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BEING DIFFERENTLY ABLED: LEARNING LESSONS FROM DYSLEXIC ENTREPRENEURS.

Robert Smith

INTRODUCTION

Learning plays a crucial part in the development of entrepreneurial propensity and is inextricably linked to communication. An appreciation of the role of communication in entrepreneurial studies is increasing, albeit slowly, and in particular the pervasiveness of entrepreneurial narrative as a learning mechanism. For example, our knowledge of entrepreneurship is often grounded in cherished stories. These stories are built around accepted myths. One such myth of the ‘poor-boy’ struggling to overcome communicational difficulties has long had anecdotal credence in entrepreneurial narrative. Indeed, it is part and parcel of the heroic construct of the entrepreneur and is an element of the basic script. This chapter [1] focuses upon weaving a more visible tapestry of the phenomenon from threadlike ‘vignettes’ collected from Inter-net articles, magazine columns and biographies. Although Reich (1987) cast doubt on the veracity of the ‘poor-boy-making-good’ storyline as a credible tale in the twenty first century, vestiges of the narrative nevertheless remain.

If such ‘poor-boy’ narratives no longer have persuasive power – should we now dispense with them? The author suggests that the answer is no and that there may be genuine psycho-social facets behind the pervasiveness of such myths which have yet to be

properly articulated. The poor-boy myth is an amalgam of many complicated social phenomenon, such as class, gender, levels of education and marginality. Consequentially, this chapter considers the impact of dyslexia and other learning difficulties on the communicational ability and styles of affected entrepreneurs. Learning difficulties per se, are predominantly associated with masculinity (as is entrepreneurship) and in particular to childhood learning. Affected boys do not develop their potential to be enterprising and can drift into a life of delinquency and crime [2]. The question of why some boys raised in marginality turn to crime, whilst others overcome great odds to become entrepreneurs has never been fully addressed. In less enlightened times dyslexia was viewed as a disability and those who were affected by it may not have fully understood its significance, or kept quiet about it for fear of invoking social consequences.

Entrepreneurial propensity has long been associated with the communicational concept of 'charisma' (the gift of grace) and charismatic people are generally regarded as being skilled orators. Not surprisingly, many successful entrepreneurs are also regarded as skilled raconteurs and storytellers, factors indicative of the importance of communication to entrepreneurial propensity. Many entrepreneurs are blessed with what Davis & Braun (1994) and Davis (1995) refer to as "*the gift of dyslexia*". The history of entrepreneurship is awash with examples of illiterate and dyslexic entrepreneurs who have succeeded despite (or because) of this 'gift'. This chapter views those with learning difficulties not as being disabled but as 'differently abled'. Rae (1999) argues that we learn to be entrepreneurial and Smilor (1997) that (action based) learning is central to the entrepreneurial process with effective entrepreneurs being exceptional learners. Indeed,

many have a sponge like ability to soak up vast quantities of information without drowning in detail. With the exception of work on entrepreneurial education and training there is relatively little research on specific aspect of learning in relation to entrepreneurship. As will be highlighted in this chapter there is an interaction between learning and entrepreneurship as processes.

As will be demonstrated, a considerable number of entrepreneurs self-report having experienced such difficulties. These difficulties affect one's ability to communicate and appear to have a higher incidence in the male population. Although, there is a hereditary aspect to many difficulties, secondary social and environmental influences appear to be more prevalent in determining life chances. It is also a difficult area to research, which perhaps explains the dearth of studies into it.

Such difficulties originate in childhood and early socialisation and if undiagnosed or untreated may lead to a narrowing of opportunities. Many such individuals may be branded as social misfits and consequentially are drawn into a spiralling pattern of deviance and rebelliousness towards authority. On one hand, we have the offending youth often associated with 'criminal families' and on the other we have the proverbial, enterprising 'child prodigy figure' associated with the 'entrepreneurial family'. From an examination of biographies and the life stories of persons who encounter learning disabilities it is discernable that there exists in society a polarised and ideologically loaded - 'double ethic' which discriminates between the privileged and underprivileged classes, viewing the symptoms created by the problem differently, according to class. In this view, dyslexic children from a working class background were more prone to be

considered as stupid and delinquent, whereas children from middle and upper class backgrounds were more likely to be considered to be special and thus gifted. We must be aware of ideological gildings, because Pollock & Waller (1993:3) point out that communication is vital because ideologically, intelligence has become associated with class, and in particular with the upper class as being of higher intelligence. Consequentially, the inability to read and write has become associated with stupidity. Reading ability is a distinct social advantage. Yet exposure to a learning difficulty does not correlate to low IQ. This phenomenon has wide spread implications for society, in that many potentially gifted children are not being channelled into socially productive and personally rewarding entrepreneurial occupations. Paradoxically, despite being associated with youth, entrepreneurship is very often a product of maturity. Pollock and Waller (1994: 22) also articulate that dyslexic children, in later life have a propensity towards business acumen and are generally street-wise.

The findings of this present study are intriguing, revealing over fifty examples of entrepreneurs, chief executive officers and inventors whom have self-reported experiencing learning difficulties such as dyslexia, ADD and ADHD. A contribution of this study is that it highlights specific communicational techniques adopted by these entrepreneurs to overcome their individual communicational deficits. These techniques, such as looking at the bigger picture; learning from pictures; the reliance upon memory; the preference for talking; the avoidance of the written word; the refusal to work from a script and so on, enable the individual entrepreneurs to compete and often excel in an aggressive entrepreneurial milieu. These techniques turn disadvantage into a competitive

advantage and imbue the dyslexic entrepreneur with a spontaneity and dramatic air, which characterise stereotypical notions of the entrepreneur. This chapter contributes to the collective knowledge of entrepreneurship by discussing a previously under-researched phenomenon.

The chapter has four sections. The first, introduces the topic of dyslexia and other learning problems providing a brief literature review / overview of the phenomenon and how it influences individual entrepreneurs. The second briefly considers the use of the Internet as an academic research tool / methodology. The third section demonstrates how dyslexia manifests itself into specific communicational traits. The chapter concludes with a discussion of implications and reflections on future research in this area. In particular, this chapter examines two research questions, namely:–

- “*What are the links between entrepreneurship and dyslexia*”?
- “*Is it possible that dyslexics communicate differently from other people*”?

The hypothesis discussed is that there is a discernable link between entrepreneurial propensity and learning difficulties amongst a considerable number of entrepreneurs, which is worthy of further more rigorous empirical research. We now turn to consider dyslexia and entrepreneurship.

DYSLEXIA AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

This section examines the research question - “*What are the links between entrepreneurship and dyslexia*”. It commences in section 1.1 by looking at specific

learning difficulties, detailing some of the problems that they pose in relation to learning. Thereafter, section 1.2 sets out a brief literature review on the subject before turning to examine areas of existing entrepreneurship theory related to dyslexia. In section 1.3 we examine overcoming marginality and disadvantage. In section 1.4 we look at learning difficulties and childhood. Section 1.5 considers dyslexia, storytelling and entrepreneurial propensity. Section 1.6 considers executive functioning skills; and section 1.7 dyslexia and the crooked pathway into crime. The links between the sections illustrate the potential scope for future studies.

Specific learning disabilities.

Although this chapter concentrates upon dyslexia, other learning difficulties include Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyspraxia, Dysphasia, Autism, Aspergers Syndrome, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) and Challenging Behaviour induced by family disadvantage. Learning difficulties are often an extremely private preserve, as indicated by Kerr (1973:29-32) who highlighted the personal and collective embarrassment that dyslexia can cause. For those interested in the specific symptoms of dyslexia, dyspraxia and attention deficit disorders see Table 14.1 below.

Insert Table 14.1 here please.

According to East & Evans (2001) children with special needs have particular strengths that manifest themselves as observable traits. An examination of such traits - suggest that they correlate to entrepreneurial traits. This is a key point in this chapter.

Insert Table 14.2 here please

Irrespective of the Learning difficulty studied some generic consequences can be described. Communicational deficits may lead to a vicious circle characterised by lack of success / achievement, resulting in frustration and issues of low self-esteem, low self-confidence, fear of isolation, a sense of being different, bullying by peer groups, inappropriate pressure from parents and authority figures. Often the problem manifests itself in specific problems such as truancy or self-harm. Literacy and numeracy are now taken for granted in modern Western societies where reading and writing levels are now very high but this was not always the case. In previous times the ability to read and write was a specific human and social capital exploited by social elites and was related to class position. Literacy equated to knowledge, power and wealth. Illiteracy was associated with poverty and the lower classes, as was crime in general. Many of those who were successful in breaking out of the cycle of poverty / deprivation / crime did so by virtue of self-education and other techniques of self-help eulogised in entrepreneur stories.

Other childhood illnesses interrupt schooling and can leave a legacy of impaired learning. Learning difficulties often occur in pairings. For instance, persons with dyslexia are commonly also dyspraxic. It is generally accepted that learning difficulties are risk

factors in delinquency and career failure in later life for children even with no conduct disorders. Approximately eighty per cent of dyslexia is believed to be inherited (Hornsby, 1984) and ADD can be inherited particularly through the male line.

Dyslexia is a neurological problem discovered by the English ophthalmologist - W. P. Morgan, in 1896. The cause of the condition is unknown and there are varying degrees of dyslexia from mild, moderate to severe. The name is derived from the Greek word 'dys' (trouble) and 'lexia' (word). It manifests itself as difficulties in reading, writing and spelling. Research has shown that dyslexic brains are structured differently from lexic brains. Consequentially dyslexics often develop highly strategic and creative cognitive abilities. According to Reid & Kirk (2001) adult dyslexics have long been misunderstood and their considerable talents have often been unrecognized and unrealised. It is a very complex condition and the form in which it manifests itself depends upon how much help, encouragement and support the individual is given, the level of parenting, schooling, how intelligent they are, their personality type and their socio-economic background. It is related to the ordering of the brain cells, and in particular an inefficient connection between the left and right halves of the brain.

A Brief Literature Review

Academic research into entrepreneurship and dyslexia is in its infancy. Rawson (1968) researched the careers of dyslexic boys of middle class professional backgrounds in Maryland and interestingly found that thirteen per cent became business executives and seven per cent eventually owned or managed their own business. Fortunately there is a

wealth of anecdotal and autobiographical material. A search for academic articles specifically related to entrepreneurship and learning difficulties proved disappointing with only one direct hit on an academic paper, namely that of Hlava (2003). However, The search also threw up various journalistic references printed in magazines, such as those by Morris (2002), Tyson (2003) and also book titles e.g. West (1999) and (2001). The PhD thesis of Julie Logan on dyslexia and entrepreneurship was a seminal piece of research. Logan found that one in five entrepreneurs in her sample of respondents was dyslexic. Levander et al (2001) have researched the incidence of ADHD in a sample of Swedish entrepreneurs and the ongoing research of Uddin (2001-) looks at the link between adult literacy and income generation using a qualitative ethnographic approach to investigate the strategies adopted by non-schooled people to cope with their income generating activities, it challenges the assumption that adults without schooling are a homogeneous mass of socially disabled people. Morris (2002) in an incisive article in the Fortune magazine examined dyslexia in the corporate world discussing how business leaders with dyslexia overcome it by finding their own approach to success.

Those who have dyslexia are often referred to as visual thinkers, particularly if they are located in the professional classes. West (2001) notes that strong visual thinkers and dyslexics are always at the leading edge and critically discusses an interesting theory that many of the early dyslexics and strong visual thinkers who experienced language problems quit their schools and conventional towns and rushed to new frontiers where they pioneered new technologies - sailing ships, wind or water powered mills, railroads and telegraph lines, gold mines and oil fields. West highlights that these pioneers sought

their fortune (in disproportionate numbers) in places like Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Texas, Alaska and California. West (2001) asks why so many technologists and entrepreneurs continue to fit this pattern.

West (2001) in a captivating article “*Dyslexic Talents & Nobel Prizes*” tells of the tradition of awarding Nobel Prizes for work associated with strong visual thinkers. West argues that the article counters perceived scientific wisdom that pictures are for non-professionals, lay-persons and children. West narrates a wonderful story of inter-generational familial genius, in families in which dyslexia is an evident genetic factor. West discusses a familiar pattern of creative visio-spatial abilities being developed in early life at the expense of linguistic ability – a genetic ‘trade off’ effect. West discusses eight families, which over the generations have produced siblings who have excelled in creative occupations. Interestingly, these families are from privileged socio-economic backgrounds where the talk is of ‘gifted children’ not delinquents. West refers to these as ‘visually orientated families’ but one could equally refer to them as ‘entrepreneurial families’. One family West discusses has produced, no less than four Nobel Laureates. It is apparent that these families trade on their specific social capital, across the generations.

However, to appreciate the influence of the subject on the entrepreneurial persona, one has to return to the seminal paper by Kets de Vries (1977) who articulated its consequences as manifested in enterprise (albeit without specifically mentioning learning disorders). The childhood stories that Kets de Vries narrates about the entrepreneurs he interviewed resonate with the reported experiences of many dyslexic people, for example

coming from an unhappy family background, feelings of displacement and isolation, being a misfit, feelings of rejection and marginality faced in a hostile world leading to the entrepreneur developing a yearning for control and achievement. The childhood of such entrepreneurs is a disturbing one filled with images of endured hardships, desertions, death, neglect and poverty. Such external factors may be easier to talk about than private learning difficulties.

Overcoming Marginality

Overcoming marginality and humble beginnings are common themes in entrepreneur stories (See Casson, 1982; Kets de Vries, 1977; and Smith, 2002) and in narratives relating to learning disorders. For example, Hornsby (1984:14) noted that in poor urban communities and isolated country districts there are a number of factors that accentuate the prevalence of learning difficulties. These include immigrant families, a poor grasp of the English language, large families, inadequate housing, poor diet, environmental pollution, lack of sleep, poor health, poor schooling, poverty, crime and an apathy towards books and literacy. Hornsby highlights these and also a lack of availability of books and the problem of dyslexia being compounded by the inability of some parents, themselves to read. Although Pollock and Waller (1994:xiii) state that dyslexia “*cuts across class, age and intelligence*” there is nevertheless veracity in their statement that dyslexia may be related to social background because statistics show that difficulties are more common in poor areas than in affluent ones(ibid.:14). Indeed, communicational isolation - whether geographical, social or mental is an influencing factor. It is interesting that some of the very socio-economic factors discussed above are also the very conditions

in which entrepreneurship appears to germinate and thrive in. Although it is difficult to evidence the preceding statement (other than anecdotally) nevertheless, marginality, ethnicity and poverty are all acknowledged as being factors, which ‘push’ people into an entrepreneurial career path. Thus we begin to see links between dyslexia, social class, and marginality – all of which may be important factors in the formation of entrepreneurial propensity.

Learning difficulties and childhood

Childhood is a time of restlessness, of questioning, of simplicity and of refreshing naivety, during which the child begins to negotiate their own reality and to establish their own personal identity. No two children are really the same and it is easy for the child with learning difficulties to remain undetected as such. Interestingly, Leibovich (2002) in referring to the childhood of the dyslexic entrepreneurs Bill Gates and John T Chambers labelled them both as “*restless kids*” - an apt description for entrepreneurial behaviour. As discussed above, overcoming learning difficulties and communicational barriers is a common entrepreneurial theme. These barriers are commonly erected in childhood. The assertion of Smith (2002) that the entrepreneurial narrative itself is seldom encountered in childhood is germane to this study because it imposes another conceptual, mental barrier to children entering entrepreneurial occupations.

Attitudes to life are formed in childhood and learning difficulties first manifest themselves at this crucial time when learning is being consolidated. Interestingly, Pollock and Waller (1994:148) point out that dyslexic children tire more easily than do non-

dyslexic children, a fact that can reduce the amount of time they can concentrate – and hence the amount they can reasonably be expected to learn. Also, Kindlon & Thompson (1999:7) report that the verbal abilities of girls develop faster than boys and that the gender stereotypes of male and female amplify the differences. Furthermore, Kindlon & Thompson (1999:33-37) stress that boys are more prone to being misdiagnosed as having learning difficulties in early years or to fit the profile of troubled learners with boys being two to four times more likely to be diagnosed as being hyperactive or suffering from ADHD. Official statistics suggest that boys account for sixty to eighty per cent of those who suffer learning difficulties. Kindlon & Thompson refer to this as a "*black hole of failure*". An interesting contemporary theory is that the rate of dyslexia is the same for boys and girls but that the four to one ratio is explained because girls have less behavioural problems and work harder at school therefore the misdiagnoses is social. Kindlon & Thompson (1999:45) stress boys suffer a double jeopardy, having a litany of harsh judgmental descriptors attributed to them, namely wilful, misbehaved and morally deficient.

School and learning are integral facets of childhood. Indeed, Hornsby (1984:7-15) notes the importance of literacy as a key to success at school and in future employment. In the developed world, illiteracy is seen as a social handicap. Traditionally, in families from poor socio-economic backgrounds the problem was often ignored and the child withdrew into silent acceptance, often gravitating towards delinquency and a life of under achievement. In more privileged families it was seen as a minor problem to be overcome and worked around with such children being channelled into more creative activities that

working class families often could not afford. If one listens to the stories of dyslexic people in general, one finds a litany of sadness at their treatment by the education system. There are many such narratives in biography and posted on the Inter-net. The question as to why some people encounter discrimination, whilst others are celebrated as geniuses must ultimately be a social phenomenon skewed by cultural factors. The twin ethics of achieving a good education and hard work can be hard taskmasters for those children whom cannot concentrate on their schoolwork. The education system, with its emphasis on learning by wrote and I.Q tests, favours the linguistically and numerically privileged. Interestingly, Casson (1982:356) recognises the role of education in entrepreneurial advancement but argues that it can disadvantage the entrepreneur by destroying their individuality. Educational systems are about conformity of learning, not encouraging individuality.

Many inspirational entrepreneurs and inventors have self-reported experiencing learning difficulties. For example, Richard Branson is on record as stating that at the age of eight he could not read and was beaten once or twice a week for doing poor school work or confusing the date of the Battle of Hastings. Entrepreneur Zara Reid was called lazy at school because she could not read and write. She left school with no exams at all and instead learnt everything she knew by doing it and living it. Interestingly, she relies on a dictating machine. Clark (1977:9) refers to Thomas Edison as being ‘addled’ or dyslexic but despite this, was a prodigious reader of books and a fabled storyteller. Empathy, independence, imagination and optimism are all traits commonly found in the life stories of dyslexics as well as being considered as entrepreneurial traits.

Schooling can be a disturbing process for children with learning difficulties. Bullying, taunts and humiliation often form part and parcel of the learning process. Take the case of entrepreneur Paul Orfalea who failed a second grade and was forced to spend part of third in a class of mentally retarded children is one of the most illustrative that the author has encountered. According to Orfalea when his classmates read aloud, it was as if "*angels whispered words in their ears*" (Morris, 2002). The 'put down' is a classic aspect of many stories told by entrepreneurs, and is usually associated with schooldays. For example, Clark (1977:9) notes that the entrepreneur Thomas Edison suffered from the 'put down' and was told that he "*would never make a success of anything*". Likewise, Sir Richard Branson tells a similar tale of a teacher who prophesied that he would either end up a being a millionaire or in jail. The put down can act as a push or pull mechanism. Pollock & Waller (1994:111) warn of the dangers of dyslexics developing secondary psychological problems such as withdrawal, truancy and delinquency.

Stanley (2000:87) considers that many 'street smart' entrepreneurs flout the cherished myth of - High IQ = Success. Indeed, he eulogises those millionaire self-made entrepreneurs who have succeeded with a SAT Test below 900, endearingly labeling them his '900 Club'. Stanley discusses the predominance of overcoming childhood marginality, hard work and the hard luck story in the personal narratives of self-made millionaires. Stanley (2000:59) stresses that the "*halo that surrounds smart people often blinds us*" and notes that many of the entrepreneurs with apparently lower intelligence employ considerable numbers of high IQ people. Stanley is not being disparaging of the

intelligent, nor suggesting that they are not entrepreneurial, merely noting that those who have to struggle in life have to accentuate the qualities and characteristics they possess by hiring themselves. Stanley (2000:9) further notes that there is a difference between the entrepreneurial origins and the final position of the legitimized millionaire entrepreneur, who as a class value education. Stanley highlights that ninety per cent of millionaires are college graduates with fifty two per cent possessing advanced degrees.

As a welcome counter balance to the pessimistic narrative of dyslexia = difficulty = delinquency = crime, Kindlon & Thompson (1999:51) argue that there is a history of great men who were notable misfits at school. This is a theme championed by West (1997) in his 'award winning' book - "*In The Mind's Eye*". Davies (1998) narrates the story of a dyslexic schoolboy who was told by teachers that he would never read or write but defied their predictions to become one of Britain's youngest entrepreneurs, founding a successful computer business. The story of child prodigy Dominic McVey is another inspirational tale. McVey started up a business from home aged 14 selling micro-scooters and now aged 18 is worth £7 million. Yet at school he did not shine.

Dyslexia, storytelling and entrepreneurial propensity

According to Roddick (2000) storytelling ability is a fabled entrepreneurial trait. Stories can be told orally, and telling stories develops innate skills such as confidence and have a therapeutic quality. It is of relevance that one of the contemporary methods in dyslexia studies is the use of storytelling as a learning tool. Encouraging the student with learning difficulties to read or concentrate on a story helps develop neural pathways. Simple

stories with pictures are preferred as they are easier to concentrate upon. Importantly, short stories can be memorised. According to Pollock & Waller (1994:107) dyslexics may have difficulty in following stories. They have to concentrate heavily upon them. Stories are important to them. Furthermore, Pollock and Waller (1994:39&44) point out that reading and spelling utilize different neural pathways, as does the recognition of symbols, consequentially, the dyslexic develops a propensity towards pictographic intelligence as opposed to ideographic intelligence. We shall return to this theme later. The entrepreneur as a voracious reader is a common theme in biographies and novels. Indeed, Kindlon & Thompson (1999:4) note the importance of voracious reading in forming emotional literacy in boys, because reading connects us to a larger world beyond our own experiences and ideas. An inability to read may thus be a barrier to communicating effectively. Such an inability does not prevent one from engaging in the creative act of storytelling.

Executive functioning skills

Executive functioning skills (EF) are important to entrepreneurs and busy CEO's allowing them to set goals, make and modify mental models of actions, organize activities, focus our attention selectively, and avoid impulses and distractions that sidetrack them from accomplishing their aims. In other words to be single-minded in achieving tasks we set ourselves. What strikes one the most about such individuals is their single-mindedness and determination in overcoming environmental and situational obstacles to achieve their goals, whilst apparently being of 'two minds'. Many entrepreneurs are single minded to the point of being obsessive and can appear to be

silent and withdrawn to others. Yet they have an ability to operate simultaneously in two parallel worlds. For instance, the fabled entrepreneur Tony O'Reilly operated as a corporate executive with Heinz and as an Irish entrepreneur, at the same time. Entrepreneurs have the mental capacity to cope with many plans simultaneously. It is perhaps executive functioning ability, which sets them apart. According to Morris (2002) dyslexics learn humility and affinity which are useful survival techniques in business / life.

Dyslexia and 'the crooked pathway' into crime

Establishing why some persons with learning and communicational difficulties overcome them to achieve productive success as entrepreneurs, inventors or scientists, whilst others succumb to destructive delinquent and criminal tendencies is a question which vexes many sociologists and parents. An appreciation of the link between entrepreneurship, dyslexia and crime already exists. An examination of Mafioso mythology also reveals that the link between illiteracy and crime can act as a spur to success. For instance, Hess (1998:48-49) highlights the meteoric rise from humble beginnings of numerous 'Mafia Dons' such as Vito Cascio Ferro – the son of a poor illiterate labourer; Giuseppe Genovese – a penniless goatherd who rose to riches; Nitto Minasola - a goatherd who started with two goats; Vincenzo Rimi – son of a shepherd, himself a cowherd who eventually rose to become a powerful cattle dealer; Filippo Balucchia – who rose from being a ceramic worker. Hess stresses that many of these now rich Mafiosi are illiterate e.g. Ferro could not read and write and Minasola never attended school.

Reid & Kirk (2001) highlight the prevalence of dyslexia amongst the criminal population. This does not preclude criminals from becoming involved in entrepreneurial activity. Bolton & Thompson (2000:196) discuss the interesting case study of George Reynolds, a reformed Geordie professional criminal who has become a successful entrepreneur / business magnate. Reynolds describes his former self as “*dyslexic, illiterate, backward and brainless....thief, bootlegger and bookmaker*”. Reynolds prided himself in being a fast and decisive decision maker. Reynolds was challenged in prison by a Priest to utilise his considerable talents in legitimate business. He took the proffered advice and has never looked back. He started up an ice cream round and through hard work diversified into Shops, Night Clubs, Manufacturing, Engineering, and finally Shipping. His business interests are now worth a reputed £250,000,000. Reynolds is a role model worthy of emulation. Another interesting study is that of dyslexic entrepreneur Kjell Inge Rokke, presented by Gibbs (2001). Rokke under achieved at school and by the age of sixteen was drifting into a life of petty crime until he ran away to sea to become a fisherman. Eventually he built up a fleet of trawlers and a thriving business in America before returning to his homeland where he is regarded both as a hero and a villain dependent upon whose side of the story one believes. Both case studies are powerful illustrators of the link between crime, dyslexia and entrepreneurship.

RESEARCHING ON THE INTERNET

This section discusses the methodology, data collection techniques and research carried out. Although much of the material covered in the previous section, frustratingly skims

over the issues and may have appeared at times to have little factual basis in places its elusive nature also impinges upon the choice of methodology. Initially, the author was concerned with the paucity of connecting theories and even considered that it may have been an artefact of collecting data from Internet and biographical sources.

Methodology

This chapter relies heavily on data gleaned from Inter-net sources. This collected material was used in conjunction with more formal academic texts and the biographies of entrepreneurs. By using the literature as a tentative theoretical orientation, the chapter considers the links between existing theories of entrepreneurial behaviour and explanations and the activities of dyslexic entrepreneurs. The methodology was designed to produce an initial explanatory framework to account for the apparent connections. The stories published on the Inter-net are used to illustrate and develop the formal academic theories. In this manner, the stories are applied to the theory to develop an explanatory theory about dyslexia and entrepreneurship. Distinctive patterns in the data emerged and these seem to reflect some existing theoretical behavioural models. Consequently the research extends and develops these models. Using Inter-net data is often regarded as being methodologically unconvincing and less than rigorous to many experienced researchers. Be this at it may, it nevertheless tells a credible research story that could otherwise never been told. Using the Inter-net or biographical data to examine phenomenon and relationships that have been validated by previous, more conventional research is an accepted research method, but what does one do in the absence of such a corpus of validated material? There are a number of accepted methodologies including

constructing case studies / case stories. These were considered but none could rival the sheer persuasive power of the fifty or so anecdotal entries located on the Inter-net. Granted, such anecdotal evidence is not a methodologically systematic corpus of knowledge, but it paves the way for future research projects to build such a rigorous body of knowledge. Another criticism may be the deliberate decision, taken not to define such basic tenets as entrepreneur, entrepreneurship, marginality or deviance. This is because the subjects located on the Inter-net come from such a diverse span of occupations and time frames that imposing an all-encompassing definition was considered impossible. It sufficed for the purpose of the study that others had chosen to label them as entrepreneurs, inventors or chief executive officers. The only honest methodological approach open to the author was to use a narrative approach by telling a convincing research story. Storytelling is a time honoured technique and is a wonderful method of teaching and learning.

The research.

The actual research conducted on the Inter-net was carried out over a period of several days, using a combination of key words and phrases such as dyslexic entrepreneurs and so forth. This raised only one direct hit on an academic paper, namely Hlava (2003), but raised a considerable amount of related sites where brief mention was made of entrepreneurs to whom dyslexia was attributed. These sites included <http://dys-add.com> , <http://dyslexiamylife.org> and <http://dyslexia.com> which list famous dyslexics. The content of some of the sites clearly mirrored each other and may have been copied from each other. The general tone of the dialogue contained on the sites was eulogistic, with

the entrepreneurs being cited as shining examples for others with learning difficulties to follow. From these sites and from personal knowledge or previous research into biographies of entrepreneurs a list of entrepreneurs with learning difficulties was constructed. Incredibly, this grew to over fifty. See Table 14.3 below.

Insert Table 14.3 here please.

Taking cognisance of the advice of Harris (1997) it was necessary to triangulate the actual data found by the research. This was done by further Inter-net research and by finding corroboration in the biographies of individual entrepreneurs to confirm that they did indeed have dyslexia or another learning difficulty. In most cases it was easy to verify the assertion merely by making an extended search using the names of the entrepreneurs. By checking these websites it was possible in the vast majority of instances to obtain corroborative references to their dyslexic tendencies. It must be stressed that this does not provide conclusive proof that the persons contained in the list are indeed dyslexic [3]. The main theme to emerge from the research was that entrepreneurs with specific learning difficulties appear to adopt specific communicational strategies.

COMMUNICATIONAL STRATEGIES USED BY DYSLEXIC ENTREPRENEURS.

This section is concerned with the question “*Is it possible that dyslexics communicate differently from other people*”? Hornsby (1984:12) acknowledges that - “*dyslexics can often have exceptional skills and insights which are denied to other people*”. Pollock and

Waller (1994:26) confirm that in dyslexics, “*intellectual grasp of facts, logic, reasoning, imagination, lateral thinking and creative skills may all be present to a very high degree*”. In addition, Hornsby (1984:122) stresses that, “*most dyslexics have above average spatial ability*”. This increased level of spatial advantage can manifest itself as a skill or gift at recognizing patterns and may be a factor in creative ability and in turn may feed entrepreneurial propensity. Hornsby (1984:119) attributes dyslexics with having the traits of “*persistence, accuracy and speed at visual tasks*”. These are characteristics with which successful entrepreneurs are often credited. It is also a common perception that the minds of many dyslexic people often work faster than their fingers. This is also a trait ascribed to many entrepreneurs.

According to Hlava (2003) herself an entrepreneur, entrepreneurs are different and tend to exhibit the following traits – rebelliousness, impulsiveness, they think outside the box, they view things with a different point of view and are frequently dyslexic, upside-down thinkers. The dyslexic New Zealand entrepreneur Andrew Cardno refers to dyslexics as ‘*eclectic people*’. Dyslexia affects self-confidence and dyslexics are often characterized as loners – a fabled entrepreneurial trait. Although it is often argued that entrepreneurs are born, not made and that there are possibly biological underpinnings to entrepreneurship, it is a practice into which one can be socialised - therefore it can be learned from experience.

Interestingly, like entrepreneurs, no two dyslexics are alike, each have their own eclectic weaknesses and strengths. However, entrepreneurs and executives with specific learning

disorders appear to utilise certain communicational strategies to help them cope. According to Morris (2002) dyslexic executives possess a distinctly different way of processing information that gave them an edge in a volatile, fast-moving world. There are generic and individual varieties. Generic ones include – soaking up information in other ways than print - orally and visually vacuum up information; minimising the amount of time they have to spend reading; utilising newspapers, short magazine articles, and summaries; making use of use of environmental scanning. Those that can read and write prefer not to do so thereby preserving their time / energies. Information grazing is a common technique. Many problems are idiosyncratic, for example Gaston Caperton who has difficulty in dialing telephone numbers, and Diane Swonk who obsessively checks her calculations at least five times (Morris, 2002). Entrepreneurs turn dyslexic deficits into advantages. Morris tells a wonderful story told by Diane Swonk's former boss and mentor at Bank One who considered that Swonk had a *"third eye"* because her predictions invariably come true. According to Morris, Bill Samuels adheres to the old adage *"Many times in business, different is better than better.... And we dyslexics do different without blinking an eye"*. Similarly, Morris tells the fascinating story of Paul Orfalea who recalls that his mother used to console him by saying that when everybody grows up, *"the A students work for the B students. The C students run the businesses. And the D students dedicate the buildings"*. It is a wonderfully inspirational statement mirroring the sentiments of Stanley (2000) that most successful entrepreneurs originate from students who overcome difficulties at school. It is evident that 'differently abled' entrepreneurs utilize individual techniques to overcome their difficulties - see Table 14.4

adapted from the article by Morris (2002) for an appreciation of specific communicational strategies adopted by individual entrepreneurs.

Insert table 14.4 here please.

A contribution of this study is that it highlights specific communicational techniques adopted by these entrepreneurs to overcome their individual communicational deficits. These techniques, such as looking at the bigger picture; learning from pictures; the reliance upon memory; the preference for talking; the avoidance of the written word; the refusal to work from a script and so on, enable the individual entrepreneurs to compete and often excel in an aggressive entrepreneurial milieu, turning disadvantage into a competitive advantage. Interestingly many of these techniques are associated with 'Pictorial' Thinking, 'Orality', 'Cognitive' and 'Behavioural' activity. There is a need to test this tentative formation using empirical research methods to see if these methods of communicating are replicated in the strategies of other dyslexic entrepreneurs.

The subject of dyslexia and entrepreneurship was raised in the BBC 2 television programme "*Mind of the Millionaire*" screened at 9 pm on Tuesday 7 October, 2003. Interestingly the programme highlights that educational qualifications are not necessary to become an entrepreneur. The presenter Dr Adrian Atkinson discussed several "*non-specific dyslexic characteristics*" such as (1) Not being dependent upon a script; (2) Appearing to others to be behaving 'off the wall'; (3) Repeatedly challenging authority; (4) Breaking or changing the rules; (5) Asking questions not in the script; (6) Refusing to

seek permission; (7) Using a pragmatist to bounce ideas off; and (8) Being 'street smart'. Most of these are fabled entrepreneurial traits. Using a specially commissioned survey of entrepreneurs the presenter posited some interesting statistics namely that sixty-one per cent of entrepreneurs were lazy or average at school; Fifty three per cent came from underprivileged backgrounds and that seventy-three per cent did not care what others thought of them. Many were given a free reign by parents to behave differently despite educational disappointments. Interestingly, two out of the five entrepreneurs featured tested positive for dyslexia. It was claimed that the rate of dyslexia amongst entrepreneurs (as a genre) was four times higher than the national average.

When one take into account other methods of communication used by entrepreneurs such as - projecting theatrical and dramaturgical imagery; semiotic exhibitionism; storytelling; as well as techniques of embellishment such as self-publicity; authoring ones own legend; and the fabrication of fable - as identified by Smith (2003:11-13) then it could be argued that perhaps differently abled entrepreneurs do communicate differently. The entrepreneurs are not behaving differently, but merely enacting what is normal to them. The research provides the basis of a tentative theoretical / psychological model which can be used to assess potential entrepreneurs and channel them into appropriate methods of learning / expression. It is now time to draw the discussion to a close by considering implications and reflecting upon the research.

IMPLICATIONS AND REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH.

The implications of the study could prove to be far reaching, because unlike entrepreneurship per se, specific learning difficulties can be screened for and those people with the psychological gift of pictorial thinking could be encouraged to embark upon an entrepreneurial career path. Dyslexic entrepreneurs such as Richard Branson are often presented as an iconic symbol to encourage would be entrepreneurs to emulate them. However, is it fair to expect them to emulate the entrepreneurial style of another, which may be influenced by biological underpinnings of a learning disorder? An appreciation of the biological underpinnings of entrepreneurial action is increasing. For instance, White et al (2003) studied the effect of the male hormone testosterone upon entrepreneurial propensity. Testosterone is associated with enterprising behaviour and also with aggression, violence and deviance. Could dyslexia and other learning difficulties be linked to other biological underpinnings such as testosterone?

The chapter also highlights the false logic / ideological underpinning of the 'double ethic' which holds that working class and other disadvantaged persons with learning difficulties are branded as delinquents and propelled towards a life of crime, whereas those from a more privileged socio-economic background are raised as special for their talents. From the perspective of entrepreneurial learning it is apparent that we need to adopt a different pedagogical approach to teaching and understanding such 'differently abled' entrepreneurs. Indeed, there are pedagogical ramifications in respect of how we teach entrepreneurship. The flexibility and the ability to adapt displayed by such entrepreneurs allows them to excel in conditions of change and uncertainty, upon which the entrepreneurial process thrives. We would be wise to heed the lessons learned from these

differently abled entrepreneurs. Consequentially, it is fitting to end this chapter with a pictorial representation / mapping of the topics covered.

Insert Figure 14.1 here please.

NOTES

[1] An earlier version of this chapter entitled “*Being Differently Abled: Entrepreneurs and dyslexia – An Exploratory study using the Internet*” was presented at an 'International Research Seminar' at Groupe ESC Clermont on 29 March, 2004. I am indebted to Alistair. R. Anderson and other reviewers for their help in developing this chapter.

[2] Considering the aspects which lead to crime lies out with the remit of this chapter, although certain examples are cited where they impinge upon entrepreneurial propensity.

[3] It is appreciated that there are ethical dilemmas raised in conducting such research and that there is a need to confirm the specific details of the alleged disorder located on the Inter-net. This will entail contacting the persons and conducting follow up research to clarify or refute the assertions.

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T.V PROGRAMME

“*Mind Of The Millionaire*” BBC2 Tuesday 7 October, 2003.

WEBSITES

<http://www.dyslexiamylife.org>

<http://dys-add.com.symptoms>

<http://www.dyslexia.com>

TABLE 14.1 - COMMON SIGNS OF SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDERS

Source: developed from material found on various internet sites.

| Dis-ability | Symptoms |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dyslexia | <p>Pre school children may learn to talk later than other children and have difficulty in pronouncing or transposing words. They may be slow to develop a vocabulary, may have difficulty recalling words and with rhyming. They may be slow to learn the alphabet, numbers, days of the week, colours, shapes and how to spell / write their name. They may be unable to follow multi-step directions, be slow to develop motor skills and may have difficulty telling and or retelling a story in the correct sequence. They may find it difficult separating sounds in words or blending words together.</p> <p>Older children may have difficulty in connecting words and sounds or in decoding single words, may have difficulty spelling phonetically or may confuse small words. They may rely on memorising, guessing and context or have difficulty learning new vocabularies. They may consistently make reading and spelling errors, letter reversals, word reversals, inversions, transpositions and substitutions. They may transpose number sequences and confuse arithmetic signs. May have trouble remembering facts, have difficulty planning, organizing and managing time, materials and tasks.</p> |

| | |
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| | <p>May use an awkward pencil grip and have poor motor skills.</p> <p>Adults may hide reading problems; spell poorly or rely on others to correct bad spelling, may avoid writing, may be illiterate but may be very competent in oral language. They may rely upon and develop an excellent memory and have good people skills and intuitively read people very well. They may work in jobs well below their intellectual capacity and may be spatially talented and gravitate towards professions such as engineers, architects, artists, designers or crafts based skills. They may be prone to left-right confusion, mirror reversals of letters and words.</p> |
| Dyspraxia | <p>Symptoms include slowness e.g. may be 8-12 years old before they can tie shoelaces, have difficulty dressing, be withdrawn in the company of other children; have untidy handwriting; be unable to assemble 'construction toys'. It also relates to difficulty in drawing, writing, buttoning and other motor skills, sequencing or tasks, which require fine movement skills. It is also associated with clumsiness and problems of language, perception and thought. It is estimated that up to ten per cent of the population experience the condition to one degree or another and it is four times more prevalent in boys than girls.</p> |
| ADD & ADHD | <p>Symptoms of ADHD are problems with attention and compulsive, hyperactive behaviour. It affects all aspects of life making children very unpopular and under-achieve. They suffer from low self-esteem and depression. Attention disorders relate to academic and behavioural</p> |

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>problems of children with difficulty in focusing and maintaining attention.</p> <p>These can overlap with other conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and speech and language disorders.</p> |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

| TABLE 14.2 - INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS MANIFESTED AS TRAITS | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ADHD | Impulsive, restless and like to see finished work |
| Aspergers syndrome | Learn by rote but have difficulty with metaphors. |
| Autistic Spectrum Disorder | Learn by rote and prone to fixate (interest in cars) |
| Cerebral Palsy | Determination |
| Dyscalculia | Strong at art, oral work and reading but cannot learn by rote, may have difficulty reading and sequencing. |
| Dyslexia | Strong performers at art, oral work and dramatic performance. |
| Dyspraxia | Keen to do well. |
| Aphasia | Strong art drawing. |
| Semantic-Pragmatic Disorder | Learn by rote. |
| Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) | Good readers |
| Left-handedness | Keen to do well. |

TABLE 14.3 - LIST OF ENTREPRENEURS / INVENTORS / CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS WHO HAVE SELF-REPORTED DYSLEXIA OR OTHER LEARNING DIFFICULTIES.

| No | NAME | DESCRIPTION |
|----|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Charles Schwab | CEO / Entrepreneur of Insurance brokerage Charles Schwab & Company. Was not diagnosed with dyslexia until in his 40's when his son was also found to have dyslexia. The acute form of dyslexia manifested itself as a specific reading problem. He required to be tutored through school. |
| 2 | Richard Branson | Founder of the Virgin group. |
| 3 | Henry Ford | Founder of the Ford Motor company. |
| 4 | Richard C. Strauss | Real Estate Financier. |
| 5 | William Hewlett. | Co-founder of Hewlett Packard. |
| 6 | Paul J Orfalea | The profoundly dyslexic founder of Kinko's |
| 7 | Ted Turner | President of Turner Broadcasting Systems. |
| 8 | F,W Woolworth | Founder of the Woolworth chain of shops. |
| 9 | Craig McCaw | Wireless telecommunications entrepreneur and founder of McCaw Cellular |
| 10 | Mark Torrance | C.EO of Musak Corporation. |
| 11 | Malcolm Goodbridge III | Senior Vice President of American Express. |

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|----|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12 | Fred Friendly | Former CBS News President |
| 13 | William Doyle | Chairman - William Doyle Auction Galleries - New York. |
| 14 | G Chris Anderson | Vice Chairman of Paine Webber. |
| 15 | William Wrigley Jr | Of the Wrigley 'chewing gum' family. |
| 16 | Russell Varian | The famous inventor. |
| 17 | Zara Reid | Founder of CSI Promotions. |
| 18 | John T Chambers | CEO of Cisco Systems. |
| 19 | Alan Sugar | Founder of Amstrad |
| 20 | Anita Roddick | Co-Founder of the Body shop. |
| 21 | James G Morgan Jr | Attorney and legal entrepreneur. |
| 22 | Benjamin Franklin | One of the founding fathers of enterprise. |
| 23 | Alexander Graham Bell | The famous inventor. |
| 24 | Albert Einstein | The famous inventor did not speak until the age of three |
| 25 | Thomas Edison | The famous inventor was unable to read until he was twelve years old. |
| 26 | William Lear | Aviation Engineer |
| 27 | Kjell Inge Rokke | The dyslexic Norwegian tycoon who walked away from a life of petty crime to build an American based trawling empire before returning to his native land as an industrialist / tycoon. |

| | | | |
|----|----------------------------|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 28 | Nelson Rockefeller | A | Attorney and Vice President of the US whose dyslexia forced him to hone his powers of concentration. He was an established artist / sculptor. |
| 29 | John Rockefeller | D | Father of above a dyslexic, prodigious entrepreneur and business titan. |
| 30 | William Randolph Hearst | | Founder of the Hearst Corporation. |
| 31 | Steve Jobs | | Founder of Apple Computers |
| 32 | George Reynolds | | British entrepreneur and former criminal. |
| 33 | Adam Faith | | British entrepreneur, singer, actor and media star. |
| 34 | Neil Holloway | | Chief Executive of Microsoft U.K. |
| 35 | Bill Gates | | C.E.O of Microsoft. |
| 36 | Larry Ellison | | Founder / C.E.O Oracle. |
| 37 | Ingvar Kamprad | | Swedish Businessman and founder of IKEA |
| 38 | Walt Disney | | Founder of the Disney Corporation, animator and business mogul. |
| 39 | Jackie Stewart | | Formula one racing driver and entrepreneur. |
| 40 | Wally Amos | | Founder of the successful business – struggled against dyslexia and illiteracy problems |
| 41 | David Boies | | Attorney and legal entrepreneur. He learned to read in the third grade and devoured Marvel comics, whose pictures provided clues to help him untangle the words. |
| 42 | Sam Walton | | Founder of Wall Mart. |
| 43 | Martha Stewart | | Founder of Martha Stewart Inc, struggled against dyslexia. |

| | | |
|----|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 44 | John Reed | Who led Citibank to the top of banking. |
| 45 | Donald Winkler | Until recently head of Ford Financial |
| 46 | Gaston Caperton | Former governor of West Virginia / Head of The College Board. |
| 47 | Diane Swonk | Chief economist at Bank One. |
| 48 | Bill Samuels Jr | The Presidents of the corporation Maker's Mark |
| 49 | Bill Dreyer | Inventor & Biologist at Caltech. |
| 50 | Peter Urs Bender | The Canadian self-help guru, businessman and promoter. |
| 51 | Andrew Cardno | The New Zealand 'visual systems' entrepreneur who suffers from poor sight, dyslexia and learnt to read aged 10. |
| 52 | Andrew Carnegie | Is said to have displayed ADD behavioural problems |
| 53 | Howard Hughes | The reclusive billionaire. |
| 54 | James Dyson | Inventor of the Dyson vacuum cleaner and entrepreneur. |
| 55 | Tommy Hilfiger | The clothes designer / entrepreneur |
| 56 | David Murdoch | CEO Dole Foods |
| 57 | Raymond Smith | Former CEO of Bell Atlantic. |

TABLE 14.4: SPECIFIC COMMUNICATIONAL STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY ENTREPRENEURS

(Source: adapted from Morris 2002).

Key – **(P)** = Pictorial; **(O)** = Orality; **(B)** = Behavioural; **[C]** = Cognitive.

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Richard Branson</p> | <p>Writes important details on his hand to overcome bad memory (P).</p> <p>Does not use computers (B).</p> <p>Uses filo-fax (B).</p> <p>Bluffs way through problems (B).</p> <p>Avoids maths (B).</p> |
| <p>David Boies</p> | <p>Learns by listening / Socratic dialogues (O).</p> <p>Uses teaching / learning tools (B).</p> <p>Highly selective about information input and revises points of importance (B).</p> <p>Memorises key points (B).</p> <p>Looks at the big picture as a story and envisages how it will end (P).</p> <p>Contextualises elements of the story where they fit best [C].</p> <p>Commits everything to memory and because he does not work from a script seldom goes wrong. This enables him to be dramatic / flexible and to improvise [C] and (B).</p> <p>Wanders around themes [C].</p> |
| <p>Charles Schwab</p> | <p>Learns plots and characters in books from pictures (P).</p> <p>Fast-forwards past the smaller, logical steps of sequential thinkers [C].</p> |

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>Synthesizes things differently and quicker than other people [C].</p> <p>Concentrates on the end result (B).</p> <p>Shortcuts rigorous step-by-step process beloved of sequential thinkers [C].</p> |
| Bill Dreyer | <p>Thinks in 3-D Technicolor pictures instead of words (P).</p> <p>Likens his dyslexia to having CAD [computer-aided design] in your brain (P).</p> |
| Donald Winkler | <p>Performs mental warm up exercise each morning [C].</p> <p>Practices trigger words that confuse him [C].</p> |
| Craig McCaw | <p>Hires ‘translators’ to turn his intuitive concepts and ideas into reality and interpret his ideas to linear thinkers (B).</p> <p>Relies on his conceptual thinking [C].</p> <p>Grabs abstract information from the environment often being unaware of its origin [C].</p> <p>Minimises reading / writing to conserve energy (B).</p> <p>Grasps maximum meaning from minimum content / context [C].</p> <p>Scan reads pulling out meaning [C].</p> <p>Alternating between apparent disinterest and maniacal focus (B).</p> |
| John Chambers | <p>Hires ‘details people’ linear thinkers and analysts (B).</p> <p>Builds a team to shore up his weaknesses (B).</p> <p>Refuses to get bogged down in details [C].</p> <p>Relies on his wife for telephone numbers (B).</p> <p>Uses GPS as he gets lost easily (B).</p> <p>Prefers voicemail to e-mail as it is so much easier to understand and</p> |

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>visualize by hearing (O) .</p> <p>Prefers summaries in three pages or less with major points highlighted in yellow (P).</p> <p>Does not keep paper records (O).</p> |
| Paul Orfalea | <p>Had lack of reading ability until 40 and refused to show anyone his handwriting (B).</p> <p>Cultivated a casual, can't-be-bothered-with-it management style that allowed him to avoid the written word (B).</p> <p>Delegated tasks requiring reading (B).</p> <p>Avoided the corporate office and instead went from place to place observing, talking to customers, making changes (B).</p> |
| Bill Samuels Jr | <p>Surrounds himself with verbal people who like to talk (O).</p> <p>Cannot write but can organize old information into a different pattern easily (B).</p> <p>Utilised homespun advertisement campaigns.</p> |

Figure 14.1 – Learning from a conceptual framework / mapping approach

