



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

JA Company Program[®]

JA Company Program empowers high school students to fill a need or solve a problem in their community and teaches them practical skills required to conceptualize, capitalize, and manage their own business venture. Throughout the process of building their own company, students collaborate, make crucial business decisions, communicate with multiple stakeholders, and develop entrepreneurial knowledge and skills. Community volunteers and mentors provide real-world guidance and experience to the student-led startup.

The program is available for both in-school and after-school settings and may be completed during one semester or throughout an entire school year.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Blended model with teacher-led and volunteer-led opportunities to support flexible implementation options
- Includes self-guided learning topics in a flipped model to maximize hands-on learning time with the lead instructor
- Subject Matter Expert volunteer guides
- Robust support materials for teachers, including a pacing guide for semester-long implementation
- Streamlined financial management with accompanying step-by-step, walk-through tutorial videos
- Includes new, interactive, self-guided topics for sales, leadership and management, supply chain, finance, and marketing

This program is part of the JA Entrepreneurship Pathway and is designed for Grades 9–12, in-school or after-school/out-of-school, for 28-32 ICH based on content delivery. The program has recommendations for volunteer delivery or educator delivery for each session.



A Brainstorming Example: Mind Mapping

Problem Statement:
As a songwriter, I need to create a unique song that no one has heard before in order to record a hit song.

SWOT Analysis - Swot makes Netflix so successful anyway?

Why Do You Network?

Networking, which is connecting with others, should always be a priority, especially for a businessperson or entrepreneur.

You should network to:

- Develop relationships with potential customers, investors, or partners
- Collaborate with like-minded individuals to expand your thinking, get insight or feedback from others, or just improve upon personal skill sets
- Get help from others to achieve your entrepreneurial goals
- Create value in the work that you are doing in your existing business

Making connections with the right people can open...

Program Outline

Meeting	Overview	Objectives	Activities
Meeting One: Start a Business	Students are introduced to the <i>JA Company Program</i> experience, explore ways to raise capital for their business venture, and analyze their personal strengths to help inform their individual roles in their company project.	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the <i>JA Company Program</i> overall objectives by reviewing the major milestones. Describe the importance of setting goals and developing a vision as first steps toward entrepreneurial success. Identify the roles and associated skill sets that are integral in a company structure. Assess personal strengths against the designated company roles to determine a potential business role. Identify different means by which to raise capital for a start-up business. Differentiate between facts and myths about entrepreneurs. Reflect on personal and professional vision, and set some immediate goals for becoming an entrepreneur. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ice Breaker <i>JA Company Program</i> Overview Program Milestones Go Be an Entrepreneur Identifying Personal Business Strengths Capitalization <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JA National Student Leadership Summit Entrepreneurial Myths and Facts Envision Yourself as an Entrepreneur
Meeting Two: Solve a Customer's Problem	Students use creative problem solving to brainstorm ideas for a business service/product, with the goal of identifying their top choices to research.	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how brainstorming several ideas and then picking the best option will lead to creative problem solving. Describe the Design Thinking model and the steps involved in the process. Describe the advantages of applying the Design Thinking model to new ideas or problem solving. Describe the Empathize, Define, and Ideate steps in the Design Thinking model. Apply the Empathize, Define, and Ideate steps of the Design Thinking model to identify a customer need and some plausible solutions. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem/Solution Thinking What Is Design Thinking? Solving Customer Problems Brainstorming a Business Idea
Meeting Three: Evaluate the Options	Students apply their personal entrepreneurial skills while exploring good decision making and vetting the viability of a venture, using a SWOT analysis tool to narrow their decision on their company's final product idea.	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain why innovation is an integral factor for a company's health and growth. Explain how failure leads to success and how using a growth mindset can provide the appropriate perspective in challenging situations. Define the entrepreneurial mindset. Describe the key characteristics that a successful entrepreneur embodies. Explain the uses and benefits of a SWOT analysis for a start-up venture. Apply a SWOT analysis to each product/service the company is considering. Define the terms <i>pivot</i> and <i>persevere</i> related to business venture startups. Use data to make informed decisions about the direction of the business. Execute a final decision about whether to proceed with the team's chosen product/service using data-informed decision making. Demonstrate that entrepreneurs have accountability by completing a Product Approval application to submit to JA. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure Leads to Success Characteristics of the Entrepreneur's Mindset SWOT Analysis Pivot vs. Persevere Vetting a Viable Venture <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation

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Meeting Four: Create a Structure	Students initiate the company's structure by establishing roles, commence planning within business teams, and finalize capitalization decisions.	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the five functional roles of the company and the essential responsibilities of each role. • Relate the sections of the Business Snapshot with the business planning information necessary to identify for a start-up company. • Evaluate personal strengths aligned to each role, and select team members for business teams. • Evaluate the different means for raising capital, and select an option for the company's start-up venture. • Identify essential tasks for different roles in the startup by drafting Business Team task lists for each functional role. • Discuss collaboration and communication strategies within and between business teams. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Roles • Business Planning Overview • Selecting Business Roles • Raising Capital for Your Company • Countdown to Launch
Meeting Five: Launch the Business	Students explore corporate leadership roles and responsibilities, evaluate personal leadership skills, and elect leaders for the business venture. Then, they organize their business teams, start deep dives into business team roles, and complete work on the Business Snapshot and Company Charter.	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate different leadership styles and the most positive leadership influence for companies in different situations. • Assess personal leadership styles and reflect on what considerations might be important in decision making as a leader of a start-up company. • Describe the significance of accountability as an entrepreneur and a student as it relates to a company venture and JA experience. • Evaluate the different leader candidates, and elect people for the company leadership positions. • Demonstrate basic business planning by completing the Business Snapshot which outlines all of the key elements to launch a business. • Express the legal and social need for a company's guiding principles by developing and agreeing to a company charter. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selecting Company Leaders and Business Teams • Business Snapshot • Company Charter <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • What Kind of Leader Are You? • Accountability and Entrepreneurship
Meeting Six–Eleven: Business Operations	Over the course of several meetings, students launch their business, work in their business teams to run the business, and share weekly progress with Leadership. They have access to self-guided content to support their specific roles.	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the five functional roles of the company and the essential responsibilities of each role. • Describe the steps involved in a company status update report. • Present status updates from each business team of the company. • Identify the purpose of each element of the Finance Workbook and when each will be used in company operations. • Establish a functional startup through completing tasks related to the management and running of their company. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Management Overview • Sales Overview • Finance Overview • Marketing Overview • Supply Chain Overview • Team Status Updates <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Workbook Overview
Meeting Twelve: Liquidate the Company	Students finalize their company's operations, initiate the steps necessary to liquidate their company's assets, and complete the steps to close out their company.	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the liquidation process for the company and the associated tasks. • Demonstrate the liquidation process of a business by executing the tasks to complete the student company. 	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liquidation • Liquidating the Company

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Meeting Thirteen: Create a Personal Plan of Action	Students recognize the necessity of networking as an entrepreneur and work on a personal action plan to develop their personal network and to refine their entrepreneurial skills.	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the importance of networking related to your business and overall entrepreneurial success. • Execute an introductory plan to initiate networking by determining immediate people and organizations you can connect with. • Execute a personal action plan to detail the next steps you will take in your entrepreneurial journey. 	Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Your Network • <i>JA Company Program</i> Reflection Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a Personal Entrepreneurial Action Plan
Meeting Fourteen: Develop an Annual Report (Optional)	During this optional meeting, students create an annual report as a summary of their student company experience.	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe an annual report and its purpose. • Develop a summary annual report project to complete the business venture experience. 	Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report

