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# Practice Enterprise

A new didactical concept for practice learning in professional higher education



# WHY PRACTICE ENTERPRISE?



## Why Practice Enterprise @ Lessius Mechelen...?

You won't make it with  
theory alone...  
in practice you choose  
for...

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Met theorie alleen  
red je het niet



In de praktijk kies je voor  
Katholieke Hogeschool Mechelen

## Outlines of the project

2 year research & development project ('09-'11)

- within KULeuven educational fund/sharing output

5 educational programmes are involved

- journalism/communication/technology/design/office management

Research question:

- How to implement real life professional context within (professional bachelor) education?

Starting from known forms of practice education:

- apprenticeships, small business projects, college companies, etc.

Practice enterprise is a NEW pedagogical/didactical concept :

- stable/continuous
- where professional context is copied/simulated 100% in the course
- focus on cooperative learning

Research outcome after first year:

**Definition:**

*“A Practice Enterprise is an enterprise (organization) within the lap of an educational institution (programme) run by students and lecturers, and functioning as an educational environment. The Practice Enterprise continues to exist, independent of incoming and outgoing students.*

*The Practice Enterprise delivers real products and/or services to its customers. Within the Practice Enterprise students carry out all working processes typical of the professional context. The professional field is involved in an active way in the learning process. The educational institution has the final responsibility for the quality of the work and the quality of the education.”*

Implementation scheme during second project year:

Other forms of practice learning

Practice Enterprise

simple virtual non-authentic technical knowledge	<b>LEARNING ASSIGNMENTS</b>	complex real authentic
	<b>COMPETENCES</b>	organisational social management
apart from subjects	<b>INCLUSION IN CURRICULUM</b>	integration of all subjects
	related to a few subjects	
monodisciplinarity	<b>DISCIPLINARITY</b>	interdisciplinarity
	multidisciplinarity	
transmitter of knowledge	<b>TEACHER ROLE</b>	coach
	<b>INVOLVEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL FIELD</b>	structural partner
limited involvement		

## EXAMPLES

In LESSIUS Mechelen:

- Communication management: PITCH (modeled on: advertising agencies)
- Journalism: SUPO (modeled on: multimedia platform)
- Interior Design: DESIGN OFFICE (modeled on: design office)
- Technology : PROJECT OFFICE (model: R&D + sales dept. of technology firm)
- **Business management: Business Lab: starting PE** (looking for a model ;-))

Outside LESSIUS Mechelen:

- OFFICE MANAGEMENT KHK & KATHO: international network of **virtual** practice firms

## ADDED VALUE of PE (results online survey/FGI/experts/...)

*For students:*

- challenge, taking and getting responsibility
- developing different competences/interdisciplinarity
- **better preparation to professional life**
- with more learning pleasure/**PE is FUN!!!**
- more self-knowledge
- 'automatic' detection of **entre- and intrapreneurial attitudes**

*For teachers:*

- learning/coaching and breaking out of traditional teaching pattern (but not to much...)

*For both:*

- stimulating initiative and **entre/intrapreneurship**
- **PE works as a 'filter' to detect entrepreneurial ambitions**

*For next generations of students:*

- Higher education is (must be) source of entrepreneurship
- **@ Lessius: guidance office for real business start ups during training**

## **SUCCESS FACTORS of PE** (results online survey/FGI/experts/...)

- enthusiastic teachers
- willing to take risks/flexible
- with experience and knowledge
- adequate guidance/coach/indicating solutions
- management support
- adequate infrastructure
- clear organisation
- cooperation professional field as educational partner
- real assignments
- strict procedure for evaluation

## **BOTTLENECKS of PE** (results online survey/FGI/experts/...)

- heavy workload for students/teachers
- continuity versus scholar holidays
- individual evaluation versus output in teamwork
- quality guarantee of deliverables
- 'competition' with own graduates...
- when € successful, where goes the money to?
- and with failure, who's responsible???

# GOOD PRACTICES PE @ Lessius

Bachelor in journalism:

## SUPO = MEDIAPLATFORM

- all (90) third year students and teachers
- ‘work’ in SUPO and deliver media products (internet, print, television, radio)
- for real media clients (and real deadlines)
- organised/structured as an media office and not as ‘school’

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The screenshot shows the SUPO website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'HOME' circled in red, and other categories like 'WERELD', 'MUZIEK', 'CAMPUS', 'CULTUUR', 'LIFESTYLE', and 'ENTERTAINMENT'. A search bar is on the right. Below the navigation, there are several article teasers:

- Sneeuwvitje door de jaren heen**: Accompanied by an image of Snow White and the Evil Queen.
- Studente figureert in Harry Potterfilm**: Text mentions Kimberly Coeckelberghs (19) and her role in a Harry Potter film.
- De die van ons**: Text mentions 'De die van Jos' and a serious zielemeester.
- Griezelen tussen de skeletten**: Text mentions Sint-Bomboutskerk and a grafgravesoort.
- Styletto 28/10/10**: Text mentions Hans Otten and a 'Vagabond'.

On the right side, there are more sections:

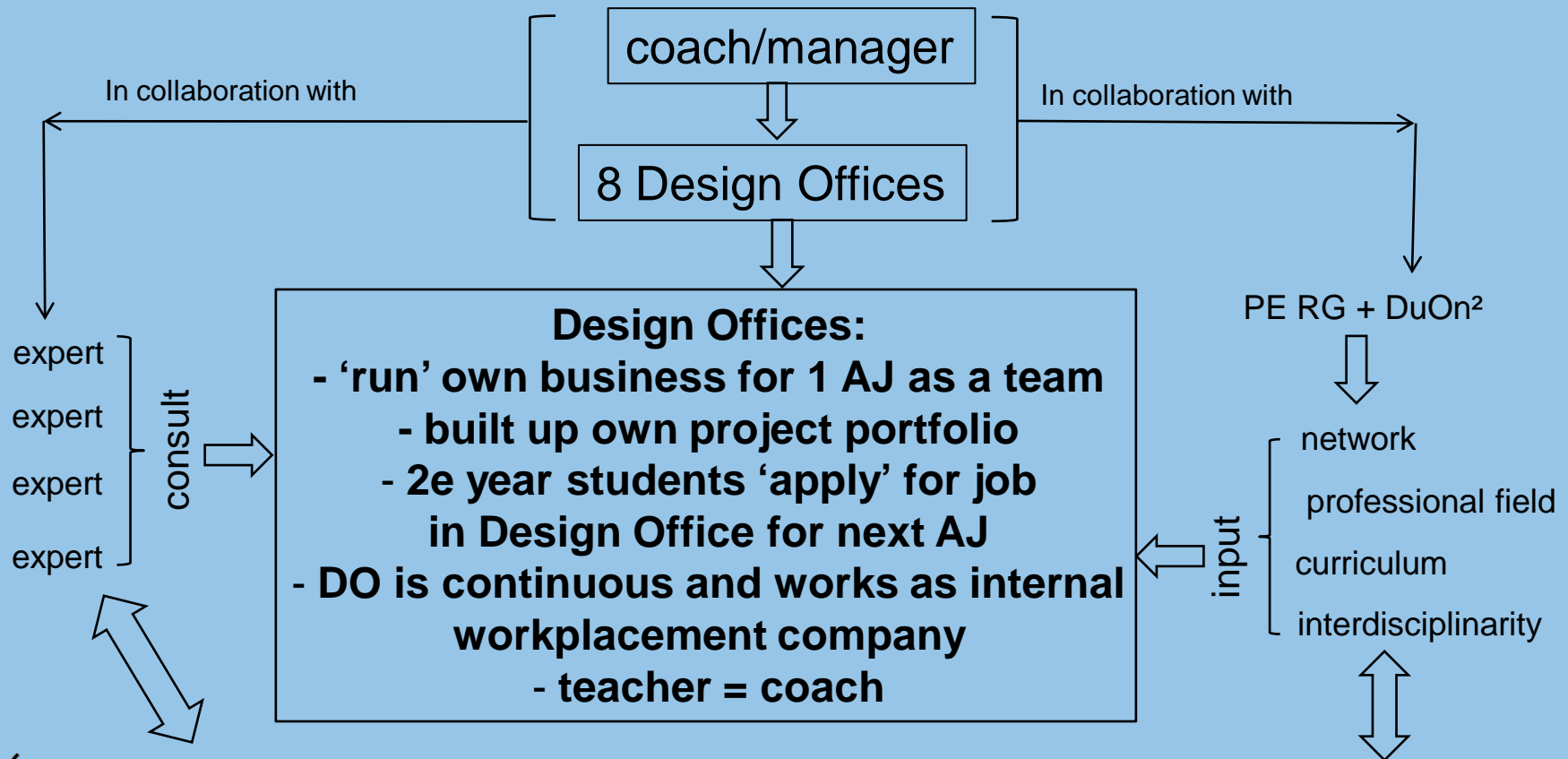
- Gold prices are rocketing**: A banner for AVAFX Trade Gold online.
- Festival**: A photo of a group of people in black and white outfits, with the caption 'De foto's online!'.
- supolicious**: A section with small profile pictures and names like 'Mieke van de week', 'Spelster van de week', 'suposutra', and 'Waar is de tijd van'.
- BIG BROTHER**, **AGENDA**, **WALL OF FAME**, and **LOGIN** sections.

At the bottom, there are two lists:

- Populair**: A list of 10 items including 'Lina peirst', 'Top 10 mislukte plastische chirurgie', 'Veganisme, WTF?', etc.
- Gewaardeerd**: A list of 10 items including 'Onder vuur: Marleen Merckx', 'Lina peirst', 'Veganisme, WTF?', etc.



## organisation structure/24 students involved after solicitation



input/feedback of **technical** 'hardcore' skills typical for profession: design, technology, complexity, presentation, budget, IT, innovation, materials, etc...

input/feedback of social '**soft**' skills also typical for profession: teamwork, independence, taking initiative, commercial thinking, discipline, persistence, enz.

important: own workspace



briefing of a mission with  
client and expert  
no teacher involved



preparation of a mission with expert: interdisciplinarity



# REBOOT!

RE-USE OF  
INDUSTRIAL LEFTOVERS



working as an  
company/organisation

Prachtige realisaties van de studenten,  
die nu al de concurrentie met de  
professionele sector aankan.

Bedankt voor de fijne, constructieve  
samenwerking. Zeker voor herhaling  
vatbaar!



Greet Geypen  
Scheperen van cultuur

# Q&A?

# BRAINSTORM?

15.00 – 16.30 special interest group

Mapping out a PE concept for business courses?

# INFO?

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