

DESENVOLVIMENTO DO JOGO SIMULATIVO “BUILD YOUR BRAND” NA EDUCAÇÃO EMPREENDEDORA E ESTRATÉGICA: REDESCOBRINDO A INTERAÇÃO COGNITIVA

*DEVELOPMENT OF THE SIMULATIVE GAME “BUILD YOUR BRAND” IN
ENTREPRENEURIAL AND STRATEGIC EDUCATION: REDISCOVERING COGNITIVE
INTERACTION*

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Objetivo do estudo

O estudo teve como objetivo desenvolver e apresentar o jogo Build Your Brand, incluindo as primeiras rodadas de execução, mostrando como metodologias ativas baseadas em simulação e gamificação podem apoiar a transição da cognição à ação empreendedora em ambientes educacionais.

Relevância/originalidade

O estudo é relevante por propor um produto inovador aplicável em todas as fases do aprendizado em estratégia e empreendedorismo. Foi idealizado por estudante do ensino médio, em parceria com professores e pesquisadores brasileiros e norte-americanos, fortalecendo originalidade e interdisciplinaridade.

Metodologia/abordagem

A metodologia adotada envolveu design-based research, integrando etapas de concepção, teste inicial e ajustes contínuos. O jogo foi aplicado em rodadas experimentais, permitindo análises qualitativas e validação inicial como produto técnico-educacional em contextos escolares e universitários de empreendedorismo e estratégia.

Principais resultados

Os resultados indicaram engajamento estudantil, integração entre teoria e prática e estímulo à criatividade. O jogo promoveu debates estruturados em estratégia e empreendedorismo, gerando evidências de aplicabilidade educacional em diferentes níveis, consolidando seu valor como ferramenta inovadora de ensino-aprendizagem ativa.

Contribuições teóricas/metodológicas

O estudo contribui ao explorar jogos de simulação como ferramenta de ensino em empreendedorismo e estratégia, fortalecendo metodologias ativas e abordagens baseadas em gamificação. Oferece base conceitual e empírica para integração de inovação pedagógica em diferentes níveis educacionais e contextos acadêmicos.

Contribuições sociais/para a gestão

O projeto valoriza protagonismo estudantil e práticas inovadoras, fortalecendo autonomia e colaboração. Para a gestão, oferece ferramenta aplicável em currículos escolares e universitários, além de ambientes de pesquisa em estratégia e empreendedorismo, promovendo educação empreendedora alinhada ao ODS 4 da ONU.

Palavras-chave: Simulação, Gamificação, Educação Empreendedora, Estratégia, Produto Técnico-Tecnológico

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Study purpose

The study aimed to develop and present the Build Your Brand game, including initial execution rounds, showing how active methodologies based on simulation and gamification can support the transition from cognition to entrepreneurial action in educational and learning environments.

Relevance / originality

The study is relevant for proposing an innovative product applicable across all stages of learning in strategy and entrepreneurship. It was conceived by a high school student with professors and Brazilian and American researchers, reinforcing originality, interdisciplinarity, and broad educational potential.

Methodology / approach

The methodology adopted was design-based research, integrating design, initial testing, and continuous refinement. The game was applied in experimental rounds, enabling qualitative analyses and initial validation as a technical-educational product within school and university contexts of entrepreneurship and strategy education.

Main results

The results showed student engagement, integration between theory and practice, and creativity stimulation. The game fostered structured debates in strategy and entrepreneurship, providing evidence of educational applicability at different levels, consolidating its value as an innovative active learning and teaching tool.

Theoretical / methodological contributions

The study contributes by exploring simulation games as a teaching tool in entrepreneurship and strategy, strengthening active methodologies and gamification-based approaches. It provides conceptual and empirical support for integrating pedagogical innovation across educational levels and academic contexts in strategy education.

Social / management contributions

The project values student protagonism and innovative practices, fostering autonomy and collaboration. For management, it provides a tool applicable in school and university curricula, as well as research environments in strategy and entrepreneurship, promoting entrepreneurial education aligned with UN SDG 4.

Keywords: Simulation, Gamification, Entrepreneurial Education, Strategy, Technical-Technological Product – PTT

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1 Context in which the problem is presented

Entrepreneurial education has increasingly become a key pillar in developing competencies related to autonomy, creativity, and innovation (Wang et al., 2022), as well as in addressing complex problem-solving, particularly among youth (Susilo et al., 2019). Aligned with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4—which advocates for inclusive, equitable, and quality education that promotes lifelong learning opportunities (United Nations, 2015)—entrepreneurial education prepares students to navigate market uncertainties and to forge their own paths in building a sustainable society (Cotoi et al., 2011).

Despite its growing relevance, traditional teaching methods still dominate entrepreneurship education, often relying on theoretical expositions disconnected from practice and failing to fully engage students (Susilo et al., 2019). This methodological gap hinders the development of essential entrepreneurial competencies, particularly among adolescents and young individuals in the early stages of their education (Bentz et al., 2024). Active learning methods are crucial for cultivating the ability to identify opportunities and transform them into entrepreneurial intentions (Pérez-Macías et al., 2023).

Gamified elements can effectively bridge the gap between theoretical leadership concepts and their practical application in real entrepreneurial settings (Saptari et al., 2024). This study presents the **development of the educational game *Build Your Brand*, designed as a simulation tool for teaching entrepreneurship and strategy**. The initiative aligns with a pedagogical approach that directly embodies the transition from cognitive processes to entrepreneurial action through active methodologies. The project originated from the initiative of a high school student in the United States enrolled in an Entrepreneurship Studies course, which required the development of a personal project with educational and social impact.

The course is part of a high-performing college preparatory school that offers the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP)—a globally recognized educational program offered by select high schools in the United States and around the world. It is a more rigorous and academic alternative to the traditional American curriculum, promoting critical thinking, international awareness, social responsibility, and research skills, and is highly valued by universities (International Baccalaureate Organization, n.d.).

Many universities in the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere grant college credits for IB subjects, allowing students to skip introductory courses and either shorten their graduation timeline or accelerate progress in their field of interest (International Baccalaureate Organization, n.d.). In this context, the game’s conception is aligned with the principles of higher education.

With the student’s idea as the starting point, and supported by her school, teachers, and her mother—who is a university professor specializing in Strategy and Entrepreneurship and active in international research groups—the project was planned, developed into an initial version, prototyped, and tested at a school fair, where it was presented to over a thousand members of the local academic community.

The game was designed to activate essential entrepreneurial competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and decision-making, promoting the transition from conceptual understanding to practical application through the simulation of real-life scenarios and experimentation with business strategies. Accordingly, it is based on the belief that entrepreneurial learning should begin prior to entry into the professional market and is both

possible and desirable from the final years of basic education through to higher education (Cotoi et al., 2011).

By constructing the didactic proposal around interactive card decks (Business Ideas, Problems, and Challenges), the project contributes to the literature on active methodologies, gamification, and simulation-based learning, offering an educational artifact that is accessible, replicable, and aligned with contemporary demands of entrepreneurial and strategic education.

The game is suitable for use in both primary and higher education, as well as in entrepreneurial training programs, supporting the democratization of access to entrepreneurial and strategic knowledge from the earliest stages of learning. Its potential impact is high, as it represents a product capable of transforming educational environments through the effective transfer of knowledge and experience in Strategy and Entrepreneurship.

This research is characterized as an applied study with a qualitative and exploratory approach. The game's development followed an iterative process, including design, prototyping, preliminary testing, and user feedback collection. High school and university students, as well as professors in the fields of Business and Entrepreneurship, participated in the validation phase.

2 Diagnosis and Development of the PTT

In an ever-evolving educational landscape, numerous studies have shown that the traditional model of education—centered on standardized testing—can hinder the development of students' creative abilities. Traditional exam-oriented education has proven to be an obstacle to cultivating students' creativity (Wang et al., 2022). In response to this limitation, entrepreneurial education has emerged as a promising approach capable of inspiring autonomy, innovation, and independent thinking in students. According to Wang et al. (2022), entrepreneurial education stimulates and ignites entrepreneurial inspiration, which enhances not only individual creativity among university students but also fosters a more creative environment within academic institutions.

This movement aligns with a broader context in which interest in entrepreneurship has significantly increased, particularly due to its close connection with competitiveness, economic growth, job creation, and innovation (Pérez-Macías et al., 2023). However, for entrepreneurial education to be truly effective, it must move away from purely theoretical approaches and adopt methods that promote practical, active, and meaningful learning. Students themselves have expressed a preference for reducing theoretical content in favor of more applied, experience-based learning that connects directly with real-world situations (Susilo et al., 2019).

The most effective active learning strategies stimulate discussion, enhance student participation and skill development, and foster critical thinking while also incorporating emotional engagement in the classroom (Thuy, 2017). Furthermore, studies suggest that methods such as visual thinking, flipped classrooms, guest lectures, brainstorming, cooperative case studies, problem-based learning, structured debates, and communication skill development act as moderators between opportunity perception and students' entrepreneurial intentions (Pérez-Macías et al., 2023).

Entrepreneurial education should therefore be understood as a process aimed at developing the skills and mindsets that enable students to transform creative ideas into concrete, entrepreneurial actions (Bentz et al., 2024). Its integration into formal curricula can significantly contribute to the development of relevant competencies while promoting innovation and economic growth in society (Wakhudin et al., 2024).

Within this context, gamification has emerged as an innovative and effective methodology for supporting entrepreneurial learning. Topics such as user experience, behavioral and social change, technological integration, and contextual adaptation have been

identified as critical success factors in gamified learning environments (Saptari et al., 2024). Gamification has become a valuable tool in higher education to address academic challenges while preparing students for dynamic professional settings (Raju et al., 2021).

By integrating classical and contemporary learning theories, gamification has evolved into a sophisticated strategy for motivating and engaging learners. It reflects a deep understanding of human cognition and motivation, leveraging the appeal of games to create a more interactive, enjoyable, and effective learning environment (Bauer et al., 2020).

Strategic teaching and learning through games involve players engaging in repeated interactions, adapting their strategies based on observed behaviors, which leads to the development of advanced strategic thinking (Schipper, 2022). Additionally, engaging in serious play allows managers to experiment with strategic ideas in a risk-free environment, enhancing their capacity for strategic decision-making (Roos et al., 2004).

In this way, the articulation between entrepreneurial education and gamification stands out as a promising approach to teaching entrepreneurship and strategy, as it fosters experiential, creative, and student-centered learning—key characteristics for developing individuals who are capable of innovating, leading, and undertaking initiatives in complex and challenging contexts.

From Idea to Development of *Build Your Brand*

During the initial planning phase, different models of games and pedagogical activities were analyzed, with the card deck format being the most discussed among participants. This choice was consolidated for several reasons: it is an accessible, portable, and familiar format for most students, evoking emotional memories of family and childhood games, and encouraging engagement through a playful approach. Moreover, it is a game structure widely recognized across various life stages, which facilitates rule comprehension and adoption by players.

The game's development process spanned nine months, starting in September 2024 and culminating in the presentation of its initial version in May 2025. In the content design phase, it was defined that the game should address the lifecycle of a business across three key stages: the emergence of the idea (identity, focus, and niche), the problems to be faced (framed as situations for reflection and strategic decision-making), and the typical challenges of entrepreneurial management (involving decision-making under uncertainty, emotional control, and resilience). Based on this, the proposal was structured into a card game divided into three types of decks—Ideas, Problems, and Challenges—used sequentially to simulate the journey of business creation and consolidation.

To make the game more dynamic and realistic, a scoring system was incorporated. This allows players or teams to be evaluated according to their decisions and strategies, simulating how market actors—such as customers, competitors, and stakeholders—validate business performance. At the end of the match, the group with the highest score represents the most successful business in the simulated competitive environment.

The game's development involved both direct and indirect contributions from a variety of participants. Students from the *Entrepreneurial Studies* course contributed ideas, testing, and initial feedback. High school and university educators provided theoretical and methodological support, while researchers in Strategy and Entrepreneurship offered conceptual insights to align the content with current academic and practical approaches. This collaborative process ensured not only the pedagogical quality of the proposal but also its academic relevance and educational applicability.

The selection of the content and questions included in the card decks was guided by informal classroom discussions between students and teachers, note-taking during different class moments, internet research on types of businesses, and input from university professors.

Additionally, the design was informed by academic literature on Strategy and Entrepreneurship. It encompasses dimensions such as the definition of clear strategic logic (Porter, 1996; Teece et al., 1997), the adoption of dynamic business models (Zahra et al., 2024), and the strengthening of organizational capabilities and collaboration networks (Grimpe et al., 2019; Serra & Thiel, 2019), highlighting how structural strategic decisions shape the early trajectory of ventures.

The game content also emphasizes the ability of organizations to adapt to changing contexts and leverage emerging opportunities. It incorporates concepts such as entrepreneurial learning (Nikolaev & Wood, 2018), the integration of external enablers (Lucas et al., 2023), and the value of authentic purpose (Dobrev & Verhaal, 2024), reinforcing the importance of flexibility and contextual resourcefulness.

Ongoing strategic improvement through resilience, adaptive leadership, and ecosystem engagement is also reflected in the game, particularly in its emphasis on the alignment between organizational identity and environmental conditions (Chandler et al., 2023; Bruneel et al., 2022), as well as the importance of continuously monitoring the ecosystem to ensure strategic evolution (Wadhvani et al., 2020).

The *Business Ideas* deck forms the foundational base of the *Build Your Brand* game dynamic, serving as the starting point from which players develop strategies, make entrepreneurial decisions, and construct creative solutions. Each of the 30 cards presents a realistic and diverse business proposal, encompassing traditional, digital, sustainable, social, and innovative models. The diversity of cards allows the game to be adapted to various player profiles and educational contexts, from basic education to higher education settings.

Upon drawing a card from this deck, the player symbolically assumes responsibility for the selected venture and, throughout the rounds, must respond to problems presented by other cards (from the *Problems* deck) and work on branding and communication strategies (via the *Challenges* deck). This dynamic combination promotes critical thinking, synthesis skills, and integrated solution building—core aspects of developing an entrepreneurial mindset.

Table 1 below presents a descriptive summary of the *Business Ideas* cards, organized into four key dimensions: **Business Idea**: the name and nature of the represented venture; **Explanation**: a brief description of the business and its context; **Potential Learning**: entrepreneurial, strategic, or communication-related competencies associated with the card; **Combination Example**: a gameplay situation that exemplifies how the decks integrate and foster knowledge construction.

Deck 1 — Business Idea Cards (30 cards)

Each card in this deck presents a business proposal that the player must adopt as the foundation for all subsequent gameplay. Below, in Table 1, we provide an individual description of each card, along with suggestions on how it can promote learning when combined with the other decks.

Table 1 – Explanatory content of the Business Idea Cards

BUSINESS IDEAS	EXPLANATION	POTENTIAL LEARNING	COMBINATION EXAMPLE
A smoothie truck	A truck that sells healthy and natural beverages.	Marketing of perishable products, seasonality, and differentiation through health and lifestyle.	Problem: “Your competitor has launched a new product.” The player may respond by creating a new product line with local or vegan ingredients.

A custom sneaker brand	A customized sneaker brand focused on exclusivity and personal expression.	Branding, differentiation, and consumer-centered design.	Related challenge: Create a slogan that conveys exclusivity or empowerment.
A mobile pet grooming service	A mobile pet grooming service.	Convenience as a competitive advantage, customer retention.	Possible problem: Increase in fuel prices. Reconsider delivery routes and establish local partnerships.
A handmade jewelry store	A store selling handmade jewelry.	Premium positioning vs. affordable pricing, product storytelling.	Challenge: Create a campaign based on “handmade with love” or “one of a kind.”
A subscription box for healthy snacks	A monthly subscription box with healthy snacks.	Subscription-based business model, logistics, and customer retention.	Problem: Increase in supplier costs. Response: renegotiate contracts or reformulate products.
A gaming café	A café featuring dedicated spaces for playing games.	Customer experience, co-creation, and themed events.	Challenge: Design a promotional campaign for a game launch.
A digital art NFT marketplace	A marketplace for buying and selling digital art via blockchain.	Emerging technologies, perceived value, and niche audiences.	Problem: Criticism regarding sustainability. Response: Propose a carbon offset initiative.
A second-hand clothing store	A second-hand clothing store (thrift shop).	Conscious consumption, repositioning of used products, curation.	Challenge: Create a brand mascot with sustainable appeal.
A mobile car wash	A mobile car wash service.	Convenience, productivity, scalability.	Problem: Decline in service quality. Response: Staff training and implementation of a standard service kit.
A plant delivery service	A plant delivery service offering gardening kits.	Market niche, customer loyalty, and seasonality.	Challenge: Design an Earth Day campaign using hashtags.
A dog-walking business	A dog-walking business serving residential neighborhoods.	Urban logistics, customer retention, and local reputation.	Problem: “A competitor offers the service at a lower price.” Strategy: Differentiate through personalized care and partnerships with local pet shops.
A tutoring service for kids	A tutoring service for school-aged children.	Service personalization, parental trust, performance indicators.	Problem: “A new trend has made your service seem outdated.” Solution: Update with interactive and gamified learning methods.
A fitness app for beginners	A fitness app designed for beginners.	Digital loyalty, perceived value in freemium services.	Problem: “High dropout rate.” Solution: Implement a rewards system based on goal achievement.
A homemade candle business	A small business selling handmade scented candles.	Sensory brand identity, online sales channels, and local fairs.	Challenge: Design a campaign for a special occasion, such as Mother’s Day.
A robot toy company	A company that manufactures robotic toys for children.	Technological innovation, product safety, STEAM education.	Problem: “New law bans the use of small parts.” Solution: Redesign product and communicate its safety features.
A zero-waste grocery store	A grocery store offering bulk products	Reverse logistics, purpose-driven	Challenge: Develop a strategy to attract Gen Z using digital content.

	without packaging (zero waste).	communication, and cause-based loyalty.	
A virtual reality arcade	An entertainment space with virtual reality games.	Immersive experience, equipment investment, developer partnerships.	Problem: "High operating costs." Solution: Create group packages or subscription plans.
A personalized phone case store	A phone case shop with personalized names, phrases, and designs.	Mass customization, e-commerce, and on-demand production.	Challenge: Create a 15-second TikTok to make your product go viral.
A local farm-to-table restaurant	A restaurant serving food made from locally sourced ingredients.	Traceability, freshness as a competitive edge, regional appeal.	Problem: "Rent has doubled." Solution: Redesign business model focusing on delivery and community partnerships.
A drone photography service	A drone photography and video service for events and businesses.	Innovation, airspace regulation, visual branding.	Problem: "Customer data has been leaked." Solution: Develop a data security and transparency strategy.
A custom-designed skateboard brand	A custom-designed skateboard brand for urban and creative youth.	Cultural niche, customer co-creation, creative economy.	Problem: "Your competitor launched an eco-friendly product line." Solution: Develop skateboards using sustainable materials and reinforce community identity.
A reusable water bottle brand	A reusable water bottle brand with an environmental focus.	Sustainable design, conscious consumption, impact differentiation.	Problem: "Store location has low foot traffic." Strategy: Expand digital channels and use influencer marketing.
A food truck selling global street food	A food truck selling global street food with diverse cuisine.	Multiculturalism, seasonality, audience analysis.	Challenge: Create a jingle that blends flavors and cultures.
A coding bootcamp for teens	An intensive coding bootcamp for teenagers.	Technology education, digital accessibility, social impact.	Problem: "Low engagement on social media." Strategy: Launch campaigns with alumni and gamified content.
A board game café	A board game café for groups and social events.	User experience, time spent on-site, cross-selling.	Problem: "Customers love the experience, but don't make purchases." Strategy: Offer promotional bundles and partner with game publishers.
A custom-designed backpack brand	A personalized backpack brand for students and travelers.	Logistics, functional fashion, co-design.	Challenge: Create three hashtags for a back-to-school campaign.
A thrift store that donates to charity	A thrift store that donates part of its revenue to social causes.	Social purpose, repositioning of "used" goods, donation management.	Problem: "You need to raise funds to expand." Strategy: Organize fundraising events with influencers and nonprofit partners.
A social media marketing agency	A digital marketing agency specializing in social media.	Data analysis, campaign creativity, return on investment (ROI).	Problem: "Your current campaign isn't producing results." Solution: Apply A/B testing and redesign the content.
A travel experience company	A company that sells unique and curated travel experiences.	Experience-based tourism, niche segmentation, storytelling.	Problem: "You ran out of funding before launch." Strategy: Use crowdfunding and partner with content creators.

A tech repair and gadget recycling shop	A repair and recycling shop for electronic devices and gadgets.	Circular economy, value recovery, cause marketing.	Challenge: Create a radio ad explaining the store's environmental impact.
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This pedagogical design enables players to understand not only how a business operates but also the strategic decisions involved in its management. By engaging with realistic problems and communication challenges in simulated contexts, players are encouraged to activate both theoretical and practical knowledge in a playful and engaging way.

In addition, the deck includes business models of varying complexity—from food trucks and artisanal product stores to NFT marketplaces and drone-based services—allowing facilitators to adapt the game to the participants' level of knowledge. The *Business Ideas* deck functions not only as the starting point for the game's narrative but also as a conceptual foundation for developing entrepreneurial skills in diverse educational environments.

Deck 2 — Problem Cards (30 cards)

The *Problem* deck represents the strategic core of the *Build Your Brand* game, introducing situations of uncertainty, risk, decision-making pressure, and the everyday dilemmas faced by entrepreneurs. The cards were developed based on real problems encountered by businesses of various sizes and industries, aiming to simulate challenging scenarios and foster the development of decision-making under pressure.

Each time a player draws a card from this deck, they are prompted to reflect and respond quickly, using both practical and theoretical knowledge to propose strategic solutions aligned with the nature of their business (as defined previously by a *Business Ideas* card). The logic of the deck reinforces the concept of adaptability as a key element of entrepreneurial behavior, placing players in direct contact with unpredictability, mistakes, improvisation, and the need for innovation.

For every problem presented, the player must respond with a practical and creative solution, which will be evaluated by the group or facilitator based on coherence, clarity, and strategic alignment. This dynamic stimulates critical thinking, logical reasoning, consumer empathy, and a systemic view of the business.

Table 2 provides a detailed description of each card in this deck, organized into the following elements: **Problem**: the challenging situation to be addressed; **Potential Learning**: the competencies, skills, and concepts the card helps develop; **Example of Application**: a proposed solution integrated with a specific *Business Ideas* card, simulating a realistic gameplay scenario.

These cards simulate common difficulties faced by real-world entrepreneurs. They are designed to prompt strategic thinking and the development of creative, practical solutions based on the business the player is managing. Below, in Table 2, we present the individual descriptions of each card, along with suggestions for how they can foster learning when combined with the other decks:

Table 2 – Explanatory content of the Problem Cards

PROBLEM	POTENTIAL LEARNING	COMBINATION EXAMPLE
Your biggest competitor just launched a new product. What do you do?	Differentiation, competitor analysis, strategic timing. Competitive advantage and competitive analysis.	If the player has the “Smoothie Truck” card, they could create a new line of seasonal flavors with a distinct visual identity and implement loyalty tactics (e.g., punch cards).

A customer left a negative online review. How do you respond?	Reputation management, customer service, empathy, and crisis communication. Stakeholder management and relational branding.	If the player owns the “Handmade Jewelry Store,” they could respond politely to the review, offer a refund or replacement, and use the opportunity to promote a satisfaction guarantee policy.
You ran out of money before launching your business. What’s your next step?	Fundraising, lean budgeting, feasibility. Financial planning and lean startup model.	In the case of the “Tech Repair and Gadget Recycling Shop,” the player might propose a crowdfunding campaign offering future discounts and repair kits as rewards.
Your supplier increased prices by 30%. How do you adjust your business?	Negotiation, cost control, redesigning product mix. Supply chain and price elasticity.	If the player has the “Zero-Waste Grocery Store,” they could diversify local suppliers, communicate pricing transparency, and adjust packaging to reduce costs.
Customers love your product, but no one is buying it. What’s the issue?	Sales funnel, conversion, perceived value. Consumer behavior and value proposition.	With the “Custom Sneaker Brand,” the player might identify gaps in the buying journey, improve the website, or launch a limited-edition promotion.
Your delivery service is always late. How do you fix it?	Logistics, outsourcing, quality control. Operational efficiency and service management.	For the “Plant Delivery Service,” the solution could be to integrate a new routing platform or contract faster local delivery services with guaranteed timelines.
A new trend makes your product seem outdated. What do you do?	Adaptability, continuous innovation, product life cycle. Incremental innovation and rebranding.	With the “Tutoring Service for Kids,” the player could implement hybrid methods or add AI-based lesson plans.
Your marketing campaign isn’t working. How do you improve it?	Digital marketing, persona refinement. Performance metrics and return on investment (ROI).	With the “Social Media Marketing Agency,” the player might run tests with new target audiences, refine messaging, and explore new formats like reels or sponsored stories.
Your website gets a lot of traffic, but no one places orders. What should you change?	Usability, conversion, data analysis. Conversion rate optimization.	If the business is the “Healthy Snacks Subscription Box,” the player could design a clearer landing page with a direct call to action and offer a limited-time free trial.
Your store has a bad reputation for poor service. How do you fix it?	Team management, organizational culture, active listening. Organizational climate and service quality.	If the player has the “Board Game Café,” they could train staff in hospitality techniques, collect post-visit feedback, and create a mystery shopper program.
A famous influencer criticized your product. What’s your PR strategy?	Crisis management, digital reputation, transparency. Strategic communication and influencer marketing.	With the “Mobile Pet Grooming Service,” the player might produce a behind-the-scenes video showing animal care and invite the influencer to experience the service firsthand.
Your employees are unhappy and productivity has dropped. How do you solve this?	Leadership, workplace climate, intrinsic motivation. People management and employee engagement.	For the “Thrift Store that Donates to Charity,” the player could conduct a climate survey, offer flexible schedules, and align social values with internal culture.
A new law bans one of your key materials. What’s your Plan B?	Regulatory compliance, sustainability, product innovation. Risk management and adaptive design.	If it’s the “Robot Toy Company,” the player could redesign the product with certified materials, emphasizing safety and educational value.
You need to raise funds to expand.	Fundraising, strategic planning, networking.	With the “Board Game Café,” the player might create a membership club with exclusive access to games.

What's your strategy?	Equity crowdfunding and investor pitching.	
A celebrity wants to promote your product. How do you take advantage of this opportunity?	Strategic partnerships, brand awareness, image leverage. Co-branding and cause marketing.	For the "Reusable Water Bottle Brand," the player could co-create a limited edition with the celebrity and link part of the revenue to environmental causes.
Customers say your packaging is polluting. How do you make it eco-friendly?	Sustainable design, environmental responsibility communication. Social responsibility and green innovation.	In the "Digital Art NFT Marketplace," the player could create a digital shipping alternative with eco-certification NFTs.
A storm destroyed your inventory. What do you do?	Contingency planning, insurance, emergency logistics. Organizational resilience and flexible supply chain.	At the "Local Farm-to-Table Restaurant," the player might partner with new local producers and share their recovery story on social media to build trust.
Your rent just doubled. How can you stay profitable?	Cost structure, negotiation, business model redesign. Value proposition redesign and financial efficiency.	For the "VR Arcade," the player could shift to home-based kits or form partnerships with schools.
Your main supplier went bankrupt. What do you do?	Supplier dependence, strategic alternatives, diversification. Supply chain analysis and partner management.	With the "Zero-Waste Grocery Store," the player could form a network of small local suppliers to reduce future risks.
Customers think your product is too expensive. How do you respond?	Perceived value, pricing strategy, differentiation. Value-based pricing and attribute communication.	If it's the "Personalized Phone Case Store," the player might offer free customization or explain the handmade process to justify the price.
You need to attract Gen Z customers. What's your marketing strategy?	Audience segmentation, digital marketing, visual language, and authenticity. Youth consumer behavior and inbound marketing.	With the "Coding Bootcamp for Teens," the player could launch short TikTok coding challenges with prizes and use memes to explain tech concepts.
Your social media posts have no engagement. How do you improve?	Content creation, storytelling, metric analysis. Value-based content and emotional engagement.	If the business is the "Thrift Store that Donates to Charity," the player could share real stories of people impacted by the donations using Instagram carousels.
Customers are returning your products frequently. What's wrong?	Quality control, expectation vs. reality, user-centered design. Product design and customer experience.	For the "Homemade Candle Business," the player could test for overly strong scents or packaging flaws and offer free samples before purchase.
A data breach exposed your customers' information. How do you handle it?	Data security, transparency, trust recovery. Crisis management and digital compliance.	If it's the "Fitness App for Beginners," the player might issue a public notice, reinforce digital security protocols, and offer incentives to retain users.
A competitor copied your product and is selling it for less. What do you do?	Intellectual property, added value, brand differentiation. Branding and market defense.	The "Custom-Designed Backpack Brand" could emphasize its exclusive design, offer customization, and highlight durability as a key differentiator.
You're launching in a new city, but no one knows your brand. How do you promote it?	New market entry, local awareness, partnerships. Market penetration strategies and local marketing.	In the "Dog-Walking Business," the player could distribute coupons at pet shops and partner with adoption events.
Your product has great reviews, but sales are still low.	Sales funnel, conversion, point of sale. Gap between reputation and conversion.	For the "Tech Repair and Gadget Recycling Shop," the player might invest in performance marketing or streamline online appointment scheduling.

What should you do?		
You need to hire, but can't afford high salaries. How do you attract talent?	Employer branding, purpose, non-financial incentives. Talent management and employee value proposition.	In the "Social Media Marketing Agency," the player could offer a career path, flexible hours, and creative freedom.
Your supplier delivered a defective batch. What do you do?	Quality control, supplier negotiation, customer transparency. After-sales experience and B2B relationship management.	For the "Plant Delivery Service," the player could send a new plant with a handwritten apology note and a discount voucher.
Your store is in a low-traffic area. What's your Plan B?	Location analysis, alternative sales channels, digital adaptation. Business model innovation.	If it's the "Gaming Café," the player could launch online clubs with exclusive content, sell merchandise online, and host digital tournaments.

The design of the *Problem* deck aims to reflect the uncertain, complex, and ambiguous nature of the entrepreneurial environment. In doing so, it prepares players to think strategically in the face of external variables, reinforcing the importance of flexibility, entrepreneurial vision, and the ability to respond with reasoned action.

This set of cards can also be used independently as a trigger for case studies, classroom debates, or soft skills training exercises. Its cross-functional application allows for the integration of content from areas such as Strategy, Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Finance, Human Resources, and Sustainability.

Deck 3 — Challenge Cards (30 cards)

The *Challenge* deck is the creative and communicative component of the *Build Your Brand* game. Composed of 30 cards, this deck invites players to externalize, represent, and express the core elements of their fictional business identity, developing competencies in persuasive communication, branding, improvisation, and creative thinking. In an increasingly experience-driven, personalized, and narrative-based business environment, these skills are crucial for differentiating brands and connecting products to diverse audiences.

Each challenge card prompts the player to perform a verbal, gestural, or symbolic task—such as crafting slogans, delivering quick pitches, creating jingles, designing mascots, simulating advertising campaigns, or translating a company mission into accessible metaphors. This phase represents a high level of cognitive and expressive activation, shifting the focus from logical analysis to the symbolic construction of value propositions.

The card design is intentionally playful yet pedagogically structured, drawing on concepts from marketing, brand design, and corporate storytelling. The *Challenge* cards were crafted to offer a wide range of stimuli and allow players to express their personal style—ranging from formal situations (like product presentations in a corporate tone) to performative challenges (such as pitching in a funny voice or explaining the business to a child). This variety enhances the game by embracing multiple forms of communication and expression.

Table 3, included in the appendix of this project, organizes the cards into three main columns: **Challenge**: the creative task prompt; **Potential Learning**: the competencies and skills stimulated by the activity; **Example of Application**: a simulation of how the challenge could be developed based on a randomly drawn business type.

These cards focus on creative communication, improvisation, and brand identity building. They may be used individually or in teams, encouraging quick thinking and the articulation of value propositions. Below, in Table 3, we present the individual description of

each card, along with suggestions for how it can foster learning when combined with the other decks:

Table 3 – Explanatory content of the Challenge Cards

CHALLENGE	POTENTIAL LEARNING
Describe your business in five words or less.	Value proposition synthesis, focus, and communication clarity. Concise brand identity.
Give a 20-second pitch for your brand.	Elevator pitch delivery, problem-solution-definition, and key differentiators. Storytelling and strategic communication.
Create a funny slogan for your business.	Humor as a tool for emotional connection with the audience. Creativity applied to brand positioning.
Pretend you're an angry customer complaining about your product.	Empathy, active listening, and anticipating objections. Customer service simulation and expectation management.
What's your viral TikTok idea?	Audiovisual content, digital culture, and organic marketing. Social engagement.
Name a celebrity to promote your product and explain why.	Use of public figures, target audience alignment, brand ambassadors. Brand alignment and social influence.
Create a jingle for your business.	Auditory memory, sonic branding, and repetition. Brand sound identity.
What would be a great partnership for your brand?	Strategic alliances, networking, and brand synergy. Entrepreneurial ecosystems.
You have 10 seconds to create a new product for your business. Go!	Creativity under pressure, rapid prototyping.
Pitch your product using a funny voice!	Relaxed communication, stage presence, playful oratory. Humanized communication and emotional impact.
If your company were a superhero, what would its superpower be?	Strategic metaphors, creative differentiation, brand purpose. Brand archetypes and symbolic storytelling.
Create three hashtags for your brand's social media campaign.	Digital branding, internet language, and organic engagement. Digital identity and community marketing.
Your product will be featured in a Super Bowl commercial. What is the ad about?	High-impact thinking, visual storytelling, brand visibility. Emotional advertising.
Create a promotion or discount campaign for your brand.	Pricing strategy, urgency, and customer loyalty. Sustainable promotion and behavior encouragement.
Your brand needs a meme. What would it be?	Pop culture, strategic humor, virality. Generational language and cultural engagement.
Invent a fake scandal involving your brand and explain how you'd fix it.	Simulated crisis management, damage control, and ethics.
Create a brand collaboration with an influencer.	Co-creation of value, strategic partner selection, audience expansion.
You have 30 seconds to rename your company and design a new logo.	Rebranding under pressure, visual identity development. Brand repositioning and value perception.
What is your brand's catchphrase?	Memorable brand building, emotional language. Slogans and verbal brand identity.
A child asks what your company does. Explain in one sentence.	Clarity, simplicity, and accessible language. Intergenerational communication and clear purpose.
List three reasons your company is better than the competition.	Competitive positioning, differentiation, and entrepreneurial confidence. Value proposition and strategic comparison.
Your company is being talked about negatively in the press. Write a positive headline to change the narrative.	Image management, proactive institutional communication.
Your mascot is a talking animal. Who is it and what's its name?	Symbolic identity creation, communication with younger audiences, playful branding.

	Brand archetype and emotional connection.
Sell your product like it's in a TV commercial!	Persuasion, advertising language, presentation, and sales techniques.
You just received a \$1 million investment. How will you use it?	Resource prioritization, scalability, and strategic expansion. Growth management and strategic planning.
You have five seconds to create a customer loyalty program. What's your idea?	Customer retention, rewards, and repurchase incentives.
Your company needs a social initiative. What do you propose?	Social responsibility, positive impact, and purpose-driven marketing. Shared value and ESG strategy.
If your brand were a theme park ride, what would it be?	Applied imagination, customer experience metaphors. Brand experience and emotional design.
Create a fictional newspaper headline showing your brand going viral.	Public recognition, cultural impact, and organic marketing. Earned media and impactful storytelling.
Rename your company in 10 seconds. Go!	Creativity under pressure, agile branding. Brand identity.

At the end of each round or during the final presentation stage (pitch), the *Challenge* cards act as catalysts for constructing the brand's narrative, allowing players not only to "manage" a business but also to communicate it in an engaging, coherent, and strategic manner. This stage reinforces the understanding that communication is an inseparable dimension of contemporary entrepreneurial management.

Additionally, the *Challenge* deck can be used independently in public speaking workshops, marketing practices, sales training, and group creativity exercises, making it adaptable to multiple educational contexts and age groups.

Therefore, the *Challenge* deck not only adds lightness and fun to the game but also plays an essential role in entrepreneurial education by integrating communication, creativity, and brand identity in a playful and applied manner.

Visual Design of the Game

The *Build Your Brand* game features a clear, appealing, and functional visual identity, carefully developed to foster engagement, accessibility, and dynamism throughout the learning experience. The graphic design of the cards and game components was created with a focus on clear instructions, intuitive deck categorization, and visual stimulation, especially for high school students, college learners, and young entrepreneurs.

Each card follows a standardized structure with a clean, colorful layout, distinct colors for each deck type (*Ideas*, *Problems*, and *Challenges*), prominent titles, and concise instructions. The design adheres to the following principles: **Clear visual segmentation**: Each card includes easily identifiable elements such as icons, direct questions, and action prompts, which support comprehension even for players with low visual literacy; **Encouraging and creative tone of voice**: Expressions like "*Think fast and get creative!*" reinforce improvisation, creativity, and confidence, promoting a playful and positive environment; **Alignment with contemporary aesthetics**: The use of modern fonts, strong contrasts, and a visual style inspired by social media enhances the game's relevance to youth visual culture, increasing familiarity and motivation.

Beyond the textual content, the layout supports gameplay in both in-person and digital settings. The cards can be printed as physical decks or adapted for virtual platforms, making the game especially suitable for hybrid or remote educational contexts.

The figures below provide illustrative examples of the three decks' cards, showcasing the integration of aesthetics, clarity, and functionality. Only a few cards are shown in the body

of this article to illustrate the general visual pattern, preserving the game's integrity and applicability in other contexts.

Figure 1 – Build Your Brand Game Box



Figure 2 – Front of the Deck Cards



Figure 3 – Example of the Back of the Deck Cards



3 Adoption and Contributions of the PTT

The creation and presentation of the *Build Your Brand* game have shown, from the early stages, strong potential for educational and social impact. During the project fair where it was launched, the game attracted significant interest from attendees—including students, parents, teachers, members of the local community, and researchers. The interactive rounds and challenges conducted among participants revealed a high level of engagement and demonstrated the game's applicability as an educational tool. Young people from various projects actively participated in the simulations and challenges, reinforcing the interactive and collaborative nature of the proposal.

Beyond the playful and educational experience, the game also generated tangible demand: many participants expressed interest in acquiring the material, while teachers from schools and universities showed enthusiasm about using the game in their classrooms. Some institutions have already begun planning pilot implementations, both in basic education and in higher education, reinforcing the tool's versatility and pedagogical relevance.

This positive reception expands the outlook for the project's next steps. After the scheduled applications (at another school and with university students in two separate institutions), the game will enter a new analysis phase, during which observations from gameplay will be systematized, user feedback collected, and opportunities for improvement identified. Based on this process, a second version of the game is planned, with possible adjustments to card content, the scoring system, and facilitator support materials.

The *Build Your Brand* game is directly aligned with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, by promoting quality education that is equitable, creative, and focused on skill development from the earliest stages of academic formation. Its use enables practical engagement with topics such as strategy, entrepreneurship, communication, resilience, and decision-making, in an accessible, replicable, and adaptable format for various contexts.

Looking ahead, there is potential for the game to evolve into a broader educational resource, with digital versions, teacher guides, complementary content, and integration with active learning platforms. The collective development of this project—uniting various stakeholders within the educational ecosystem—reinforces its legitimacy and provides a solid foundation for its continuity as a strategic tool for teaching Entrepreneurship and Strategy.

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