

# Analysis of Strategies and Effects of Integrating Real Corporate Cases into Course Teaching: A Case Study of the *Introduction to the English Major Course* at Ningbo University of Finance and Economics

Fengge Liu<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ningbo University of Finance and Economics, Ningbo, Zhejiang 315100, China

## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the application of case-based teaching in the "Innovation and Entrepreneurship" segment of the *Introduction to the English Major* course, through the analysis of entrepreneurship cases from an English major graduate at Ningbo University of Finance and Economics. It examines specific strategies and their outcomes in utilizing real corporate cases within educational settings, effectively merging industry insights with academic learning. The study reveals that incorporating case-based teaching significantly boosts students' entrepreneurial awareness, practical skills, and innovative thinking. The paper proposes a series of teaching strategies and evaluates their effectiveness through teaching practices, offering a novel perspective and methodology for innovation and entrepreneurship education within the framework of integrating real corporate cases into academic curriculum.

**Keywords:** *Case-based teaching, Real corporate cases in education, "Innovation and Entrepreneurship", Introduction to the English Major, Teaching strategies.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalization and the knowledge economy, higher education institutions are facing the challenge of closely integrating with the industrial sector to cultivate high-quality talents who can meet market demands. The course, *Introduction to the English Major*, plays a crucial role for freshmen. It is designed to help them understand their major, ignite their interests, and cultivate a spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship. This necessitates innovative approaches in both its content and teaching methods. Case-based teaching, a method that combines theory with practice, has been proven to significantly enhance students' innovative spirit and practical abilities. This study focuses on the "Innovation and Entrepreneurship" segment of the *Introduction to the English Major* course at Ningbo University of Finance and Economics, exploring how to integrate real corporate cases into teaching and enhance students'

capabilities in innovation and entrepreneurship through case-based teaching.

## 2. CASE BACKGROUND ANALYSIS

In today's globalized world, students majoring in English have demonstrated unique advantages in the fields of innovation and entrepreneurship due to their foreign language proficiency and cross-cultural thinking abilities. The entrepreneurial journey of one college graduate, now a co-founder of one company in Hangzhou, is a good example. Not only has she successfully tapped into the English education market with her English major background, but she has also achieved the international development of language education through innovative business models, providing valuable experience and insights for English major students.

As is known, there are advantages of English major students, like (1) Language Skills: English major students typically possess a solid language

foundation and excellent communication skills, enabling them to communicate seamlessly with international clients and partners, effectively reducing communication costs in cross-cultural transactions. (2) Cross-cultural Communication: English major students are exposed to diverse cultures during their studies, equipping them with strong cross-cultural understanding and adaptability. This multifaceted thinking characteristic makes it easier for them to meet consumer demands and market characteristics. (3) Innovative Thinking: English major students undergo systematic cross-cultural thinking training, developing the ability to draw inspiration from different cultures and create novel products or services to meet the diversified needs of the market.

But the English major students are also faced by challenges, like (1) Intense Market Competition: With the deepening development of globalization, English major students face challenges from non-English major competitors in the innovation and entrepreneurship process. How to stand out in fierce market competition is a challenge they must confront. (2) Lack of Practical Experience: Although English major students have certain theoretical knowledge advantages, they may encounter many difficulties in the actual entrepreneurial process due to a lack of practical experience. (3) Difficulty in Resource Acquisition: For English major students, obtaining resources such as funding and networking can be a challenge at the initial stage of entrepreneurship, which needs to be addressed through effective strategies and methods.

Consequently, it is essential to employ certain strategies to capitalize on the advantages that English major students possess while simultaneously mitigating the impact of any adverse factors. By collaborating with enterprises, provide students with internship and training opportunities, allowing them to learn and practice in real social environments and accumulate valuable practical experience. Secondly, students should be encouraged to participate in international exchange programs, such as studying abroad and international conferences, to expand their international horizons and enhance their cross-cultural understanding and innovation capabilities. Also, colleges and society should work together to provide English major students with entrepreneurial guidance, financial credit support, market information, and other resources to help them better realize their entrepreneurial dreams.

By deeply analyzing the current situation of innovation and entrepreneurship education for English majors, we can clearly recognize the advantages of students and also be aware of the challenges they may face in the entrepreneurial process. By formulating reasonable educational strategies and providing necessary support, we can better leverage the advantages of English major students and cultivate more innovative talents with international competitiveness.

Based on the analysis above, this article conducts an analysis of strategies and effects of integrating a real corporate case into course teaching, based on the entrepreneurial case of a university graduate. Below is the background of this case:

- **Entrepreneurial Intentions:** The entrepreneurial intentions of Miss Zhu, a 2019 graduate from our university, stemmed from a profound understanding of educational equity, enthusiasm for English education, a positive response to the national "Belt and Road" initiative, and an accurate judgment on the integration of online and offline education. She aimed to leverage her efforts to enable more children to access high-quality educational services.
- **Market Research Process:** Before embarking on her entrepreneurial journey, Miss Zhu conducted in-depth market research. Through questionnaires, interviews, and data analysis, she gauged the demands of the target market and the preferences of potential customers. She observed that, with the progression of globalization and the implementation of the "Belt and Road" initiative, the demand for English and Chinese language education was increasingly growing, especially in countries along the "Belt and Road" route. Moreover, she noticed the rapid growth of the online education market, viewing it as a significant business opportunity.
- **Identifying and Seizing Entrepreneurial Opportunities:** Based on her market research findings, Miss Zhu identified several key entrepreneurial opportunities. She recognized the potential of online education platforms and realized that, with the rise of China's economy and its growing international influence, the market for teaching Chinese as a foreign language was set to experience explosive growth. Consequently, she decided to merge these opportunities by creating an online

platform focused on providing high-quality language education services. Miss Zhu's entrepreneurial story exemplifies how she combined personal interests, societal needs, and market trends through innovation and unwavering determination, ultimately realizing her entrepreneurial dream. Her success has not only earned her recognition but also serves as a valuable source of inspiration and motivation for other young people with entrepreneurial aspirations.

### **3. MULTIDIMENSIONAL INTERPRETATION OF THE CASE CONTENT**

The entrepreneurial journey of Miss Zhu offers a rich canvas for analysis, embodying a seamless blend of theoretical knowledge and practical application across diverse business disciplines. This multidimensional case study provides a fertile ground for exploring complex concepts in education, management, marketing, financial planning, innovation and technology, as well as social responsibility and cultural promotion. It serves not only as a testament to Miss Zhu's remarkable leadership and strategic foresight but also as a comprehensive educational tool that equips students with a broad spectrum of business acumen and critical thinking skills necessary for navigating the contemporary business landscape.

From the perspective of educational studies, this entrepreneurial case demonstrates the importance of educational model innovation, the application of educational technology, educational content and curriculum design, educational assessment and quality assurance, as well as educational equity and social responsibility in entrepreneurship. The company has introduced a blended learning model that combines online and offline approaches, providing not only a flexible and personalized learning experience but also effectively integrating language learning with cultural education, which promotes the development of students' cross-cultural communication skills. At the same time, the use of big data analysis has optimized teaching content and the learning process, thereby enhancing the quality of education. In terms of curriculum design, her team has meticulously planned to meet the educational needs in the context of globalization, ensuring the quality and effectiveness of educational services. Additionally, her entrepreneurial project places special emphasis on educational equity, striving to provide equal learning opportunities for students from diverse

backgrounds, reflecting a strong sense of social responsibility. Through these comprehensive efforts, the entrepreneurial case has not only achieved commercial success but has also made a positive contribution to driving innovation and development in the education industry.

Delving into the management aspects of Miss Zhu's enterprise, her venture vividly illustrates the essence of modern business management. Central to her success is the formulation of an efficient team characterized by clear delineation of responsibilities and objectives. This efficient team structure underpins the decision-making process, underscoring the pivotal role of strategic management in steering the company towards its long-term goals. Furthermore, the flexibility ingrained in the company's strategic and organizational design is indicative of a responsive and adaptable management philosophy, essential for sustaining growth and innovation in an ever-evolving business environment.

From a marketing perspective, the meticulous execution of market segmentation, target market selection, and product positioning strategies by Miss Zhu reveals a sophisticated understanding of market dynamics. Her methodical market research efforts led to the precise identification of target customer segments, specifically students and adults seeking premium language education services. By tailoring differentiated offerings, such as the innovative O2O integrated language training courses, her venture successfully addressed the unique needs of this niche market. Moreover, the strategic use of digital marketing channels, including social media and online advertising, played a crucial role in amplifying brand visibility and attracting a broader customer base, thereby solidifying the company's market position.

In the realm of financial planning, Miss Zhu's acumen in capital management and financial stewardship stands out. Her adeptness at conducting cost-benefit analyses enabled the judicious allocation of resources, ensuring optimal utilization and financial sustainability. The pursuit of external investment and government grants further exemplified her strategic approach to securing financial backing, enhancing the company's solvency and bolstering its competitive edge. These financial strategies underscore the importance of robust financial planning in underpinning the fiscal health and viability of entrepreneurial ventures.

Technological innovation forms the cornerstone of Miss Zhu's business model, with the adoption of

an O2O teaching paradigm that marries the convenience of online learning with the richness of offline interactions. This forward-thinking approach, supported by state-of-the-art technologies such as cloud computing and big data analytics, has revolutionized the learning experience, offering customized and dynamic educational pathways. The incorporation of technological innovations not only exemplifies the transformative potential of technology in education but also sets a benchmark for the sector.

The case study highlights Miss Zhu's deep commitment to corporate social responsibility and cultural advocacy. By leveraging her platform to offer online Chinese language instruction to countries along the "Belt and Road" initiative, her enterprise transcends commercial objectives to foster cultural exchange and promote educational equity. This dual focus on profitability and social impact reflects a holistic business ethos that aligns commercial success with broader societal benefits, contributing significantly to the discourse on the role of businesses in advancing global understanding and cooperation.

In sum, Miss Zhu's entrepreneurial narrative is a compelling illustration of how visionary leadership, combined with a strategic and integrated approach to management, marketing, financial planning, and technological innovation, can drive business success while making meaningful contributions to society and culture. This case study not only enriches the academic curriculum but also inspires future entrepreneurs to embrace a multidimensional and socially responsible business model.

#### **4. DETAILED DESIGN OF TEACHING ACTIVITIES**

The course curriculum is meticulously designed to immerse students in a comprehensive learning experience, blending theoretical knowledge with hands-on practice. This immersive approach is achieved through a structured series of teaching activities that not only enable students to apply what they've learned in real-world scenarios but also to refine their entrepreneurial mindset and skills. The design of these activities is rooted in the principle of active learning, encouraging students to engage deeply with the material, collaborate with peers, and think critically about the challenges of starting and running a business.

##### ***4.1 Drafting of Simulated Business Plans***

The course begins with students being grouped into teams, tasked with the challenge of conceptualizing a startup. This exercise requires them to draft a detailed business plan, encapsulating everything from the business idea to market analysis, financial forecasts, and operational strategies. This activity is designed to foster teamwork and creativity, pushing students to think like entrepreneurs and anticipate the complexities of launching a venture.

##### ***4.2 Production of Market Analysis Reports***

In this segment, students delve into the intricacies of market research by analyzing the business environment relevant to Miss Zhu's case study. They are required to produce comprehensive market analysis reports, which include assessing market demand, analyzing competitors, identifying target customers, and forecasting market trends. This exercise sharpens their analytical skills and offers insights into the importance of market research in the success of a business.

##### ***4.3 Allocation of Roles Within Entrepreneurial Teams***

Mirroring the dynamics of a real entrepreneurial venture, students in each team assume specific roles, such as CEO, CFO, CMO, and COO, among others. This role allocation introduces students to the diverse set of skills and responsibilities needed in a startup and challenges them to collaborate effectively, leveraging their individual strengths for the success of their simulated business.

##### ***4.4 Entrepreneurial Case Seminars***

To deepen students' understanding and stimulate critical thinking, seminars are organized around the discussion of Miss Zhu's entrepreneurial journey. These seminars serve as a platform for students to debate key decisions, assess risks, and evaluate the factors contributing to the success or failure of a business initiative. Facilitated by instructors, these discussions encourage students to articulate their thoughts, listen to diverse perspectives, and refine their analytical and decision-making skills.

##### ***4.5 Entrepreneurial Simulation Game***

The course features an innovative simulation game that places students in the shoes of

entrepreneurs faced with the challenge of making strategic business decisions in a competitive environment. This interactive game simulates the unpredictability of the business world, requiring students to navigate uncertainties, manage risks, and seize opportunities. It's a dynamic way to experience the thrills and challenges of entrepreneurship, fostering resilience, strategic thinking, and adaptability.

By integrating these varied teaching activities into the curriculum, the course aims to create a rich educational experience that equips students with a deep understanding of entrepreneurship. It prepares them not just to be successful entrepreneurs but also to be thoughtful leaders who can navigate the complexities of the business world with confidence and creativity. Through this comprehensive approach, students are not only taught the fundamentals of business but are also inspired to think innovatively and act strategically in their future endeavors.

## **5. IMPLEMENTING THE TEACHING PLAN AND ASSESSING TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS**

The course architecture is meticulously orchestrated into three sequential phases — Pre-Class Preparation, In-Class Teaching, and Post-Class Activities — each serving a unique purpose in the educational continuum, ensuring a holistic learning experience that seamlessly integrates theoretical insights with practical application. This trifecta approach is designed to engage students in a deep and meaningful exploration of entrepreneurship, nurturing critical thinking, and problem-solving skills essential for navigating the complex landscape of modern business.

### ***5.1 Pre-class Preparation: Engaging Minds Before the Classroom***

The journey commences with the Pre-Class Preparation phase, a critical prelude to active learning. Here, educators proactively disseminate discussion topics, case studies, and reading materials well in advance, setting the stage for intellectual engagement. This strategy encourages students to embark on an exploratory journey, prompting them to engage with the material on a personal level, formulating questions, hypotheses, and reflections. This preparatory work is vital, as it not only equips students with a foundational understanding of the topics at hand but also

cultivates a culture of inquiry and independence—traits that are quintessential for entrepreneurial success. This phase is instrumental in transforming passive learners into active participants, eager to delve deeper into the nuances of entrepreneurship during the subsequent in-class phase.

### ***5.2 In-class Teaching: A Fusion of Theory and Practice***

The heart of the course lies in the In-Class Teaching phase, where the magic of learning unfolds through dynamic interaction and engagement. Educators employ a variety of innovative teaching methodologies designed to captivate and stimulate students' minds. Interactive sessions may include debates on ethical entrepreneurship, design thinking workshops, and simulation exercises, each aimed at encouraging participation and fostering a hands-on learning environment. The incorporation of role-playing stands out as a highlight, offering students the unique opportunity to step into the shoes of entrepreneurs, investors, and consumers, thereby gaining a 360-degree perspective on the business world. This immersive experience is crucial for contextualizing theoretical knowledge, allowing students to explore the practical implications of their decisions in a controlled yet realistic setting. Through such engagement, students develop a nuanced understanding of entrepreneurial strategies, market dynamics, and the intricacies of business management.

### ***5.3 Post-class Activities: Extending Learning Beyond the Classroom***

The educational odyssey extends into the realm of Post-Class Activities, where students are tasked with applying their newly acquired knowledge to tackle real-world challenges. This phase includes a diverse array of assignments, from crafting comprehensive business proposals to engaging in community-based entrepreneurial projects. These activities serve a dual purpose: they reinforce learning while providing a platform for practical application. Furthermore, this phase facilitates reflective practice, where students are encouraged to introspect on their learning journey, identifying areas of strength and opportunities for growth. Peer-to-peer interactions are also emphasized, with collaborative projects and online forums fostering a community of practice. This extended learning environment ensures that the knowledge and skills developed during the course are not only retained

but also augmented, preparing students to navigate the uncertainties of the entrepreneurial world with confidence and agility.

In essence, this tripartite structure of Pre-Class Preparation, In-Class Teaching, and Post-Class Activities creates a comprehensive and immersive learning experience. It is a deliberate and thoughtful approach to education that not only imparts knowledge but also inspires action, encouraging students to think critically, act strategically, and lead with innovation. Through this journey, the course aims to mold not just successful entrepreneurs, but visionary leaders capable of contributing meaningfully to the global business ecosystem.

## **5.4 Teaching Effectiveness Assessment**

The Teaching Effectiveness Assessment is a cornerstone of the educational process, designed to meticulously gauge the impact of teaching methodologies and the curriculum's alignment with learning objectives. This comprehensive evaluation employs a dual-faceted approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative assessments to capture a holistic view of student learning outcomes, satisfaction levels, and overall engagement with the course material.

### **5.4.1 Integrative Approach to Assessment: Quantitative and Qualitative Insights**

The course embraces a balanced assessment strategy that intertwines quantitative metrics with qualitative insights, providing a multi-dimensional perspective on teaching effectiveness. Quantitative assessments are operationalized through meticulously designed questionnaire surveys that aim to capture tangible data on students' grasp of the course content, the effectiveness of skill enhancement initiatives, and the overall satisfaction with the instructional approaches adopted. These surveys serve as a critical tool for quantifying educational outcomes, enabling educators to measure learning progress and student engagement in an objective manner.

Conversely, the qualitative component of the assessment strategy delves into the nuanced experiences and perceptions of students, offering a platform for the articulation of in-depth insights and constructive suggestions. Through structured interviews and open-ended discussions, students are encouraged to reflect on their course experience, articulate any learning challenges encountered, and

evaluate the applicability and relevance of case studies and practical activities. This qualitative inquiry enriches the feedback mechanism, providing educators with actionable insights into the pedagogical strengths and areas for improvement.

### **5.4.2 Multidimensional Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness**

The evaluation framework extends beyond mere knowledge acquisition, embracing a broader spectrum of educational outcomes including skill development, attitudinal shifts, and the cultivation of an entrepreneurial mindset. Academic prowess is assessed through traditional methods such as examinations and graded assignments, which serve as benchmarks for theoretical understanding and analytical capabilities. The augmentation of practical skills is gauged through students' performance in simulated entrepreneurial endeavors, offering a tangible measure of their ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practical scenarios.

Moreover, a critical aspect of the assessment focuses on the evolution of students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship, measured through comparative analyses of attitude scales administered before and after the course. This longitudinal approach enables educators to assess the transformative impact of the course on students' perspectives and aspirations, highlighting shifts towards more proactive, innovative, and risk-tolerant outlooks.

### **5.4.3 Fostering a Culture of Continuous Improvement**

The culmination of these assessment efforts feeds into a dynamic process of continuous pedagogical refinement. The insights garnered from both quantitative and qualitative evaluations inform strategic adjustments in teaching methodologies and curriculum design, ensuring that the course content remains relevant, engaging, and aligned with evolving educational objectives. This iterative process of evaluation and adaptation fosters a responsive educational environment where teaching strategies are perpetually optimized to meet the diverse needs of students, enhancing their readiness for entrepreneurial ventures.

By embedding a culture of continuous improvement within the teaching cycle, the course aspires to not only address immediate learning needs but also to anticipate future challenges,

equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to navigate the complexities of the entrepreneurial landscape. Through this comprehensive and reflective approach to teaching effectiveness assessment, the course aims to cultivate a generation of entrepreneurs who are not only adept at identifying opportunities but are also committed to driving innovation and societal progress.

## **6. STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN ENGLISH MAJORS**

During the process of innovation and entrepreneurship education in English majors, both students and educational institutions face a series of challenges. However, by drawing on the experiences of successful entrepreneurs such as company founders, we can identify effective strategies to overcome these challenges.

### ***6.1 Providing Real-World Experience Sharing***

It is suggested to regularly invite successful entrepreneurs like company founders to share their experiences on campus through lectures and seminars, allowing students to feel the entrepreneurial atmosphere up close and learn entrepreneurial knowledge and skills from successful cases.

It is also suggested to make full use of our school's entrepreneurial mentorship program, where experienced entrepreneurs provide one-on-one guidance and advice to students, helping them avoid common pitfalls and mistakes in the entrepreneurial process.

It is also significant to collaborate with companies to provide students with internship opportunities, allowing them to learn and practice in a real business environment, accumulating valuable practical experience.

### ***6.2 Establishing International Cooperation Projects***

The following are some suggestions for the strategies to address the challenges: (1) International Exchange Programs. Make full use of the opportunities to establish cooperative relations with overseas universities, and conduct more

student exchange programs and short-term study tours, giving students the chance to learn and practice in different cultural backgrounds. (2) Cross-National Team Projects: Encourage students to participate in cross-national team projects, collaborating with students from different countries to complete project tasks together, enhancing their cross-cultural team collaboration skills. (3) International Market Research: Conduct research on international markets, allowing students to gain a deep understanding of the characteristics of different countries and regions' markets and consumer behavior, laying a solid foundation for future international entrepreneurial activities.

### ***6.3 Optimizing Entrepreneurial Support Services***

Entrepreneurial support services should be optimized in the following ways: (1) Entrepreneurship Guidance Center: Make better use of the entrepreneurship guidance center, providing students with services such as entrepreneurship consultation, project evaluation, and business plan writing, helping students better plan and implement entrepreneurial projects. (2) Entrepreneurial Funding Support: Cooperate with the government, enterprises, and other social organizations to provide students with entrepreneurial funding support, reducing the barriers to entrepreneurship and encouraging more students to try their hand at starting a business. (3) Entrepreneurial Achievement Display Platform: Establish a platform for displaying entrepreneurial achievements, giving students the opportunity to showcase their entrepreneurial projects and results, increasing their entrepreneurial confidence and attracting potential investors and partners.

By implementing these strategies, innovation and entrepreneurship education in English majors will be more closely aligned with practical needs and better cultivate students' entrepreneurial spirit and practical abilities. At the same time, these measures will also help students find their own positioning in the global business environment and enhance their international competitiveness.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The integration of case-based teaching within the *Introduction to the English Major* course has marked a transformative step towards enriching the academic landscape with the vibrancy of innovation and entrepreneurship. This pedagogical approach

has not only heightened student engagement but has also played a pivotal role in cultivating a deeper understanding and appreciation of entrepreneurial principles. By navigating through a variety of entrepreneurial scenarios, students have not only enhanced their awareness of the entrepreneurial ecosystem but have also significantly honed their practical skills and capacity for innovative thinking. This progression underscores the profound impact that practical, real-world examples can have on the educational experience, offering students not just knowledge, but wisdom that is applicable beyond the confines of the classroom.

Looking towards the future, it becomes imperative for educational design to further bridge the gap between theoretical concepts and practical application. This endeavor necessitates a more dynamic collaboration between academia and the industry, fostering a symbiotic relationship that enriches the curriculum with real-world relevance and immediacy. The evolution of teaching methodologies should therefore prioritize the integration of practical projects that mirror current industry challenges, enabling students to apply their theoretical insights in tangible settings.

In parallel, there is a critical need for the continuous revitalization of the case library to ensure its alignment with the ever-changing business landscape. This entails not just the updating of case studies to reflect contemporary entrepreneurial ventures but also the diversification of cases to cover a broad spectrum of industries, business models, and geographic contexts. Such an enriched repository of case studies would provide students with a panoramic view of the entrepreneurial world, preparing them for the multifaceted challenges of the global market.

Moreover, the fusion of industry and education heralds a new era in the development of higher education, one that demands closer and more creative collaborations between educators and business leaders. Co-developing courses, designing internship programs, and organizing industry forums are just the beginning. There is a vast landscape of opportunity for joint research projects, entrepreneurship incubators, and live business consultancy projects that can serve as platforms for experiential learning and innovation.

On the policy front, there is a pronounced need for more robust support systems and incentives to catalyze these collaborative endeavors. Policymakers play a crucial role in facilitating the integration of industry expertise within academic

settings, whether through funding, regulatory frameworks, or platforms that promote knowledge exchange. By encouraging enterprises to actively participate in the educational process, not only as contributors but also as beneficiaries of fresh talent and innovative ideas, a more cohesive and mutually beneficial ecosystem can be cultivated. This strategic alignment of educational objectives with industry needs is pivotal in nurturing a new generation of high-caliber professionals who are adept at navigating the complexities of the modern business environment.

In essence, the journey towards an enriched educational framework that seamlessly integrates innovation and entrepreneurship with academic study is both challenging and exhilarating. It requires a concerted effort from educators, industry professionals, and policymakers alike to reimagine and reshape the educational experience. Through such collaborative endeavors, we can aspire to cultivate a future workforce that is not only theoretically proficient but also practically adept, creatively inspired, and ready to contribute to the advancement of society and the economy at large.

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