



Līdzfinansē
Eiropas Savienības
Erasmus+ programma

Daugavpils 15.vidusskolas ES Erasmus+ programmas skolu apmaiņas partnerību projekta “Mācīties vienam no otra - veidot nākotni” Nr. 2019-1-LV01-KA229-060348_3

INTERVIEW WITH AN ENTREPRENEUR

Interviewer: project participant Dmitrijs Kiseļovs

Biedrība “LATGALES DIZAINS”, Daugavpils

Founder: Julija Kulgajeva

<https://www.facebook.com/latgalesdizains>

Uzņēmēja tālr.: +371 29 644 293



1. What was the most valuable entrepreneurship lesson?

The leader is an example for his employees. As an entrepreneur-leader, you cannot demand more from your employees than you yourself are able to bring to the common cause and to each project, in particular. Everyday painstaking and hard work will make you believe first of all, and then your whole team in success. But as in any entrepreneurial activity, so in an art studio, rationalism, as a measure of commercial feasibility in all projects, should be the basis of every undertaking.

2. Can you describe your working day?

The working day begins with incoming and force majeure calls until the official working day in the office (8:00 - 10:00). Then an individual work plan for yourself. Then the planning meeting with the employees all together and then separately (10:00 - 12:00). Basically the distribution of responsibilities. Then work with clients (12:00 - 15:00), negotiations, acceptance of orders and

subsequent redirection of order components to employees. Control over all production processes throughout the day. Meeting with designers, illustrator and photographer on the topic of art projects. Help and professional development for volunteers and young employees. More detailed work and meeting on art projects (15:00 - 17:00). Individual work: writing projects, grants, individual art projects (17:00 - 19:00).

3. What advice would you give to graduates who want to become an entrepreneur?

-Before starting your own business - work for a large and successful company. And also apply for support to the business incubator.

4. What are you looking for in employees?

Diligence. Enthusiasm. Responsibility for the common cause and the honor of the team. Respect for work, for oneself, for colleagues. Desire learns new things in its specialty. Work for results. In our team, colleagues work with joy and conscience.

5. What makes your company unique?

The fact that here people are doing what they love - they give joy, bring beauty and art to the masses.



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INTERVIEW WITH AN ENTREPRENEUR

Interviewer: project participant Elvina Narovska

Interview with Founder Anita Ozoliņa

Cat café “KOTOFFSKI”

Cietokšņa iela 44, Daugavpils, LV-5401

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Cat café “KOTOFFSKI” is the only café in Latvia with cats, here is its unique approach and attractiveness, and because of it I decided to take an interview with the person who runs this amazing and cozy place. At the moment 6 cats found their home at the café. The café has Facebook

(<https://www.facebook.com/110628347236824/posts/206319854334339/?app=fbl>) and Instagram (<https://instagram.com/catcafekotoffski?igshid=1v6xpew..>) pages, where news are daily updated. Because I have already visited this café before I can say for sure what I liked its elegant and homelike atmosphere, and you get an unforgettable experience simply by being there.

1. First of all, congratulations with the official opening!

Thanks a lot! We are always happy to welcome guests here at the café. We often have some novelties.

2. For the beginning we would like to ask you: what was the motivation for you back then to start your own business and what steps did you take?

Back then the motivation for me was my little son. I had written a project for a kids' center, I won it, and this way my life in business took off. When I started, I hadn't any experience, because my first degree was in education (I was a teacher of Latvian) and by the second degree I was a real estate agent. Now, when I opened cat café, of course, I had plenty of experience (almost 11 years), during these years I gained some valuable experience, did a lot of mistakes, but now I easily avoid similar mistakes. I also like everything new. Once I opened the kids' center and now cat café, which currently is the only one existing in Latvia.

3. You run a pretty unusual café.

Yes, it is true. The closest cat café to us is in Vilnius. And why cat café? I'm a big fan of cats as my family is. I have experience with animals, love and a great desire to help them.

4. So when you opened the café what did you want to achieve?

As for the café, here I promote all these ideas that are close to my heart: eco lifestyle, humane treatment of animals. Eco lifestyle here is in everything: our furniture is vintage or restored; many things have found a second life here. We also don't use plastic tableware, and we want to quit using plastic shoe covers. Of course, rainy days only allow us to use plastic shoe covers, but in dry weather we will use reusable shoe covers.

5. What was the inspiration for your café?

Firstly, of course, I have a big love for cats; I always want to help them. I have been to an animal shelters before, and when you see so many cats who need help, you are trying to help them with all you can. So I wanted to raise the awareness about it and now I can share it with the guests of the café. Secondly, it just seemed incredibly interesting to try; it was a hobby at first. When I was in Milan, I visited cat café "Crazy Cat" and I remember telling my husband this phrase: "I would really like if the same type of café appeared in our city". Between this phrase and opening of the café passed almost 14 years.

6. Tell us, please, how have you changed since starting your business? Is this change noticeable?

- Yes, of course. All extra responsibilities, which we are taking, change us considerably. I became more focused, responsible, also stronger and kind of bulletproof, because as my first business, my second business requires working with people. We are all different, our mood can always change, and sometimes

you have to deal with it. But in the café conflicts are rarely to happen. The thing is that here come the same “crazy” (in the positive meaning) people like me. Also publicity imposes a certain responsibility: now you have to watch your behaviour, you can’t act like you sometimes, for example, if you want to cry or let your anger out, you have to shut it down for a while. But all these are positive changes as I see them. Now I feel like I’m invulnerable.

7. When you opened kids’ center what was the most valuable lesson for you in the business sphere?

- It was mistakes. All was intuitively for me and I learned along the way. Of course, because of the fact that I was out of experience and also lack of certain skills I made mistakes. But I enjoy learning, and I can’t even remember a period in my life, when I wasn’t learning something. Now I applied for a course of digital marketing, because it’s the way into the future: ads in social media and everywhere in the web. Now I really like all these phone apps for photo and text editing, I am getting a hold of them with a great pleasure. This is pretty convenient, yeah. But you see, people of my age are more conservative and not all want to try new things, but this is interesting. Actually, when we learn, our brain is the constant state of work, this helps to acquire new skills and frees of feeling of uselessness. In general, all that you learn, all that happens to you is not for nothing, sooner or later it will all come in handy. Definitely learn languages. English. With this knowledge you will feel like a citizen of the world, wherever you go you will feel more confident. I had a sad experience, when I was abroad, not knowing the English language. It was hard to learn in the process, much better, when you know the language, you can start moving into business direction.

8. Are you fluent in English?

- Not really, but I can communicate with people and read books, so for now it’s enough for me.

9. Can you describe your work day?

Work day. So I usually come at 12, when we are opened. Sometimes later. It all depends. My work day isn’t only at the café, besides it I write projects, deal with documents and other stuff. I attend different courses, and I’m also an ambassador of social entrepreneurship from association of social entrepreneurship, so I travel a lot to give consultations and I learn too.

10. This year we are graduating from school, so maybe one of us would want to be in business sphere. What will be your advice for us?

First of all, if you decided to open your business, you ought to get a proper education. This will prevent you from many questions and mistakes related to business. Also you should talk to entrepreneurs. Don't be afraid to show interest in your goals, maybe you will have a chance to volunteer in some organisations which do something similar to what you want to achieve. Secondly and it's of essential importance, a businessman should know how to do each job at his company and do not despise it. You need to understand that every job is significant, and there can be moments, when you need to do a job of a waitress, a cook or a janitor. Moreover, I advise you to participate in all projects. There are two reasons for it. First, projects get you financing, and when you start, it will be a much needed help. There are many projects which give you an opportunity to open your business from scratch and without any cost. Second, project is like a magic push: you win it and then you need to bring it to life, so it's a good motivation.

11. And the last question we would like to ask you is how was your business when Covid-19 showed up?

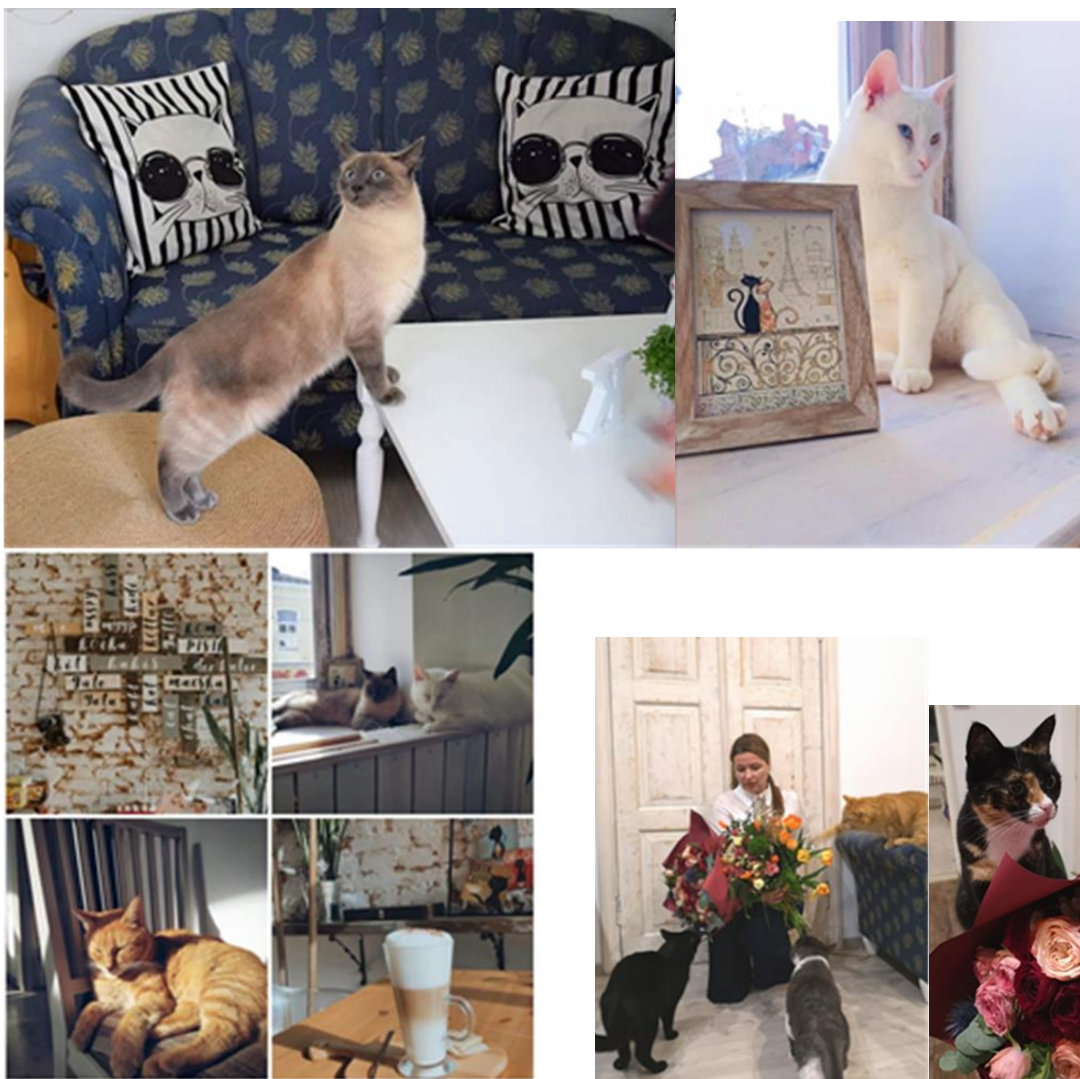
Yes, it's quite actual now, because it concerned both my businesses. They were two spheres that were both first touched by the virus. All sections for kids and cafés had and have strict restrictions. For the café it is limit on people for one table, distance between tables and limit on work time, so you can imagine how negatively it affected the café. But we still are in business, making plans and slowly but eventually growing. Now, of course, is really unstable economic situation in the country, but how we can help it, life isn't stopping here. We have 6 cats, and it's extra responsibility, so for us it's harder to cope with this situation than other cafés and restaurants. But we are open for now.

12. Thanks a lot for your time! You have a cool café with its own magical atmosphere.

Thank you and you are always welcome.

October 2, 2020

Cat café "KOTOFFSKI"



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INTERVIEW WITH AN ENTREPRENEUR

Interviewer: project participant Lera Gorbenko

SIA "TALAM"

Founder: Lamņova Tatjana

18. novembra iela 387-8, Daugavpils Uzņēmēja tālr.: +37126264689

1. Can you please tell me about your enterprise? What is the name of your company and what business does it?

My company is a fairly new, it was created in 2018. The name of the company is "SIA TALAM". The area of occupation is education of young people's interests, non-formal education of adults, and also our company provides academic consultations in different subjects.

2. What event gave rise to starting a business?

It was a high demand in our region for academic consultations and private lessons in mathematics.

3. What purposes did you have at the start of the business?

To provide quality services to our customers, to expand the range of services offered.

4. What does the uniqueness of your company relate to?

When providing services, our priority is always the customer, and we deal with each client individually, looking for very specific solutions, according to the client's specificities and requirements.

5. Who was your greatest inspiration?

Children who have difficulties in learning subjects. And when the child has the results and there is growth – this gives the most inspiration and motivation for the future.

6. What was the most valuable insight you gained in business?

The main thing is professionalism and relationships with people (clients and cooperation partners). Honestly doing your job you can achieve a great deal, achieve goals that perhaps seem unattainable from the beginning.

7. What do you think it means to be an entrepreneur?

Being an entrepreneur means a lot: you need to anticipate the consequences of your actions, be able to make decisions, be able to anticipate potential risks, be professional in your field and develop their knowledge and skills at all times, and be human – not to lose the ability to be good-natured, helpful, to think of a customer not as a bearer of money, but as a person with his own peculiarities and needs, and to find a better solution for the customer, company and business partners at all times.

8. What characteristics do you think an entrepreneur needs to achieve success?

Purpose, perseverance, courage, optimism, self-confidence, patience and flexibility.

9. What would you recommend to graduates who want to become entrepreneurs?

The main thing I think is education, recommending, all the time seek a new, choose for yourself an occupation that comes from the heart, be ambitious and not forget that our greatest value is the people who are next to us!



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