

THE ROLE OF THE ENTREPRENEUR IN MODERN AGRIBUSINESS AND CHOOSING THE MOST FAVORABLE ENTREPRENEURIAL STRATEGY

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Abstract

Modern agribusiness, as a permanent process of reallocating financial, physical, and human resources from areas of societal reproduction where they are underutilized and inefficiently used to areas where they will yield much greater effects, always demands a positive optimistic attitude. The entrepreneur, in line with the analyses of self-development management philosophy, must impartially and objectively assess their strengths, weaknesses, available opportunities and threats in their operations. It is crucial to believe in one's abilities and the products or services offered.

Agricultural entrepreneurship, as part of production, is characterized by low mobility of assets over time and space. Land as a production factor also has a limiting effect on agricultural entrepreneurial activity. The natural factor, along with the biological nature of the means and objects of work, is a precondition for the conditioned nature of agribusiness operations.

The entrepreneur in agribusiness is a person who possesses creativity, and can lead and handle all challenges and risks in the work process. They are brave enough to take the risk of turning their idea into reality. Entrepreneurs are one of the most renowned untapped sources in the world of creativity and growth, making their role in modern agribusiness increasingly relevant in both developed and transition countries.

By utilizing their entrepreneurial skills and qualities, the entrepreneurs should apply the best entrepreneurial strategies for the benefit of the company, not allowing uncertainty and potential failure to discourage future steps. On the contrary, they should see opportunities, not problems, in challenges and risks.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, modern agribusiness, entrepreneur, entrepreneurial strategies.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship represents a unique way of thinking; it is associated with taking initiative and action and is not limited to the business sector alone. It serves as a driving force for economic growth, making it essential to raise awareness for its development and understanding. In the broadest sense, entrepreneurship is a continuous process of redirecting and reallocating financial, physical, and human resources from areas of social reproduction where they are underused and inefficiently utilized to areas where they will generate much greater effects. The terms entrepreneur and entrepreneurship are often associated with the private sector in everyday life, but they encompass a much broader scope.

The globalization process brings uncertainty, risk, and competition, along with modern developed distribution channels that do not allow one to remain "average" but instead require striving for the top. This means that entrepreneurs managing a company must face all the challenges and risks posed by today's operational and survival methods.

Agro-entrepreneurship, as a part of production, is characterized by low mobility of assets in terms of time and space. Land, as a factor of production, also imposes limiting effects on agro-entrepreneurial activities, such that the agro-entrepreneur addresses numerous issues related to the optimal size of land, and its rational and effective use, aligned with the quantitative

parameters of other resources. For the production entrepreneur, land is not just a simple factor of production because it determines their social status as an agricultural producer.

Unlike other entrepreneurial fields where results can be viewed as a consequence of multiple aspects, in agricultural activities, the subject of work is not only modified by the efforts of the entrepreneur and their employees but also by the fertility of the soil, climate, water resources, location, and configuration, the topography of the place, etc.

The word entrepreneur has been in use since the twelfth century, rooted in the verb **entreprendre** – which means to undertake, or to do something different from others. Essentially, it refers to a person who starts something new, takes initiative, and possesses exceptional characteristics such as self-confidence, creativity, talent, dynamism, shrewdness, energy, flexibility, perseverance, persistence and vitality. Typically, entrepreneurs are creative people, innovators, and visionaries who are constantly creating, bringing new quality, seeking changes, and realizing their ideas.

Entrepreneurial strategy as an important segment for the development of the agricultural business

"From imagination to innovation" would be the motto guiding every entrepreneur. "There are people who live in a world of dreams and people who live in reality. But there are also people who turn the world of dreams into reality" – Douglas Everett, a thought that should be the fundamental guide for the entrepreneur.

At the center of every business, every business idea, business plan, marketing, management, and so forth, the core segment is precisely the entrepreneur¹ and their role is illustrated in the accompanying image:

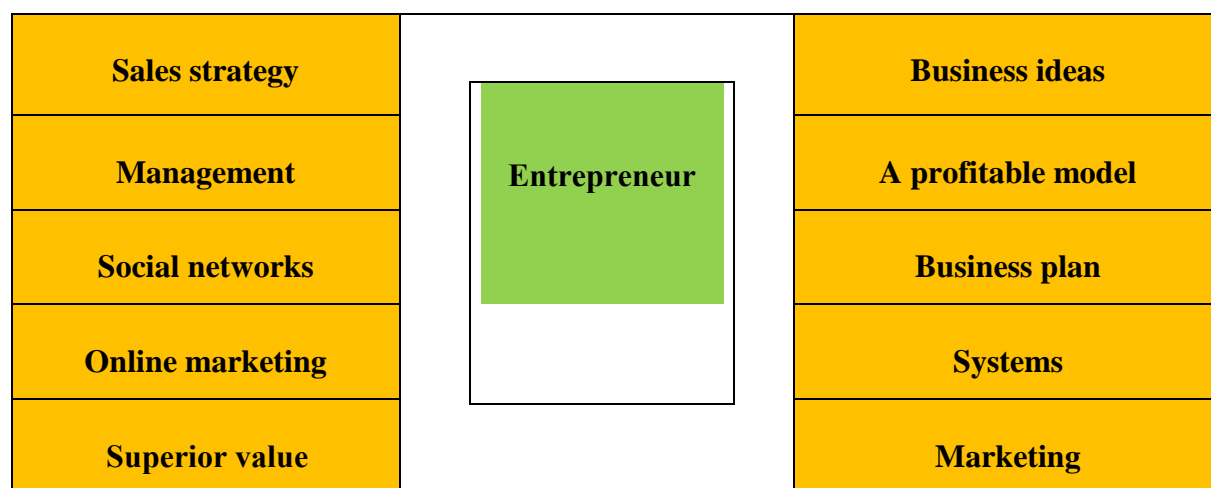


Figure 1. The foundations of entrepreneurship

The good entrepreneurs are not born, they are made. Every person is born with a talent, but these talents need to be enriched through learning, development, and training, which enable the entrepreneur to handle stress, risk, and responsibilities.

A successful entrepreneur possesses the following characteristics:

- Believes in themselves, their own ideas and instincts, and understands the importance of self-confidence for their success.
- Plans ahead, as improvisational and experimental day-to-day work is not typical of them.

¹ John e. Tropman, Gersh Mornigstar : „Entrepreneurial systems for the 1990s : their creation, structure and management

- Demonstrates creativity, finding different creative approaches to already used ideas by expanding, improving, and further developing them.
- Knows how to test themselves, identify their best qualities, and align them with their ideas and ideals, remaining open to criticism, and changes and always ready to hand over their work to someone better.
- In a dynamic environment, they have the ability to foresee their success and direct themselves towards the right goals.
- Never gives up; possesses self-confidence, a realistic outlook on work, social responsibility, ethical behavior, emotional stability, a sense of urgency, conceptual abilities, competitive spirit, vision, faith, persistence, courage, social and negotiation skills, and leadership abilities.

The true entrepreneur removes from their thoughts the words: "I can't," "I don't want to," "That's impossible," "I can't do that," and instead thinks differently, guided by their dreams as Robert Kennedy said many years ago, a statement that holds true today: "Some people see things as they are and ask why. I dream of things that never were and ask why not?"

In this context and in line with the issues analyzed in this work, it is crucial to emphasize that without a proper strategy and strategic approach, success cannot be achieved despite the efforts and commitments made. A fundamental characteristic of strategy is that it represents an integral approach to issues related to the development of agriculture and a vision that outlines the opportunities and the path for the development of the agricultural sector. Setting the strategy should be based on three main pillars:

- The producers for whom the strategy is crafted and without whose consent and broad participation it cannot be successfully implemented,
- The government, which must take the lead in the efforts to implement the strategy, and
- International development agencies and foundations, whose approval and financial resources are necessary for its successful implementation.

Individual farmers-entrepreneurs and their work and action strategies should be based on the national strategy of the state as the leading framework in agriculture. Crafting a successful strategy for the development of agriculture requires technical expertise on relevant issues, a solid understanding of the agricultural sector within the national economy, and political leadership for the process of change. For more than two decades, Macedonian agriculture has faced numerous challenges. In order to advance the agricultural sector, it is necessary to restructure and adapt it to handle competition from the European market it aims to enter, to apply European rules, anticipate, plan, organize, and implement measures in all phases of agricultural production (including marketing and procurement) with active participation from the state, as well as to stimulate young farmers to remain in the country.

It is essential to utilize funds and invest in science, technology, and innovations to access available financial resources for all phases of the agricultural cycle. One of the most important aspects of creating a development strategy in agriculture is innovations in science and technology, which play a key role in transforming the agricultural system to become more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable. In fact, science, technology, and innovations in agriculture encompass all dimensions of the production cycle across the entire value chain, including multiple technologies, innovations, sustainable agricultural approaches, biotechnologies, digital technologies and renewable energy technologies. For example, advancements in biotechnology can be used for genetic improvement of plants and animals. Remote sensing and satellite data, as well as drones, offer vast opportunities for data collection to monitor weather, crops, pests diseases, and soil conditions.

In the strategy for successful agriculture, one of the most important aspects is directed towards encouraging young people to choose agriculture as a career and ensuring that living conditions in rural areas are as good as those in cities. It is an undeniable fact that rural areas in Macedonia

are currently in an extremely poor state. Intensive modernization of life in agricultural areas is necessary, including the improvement and construction of higher-quality infrastructure, facilitating loans for the development of family farms and providing additional subsidies for staying and working in rural areas. This aims to increase productivity and the quality of production, motivate young people to pursue education in this direction, return to family properties, and create a safe environment for living and working through the concept of smart villages, which has long existed in the European Union.

One of the main reasons for low and inefficient agricultural production, and the biggest limiting factor for increasing the competitiveness of Macedonian agriculture, is the small size of agricultural holdings and the fragmentation of plots. Therefore, one of the key measures in creating a competitive agricultural sector pertains to land policy, whose main goal is to consolidate and regulate agricultural land, especially concerning state-owned agricultural land. If the state does not address this during the EU negotiation process or by securing an additional transitional period, it will be purchased by foreign companies at much lower prices to the detriment of domestic producers and companies.

If all the aforementioned aspects are not taken into account, the strategy may become merely a wish list and lose its power to create successful, development-oriented and sustainable agriculture.

Empirical Research

To understand and obtain answers to certain questions related to the entrepreneur as the pillar of modern agribusiness and the selection of the most favorable entrepreneurial strategy, a survey questionnaire was prepared. This questionnaire was administered to 100 individuals divided into two groups: employees in private companies and entrepreneurs.

Among the 100 respondents, 13 were aged up to 25 years, 33 were aged 26 to 35 years, 34 were aged 36 to 45 years, 15 were aged 46 to 55 years, and the remaining 5 respondents were over 56 years old.

The general hypothesis of the research is: *Does an entrepreneur who has high self-confidence, gained through knowledge, skills, intelligence, and experience, serve as an example and motivation for their environment, and how does the choice of the most favorable entrepreneurial strategy influence this?*

The first question of the survey was: *Does the entrepreneur's way of functioning and behavior positively influence employees?*

The purpose of this question is to examine whether a successful entrepreneur serves as a model for their employees and whether they also inspire other entrepreneurs. The results of this question are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Overview of responses from surveyed groups to the first question

Question No. 1	Employees		Entrepreneurs	
Does the entrepreneur positively influence employees through their functioning and behavior?	Absolute Values	%	Absolute Values	%
a) Yes	66	94	30	100
b) No	1	2	0	0
c) Don't know	3	4	0	0
Total	70	100	30	100

From the table representation, the responses to the first question show that the majority of employees and entrepreneurs believe that the entrepreneur, through their way of functioning and behavior, positively influences both their employees and other entrepreneurs. This is achieved through determination and self-confidence, dedication to work, flexibility, creativity, team spirit, competitive spirit, and vision.

The second question was: ***Should you believe in the abilities and ambitions of a successful entrepreneur?***

The results of this question are presented in the table below.

Table 2. Overview of responses from surveyed groups to the second question

Question No. 2	Employees		Entrepreneurs	
Should you believe in the abilities and ambitions of a successful entrepreneur?	Absolute Values	%	Absolute Values	%
a) Yes	48	69	19	63
b) No	7	10	6	20
c) Don't know	15	21	5	17
Total	70	100	30	100

From the tabular representation, it is clear that with a high percentage of "yes" responses, both employees and entrepreneurs show a similar stance, indicating that successful entrepreneur should be trusted and supported in their endeavors and initiatives, as they are the main pillar of the business and its driving force. The percentage of respondents who answered "no" and "don't know" to this question is small.

The third question concerned the applied strategy in operations: **Does the choice of the most favorable entrepreneurial strategy affect the development of modern agribusiness?** The results of the responses are provided below.

Table 3. Overview of responses from surveyed groups to the third question

Question No. 3	Employees		Entrepreneurs	
Does the choice of the most favorable entrepreneurial strategy affect the development of modern agribusiness?	Absolute Values	%	Absolute Values	%
a) Yes	63	90	24	80
b) No	3	4	2	7
c) Don't know	4	6	4	13
Total	70	100	30	100

It is interesting to note that for this question as well, both groups of respondents share a similar stance. They agree that the strategy in operations is a crucial link in the chain of success and choosing the right strategy means a true direction in actions that lead to success and profit as the ultimate goal. The responses to the three analyzed questions indicate that the generally stated main hypothesis is satisfied, reaffirming the primacy and importance of the entrepreneur in all spheres of work and activity. Both employees and entrepreneurs share the opinion that an ambitious entrepreneur, who cares for their employees, believes in their own ideas and instincts, understands the importance of self-confidence for their success, and chooses the most favorable entrepreneurial strategy is a fundamental tool in modern agribusiness.

Conclusion

The previously presented insights serve as a guide for understanding the processes of entrepreneurship and agro-entrepreneurship, as well as a deep analysis of the functioning of a successful entrepreneur in modern agribusiness. The key conclusions drawn from the analyzed issues are as follows:

1. Entrepreneurship is a driving force for economic growth in a country. Therefore, it is necessary to raise awareness about its development and understanding as a continuous process of redirecting and reallocating financial, physical, and human resources from places of societal reproduction where they are underutilized and irrationally used to places where they will yield much greater effects.
2. Agro-entrepreneurship is characterized by low mobility of assets in time and space because the assets used in agro-entrepreneurship do not possess the properties characteristic of commercial and financial entrepreneurship, such as transportability, preservation, and quick liquidity. This is the reason for the agro-entrepreneur's difficulty in adapting to market conditions and managing flexibly in the short term. The natural factor, along with the biological nature of the means and objects of work, is a precondition for the conditional nature of agribusiness operations.
3. Ambition, a desire for independence, and leadership abilities are just some of the characteristics that an entrepreneur should possess. These traits simultaneously serve as the entrepreneur's driving force and their ability to face challenges and risks in their environment. In this context, choosing the right entrepreneurial strategy is a fundamental condition for the long-term success of the entrepreneurial business. When selecting the right strategy, the entrepreneur does not seek short-term financial gains but rather long-term financial and economic results based on continuous market presence, maintaining already occupied market positions, and their expansion.
4. The conducted empirical research, using the survey method, included 100 individuals divided into two groups: employees in private firms and entrepreneurs. The research confirmed the thesis that, even in the realm of agribusiness, entrepreneur with their knowledge, skills, experience, gained self-confidence and vision should serve as an example and motivation for their employees. Together, through the implementation of a successful strategy, they will ensure the development of a profitable, sustainable, and forward-looking business.

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