SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Second Edition

Edited by Paul Burns and Jim Dewhurst

palgrave

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SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Preface to the second edition

This book is about small business, warts and all. It is about new businesses, growing businesses, businesses that go nowhere and businesses that fail. It is also about the owner-managers that run these firms. Most interesting of all, it is about entrepreneurs, that small group of owner-managers who try – and sometimes succeed – in growing their business and making a success of it.

It is aimed particularly at those students of business that are interested in the way the majority of firms actually work. It is suitable for all students taking courses on small business and entrepreneurship in universities and colleges, as well as those entrepreneurs interested in their own endeavours. It is primarily a 'why to do it' text and is designed to be used with its sister text, *Small Business Management* (now in its third edition), which is more of a 'how to do it' text. The book has developed out of MBA (Master of Business Administration) courses at Cranfield University School of Management, and Warwick Business School UK. MBA students seem fascinated by entrepreneurs and many come to a business school harbouring a deep-seated desire to set up their own business. Sadly, few ever do.

The sheer diversity and complexity of the issues facing the entrepreneur in business today is such that no one person can ever claim to be an expert in all the areas. This book brings together a large number of contributors, all experts in their respective fields. This second edition has many changes and many new contributors. There is a greater emphasis on the way firms develop and the problems small firms face in raising finance. Even chapters you may recognise from the last edition have been extensively rewritten. The structure of course that this book is designed to support involves some 'talk-

at' sessions but also case analysis. This edition of the book has many new case studies, this time with questions to be addressed in class. Inevitably, however, any course on entrepreneurship must involve a talk by an entrepreneur on 'what it is really like'. Our experience is that this will be the highlight of the course. No matter how good the teacher, there is no substitute for the real thing – somebody who did it.

The book retains a chapter on the business plan, now revised and updated. Part of the course work on many small business courses involves the preparation or review of a business plan on an idea for a business start-up. Ideally students should be asked to prepare a plan on an idea of their own that they think has some commercial potential. Preparing the plan forces them to be creative and entrepreneurial. It also takes them beyond the ideas stage and forces them to crystallise their ideas, write them down on paper and show how they can be made to happen. This is not only creative, but also an excellent management discipline. It integrates all the functional areas of management that, sadly, all too often are taught separately. We normally insist that students present their plans to fellow students so that each can learn from the other's endeavours

In the final analysis, any course on entrepreneurship must challenge students to think entrepreneurially. It must make them realise how the needs of the owner-manager and the business are intertwined. It must make them address issues in a multidisciplinary way. But, most of all, it must be fun and interesting.

PAUL BURNS
JIM DEWHURST

Notes on the contributors

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Paul Burns is Chairman of Design for Learning Ltd and Director of the 3i European Enterprise Centre. He was Professor of Small Business Development at Cranfield University and was founding President of the Institute for Small Business Affairs. Previous books include *Small Business Management* (1993) and *Business Finance – A Pictorial Guide* (1994).

Jim Dewhurst is a chartered accountant. His extensive commercial experience includes periods as company secretary and financial director. He currently lectures on the Open Studies Programme at the University of Warwick. He is the author of a number of books,

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