

## **Paper Title**

How to create educational environments that activate entrepreneurial behaviour?  
*Results of measuring the entrepreneur behavior style indicate that entrepreneurs have on average significantly -different behaviour style. What does this finding implicate for the context of teaching and learning of entrepreneurship?*

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## **Abstract:**

How to create educational environments that activate entrepreneurial behaviour? First: can entrepreneurial behavior be identified? We have tested the behavior styles of nearly thousand persons, among them nearly thirty entrepreneurs. Results: entrepreneurs on average have a different behavior style. Significant differing from the average behavior style: red (dominant, +30%), yellow (influence, + 15%), blue (conformity, -20%) and green (harmony, -30%).

Our complex business role-play- game simulation LE-Game is an example of an educational environment that activates entrepreneurial behaviour. Using the experimental method we obtained several pre- and post-game results on changes in behaviour style. They all showed a small change towards more entrepreneurial behavior: on average a little more extravert behavior style.

## Introduction: questions we care about

The question is whether it is possible to identify entrepreneurial behavior is caused by serendipity. – The findings that entrepreneurs have a significant different behavior style is due to the fact that in our tests it is possible to measure the behavior style of a “team”. The idea arose to select all entrepreneurs as a team and find the behavior style of this “team entrepreneurs”. The results are presented in this paper, combined with an possible answer on the question ‘how to create educational environments that activate entrepreneurial behavior?’

Also a complex simulation role-game is presented, which was the starting point of the development of testing entrepreneurial behavior.

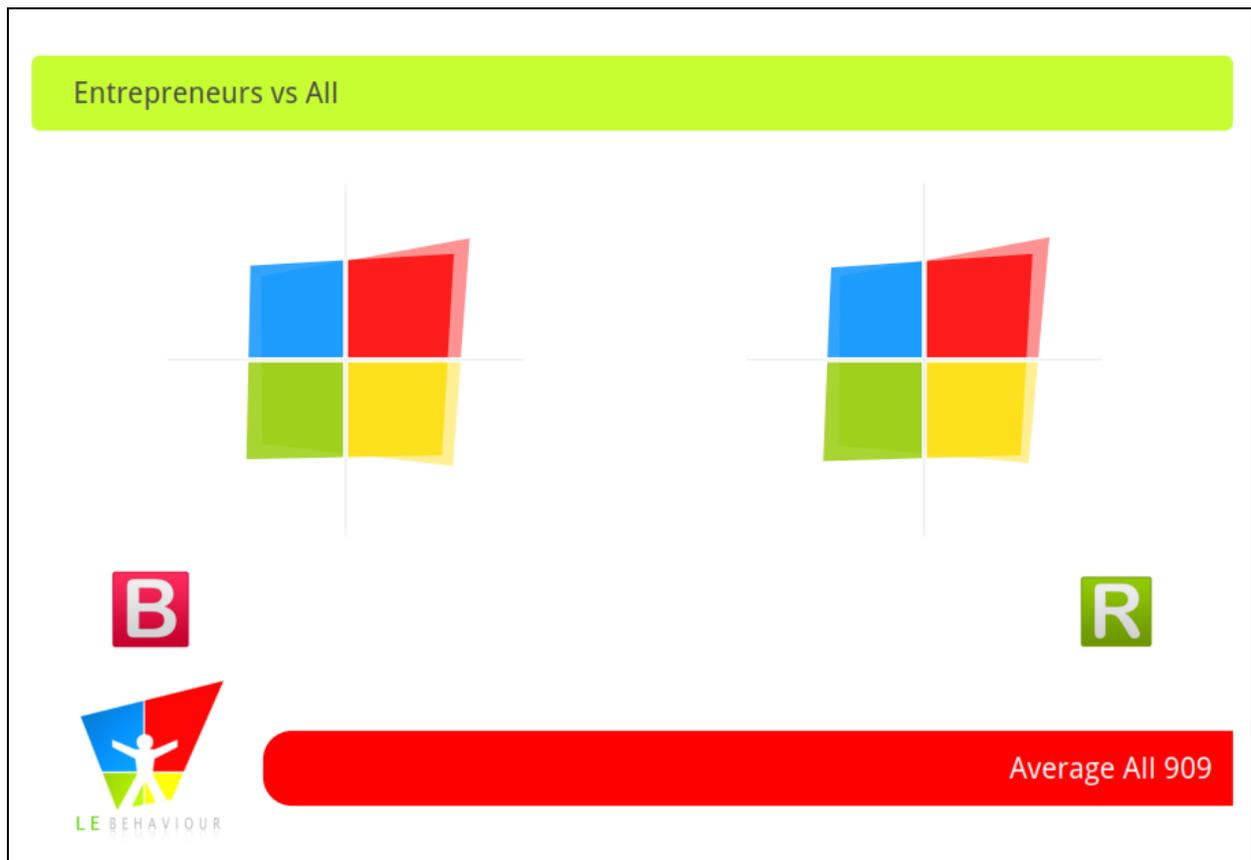


Figure 1: Entrepreneurial behavior: more extrovert (dominant-red & influence-yellow) than the “average” behavior style (both Response and Basic behavior style)

In earlier papers we presented how our role game simulation on entrepreneurship activated entrepreneurial behaviour. One of the research questions we had was: Is it possible to find out whether the behaviour styles correlate with the entrepreneurial skills? To answer this research question, we have used the experimental method. The participants are tested before and after the LE-Game participation. This gives us pre- and post-game results, which we compared to see whether there were behavioral changes after the game. On an average, we found there is small but significant change towards a more extravert behavior styles (dominance-red and influence-yellow). So our expectations, which were clearly visible in the behavior of the participants of these LE-Games during the games we played, have been supported by these statistics. As an entrepreneur, we concluded, you have to activate extrovert behavior:

remaining inactive and waiting does not lead to the most successful game result for the participant.

The conclusion that behaviour or the behaviour styles are very decisive in business, has gradually developed. It began with experiences on the importance of hard skills versus soft skills in learning. During the development of the educational concept of the learning companies<sup>1</sup>, we found out that behaviour had a much bigger impact than expected. By testing the behaviour style, we introduced the “soft elements” of the group process in order to identify bottlenecks in the effectiveness of groups. The group of students had to create services with added value for a customer. The importance of behaviour styles was continuously confirmed in the several learning companies. We applied behavior styles in simulations we developed, like LE-Game (Learning Entrepreneurship Game).

### **Approach: desk research and the experimental method**

Desk research has been mainly used to analyze the learning and teaching processes, especially those related to our experiences with authentic learning environments. These authentic learning environments, such as International Learning Companies (ILC's,- groups of students carrying out real assignments for “real paying customers”), led us to the thesis of testing entrepreneurship behaviour.



Figure 2: behaviour & behaviour style, examples

<sup>1</sup> Roelofs, Henk & Van der Sijde, Nico (2005). *Handbook learning companies* (5th ed.), Stenden university

The behaviour style analyses were based on the Management Development Instrument (MDI) test. This style analysis is based on William Moulton Marston's Emotions of Normal People (1928). MDI is an authoritative test, which is rather popular within companies, because it measures behaviour criteria in an objective manner. Based on this test we have developed a new simple and efficient test of behaviour styles.

The test has been applied to over 900 persons to measure the Response behaviour style and their Basic behaviour style. We also applied the tests in our role-game simulations, using the experimental method: testing whether the participants had changed their behavior in the entrepreneurship role simulation game LE Game (LE stands for "learning entrepreneurship"). Testing what everyone could clearly observe when a LE Game was played: each participant of the role-game being activated to entrepreneurial behaviour. We showed that in our experiments the participants on average changed their behaviour style towards more extrovert behaviour.

This LE-Game offers participants the chance to experience entrepreneurship in a safe and simulated environment. The experimental method can be applied because LE-Game can be played again and again, so our hypothesis can be validated or falsified when the experiments are repeated. This is exactly what we did: until now we found again and again more or less the same results.

## **Literature**

Learning in our Stenden university of Applied Science, as in all Dutch universities of Applied Sciences, is about the students acquiring "competencies". Competencies are described as "knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour to be successful in a professional environment". But, isn't teaching nowadays focusing too much on knowledge, a little on skills, somewhat on attitude and hardly on behaviour?

Illeris sees 'mislearning' element in learning processes, because '*in education, at workplaces and many other situations, very often people do not learn what they could learn or what they are supposed to learn*'; Mislearning due to misunderstandings, lack of concentration, mental resistance, etc. Since young people are highly engaged in a process of personal identity development, Illeris means that young people fundamentally meet all learning initiatives with questions such as: What does it mean *to me*? Or: What can *I* use this for? - implying that it is only worth paying attention to if it is subjectively accepted as a usable contribution to the present demands of the identity process.

To avoid mislearning, contemporary professional education should develop more effective, efficient, flexible and creative learning methods that fit better in this 'new' mindset of the new generation. Prensky (2001), and Veen and Vrakking (2006) presume that the current generation of students follow different study methods than the generation before, simply because they are brought up with the new ICT technology, learning through computer screens, icons, sound, games, exploration and show non-linear learning behaviour.

If we focus in the learning of entrepreneurship on learning in “being successful”, the value of learning from making mistakes (which has been pointed out by the famous German philosopher Karl Popper) is a positive element in a learning process since it is rewarding in terms of the entrepreneurial experience. An example of this benefit might be: “now I know that this doesn’t work, let’s try another way”.

Moreover you also need successes to learn to be successful. This type of learning is also effective by the experience of positive emotions: success drives success.

But how is “being successful” defined? As we showed in the article<sup>2</sup> on authentic learning environments, we experienced especially in the “international learning companies” (ILC’s) that “being successful” implies an environment in which there is a “risk” aspect; an environment with the dynamics to experience positive emotions of being successful by overcoming these risks. An environment in which there is a “risk” aspect, with the opportunity for each participant to create value and learning by successes of doing it, or not. This specific element of “risk” has been integrated as a key element in the development of the Learning Entrepreneurship Game (LE-Game)

According to Anthony and Jan Herrington (2005) in their book about authentic environments, such an authentic environment should provide:

1. An authentic context that reflects the way the knowledge will be used in real life.
2. Authentic activities.
3. Access to expert performances and the modelling of processes.
4. Multiple roles and perspectives.
5. Collaborative construction of knowledge.
6. Reflection.
7. Articulation.
8. Coaching and scaffolding.
9. Authentic assessment.

These criteria can be used to construct educational environments that activate entrepreneurial learning. In this earlier article<sup>3</sup> we also emphasized on the importance of an authentic learning environment, because the authenticity of this environment is needed to create effective learning. The difference of such a learning environment with a professional environment is that it is allowed to make mistakes, sometimes even encouraged to make mistakes. As making mistakes are regarded positive in the acquiring of entrepreneurial competencies.

According to Coulter, this presence of opportunities is the major characteristic in the definition of “entrepreneurship”. She analysed many definitions, concluding:

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<sup>2</sup>Roelofs, Henk, Samplonius-Raut, Shilpa (2011), *The edupreneurial method: an authentic environment as a base for effective education*

<sup>3</sup> Idem..

*Our definition of entrepreneurship is the process whereby an individual or group of individuals use organized efforts to pursue opportunities to create value and grow by fulfilling wants and needs through innovation and uniqueness, no matter what resources the entrepreneur currently has. (Coulter, 2003)*

The learning aspect of entrepreneurship is described in “the Entrepreneurial Process” (Coulter, 2003) which is characterized by:

- A context to identify opportunities
- Possible competitive advantage(s) to start
- Engage in activities that are entrepreneurship in action

When applied to learning entrepreneurship, such an ‘Entrepreneurial Process’ should be present in the learning environment. There should be a context for identifying opportunities. Also when learning entrepreneurship, each student should be in a starting position where he/she has at least a possible competitive advantage(s) to start. The learning environment should also have the dynamics that make it possible to make decisions and engage in activities that are entrepreneurship in action. In our opinion this means an environment in which there is a “risk” aspect. For effective learning of entrepreneurship, an authentic learning environment is needed, that has the characteristics of the entrepreneurial process, with the opportunity of each participant to create value and learning by successes of doing it.

In an earlier article<sup>4</sup> we have pointed out that it is possible to improve one’s entrepreneurial behaviour and skills by playing the entrepreneurship simulation game. As a result, something as complex as entrepreneurial behavior is indeed teachable and learnable

### **LE-Game explained**

LE Game offers participants the chance to experience entrepreneurship in a safe and simulated environment. It is an authentic context for the learning process of entrepreneurship that focuses on two key characteristics: creating added value and pursuing opportunities. The participants develop their skills by using the market opportunities: so a demand oriented learning method to develop entrepreneurial competences in an authentic learning environment. The experience acquired provides the confidence to bridge the uncertainty caused.

In LE-Game, the objective is to learn entrepreneurship, but there is also a winning element: The one who earns the most profit, wins. The dynamics caused by the scarcity of money and time, and the competitors, create both linear and non-linear processes. Also in every LE-Game, we experienced that participants created new elements, sometimes even new rules, and it can be clearly shown that relationships between participant changes over time. Sharing successes create positive emotions that support the learning of entrepreneurial competences.

The experience acquired while participating in LE Game provides the confidence to

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<sup>4</sup> Roelofs, Henk , Samplonius-Raut, Shilpa (2010), *The Edu-preneurial Pedagogic Method: providing risk and added value experience in a pull system for learning entrepreneurship*, China-USA Business Review ISSN 1537-1514 October 2011, Vol.10, No.10, 993-1010

participants to address the uncertainty caused by the necessity of creating added value while being exposed to competition.

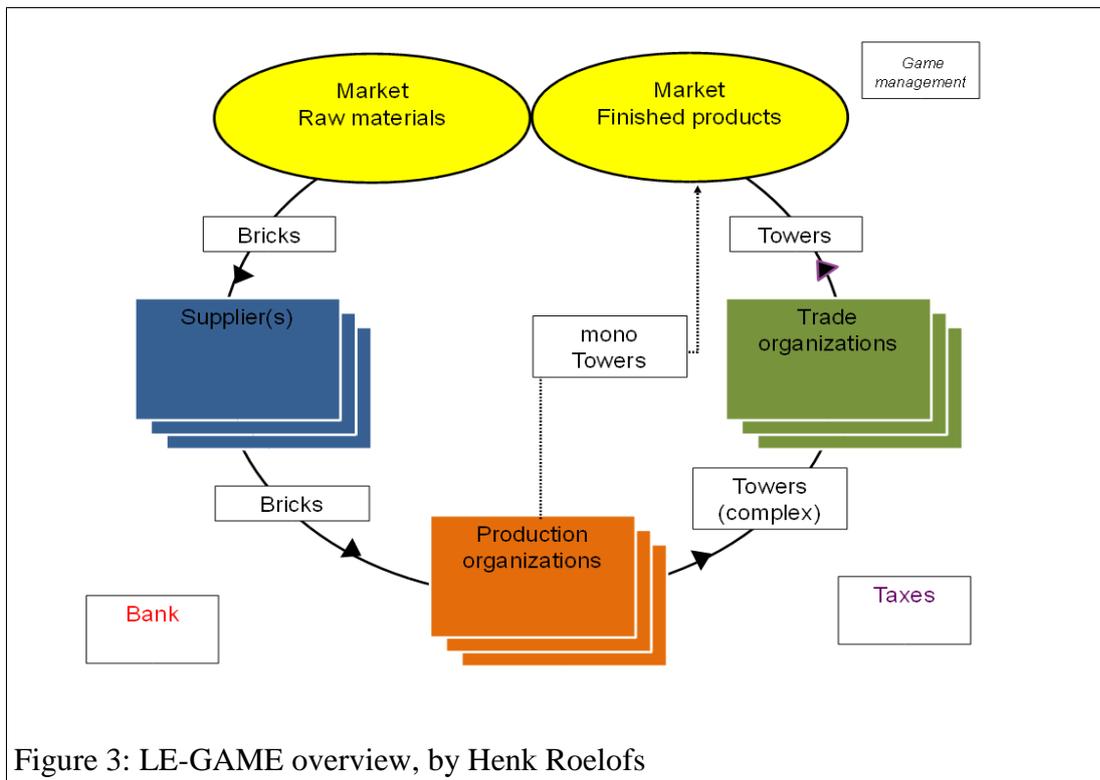


Figure 3: LE-GAME overview, by Henk Roelofs

The essence of the simulation game LE Game lies in the conflict of interests among the different market players (see figure 3). In the game simulation LE-Game, participants are exposed to real uncertain market situations. The drive to participate actively is caused by real uncertain market situations in LE-Game itself: complex, unpredictable, and creating a demand to participate. In LE-Game the objective is learning, but there is also a winning element: the one, who scores the most 'profit', wins.

So, the participants experience the market competition in combination with the scarcity of the resources: the pressures of the scarcity of money, time and of course, the competitors, being continuously exposed to the market transactions and the risk during the game. The dynamics caused by this pressure of the scarcity of money and time and of the possible competitors create both linear and non-linear processes. Each participant is challenged to guide his company in the best way to make as much profit as possible. Success drives success

Each participant is triggered by senses and emotions (see Damasio, *Descartes' Error* ). Positive emotions in experiencing successful transactions support the learning by doing process.

In the simulation, several markets are created, where Lego products are traded. Participants buy and sell commodities, produce and /or trade Lego towers or Lego parts. The use of Lego makes LE-Game also quite sustainable, since there is no waste produced. This is an extra advantage of the LE-Game.

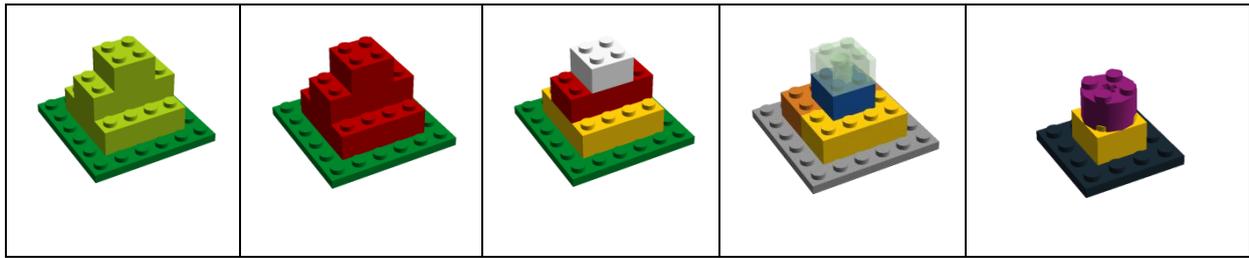


Figure 4: Selection of the final products traded in LE-Games

The rules of the framework of entrepreneurial method LE-Game are:

- Everybody is entrepreneur in his/her role. In the simulation, several markets are created, where Lego products are traded. Participants buy and sell commodities, produce and /or trade Lego towers or Lego parts;
- There are three variations in the roles: Trading organisations, Production organisations and Suppliers (see figure 3). The added value is created by the entrepreneurs by trading the raw materials, which can be bought at the Market Raw Materials and the finished products which can be sold at the Market Finished products;
- The market consists of two types of products: simple mono-coloured towers and multi-coloured towers
- Besides the entrepreneur roles there can be “supporting roles” like a bank, and tax authority, this depending on the complexity of the simulation (LE-Game basic, LE-Game silver, LE-Game gold, see <http://le-network.nl/en/games/le-game/> )
- All entrepreneurs are limited in their resources, have a (small) comparative advantage in their stock and have the same starting capital: € 2500 in cash and in kind.

Learning in a school mostly is restricted to knowledge and skills; no explicit attention is given to learn behaviour and attitude. This is something that explicitly can be learned in LE Game. One can practice an open attitude in LE Game: acceptance, kindness, curiosity, openness.

- LE Game teaches a participant to cope with opportunities, acquire positive emotions by activating these opportunities in an entrepreneurial way. It changes an attitude “I cannot, because I don’t have the means...” which evolves negative, sad emotions towards “How can I afford, realize that...” such an entrepreneurial attitude inspires to enthusiasm, to use opportunities, to ‘dream’, to create.
- LE Game teaches to think and to discover new financial possibilities. Instead of “just sit and wait”, participants create these opportunities, since “money” is just a resource and many deals are made not by merely exchanging money but by making agreements.
- LE Game teaches to decide fast. Knowing when to take a decision is an important competence. Opportunities come and go. Sometimes when you don’t take a decision the opportunity disappears, is gone. In LE Game you can experience these kinds of situations.

LE Game teaches to enlarge your view, so participants can discover opportunities. Many people have kept their eyes shut and never open them to discover opportunities. To learn to

identify opportunities that 'others don't see', is an important skill. Once you have identified such a unique opportunity and used it, you will see opportunities all your life.

LE-game gives the participants insight into the operational, financial, and commercial sides of entrepreneurship. Also, it showed the effectiveness of a pull strategy, initiated by customer(s).

The experience acquired while participating in LE Game provides the confidence to participants to address the uncertainty caused by the necessity of creating added value while being exposed to competition. So making mistakes, and, especially, experiencing successes is part of the learning process.

Using a simulation role game like LE Game creates a pull system, in which learning is based on activating the needed competencies to be successful as an entrepreneur.

The experience of an entrepreneurial context in which opportunities arise or disappear, create a dynamic environment for acquiring entrepreneurial competences. A study process in which making mistakes is positively awarded; even having fun about them is a core element of the LE-Game experience! It helps in changing the mindset towards entrepreneurship: learning by experiencing risk, experiencing aspects of sometimes flexible interpretation of moral aspects (even dishonesty) which is uncommon in education.

Using a simulation role game such as the LE-Game creates a pull system, in which learning is based on activating the needed competencies to be successful as an entrepreneur.

### **Results, the test**

The behaviour style test is based on the Management Development Instrument (MDI) test. This style analysis is based on William Moulton Marston's Emotions of Normal People (1928). MDI is an authoritative test which is rather popular within companies, because it measures behaviour criteria in an objective manner. Based on this test we have developed a simple and efficient behaviour style scan (see appendix).

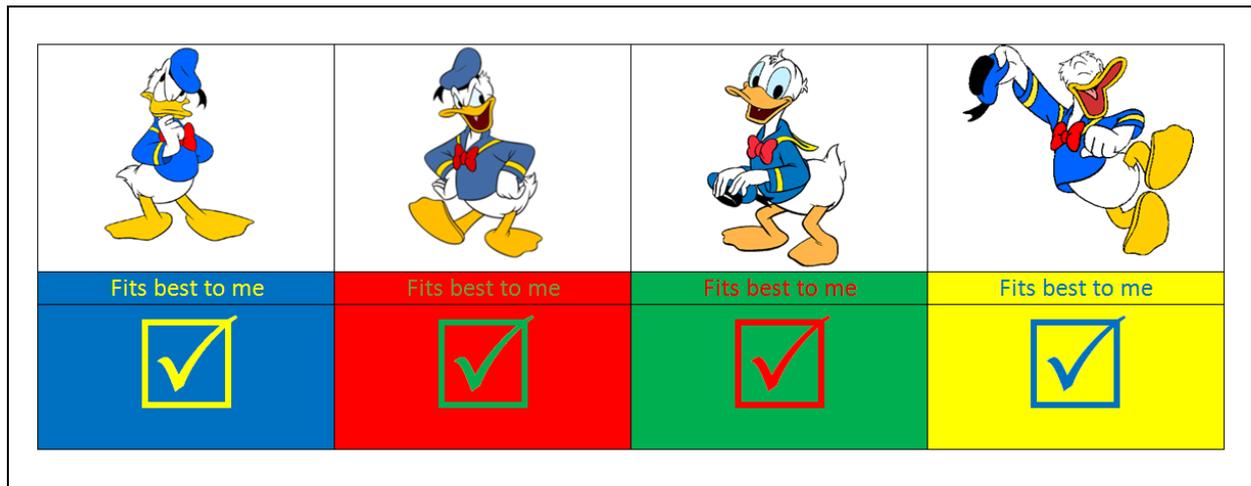


Figure 5: behavior style stereotypes, Donald Duck examples

The major characteristic of the 4 behaviour types which are measured in the test are:

- (1) The behaviour type dominance—represented by the colour red—is found among extroverts and thinkers. Someone with a dominant style of behavior, is a clear-cut leader: a powerful, demanding, dominant and fairly headstrong personality.
- (2) The behaviour type influence—represented by the colour yellow is found among extroverts and feelers. Basic characteristics are optimism (boundless) and enthusiasm. Someone who scores high on this style, is an inspirer: extrovert, kind, friendly and convincing. He is optimistic, enthusiastic and creative.

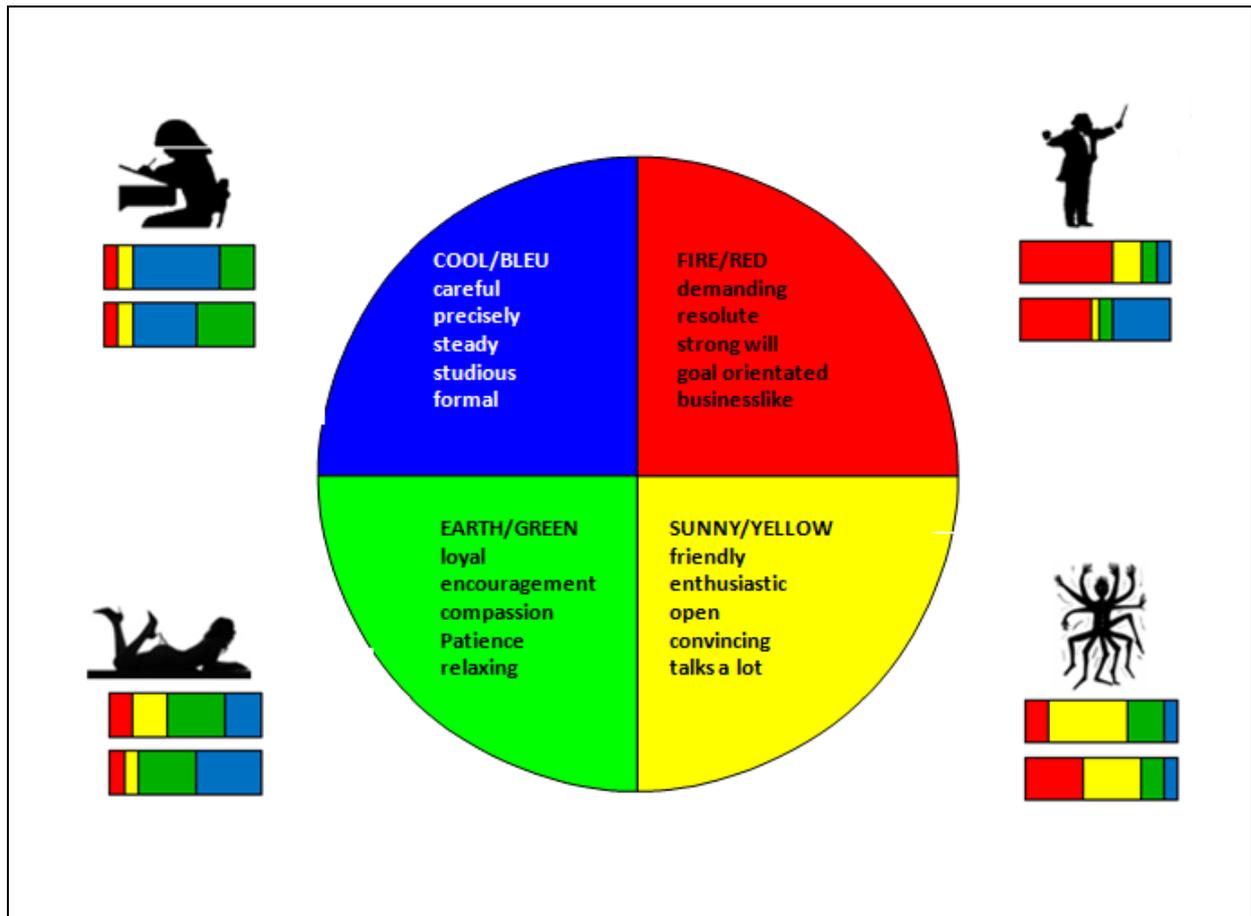


Figure 6: the specific characteristics of the 4 behaviour styles, with examples

(3) The behaviour type harmony—colour green—is found among introverts and feelers. Basic characteristics are striving for harmony, unwillingness to show emotions. Someone who scores high in this style, is a supporter: a kind, friendly, quiet and gentle person who gets along well with others. He is very sympathetic and encouraging, moderate, self-controlled, attentive, patient, trustworthy and methodical;

(4) The behaviour type conformity—colour blue—is found among introverts and thinkers. Basic characteristic is perfectionism. Someone scoring high in this behavior, is an observer: precise, careful, disciplined and painfully conscientious. Only perfection is good enough. He has very critical observational powers and will always demand well-founded arguments.

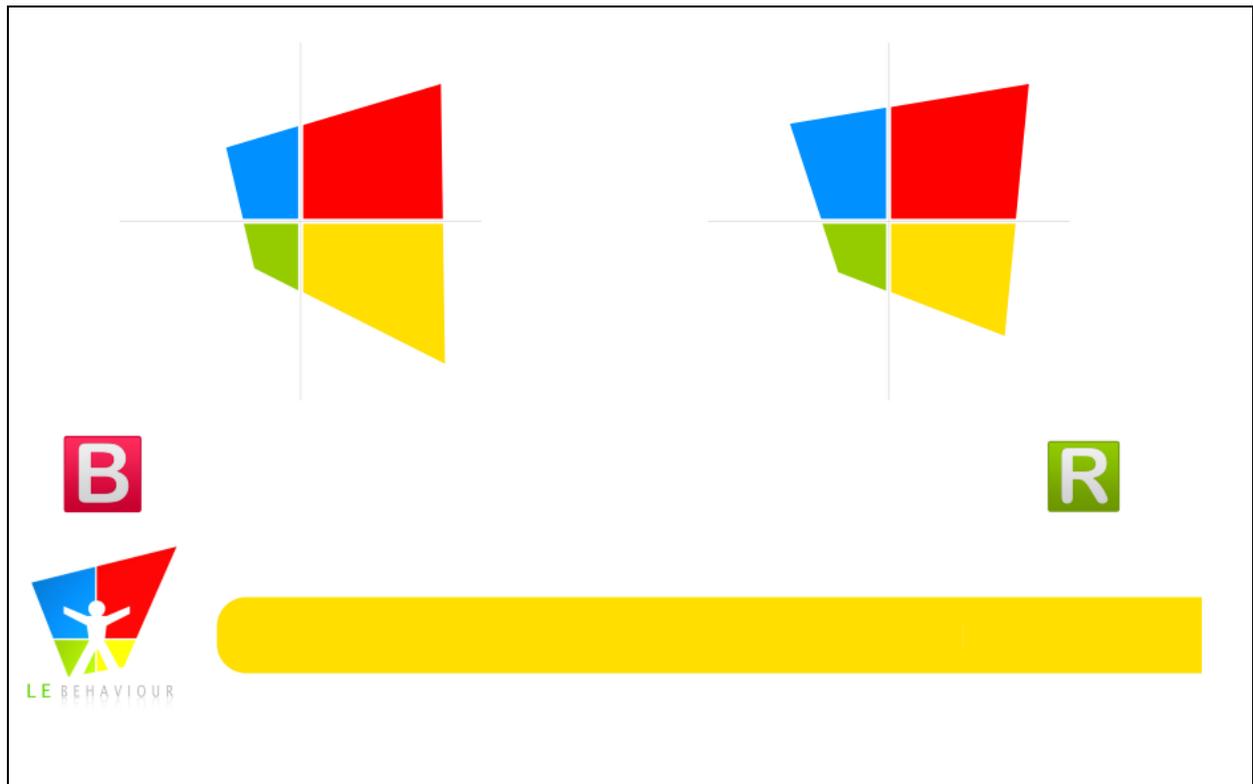


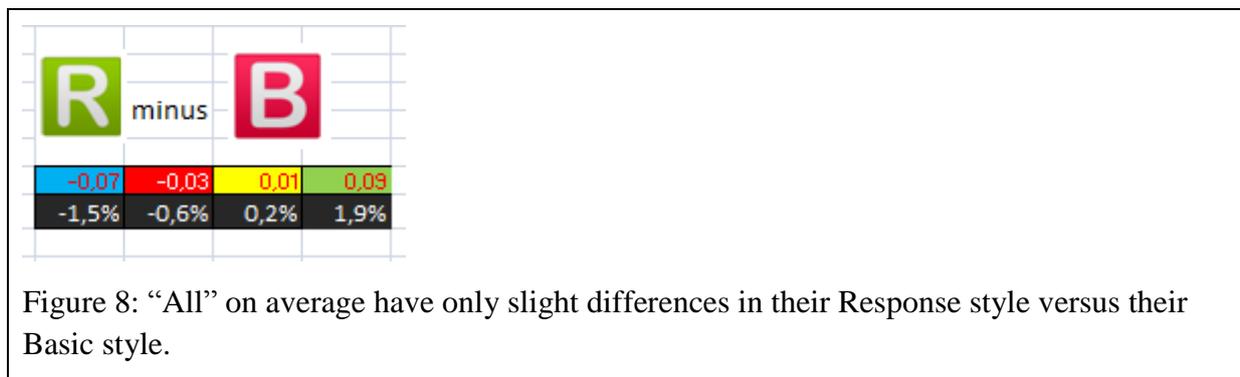
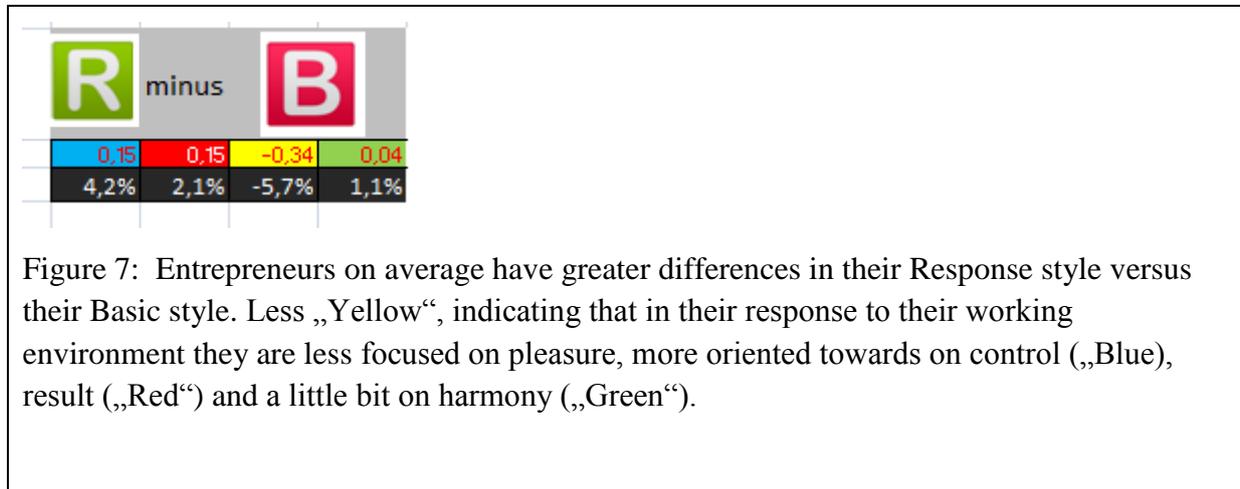
Figure 7: An example of the result of an individual behaviour test (the name in the yellow bar is hidden, privacy)



Figure 8: The result of the differences between Response behavior style and Basic behavior style of Figure 7.



Figure 6: A screenshot of the spreadsheet: the average of the entrepreneurs compared with 909 observations. Due to privacy law, the names of the entrepreneurs are not shown.



### Implications, conclusion

The virtue of entrepreneurship, in all the aspects of it, plays an important role in the rapidly changing society. An effective education system should provide teaching and learning methods for the needed entrepreneurial competences: knowledge, skills, attitude and behaviour.

We postulate that the focus in entrepreneurship education has to be on creating an authentic learning environment based on a demand driven, pull strategy of learning, as the development of entrepreneurial behaviour is far more demand driven than supply driven.

In this article, it is found that the behaviour types of the individuals is linked to the entrepreneurial skills. This implies that in order to be an entrepreneur, one has to change their behaviour style.

The behavior style results give an indication of the requirements of learning environments that activate entrepreneurial type of behaviour. Our complex business role-play game simulation LE-Game is an example of an educational environment that activates entrepreneurial behavior, so an answer to the posited question.

Because the goal of this conference is focusing on problems and questions rather than on ready-made solutions and presentations of research findings, in the beginning of this paper the question was posited: “*How to create educational environments that activate entrepreneurial behaviour?*” The findings of the entrepreneurial behavior style (Basic and Response) can be helpful to generate specific answers to this question.

### **Value/Originality**

Identifying that the entrepreneurial behaviour styles are specifically different was a result of serendipity. The value is that this finding can contribute to the construction of better contexts for -teaching and learning of entrepreneurship: authentic learning environments that activate entrepreneurial behavior. LE-Game (Learning Entrepreneurship Game, a complex business role-play game simulation) is an example of such an environment.

Next step: develop measurement systems where other aspects of entrepreneurship can be measured during LE-Game, by using apps for the participants to register the dynamics of their entrepreneurial activities, relate to their behavior (style).

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# Appendix

## Behaviour scan (English version)



LE Behaviour 



### Basic style scan

This instrument measures your style of behavior on basic topics. It is NOT a test, in which you can pass or fail!

#### Personal data:

Surname: .....

Gender: M/F

First name: .....

E-mail: .....

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

Below you see 10 categories, consisting of 40 terms of behavior

Per category you must spread 20 points

Give the MOST points -maximum 10- to the term which describes you THE WORST.

#### EXAMPLE

Ambitious:	2
Enthusiastic:	3
Careful:	7
Analytical:	8
To divide points: 20	

#### THE TEST:

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LE Behaviour

## Response style scan



This instrument measures your style of behavior on basic topics. It is NOT a test, in which you can pass or fail!

### Personal data:

Surname: .....

Gender: M/F

First name: .....

E-mail: .....

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Below you see 10 categories, consisting of 40 terms of behavior  
Per category you must spread 20 points

Give the MOST points -maximum 10- to the term which describes you **THE BEST**.

### EXAMPLE

Ambitious:	2
Enthusiastic:	3
Careful:	7
Analytical:	8
To divide points: 20	

### THE TEST:

Pugnacious:		Powerful:		Attentive:		Competitive:		Ambitious:	
Fluent:		Narrative:		Relativizing:		Focus on surrounding:		Enthusiast:	
Cooperative:		Patient:		Tactful:		Quiet:		Careful:	
Rational:		Arguing:		Investigative:		Planning:		Analytical:	
To divide points: 20		To divide points: 20		To divide points: 20		To divide points: 20		To divide points: 20	

Resolute:		Initiating:		Enterprising:		Leading:		Goal orientated:	
Lively:		Easy:		Energetic:		Influencing:		Social:	
Collaborative:		Empathic:		Harmonious:		Supportive:		Modest:	
Logical:		Systematic:		Consistent:		Thorough:		Knowledgeable:	
To divide points: 20		To divide points: 20		To divide points: 20		To divide points: 20		To divide points: 20	

- The Response behaviour style requires to spread 20 points on each set of 4 words. You have to give the give the MOST points -maximum 10- to the term which describes you **THE WORST**.
- The Basic behaviour style requires to spread 20 points on each set of 4 words. You have to give the MOST points -maximum 10- to the term which describes you **THE BEST**.