1961, p. 305), and the generation of ideas (Johnson, 2010; Mattimore, 2015). Creativity is an intraindivdiual process; innovation involves interindividual and social processes (Anderson et al., 2014).

While employers increasingly value creative, self-starter, and entrepreneurially minded employees (Institute for the Future for Dell Technologies, 2017), measuring, assessing, and teaching creativity are debated and complex topics. Encouraging creative development in the classroom is difficult, as few teaching strategies have been effective (Renzulli, 2017, p. 23). This could be due to a myriad of reasons, as an individual's understanding of, and ability to execute, their own creative talents is influenced by a complex relationship of environmental, social, cultural, and organizational factors that recognize, promote, and reward creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 2006; McIntyre, 2008; Runco, 2014). While understanding the difference between convergent and divergent thinking is a good starting point (Renzulli, 2017, p. 23), many other factors influence creativity in the classroom, as well as the interplays among teachers, students, and parents that promote this creativity. Convergent thinking involves converging on one correct answer, whereas divergent thinking promotes a broad exploration of possible answers. Puccio et al. (2011) offer strategies for adaptive and transformational leaders to promote and implement creativity in their organizations, including numerous frameworks for divergent thinking. Divergent thinking encourages students to generate and explore more options, which leads to more content knowledge and creativity. 'More creativity will often lead to more content knowledge, and more content knowledge will generally lead to more creativity' (Baer & Garrett, 2017, p. 50).

How do high school students develop creativity and innovation skills? There are numerous factors that indicate and influence an individual's ability to perceive themselves as creative and also to execute and strengthen their creativity (Reisman, 2017; Reisman et al., 2016; Runco, 2016). Educational leaders, teachers, students, peers, parents, and community partners and stakeholders all play roles in creating an educational environment that extends beyond the classroom to family, social, community, cultural, and national environments. Since 'different leadership styles may significantly influence creative work' (Runco, 2014, p. 161), all influencers in students' lives, including individuals in students' own peer group, must be aware of how to identify, value, validate, promote, and strengthen individual creativity. The Reisman Diagnostic Creativity Assessment (Reisman et al., 2016) is a self-reported 'diagnostic, rather than predictive, [instrument] with a focus on making the user aware of creative strengths and weaknesses' (p. 177).

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Additionally, beyond designing classroom and school environments that help students increase their own awareness of their creative strengths, teachers play important roles in affirming students' perceptions of themselves as creative. How teachers understand, develop, and execute their own creative potential, and whether they see themselves as creative, are crucial in promoting creativity in students. Teachers must be aware of their own perceptions of themselves as creative, as well as their own biases of creative individuals: If teachers have too strong an image of 'the ideal student' (Torrance, 1972, as cited in Runco, 2014), as one who is punctual, courteous, and compliant, teachers may hinder students from exploring their identities as creative individuals and their fullest creative potential. To identify as a creative individual, teachers and students must be able to see how they can express creativity in multi-dimensional, accessible, and relevant ways, across a broad range of subjects. In this way, creativity connects different disciplines and provides purpose to existing roles and routines.

A coherent and clear framework is needed to promote creativity and innovation skills in ways that connect them to systems thinking, self-actualization, and adaptive and transformational leadership, as well as to contextual these five skills in the 21st century's highly globalized, hyper-connected, and technologically integrated landscape and economy.

The CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset

The CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset, as promoted by the ED, provides this framework. This framework promotes skills for entrepreneurship and creative change leadership, regardless of an individual's career path or whether an individual becomes an entrepreneur. The CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset promotes systems thinking, self-actualization, leadership, creativity, and innovation in purposeful, programmatic, experiential, and student-centered ways, in school settings (see Figure 1 on page 29). As such, this framework is a new framework of EE and leadership development education.

In the acronym CHANGE, each letter stands for specific words, which align with the skills promoted by the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset. *C* stands for collaborate to create. Leaders must collaborate with others to create the sustainable and needs-based change they seek to implement. *H* stands for holistic: head, heart, and hands. Leaders must lead in, and build solutions from, holistic and integrated ways, applying the skills and knowledge in their heads, values and morals in their hearts, and actions authored by their hands. *A* stands for actualize to accomplish. Leaders must actualize the change they seek to accomplish: Wishing and hoping for change is not enough. *N* stands for now's needs. Leaders must uncover and understand system members', collaborators', and stakeholders' current needs and meet individuals where they are in the present moment, to co-construct more purposeful solutions that connect the present to the future. *G* stands for grow for good. Leaders must invest in their own and others' personal and professional growth and development and constantly seek to apply their knowledge and skills not only to doing well, but also to doing good. *E* stands for energize to excel. Leaders must understand how to motivate themselves and others to pursue excellence as they accomplish the shared vision. So, the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset prepares individuals to be creative change leaders, as they navigate non-linear career paths, regardless of whether they become entrepreneurs.
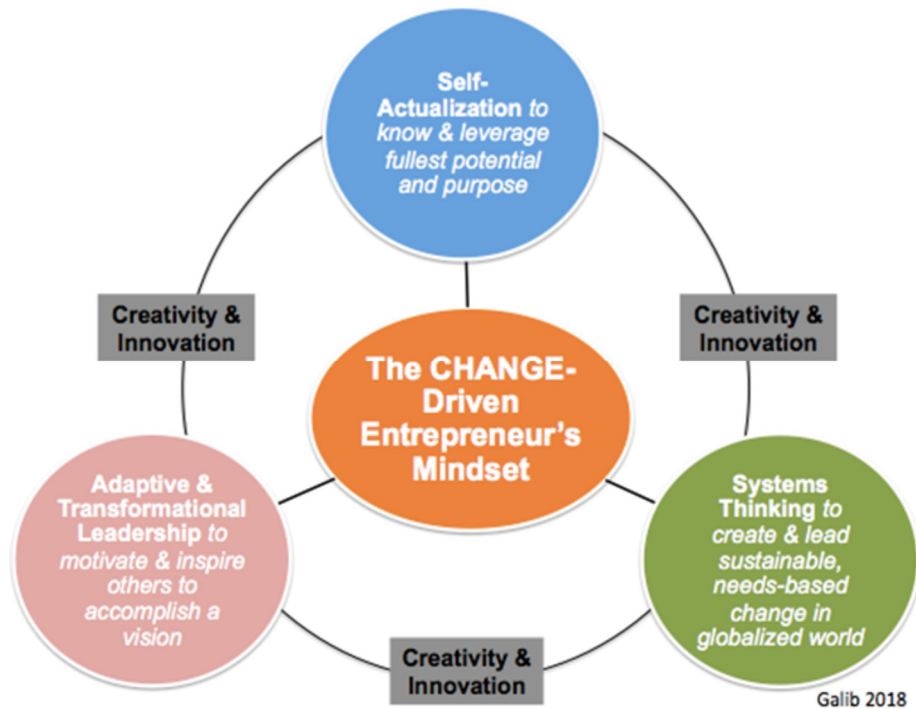
Figure 1: The CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset
Source: results of own research (Galib, 2018)

The Entrepreneurship Diploma

The Entrepreneurship Diploma (ED) is a high school degree program that promotes the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset. The ED enables students to take coursework and extra curricular opportunities in entrepreneurship and business literacy. These courses include Entrepreneurship, Financial Literacy, Negotiations, Decision Making, Leadership Development, Marketing & Strategy, and Private Equity & Venture Capital. ED candidates also take a Creativity Module. Throughout these courses, featured experts, entrepreneurs, or business leaders, are brought in as speakers to share their stories and bring the real world to the classroom through the Entrepreneurship Speaker Series.

These courses are taken as half-year electives, typically during junior and senior year of high school, while ED candidates concurrently meet their standard high school requirements. The Entrepreneurship course is a full-year course, typically taken during the student's freshmen or sophomore year. The Entrepreneurship course culminates in a Pitching Event at which Entrepreneurship students pitch their business idea to, discuss their business plan with, and network among community leaders, peers, and school administrators, parents, and faculty. ED candidates also must participate in an internship experience, as well as a service-based learning or sustainable development project, before they graduate. Extra-curricular opportunities include field trips to local entrepreneurial hubs and universities with business or entrepreneurship centers. The culminating project for ED candidates is a Capstone project in which students launch their own business, from idea to execution. To obtain her or his diploma, each student

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must pitch her or his business to investors, entrepreneurs, and other professionals at a pitching event, as well as show metrics of success. The ED enables students to develop strong creative leadership, management, and entrepreneurial skills, while gaining the tools to tackle the problems and challenges of our 21st century local and global landscape.

A Future That is Not Just Different, But Better

As educational leaders, how do we create real change? For Senge et al. (2010), 'All real change is grounded in new ways of thinking and perceiving' (p. 10). As Einstein's quotation explains, 'We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them' (Senge et al., 2010, p. 10). To create innovative and sustainable solutions for the problems and challenges that define the 21st century global landscape, real change is needed. These solutions must include, leverage, and engage all stakeholders.

Whether we sit in a corner office overlooking a busy city street, stand at an operating table focusing on a complicated surgery, start our own business to solve a community need, or complete academic coursework as curious, lifelong learners, all individuals have the potential to be creative change leaders. As educational leaders, we must inspire students to discover, understand, develop, and strengthen their creative change leadership potential. In doing so, we truly make our future not just different, but better (Thiel, 2015).

Conclusion

This paper has surveyed the 21st century landscape, identifying this landscape as one comprised of globalized, hyperconnected, and technologically integrated systems. These systems create new problems and challenges. To solve these problems and tackle these challenges in scalable and sustainable ways, entrepreneurs and creative change leaders must be able to apply creativity and innovation to thinking in systems and leading adaptively and transformationally. To better position themselves to think and lead in these ways, individuals must develop deep and authentic self-knowledge. Promoted by the ED, the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset is a new framework for EE and leadership development education that empowers high school students to develop these skills. As such, the CHANGE-Driven Entrepreneur's Mindset prepares our future leaders to launch and lead creative change as they navigate non-linear careers.

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