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## **Lesson 9: Sabrina Kay – Innovating Higher Education**

### **AUTHOR**

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### **OVERVIEW**

As a young single mother and college dropout, Sabrina Kay’s entrepreneurial journey begins with what some would see as disadvantages. To Sabrina, they were a driving force to her success. After creating and selling the Art Institute of Hollywood for “a good comfortable 8-figures” while still in her 30s, she chose to return to college and ultimately launch her own.

This mini-lesson is part of the Economics Arkansas iNSPIRE! series and can be used to start a class on a number of related topics including human capital, higher education, and occupational outlooks. The included activities will help your students explore the value of curiosity and agility as well as the importance of “giving back” as an entrepreneur.

### **CONCEPTS**

Agile  
Lifelong Learning  
Philanthropy

### **OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the value of being AGILE when testing business assumptions.
- Discuss the trait of curiosity and LIFELONG LEARNING among entrepreneurs.
- Identify examples of PHILANTHROPY.

### **TIME REQUIRED** (12 – 37 minutes)

Bell Ringer: Steps 1 through 4 (12 minutes)

Mini Lesson: Steps 5 through 8 (+15 minutes)

Extension: Step 9 (+10 minutes)

### **MATERIALS**

Visuals

- Visual 1: “Definitions”

Activities

- Activity 1: “Room Zones (LABELS)”



## Handouts

- Handout 1: “Video Questions” (1 per student)
- Handout 2: “Stay Curious, My Friend” (1 per student)
- Handout 3: “The Guessing Game” (1 per student)
- Handout 4: “Giving Back” (1 per student)

## Online Resources

- Video “Sabrina Kay: Innovating Higher Education”  
<https://www.thisiscapitalism.com/sabrina-kay-innovating-higher-education/> (5 minutes, 27 seconds)
- Resource to search for top philanthropic givers in the United States (Handout 4)  
<https://www.forbes.com/top-givers/>

## RELATED LINKS

Dr. Sabrina Kay

- Her Story  
<https://sabinakay.com/her-story/>

## PREPARATION

1. Before class begins, print *individual* copies (1 per student) of Handout 1: “Video Questions,” Handout 2: “Stay Curious, My Friend,” Handout 3: “The Guessing Game,” and Handout 4: “Giving Back.”
2. Print and cut out one set of letters (A, B, C, D) from Activity 1: “Room Zones.” Attach one letter to each of the four walls/corners in your room to identify the four room “zones.”

## PROCEDURES

1. Watch the video “Sabrina Kay: Innovating Higher Education”  
<https://www.thisiscapitalism.com/sabrina-kay-innovating-higher-education/> (5 minutes, 27 seconds).
2. Ask students to work individually.
3. Distribute Handout 1: “Video Questions” (1 per student), and have students individually complete the questions. Allow students five minutes to complete.
4. Ask students (Question 3): “Do you think that **LIFELONG LEARNING** is a common trait among entrepreneurs? Why or why not?” Answers will vary but may include comments on the value of learning new skills or the importance of curiosity when you are learning something new. As time allows, offer students the opportunity to discuss their results.
5. Using Visual 1: “Definitions,” review each definition. Explain that we will be considering the importance of an entrepreneur being **AGILE**, demonstrating curiosity through **LIFELONG LEARNING**, and ultimately practicing an attitude of gratitude and giving back through **PHILANTHROPY**.



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6. Distribute Handout 2: “Stay Curious, My Friend” (1 per student) and Handout 3: “The Guessing Game” (1 per student). Ask students to read through Handout 2 and to follow the instructions. They will need to record their own responses and their *Best Guesses* on Handout 3 before proceeding to the Activity.
7. Ask students to look around the room and identify “Zones” A, B, C, and D. Let them know that we will be doing a quick experiment to test their assumptions on each of the questions on Handout 3. Ask the students to stand up and take a pencil and their copy of Handout 3 to the “Room Zone” that they selected as *their own personal response* (not their *Best Guess*) on Question 1: (Your birthday season?). Ask students to record on Handout 3 what the actual *Most Popular* response was. Go through each question on Handout 3, allowing students to move from zone to zone and record the results. Once all of the questions have been answered, ask students to return to their seats.
8. Ask students to go back to Handout 2: “Stay Curious, My Friend” and complete the final question. As time allows, ask students to present their results to the class. Emphasize that the goal of an experiment isn't to prove that we're right about something. Regardless of the result we may be hoping for, we want to uncover the *truth* and to be **AGILE** in the way we respond to it.
9. Optional Extension Activity: Distribute copies of Handout 4: “Giving Back.” Display the assignment, and ask students to complete it in class as a team or individually as a homework assignment. Ask students to identify the impact that **PHILANTHROPY** has on our nation. This is meant to get students thinking about the sense of social responsibility that many entrepreneurs feel. If used in class, provide three to four minutes for presentations and discussion.



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## Visual 1: Definitions

### **Agile**

A *trait* that allows individuals (people or companies) to quickly *respond* and *adapt* to change

### **Lifelong Learning**

A *lifestyle* of constantly and voluntarily *pursuing* knowledge

### **Philanthropy**

The *practice* of *giving* your money or time to *help* make life better for others



### Activity 1: Room Zones (LABELS)

Cut out the following LABELS. Attach one to each of the four walls/corners in your room to identify the four room “zones.”

**A**

**B**

**C**

**D**



## Handout 1: Video Questions

*"We falter due to the abundance of choices rather than lack of opportunities."*

– Sabina Kay

After watching the video “Sabrina Kay: Innovating Higher Education,” work individually to answer the following questions. The video can be found at <https://www.thisiscapitalism.com/sabrina-kay-innovating-higher-education/>.

Sabrina Kay retired in her 30s after selling her computer-aided fashion design business for a “good comfortable 8-figures.” Translated into a dollar amount, this is *at least* \$10,000,000! Fueled by a strong work ethic and an endless appetite for learning, retirement would turn out to be just the beginning for Sabrina.

As a young single mother, Sabrina dropped out of college but never stopped pursuing education. This attitude of **Lifelong Learning** helped her quickly master new skills on the job and would eventually lead her back to school for several graduate degrees including a Ph.D.

1) Identify **lifelong learning** as it is demonstrated throughout Sabrina Kay’s story. From what you heard in the video, list at least three specific examples where this trait is seen in her decisions.

1. *Example: Got her Ph.D. (degree)*

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

2) Beginning with your freshman year of high school, map out a proposed timeline of your education. Consider and include any significant sources of *informal* education such as internships, summer jobs, and dream jobs.

*Start high school*

-----20-----30-----40-----50-----60-----70-----80-----90

*Never stop learning!*

3) Do you think that **lifelong learning** is a common trait among entrepreneurs? Why or why not? Be ready to report your results back to the class.



## Handout 2: Stay Curious, My Friend

*"If you're not absorbing every piece of information you can, you are at a loss. Get excited that you're not good at something, and run forward to master it."*

– Sabrina Kay

While Sabrina Kay was completing her Ph.D. in Pennsylvania, she began to dream of innovative possibilities for improving America's education system. Inspired by her own educational journey, she chose to buy a college back home in California and turn into a laboratory for trying new learning methods.

Similar to Sabrina's college, every new business is a laboratory. When we develop a business idea, it comes attached to a rather lengthy list of our personal assumptions. We **think** we know what problem we are solving. What if others don't see it as a problem worth solving, leastwise a problem worth paying someone else to solve? We also think we know who will buy our product, what color it should be, what features it should have, where we should sell it, and the list of assumptions goes on and on. Until confirmed, however, these are all guesses.

It's not bad to have assumptions. It becomes a problem, however, if we can't admit when they are wrong. We **will** be wrong at times, and that is completely normal! According to American architect and inventor Richard Buckminster Fuller, "There is no such thing as a failed experiment, only experiments with unexpected outcomes." The purpose is to learn. So, what do we need to do? Create simple experiments, and test our assumptions. Be receptive to the results, no matter how far off they may be from our original thoughts. Stay **Agile**, adapting ideas and plans quickly when feedback doesn't match our expectations.

- 1) Take a moment and complete Step 1 of Handout 3: "The Guessing Game." Once you have made your *Best Guess* on your classmate responses, combine two of your assumptions (guesses) to develop a simple idea for a business opportunity. For example, you could combine your guesses on Birthdays and Vacations.

- 2) After the activity, look back at your assumptions. Were they correct? If not, how would the actual responses affect your business idea or possibly create unexpected opportunities? Be prepared to share your results.



### Handout 3: The Guessing Game

- 1) Before the activity begins, record your own *personal* responses to each question by “checking” the appropriate *Your Answer* box. Next, select the responses that you *think* will be the most popular among students in your class by “checking” the appropriate *Best Guess* box.
- 2) During the activity, record the actual *Most Popular* responses by “checking” the appropriate box.

Of the provided options (A, B, C, D), What Is...	A	B	C	D
<b>1) Your birthday season?</b>	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
Your Answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Best Guess	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most Popular	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2) Your preferred \$10 gift card?</b>	iTunes	eBay	Starbucks	Target
Your Answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Best Guess	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most Popular	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3) Your last <i>researched</i> purchase?</b>	For Yourself	For a Friend	For Family	For Work
Your Answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Best Guess	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most Popular	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4) Your preferred fast food?</b>	McDonald’s	Subway	Chick-fil-A	Taco Bell
Your Answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Best Guess	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most Popular	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5) Your most-used social media?</b>	Facebook	Instagram	Snapchat	None
Your Answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Best Guess	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most Popular	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6) Your preferred vacation spot?</b>	Big City	Beach	Mountains	Home
Your Answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Best Guess	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most Popular	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





### Handout 4: Giving Back

*"So much opportunity is available when an individual focuses on education."*

– Sabrina Kay

Gratitude and a strong desire to “give back” exist at the core of Sabrina Kay and have resulted in her serving alongside more than 30 charities. Whether by volunteering time and expertise or by financially supporting causes and organizations aligned with their personal values, Sabrina and entrepreneurs across the globe are actively engaged in a lifestyle of **Philanthropy**.

Americans gave more than \$400 Billion to charity in 2017. One man, Warren Buffett, contributed \$2.8 Billion. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation were close behind at \$2.5 Billion. This is an amazing sum of money, but what are they actually investing in? Let’s take a look!

Pull up the current Forbes list of Top Givers and complete the following chart.

<https://www.forbes.com/top-givers/>

Year \_\_\_\_\_

Rank	Top Givers	Amount Given	Purpose of Giving
1		\$	
2		\$	
3		\$	
4		\$	
5		\$	