In recent years it is possible to detect an increasing interest in entrepreneurship development worldwide. Governments and all kinds of institutions are asking for information about entrepreneurs’ characteristics, behaviors, and everything related to them, the aim being to understand their mechanisms for creating wealth and to foster entrepreneurship among the population. The saturated labor market in developed countries, the need to create jobs in underdeveloped ones, migration processes, the loss of certain values, and other issues are making it advisable to pay close attention to the kind of individual that can assume personal risk, has interesting and innovative ideas, and has the courage to start up a business.

It is true that information, studies, and analysis of entrepreneurs’ characteristics and behavior can help policy makers design adequate public policies to foster entrepreneurship among the population, but what about helping individual people to become entrepreneurs?

For this purpose other kinds of tools are needed, especially educational ones. Schools, universities, and other organizations are providing several programs to help potential entrepreneurs acquire the knowledge they need to become real entrepreneurs. Thus, in many countries it is now possible for interested individuals to learn how to develop an idea, how to make a business plan, how to deal with bureaucracy, how to determine if the business is viable or not, and how to learn all of the details needed to start up. All the abovementioned organizations—schools, universities, Chambers of Commerce, business associations, and others—can assess people and help them develop a good idea into a real business.

But now, despite all these programs, which are improving day by day, there are persistent problems that cannot be solved so easily. One of these problems is how to
come up with original business ideas and another is how to decide if an individual is really prepared to become an entrepreneur, if they really know what this entails.

Books like the one presented here are tools that can help people to understand the real process of being an entrepreneur because they show real cases and experiences that no one, apart from an entrepreneur, can live and explain. Examples are the best way to show how others had a clever idea and translated it into a profitable, growing business.

The case study method allows interested people to step figuratively into the shoes of a particular entrepreneur. It gives an accurate description of the business, its situation, the problems faced by the entrepreneurs, the kind of decisions the entrepreneurs have to make, and the challenges and opportunities the entrepreneurs are considering for the future. Thus, apart from actually living alongside an entrepreneur for a period, cases come closest to transmitting the experience of what it feels like to be an entrepreneur.

This book, by examining entrepreneurs’ actual experiences, will help solve some of the real problems that arise in firm creation, but it offers something more: the cases focus on businesses involved in Information Technology.

As mentioned, another common problem for potential entrepreneurs is how to find a good and original idea. It is very difficult to be original and to discover a “unique” product or service in practice. Brainstorming sessions and other educational methods can help individuals generate new ideas, but another alternative is to look at the market and be a good observer of what is going on around and where the opportunities are.

And that is what makes this book a very interesting contribution. It presents cases involving what is currently one of the most recommended fields for potential young entrepreneurs: the Information Technology sector.

This sector has enormous potential, offering a large number of business opportunities for potential young entrepreneurs trained in a large number of specializations. Information Technology influences the way firms organize their production, distribution, customer and supplier relationships, accounting, human resources, and all branches of their activity. Firms need good solutions for dealing with all of these matters, and the IT industry is creating them continuously. Moreover, things can be done in a wide variety of different ways, and there are enough business opportunities to allow diversity. Information technology is also critical in marketing, advertising, market research, and related sectors. All conceivable business activities now involve some use of information technology. The cases presented in this book explain how some entrepreneurs jumped over the barrier and went inside a sector that can frighten at first but where there is a lot of work to do.

One of the keys of technology-based entrepreneurship is to take into account that it is probably necessary to create multidisciplinary teams to start up. In other words, a person who has a technical idea but does not have expertise or knowledge in business management will have to search for the right people to deal with the managerial
part of the initiative. Another important factor to consider is location, and seeing whether there is a possibility of joining a business cluster of the same sector. It is also critical to work in this sector in order to understand that if the firm is going to offer technical solutions to other firms, it is essential to know and analyze the interaction of technology with all aspects of the firm that will buy the products. This brings us back to the need for a good and adequate multidisciplinary team.

*Cases on Information Technology Entrepreneurship* discusses all these issues, and it will undoubtedly prove very useful, in two ways, to students who have not yet chosen their professional future. On one hand, it should convince many students of the attractiveness of the entrepreneurial option, and, on the other, it should persuade them to give serious consideration to the IT sector as a possible area in which to work, regardless of their particular branch of study. All branches are relevant, given the need for multidisciplinary teams when creating new businesses in this field.

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