

# Science, the Magazine, publishes the findings world bank study in which Leuphana participated

2017-09-25 For small entrepreneurs, self-initiative is more important than business know-how.



Professor Frese und Mitarbeiterin Mona Mensmann

Lüneburg. Training intervention in psychological self-initiative is more efficient than traditional business training. These are the findings of a study which have recently been published in the world-renowned scientific journal "Science". The authors include Professor Dr. Michael Frese and his colleague Mona Mensmann from Leuphana University of Lüneburg. Together with their co-authors from the World Bank, they had carried out a field experiment in Togo with 1,500 small-scale entrepreneurs.

The aim of the study was to compare the effect of traditional business training for entrepreneurs with that of training in self-initiative and a control group, which did not receive any training. The study, conducted over a two-year period, showed that participants who received self-initiative training were 30% more profitable than those of the control group. Whereas profit growth reached only 11% when traditional business training had been given.

Professor Michael Frese and his team have developed the successful self-initiative

training course. He works at Leuphana and at the National University of Singapore. The scientist explains his approach with these words: "The training aims to develop important proactive thinking and behavioural patterns, including gumption, innovation, spotting and exploiting new business opportunities and overcoming obstacles".

The study also shows that self-initiative training is more cost-effective. Although both training courses cost \$750 per participant, the psychology-oriented approach paid off within one year, thanks to the increase in the monthly profits of the participants following the training.

The results of the study suggest that the psychological aspects of training for small businesses in West Africa and other regions should be given much more attention, says the World Bank. For the success of small businesses, it is important not only to acquire business management knowledge, but also to develop entrepreneurial ways of thinking and acting.

Further authors of the study are Marcus Goldstein, Francisco Campos, Leonardo Iacovone and Hillary Johnson of the World Bank.

Please, find the full study here (Science: Vol. 357, Issue 6357, pp. 1287-1290 DOI: 10.1126/science.aan5329).

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