

1. Introduction

Ms A., a secretary approaching 50 years old, couldn't find a job for a long time although she lived in Warsaw where there is relatively low unemployment. She considered self-employment as the only option for her to stay active on the labour market. She decided to acquire new qualification and took up college to become podiatrist. While finishing the college she found ESF project supporting self-employment, applied and was accepted. In the project she underwent almost 6 months of entrepreneurship training supplemented by individual business, vocational and educational counselling and guidance. With the counsellor's help she prepared a good business plan and won a subsidy for starting the business and monthly allowance to cover her dues and current costs (for first six months of economic activity). She registered her firm offering podiatry services.

2. Overview/analysis

For the first months of her firm's functioning she was focused on buying equipment, finding clients and advertising her services. Podiatry is not very popular in Poland and many people do not know what podiatry is, so they are not aware that they may need such services. This is why Ms A. Spent a considerable amount of her budget on promotional materials (leaflets, banners), advertisements in magazines and so on. Unfortunately she started having problems with her landlord and had to look for new location for her firm, what meant that she had to look for new clients in the new place. She started having financial problems- she spent the reserve she had on adaptation of the new premises, the additional financial support from the project ended after half a year.

3. Status report

Ms A's company shares the premises with a beauty saloon in the district where rather wealthy people live. In the same district there is a Orthopaedic and Rehabilitation Centre.

In the project she met a group of 35 other new entrepreneurs, her peers and the group got quite integrated during the span of the project. They still met regularly and discuss they problems – their situations are in many ways similar although they run different firms.

In the project she can also get ad hoc help of counsellors – specialists in different fields during the first year of economic activity.

4. Case problems

Ms A has to gain new clients in the new place but she has no financial resources for extensive advertising campaign. Her situation is difficult because it is hard to get clients in the time of the crisis and additionally she has to raise awareness among people what podiatry is about and make them realise they need her services.

How can she achieve her goals without investing much money? What are her other resources she can use? Are there any cost-free or cheap ways of raising awareness about podiatry and advertising her business?

Prepare promotional strategy for Ms A. including analysis of her non material.

1. Synopsis

The case presents the real story of a person at the beginning of the entrepreneurship career. The situation regards podiatry but the problem can be faced in many other branches. The case study allows students to experience how to analyse situation, notice and use all possible resources and look for non standard solutions to the problems encountered in the first phase of running economic activity.

2. Educational objectives

The case study will:

- Implement the concepts, attitudes and skills learned during the course
- Encourage creativity and analytical skills of students
- Give students the opportunity to experience a situation based on a real case similar to those they will face in the future as entrepreneurs.
- Establish guidelines for the student to discover the main sources of information that can be used for decision-making.
- Discover the importance of creativity and strategic thinking to ensure the project's viability.
- Developing skills for recognising opportunities, calculating budgets and preparing strategies.

3. Discussion outline/questions

Being an open case, allows different orientations, depending on the topic that you want to emphasize / reinforce, namely, marketing, advertising, strategy, opportunity recognition.

4. Tips for resolving the case problem

There is no limited number of solutions to the case problem. Some opportunities may be noted in the description of the case (e.g. use the help of the project counsellors or other project participants) but a lot depends on the knowledge and creativity of students.