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**USE OF LEXICAL STYLISTIC DEVICES IN BUSINESS  
BLOGS FOR ENTREPRENEURS**

**LEKSISKI STILISTISKO IZTEIKSMES LĪDZEKĻU  
LIETOJUMS LIETIŠKAJOS EMUĀROS UZŅĒMĒJIEM**

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## ANOTĀCIJA

Ar komercdarbību saistīto emuāru autori cenšas savus emuārus padarīt cik vien iespējams pievilcīgus lasītājiem. Šī bakalaura darba pamatā ir leksiski stilistisko izteiksmes līdzekļu lietojuma pētījums lietišķajos emuāros uzņēmējiem. Dažādu autoru 20 emuāru ierakstu, kas atrasti internetā, kvantitatīvā un kvalitatīvā analīze norāda, ka visbiežāk lietotie leksiski stilistiskie izteiksmes līdzekļi ir metaforas, epiteti, perifrāzes un hiperbolas. Turklāt autori izvairās no ironijas lietošanas. Balstoties uz pētījuma rezultātiem, var secināt, ka leksiski stilistiskie izteiksmes līdzekļi tiek plaši lietoti lietišķajos emuāros un padara emuāru rakstus daudz pievilcīgākus lasītājiem.

**Atslēgas vārdi:** lietišķie emuāri, leksiski stilistiskie izteiksmes līdzekļi, tēlainā valoda, metafora, epitets.

## **ABSTRACT**

Business blogs allow bloggers to strive to make them as appealing for the readers as possible. The present paper was written with the aim to study the use of lexical stylistic devices in business blogs for entrepreneurs. The quantitative and qualitative analyses of 20 blog entries, found on the Internet and written by different authors, indicated that the most frequently used stylistic devices are metaphors, epithets, periphrasis and hyperbole. Moreover, irony in the business blogs is usually avoided. Based on the research findings it was possible to conclude that lexical stylistic devices are widely used in the business blogs and make the blog articles more attractive for the readers.

**Key words:** business blogs, lexical stylistic devices, figurative language, metaphor, epithet.

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## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, when technologies have become an important part of life and the direct contact has been changed into a virtual one, people try to find ways to make the transmission of the information in the virtual world more meaningful, qualitative and faster. Furthermore, the need to make the information more attractive and also informative encourages people to start creating various websites and blogs that are not only being used to share information, but also to evoke a close connection between individuals and also between a company and its customers.

When people talk in front of each other, they use a voice intonation, facial and body gestures, and mimics in order to attract the other person or to make an emphasis. In the situation where direct conversation has been replaced with the written discourse, different lexical stylistic devices are used. Such devices not only make the language more expressive and imaginative, but also sometimes help to avoid one or another unpleasant situation. As lexical stylistic devices in written discourse are used often and also perform several functions in the text, they are considered to be an important sphere of analysis for linguists.

Several researchers (Galpherin (1971), Yule G. (1996), Wales K., (1989)) have studied stylistic devices (also called rhetorical devices). Different researchers define and examine these figures of speech used in different discourses. The focus of this study is lexical stylistic devices used in business blogs for entrepreneurs.

Since the world now has become so global and the internet techniques are used almost in every country of the world, the topic of lexical stylistic devices in business blogs provides a large field for research.

**The goal** of this paper is to analyze the use and the frequency of lexical stylistic devices used in business blogs for entrepreneurs to attract readers' attention.

**The following hypothesis has been formulated:** "Although different lexical stylistic devices in business blog articles for entrepreneurs serve for various purposes, their main function is to attract readers' attention."

To reach the goal, the following **enabling objectives** have been proposed:

1. to study and analyze relevant theoretical literature on lexical stylistic device;
2. to study the theory available on business blogs as well as on business discourse in general;
3. to select the blog articles for analysis;

4. to examine the most frequently used type of lexical stylistic devices used in the selected blog articles;
5. to determine the functions of lexical stylistic devices used in the selected business blog articles for entrepreneurs;
6. to draw relevant conclusions.

The research **methods** comprise analysis of the theories on stylistic devices put forward by Yule G. (1996), Studer P. (2008) and Wales K. (1989), and on blogs offered by Kanwar P., Taprial V., (2012) and Flynn N., (2006) and Holtz, S., & Demopoulos, T. (2006).

The empirical research method of the present study is qualitative analysis of 20 different business blog entries selected from the internet. Also, a quantitative analysis was used in the current research to determine the frequency of lexical stylistic devices used in the selected blog articles.

Chapter 1 of the paper supplies the theoretical framework on lexical stylistic devices. Chapter 2 deals with the description of business blogs. Chapter 3 analyses the collected material in the context of theory provided in the first two chapters and presents the findings of the conducted analysis.

## CHAPTER I

### FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE AND LEXICAL STYLISTIC DEVICES

The first chapter provides an insight into figurative language and lexical stylistic devices, first, starting with a short insight into language importance for human beings, and then continuing with spoken and written discourses. This is followed by a short insight into pragmatics. Finally, there is figurative language as well as lexical stylistic devices looked at.

#### 1.1 Spoken and Written Discourse

‘Language is the greatest invention of mankind’ (Deutcher, 2006:1). ‘Human beings are able to communicate with each other, exchange opinions and wishes, also knowledge. People can laugh or smile to express amusement, happiness, or disrespect, and only imagination can set limits here’ (Mark Ian C.Tagami, 2014:1). Professor Harvor Eifring believes that ‘language is a system of communication that is based on the combination or simply words that are put into a sentence’ (Harvor, 2005:2). Furthermore, he also discusses that ‘communication by the means of language can be divided into the linguistic one and other ways, for example, laughing or shrieking is non – linguistic communication and even though most non – human species also exchange information, none of them have such system’ (ibid.). ‘Primarily, such creatures communicate with non-linguistic means, therefore language is purely human property and in time, people have intensively shaped and transformed it’(ibid.).

The present study explores spoken and written discourse as modes of communication. The most interesting point in this discussion is the difference between these two discourses. These differences are mainly analyzed by Bartsch (1997) and Paltridge (2006). According to them, ‘written language is pre-planned, well-organized, and also transactional, while spoken mode is relatively unplanned, less structures and interactive’ (Bartsch, 1997:41-48). ‘Furthermore, speech has several distinctive features like intonation, gestures and body language, while written style uses “punctuation instead of intonation, hesitation and pauses” and figurative language, linguistic stylistic devices in particular, instead of all other expressions that may or may not be used in direct communication’ (Ghasemi&Jahromi, 2014:147).

According to Ager (2015), ‘There are a lot of differences between written and spoken language. However, some writing forms are closer to speech than others. Below are some of the remarks in which these two forms of language differ’ (Online 10):

- ‘Writing is usually permanent and written texts, when they are already printed out, cannot practically be changed;  
Speech is normally transient, and speakers are able to correct themselves and even change their utterances if they really want to;
- A written text can remain through time and space for as long as the particular language and writing system is usable and still understood, while speech is used for immediate interactions and conversations;
- Written language is usually more intricate and complex than speech with many subordinate clauses and long sentences. The punctuation and layout of written texts have no spoken equivalent. However, there are some forms of written language that are closer to spoken language and they are, for example, instant messages and e-mails;  
Spoken language is full of repetitions, corrections and incomplete sentences, interruptions. The exception here is formal speeches;
- Speech is usually an interaction between two or more people. Shared knowledge and context are the most important things, therefore it is possible to leave much unsaid or indirectly implied;
- Finally, speech can use tone, timing and volume to add emotional context, while written texts are full of linguistic stylistic devices that can create similar effect in writings;
- Written material can be analyzed and compared, also a lot of investigations and studies can be made, while only recorded speech can be used in this way;
- Some constructions of grammar and vocabulary are only used in writing.’ (Ager, 2015)

Therefore, nowadays, when people practically have no time for live conversations and the internet is the main source of the information, the need for scientists to start to take a closer look to the written texts, their purpose, effect and structure in particular, has appeared.

## **1.2 Pragmatics**

The subchapter 1.2 discusses pragmatics as the study of meaning that people usually want to transmit and its parts discuss figurative language and lexical stylistic devices that are being used while communicating.

Every system has its own regulations. Language is not an exception as well. All actions that are performed throughout it are considered to be an important sphere of analysis for linguists, pragmatics in particular. If a person uses language as just a chain of symbols without understanding the meaning of each word and even more the context, it can cause a

misunderstanding. Furthermore, when two or more words are put together and make a lexical stylistic device, the meaning can totally change. This is the reason the author of the current paper looks at pragmatics. ‘Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). It has, consequently, more to do with the analysis of what people mean by their utterances than what the words or phrases in those utterances might mean by themselves’ (Yule, 1996:3). It includes the interpretation of what people mean in a particular situation and also tries to clarify how context effect the meaning of the words. Moreover, pragmatics explores the “hidden” meaning behind the words and actions in a certain context and environment by being ‘the study of how more gets communicated than is said’ (ibid.). Furthermore, pragmatics includes “expressions of relative distance” (ibid.), that is, it also depends whether the speaker is close to the listener, or not and this is just one of many features that can be analysed from the prism of linguistic area. Though, it is closely related to syntax and semantics, “only pragmatics allows humans into analysis” (Yule, 1996:6) of meaning behind the words that includes the interpretation of context and cooperation among the speaker and the listener.

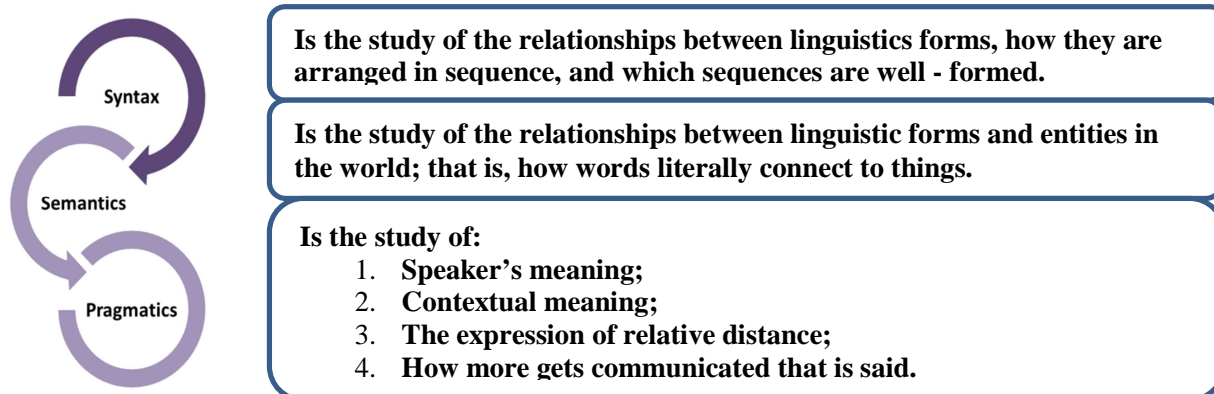


Figure 1.2: The definitions of main Linguistic fields (Yule, 1996:7)

These definitions in *Figure 1.2* that were given by George Yule to clearly show that when it comes to syntax and semantics, the main emphasis is based on a formation and relationship between linguistic forms or their connection with the entities in world, while pragmatics is concerned with the meaning and the representation of those forms. Therefore pragmatics is concerned in how language is used to do thing in real world situation.

### 1.2.1 Figurative Language

This chapter provides an insight into the use of figurative language and provides classification, usage, functions and examples of lexical stylistic devices.

When a writer uses figurative language (it can also be used by the speaker), he/she is describing something through the use of unusual and sometimes very colorful comparisons. This is often done to make a point, generate interest in the topic, or just to make something clearer. One of the examples of such language is: ‘It was raining cats and dogs. Since cats and dogs were not falling from the sky, this sentence could be rewritten It was raining very hard’ (Online 4). Figurative language is usually used in advertisements, various blogs and literature to make the text more alive and impressive, to make the reader remember the text he/she was reading.

Scholar D. Crystal (2000) provided two main meanings that a word has:

a) *denotative meaning of the word*

“An act of verbal communication between the speaker and the hearer is made possible primarily to the fact “that units of communication (words) are preferable to extra-linguistic situations and things meant.” (2000: 46) The word denotes a concrete thing as well as a concept of a thing.

b) *connotative meaning of the word*

Besides denoting a concrete thing, action or concept the word may also carry a connotation (an overtone). These overtones vary in character. They may be emotive or stylistic. Writers want to reproduce their own thoughts and feelings to make the reader visualize and feel the expressed information. There are various stylistic expressive means to produce the certain effect on the reader. The choice of words to a great extent determines the effect of written text and conveys the meaning.

Therefore, literal language is for direct meaning, while figurative language uses metaphors, similes, hyperboles and personifications to describe something, often through comparison, with something different. The examples are being provided below:

*Table 1.1 Literal and figurative descriptions*

<b>Literal Descriptions</b>	<b>Figurative Descriptions</b>
The flowers smells sweet	The flower has the sweetest smelling petals in the world
(hyperbole)Grass looks green	The grass looks like spiky green hair (simile)

Therefore, stylistics is a branch of linguistics dealing with variants of linguistic expressions and with the sub-systems, making up the general system of language. In the context of a dichotomous view of language, figurative language could be regarded as the simple oppositeness of literal language. Thus, according to Jonah Katz, 'the literal language is assumed to communicate a direct meaning, the figurative language is more related to the notion of conveying indirect or veiled meanings' (Katz, 1980:204). 'Figurative language could be regarded as a type of language that is based on literal meaning, but is disconnected from what people learn about the worlds based on it' (Bergen, 2005:1).

'The literature on metaphorical and figurative language has a long, controversial, and ongoing tradition. Metaphorical language expresses what is difficult to express with literal language alone' (Zjag, 2010:1480). Furthermore, according to Manca and Delfino, 'figurative language is special because it concerns emotional communication, which accurately reflects something about people's ordinary conceptualizations of their complex emotional experience' (Manca&Delfino, 2007:8). In addition, figurative language is a powerful communicative tool, because it can create and increase the sense of closeness and intimacy between speaker and listener, allowing people to speak about their emotions at a remove. 'For this reason it seems that people would be more likely to use figurative language to describe their subjective experience of emotion than to describe the actions they took in response to an emotional experience' (Manca&Delfino, 2007:8).

Figurative language is not always clear or precise. 'If discourse participants cooperate by expressing themselves as clearly, concisely, and completely as possible, then potentially figurative language must accomplish certain communicative goals better than literal language' (Kreuz, Long, & Church, 1991:159).

Figurative language uses "figures of speech" - a way of saying something other than the literal meaning of the words. According to Weihard (2015), 'Figurative language is a word or phrase that departs from everyday literal language for the sake of comparison, emphasis, clarity, or freshness.' 'Metaphor and simile are the two most commonly used figures of speech, but things like hyperbole, synecdoche, pun, and personification are also found in literature' (Kinoshita, 2004:9).

There are four main groups of stylistic devices:

1. '*Lexical stylistic devices* are based on the binary opposition of lexical meanings regardless of the syntactical organization of the utterance';

2. ‘*Syntactical stylistic devices* are based on the binary opposition of syntactical meanings regardless of their semantics’;
3. ‘*Lexico– syntactical stylistic devices* are based on the binary opposition of lexical meanings accompanied by fixed syntactical organization of employed lexical units (syntactical units)’.
4. ‘*Graphical and phonetic stylistic means* are based on the opposition of meanings of phonetic and graphical elements of the language’ (Пацеля&Кудряшова, 2008: 12-14).

According to Пацеля&Кудряшова lexical stylistic devices can be divided into three groups:

1) ‘the interaction of different types of lexical meaning:

- dictionary and contextual logical meaning (metaphor, metonymy, irony)
- primary and derivative logical meaning (zeugma, pun)
- logical and emotive (epithet, personification, oxymoron)
- logical and nominative (antonomasia)’

2) ‘Intensification of a feature (simile, hyperbole, periphrasis, euphemism)’ In the table below, all lexical stylistic devices are provided. Also the definitions and examples are being mentioned. However, not all of these devices are often used, because people sometimes just do not know that they actually exist. In the spoken discourse, according to Пацеля&Кудряшова, humour and similes are used most often.

*Table 1.2 Lexical Stylistic Devices* (Wales, 1989)

<b>Lexical Stylistic Device</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b><u>Allergy</u></b>	An extended metaphor - the whole poem or story is representative of another idea. An allegory is intended to teach a moral or lesson.	“The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe” by C.S. Lewis is a religious allegory with Aslan as Christ and Edmund as Judas
<b><u>Allusion</u></b>	A brief reference to a person, event or thing religious or historical.	“... the three glorious fathers of the great island of the taints where the visionary Italian Mariner stepped a European foot for the first time...”
<b><u>Alliteration</u></b>	The repetition of the same sound beginning several words in sequence.	“The possessive instinct never stands still.”
<b><u>Anaphora</u></b>	The repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses or lines.	“Better for him, better for me”

<b><u>Antonomasia</u></b>	Speaking names	Miss <b>Sharp</b> . Scrooge McDuck. Sponge Bob.
<b><u>Assonance</u></b>	The repetition of the same sound in words close to each other.	“Men sell the wedding bells.”
<b><u>Cacophony</u></b>	Harsh joining of sounds.	“I detest war because cause of war is always trivial.”
<b><u>Catachresis</u></b>	A harsh metaphor involving the use of a word beyond its strict sphere.	“I do not ask much: I beg cold comfort....”
<b><u>Detachment</u></b>	Stylistic device based on singling out a secondary member of sentence with the help of punctuation (intonation).	“I have to beg you for money. Daily.”
<b><u>Epithet</u></b>	Expresses a characteristic of an object, both existing & imaginary.	The sleepless pillow, the tobacco-stained smile, a ghost-like face
<b><u>Humour</u></b>	A smart joke or idea.	Magwitch wants to sleep and asks Pip, “Where will you put me?” [Magwitch] asked, presently. “I must be put somewhere, dear boy.” Charles Dickens, Great Expectations.
<b><u>Hyperbole</u></b>	Exaggeration for emphasis or for rhetorical effect.	“I was so embarrassed, I could have died. I would give the whole world to know.”
<b><u>Irony</u></b>	Expression of something which is contrary to the intended meaning; words say one thing but mean another.	“He smiled the <b>sweet smile of an alligator.</b> ”
<b><u>Metaphor</u></b>	An implied comparison achieved through a figurative use of words; word is used not in its literal sense, but in one analogous to it.	“New kid in our class is really a squirrel.”
<b><u>Metonymy</u></b>	A substitution of one word for another which it suggests.	“To earn one's bread, to live by the pen.”

<b><u>Onomatopoeia</u></b>	The use of words to imitate natural sounds; accommodation of sound to sense.	("hiss", "bowwow", "murmur", "bump", "grumble", "sizzle")
<b><u>Oxymoron</u></b>	An apparent paradox achieved by the juxtaposition of words which seem to contradict one another.	adoring hatred, awfully nice, sweet sorrow
<b><u>Paronomasia</u></b>	Use of similar sounding words; often etymological word-play.	"Tickler was a wax-ended piece of cane, worn smooth by collision with my tickled frame" Charles Dickens, Great Expectations.
<b><u>Personification</u></b>	An Attribution of personality to an impersonal thing.	"The long arm of the law will catch him in the end."
<b><u>Pleonasm</u></b>	The use of superfluous or redundant words, often enriching the thought.	"I am eating tuna fish burger."
<b><u>Pun</u></b>	A stylistic device based on the interaction of two well-known meanings of a word or phrase.	"Did you <b>hit</b> a woman <b>with a child</b> ? - No, I <b>hit</b> her <b>with a brick</b> ."
<b><u>Sarcasm</u></b>	A type of irony in which a person appears to be praising something but is actually insulting it. Its purpose is to injure or hurt.	"As I fell down the stairs headfirst, I heard her say, 'Look at that coordination.'"
<b><u>Simile</u></b>	An explicit comparison between two things using 'like' or 'as'.	"My love is like a red rose. Sly as a fox, busy as a bee."
<b><u>Synecdoche</u></b>	An understanding one thing with another; the use of a part for the whole, or the whole for the part.	"All hands on desk. The hall applauded."
<b><u>Understatement (meiosis)</u></b>	An opposite of hyperbole. It's a kind of irony that represents something as being much less than it really is.	"I'd probably manage to survive on a salary of 2 000000 \$ per year."

<u><b>Zeugma</b></u>	Two different words linked to a verb or an adjective which is strictly appropriate to only one of them.	“I like to have a tea with you and with cookies.”
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Therefore, there are a lot of linguistic stylistic devices that writers could use while creating one or another text. However, as mentioned before, not all texts have the same purpose, thus some devices are used intentionally and appear regularly in some texts, while others are also intentionally avoided.

### 1.2.2 Use of Lexical Stylistic Devices

This chapter provides the definitions of lexical stylistic devices by different researchers such as Lakoff (1993), Sosnovskaya (1974), Galperin (1971) as well as electronic dictionaries available on the internet as Oxford Dictionary of English and Websters New World Dictionary. A figure of speech is any way of saying something other than the ordinary way. A figurative language is language using figures of speech. Lexical stylistic devices are figures of speech.

In literature and writing, stylistic elements are the use of any of a variety of techniques to give an auxiliary meaning, idea, or feeling to the literal or written discourse.

Nowadays, when economics and financial sphere is being broadened and also become one of the most important areas, they are not only being developed in only one position, in the use of language also. According to Vasilescu, Epure, Florea(2013:368), the commonly used lexical stylistic devices in business are:**1) Metaphor**

**Metaphor** – ‘a figure of speech in which a word or a phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable’ (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2005). ‘The word “metaphor” ‘is defined as a novel or poetic linguistic expression where one or more words for a concept are used outside of their normal conventional meaning to express a “similar” concept’ (Lakoff, 1993:371). ‘Metaphorical transfers express a semantic similarity relation between two concepts that yields a conceptual mapping, a list of correspondences, between the source and target domains of a metaphor’ (Lakoff, 1993:372). ‘Aristotle has defined the metaphor as an intuitive perception of similarity in dissimilar’ (Diyanni, 1990:451). Some scholars like Lakoff (1993), make a distinction between poetic and lexical metaphors:

‘The **poetic metaphor** is largely dominated by emotional factors and may be described as a manifestation of additional linguistic creativity that is creativity that exceeds or transcends the standard level of creativity’ (Krupa, 1996:1). ‘Poetic metaphor is based upon a discovery of some new, fresh striking analogy between two things. The discovery is made by an individual, that is to say, a poetic metaphor is always an individual creation’ (Sosnovskaya, 1974:15).

**Lexical metaphors**‘ are commonly produced lexical units. They are called dead or trite metaphors because they do not produce vivid associations, their function is rather than that of intensifier (e.g. *Time flies* – time passes very quickly). Such a metaphor is an integral part of word’s semantic structure, constituting one of its figurative meanings (e.g. a puppy – a young dog (literal meaning); a vain, ill-bred young man (figurative meaning)’ (Sosnovskaya, 1974:15). Usually metaphors are fixed in dictionaries as units of the language.

A distinction is made between a simple metaphor and a complex metaphor. Complex one can be called a sentence, a paragraph and even the whole story that can consist of several inner metaphors as well as other stylistic devices and even neutral phrases combination of which makes the effect of one metaphor and consequently raises strong emotions (Kemertelidze&Manjavidze, 2012:17).

### **Metonymy**

Metonymy is a figure in which the name of one thing is used in place of that another associated with or suggested by it’ (Websters New World Dictionary). Radden and Kövecses (1999:21) define metonymy ‘as cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same idealized cognitive model.’ There are many attempts to define the types of relation which metonymy is based on. The most common types are:

- a) ‘A container is used instead of the thing contained (*The kettle is boiling. He drank the whole cup*)’;
- b) ‘The material instead of the thing made of it (*The marble spoke. Can you give me a rubber, please?*)’;
- c) ‘A part for whole (*We need a good head for this project*)’;
- d) ‘Concrete for abstract (*First we must roll up our sleeves. Your goal of becoming a teacher is a worthy one. With all the crosscurrent in society today that has not been easy*)’;
- e) ‘A symbol to refer to representative (*Hanoi highly appreciates all what have done by Washington in order to build up a good relationship between the two countries*)’ (Hoai, 2007:18).

Metaphor and metonymy are both figures of speech where one word may be used in place of another. However, especially in cognitive science and linguistics, the two figures of speech work very differently. R. Jakobson (2002) writes that ‘they represent two fundamentally different ways of processing language.’ ‘Metonymy works by the contiguity (association) between two concepts, whereas metaphor works by the similarity between them. When people use metonymy, they do not typically wish to transfer qualities from one referent to another as they do with metaphor: there is nothing crown-like about the king, press-like about reporters’ (Jakobson & Halle 1956:91-95).

### **Irony**

Irony is a stylistic device based on the ‘simultaneous realization of two logical meanings – dictionary and contextual, but the two meanings stand in opposition to each other’ (Galperin, 1971: 142). The contrast may be between what is said and what is meant or between what happens and what is expected to happen. According to Divanni, ‘irony can be divided as following:

#### **1) Verbal irony**

‘Irony when the actual intent is expressed in words that carry the opposite meaning. It may be used for humor or satire or to provoke thought’ (Online 13). Common examples are: “soft like a brick”, “Hard as putty”

#### **2) Irony of circumstances**

Creation of discrepancies between what seems to be and what is.

#### **3) Dramatic irony**

A type of irony when the audience or the reader has a better understanding of events or individuals than one or more characters. May be used to create suspense, evoke laughter, or other reasons.

#### **4) Ironic vision**

‘An overall tone that suggests how a writer views his characters and subject’ (Diyanni, 1990: 74-76)

### **Zeugma**

Zeugma – ‘the use of a word in the same grammatical but different semantic relations to two adjacent words in the context, the semantic relations being on the one hand literal, and on the other, transferred’ (Galperin, 1971:145).According to Sosnovskaya (1974:28), ‘zeugma is a figure in speech which consists of one main element and a number of adjuncts. The adjuncts

represent semantically different word classes thus differing in the type and degree of cohesion with the main element. (e.g. *He had a good taste for wine and whiskey and an emergency bell in his bedroom*) (ibid).

## **Pun**

Pun is a ‘humorous use of a word that has two meanings nor of different words that sound the same, a play on words’ (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary). English puns generally fall into four categories, three of which are well established and are based on homophones, polysemous words, and close-sounding words (Lems 2011). A fourth, ‘newer category of puns is now emerging through texting and instant messaging and is based on the use of alphabetic, numeric, or simplified spelling’ (Lems,2013:27) classifies puns as follows:

### 1) **Soundalike puns** (homophones)

‘Soundalike puns are based on homophones, words that sound the same, but have different spellings and meanings (e.g., hair/hare; to/too/ two).’

### 2) **Lookalike puns** (polysemous words)

‘Polysemous words are spelled and pronounced the same and have related meanings (e.g., “ruler” as a measuring stick or a king; “mole” as a burrowing mammal or a spy). Polysemous words create lookalike puns.’

### 3) **Close-sounding puns**

‘A third kind of English pun comes from the confusion generated by similar sounding words. When one word is substituted for another that sounds like it, whether the substitution is for a single word or part of a phrase, that can create a close-sounding pun.’

4) **Texting puns** (alphabetic, numeric, and simplified spelling) ‘Alphabetic, numeric, and simplified spelling can create texting puns. These are based on the increasingly common practice of using the sound and/or spelling of alphabet letters, numbers or symbols, or simplified spelling as a way to represent or “spell” a word’ (Lems, 2013:28).

## **Epithet**

Epithet –an adjective or phrase expressing a quality or attribute regarded as characteristic of the person or thing mentioned: *old men are often ‘unfairly’ awarded the epithet ‘dirty’* (Oxford Dictionary of English). Epithet is one of the most ancient one lexical stylistic device, therefore, there exist numerous definitions of this phenomenon offered by many scholars. Crystal defines epithet as a word or phrase which characterizes a noun and is regularly connected with it such as “*the haunted house*” (2003:163). From a stylistic point of view, epithet is based on the interaction

of the logical and emotive meanings. It shows the purely individual emotional attitude of the writer or the speaker towards the object mentioned like "*heart burning smile*" (Gill, 2011:15). As a substitutional process, epithet is like a 'title or nickname by which a person is known. Epithets are not names of persons but they can be used in the place of or substitute for the name or title of the person. "Lackland" is an epithet for King John used in place of his real name John' (Harper, 2010:4). Semantically epithets are divided into two groups:

- associated – 'the idea expressed in the epithet is to certain extent inherent in the concept of the object (e.g. *dark forest*)'
- unassociated – 'attributes used to characterise the object by adding a feature which is unexpected, it surprises the reader by its novelty (e.g. *voiceless sounds*)' (Galperin, 1977:32).

From the point of view of their compositional structure, epithet may be divided into simple (adjectives, nouns, participles), compound epithets that by Peltola (1956: 287), can be formed with adjectives and the inverted ones. Simple epithets are built with ordinary adjectives, adverbs and participles that can be placed in pre- or postposition. Peltola (1956: 287) mentions that compound epithets are formed with adjectives:

1. 'Noun + adjective: *stone-cold water*'
2. 'Noun + participle: *The house had a snow-beaten look*'
3. 'Adjective or adverb + participial: *much-travelled cousin*'
4. 'Noun + adjective (derived from a noun): *The key-eyed boy*'
5. 'Very often an epithet is made using a participial attribute: *The grey boiling sea burst on the sand.*' Peltola (1956: 287).

Inverted epithets are easily transformed into epithet of a more habitual structure where there are no logical syntactic contradictions. Rooks (2009:1) states that there is another term for inverted epithet which is called "reversed epithet". It is composed of two nouns and an of - phrase as in: "*a devil of the sea*", "*a shadow of smile*". From the point of view of the distribution of the epithets in the sentence, Galperin distinguishes:

- 1) 'the string of epithets many-side depiction of the object (e.g. *such was the background of the wonderful, cruel, enchanting, bewildering, fatal, great city*)'
- 2) 'the transferred epithet – a logical attribute generally describing the state of human being, but made to refer to an inanimate object (e.g. *sick chamber*)' (Galperin, 1971:152-158).

## Personification

The attribution of a personal nature or human characteristics to something non-human, or the representation of an abstract quality in human form: *the book provides a sustained account of how literary personification works*. Personification is often used in poetry, prose, and song lyrics, as well as in everyday speech. It is often a form of metaphor, a method of describing something by comparing it to something more familiar. Emotions, abstract concepts and natural forces have all been given human characteristics in myth and literature (Paxson, 1994:12).

## Oxymoron

Oxymoron is a figure of speech in which apparently contradictory conjunction (e.g. Faith unfaithfully falsely true) .According to Galperin (1971:159-160) ‘the essence of oxymoron is the capacity of the primary meaning of the adjective or adverb to resist the overwhelming power of semantic change which words undergo in combination. ‘Not every combination of words which we call non-combinative should be regarded as oxymoron, because new meanings developed in new combinations do not necessarily give rise to opposition. ‘Oxymoron is mostly combination of an adjective and a noun or an adverb with an adjective (e.g. *proud humility*)’ (1971:158-160).

There can be distinguished two types of oxymoron:

- ‘proper oxymoron– joins two antonymous words into one syntagm, most frequently attributive or adverbial (less frequently other patterns). e.g. *adoring hatred, shouted silently, doomed to liberty*’;
- ‘trite oxymorons have lost their semantic discrepancy (are used in oral speech and fiction dialogue), e.g. *pretty lousily, awfully nice*’(Кузнецова Н.С., Шайдорова Н.А, 2007:6)

The main stylistic functions of oxymoron are:

- to indicate roused emotions;
- to convey the author’s or the character’s personal attitude towards what is modified (*sweet sorrow, glad terror*). (Пацеля&Кудряшова, 2008:17)

## Antonomasia

‘Antonomasia - the use of a proper name for a common one. It is based on the interaction of the logical and nominal meanings of a word. It may be metaphoric, i.e. based upon a similarity between two things’ (Online 9).

‘It may be metonymic, when a name of a person stands, for instance, for the thing he has created (e.g. *Where one man would treasure a single Degas, Renoir, Cezanne, he bought wholesale*). To be employed as a common noun the proper name must have a fixed logical

association between the name itself and the qualities of the bearer'. Each case of antonomasia is a unique creation. The main function of antonomasia is to characterize the person simultaneously naming him (Пацеля&Кудряшова, 2008:14).

### **Simile**

Simile – 'A figure of speech involving the comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind, used to make a description more emphatic or vivid (e.g. *as brave as a lion*)' (Oxford Dictionary of English). Both similes and metaphor are based on comparison, but the simile is more restricted in its comparative suggestion. Similes have connective words such as *like, as, such as, as if, seem* but metaphors have no such verbal clues' (Diyanni, 1990:451).

Similes are not categorization statements; in 'terms of they do not share common properties to map the comparison through a well-defined link. Rather, such link must be inferred from our knowledge of the external world. Thus, their example "*a wedding is like a funeral*", is interpretable (by mapping some salient properties of funeral that can be applicable to wedding, so that the sentence makes sense after figuring out the fact that weddings occur in a (solemn) church, and are sometimes forced (unfortunately) for non-romantic (sad) reasons' (Veale &Hao, 2007:1471–1476).

In the English language 'there is a long list of hackneyed similes pointing out the analogy between the various qualities, states or actions of a human being and animals supposed to be the bearer of the given quality, for example, *hungry as a bear, to fly like a bird, to work like a horse, thirsty as a camel* and many others of the same type. However, these combinations have ceased to be genuine similes and have become clichés in which the second element is merely an adverbial intensifier. It's logical meaning is vaguely perceived' (Galperin, 1971:166).

### **Periphrasis**

'Periphrasis is an indirect and circumlocutory phrase' (Oxford Dictionary of English). 'Periphrasis originates from a Greek word *periphrazein* which means "talking around". It is a stylistic device that can be defined as the use of excessive and longer words to convey a meaning which could have been conveyed with a shorter expression or in a few words. It is an indirect or roundabout way of writing about things' (Online 1).

Sosnovskaya (1974:18) uses the term euphemistic periphrasis – 'a substitution for a concept or thing which the author finds too unpleasant or too reticent to name directly.'

Periphrasis can be divided into two types:

1) Euphemistic periphrasis;

2) Trite periphrasis. (Пацеля&Кудряшова, 2008:18)

‘Many of the trite periphrasis have become part of general lexicon., e.g. *the seven-hilled city* (Rome), *the language of Racine* (the French language), organs of vision (eyes).’(ibid:18)

The essence of periphrasis is that it is decipherable only in context. If a periphrastic locution is understandable outside the context it is merely a synonymous expression.

### **Euphemism**

Euphemism – According to a (Oxford Dictionary of English) ‘A mild or indirect word or expression substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant or embarrassing: the *jargon* has given us ‘*downsizing*’ as **a euphemism for cuts**’. ‘The opposite of dysphemism. (Oxford Dictionary of English).

‘Indirectness is a communicative strategy by means of which, speakers avoid being outspoken and attempt to hold a correspondence between their talk and face considerations.

Adopting indirectness strategy through using euphemistic terms helps:

- speakers prevent from mentioning socially distasteful topics.
- minimize the threat of overt confrontation.

By virtue of euphemisms, as part of each language’s politeness system, one finds it easier to communicate his intents without affronting the hearer’s face and get rid of unpleasant terms with too negative overtones’ (Bahtiar, 2012:8).

### **Hyperbole**

Hyperbole – Exaggerated statement or claims not meant to be taken literally:

*he vowed revenge with oaths and hyperboles.*

Hyperbole is defined as ‘a form of extremity, an exaggeration that either magnifies or minimizes some real state of affairs’ (OlcaySert, 2008:3). Hyperbole may lose its quality as a stylistic device through frequent repetition and become a language ‘hyperbole, e.g. *a thousand pardon, immensely obliged, I’d given the world to see him*’ (Galperin, 1971:174).

Leggitt and Gibbs (2000) looked at people’s emotional reactions to different kinds of ironic language, including hyperboles, within a cognitive appraisal framework. It was found that hyperbole is more consistently correlated with the less threatening statements, such as understatement and satire.

There are several different expressive means which writers use in order to make their works more vivid, colorful, and interesting. Lexical stylistic devices are used in written discourse as well as in daily speech. Not always people notice them in writing or used in a speech, moreover,

they can be distinguished just when a person has the linguistic knowledge. It is logically that a writer cannot use all of these devices in his/her work. It is often the successful use of expressive means that makes a work successful, attractive to a reader.

To conclude, lexical stylistic devices are elements of figural speech. The purpose of using stylistic devices in discourse, basically, is to enrich the language of the text, to draw reader's attention or to accent something.

### **1.2.3 Functions of Lexical Stylistic Devices**

There are several different lexical stylistic devices or so-called expressive means which writers use for different purposes. Each of them serves a specific function in a context. Below comes a list of basic functions of each lexical stylistic device that is looked at in the current paper distinguished by different scholars as Єфімов Л. П. (2004) and Lakoff, George and M. Johnson (2003).

#### **Metaphor**

'A metaphor is described as a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two things that are basically dissimilar' (Damrosch, 1985:990).

'Metaphor is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish - a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is type fully viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action' (Lakoff, George and M. Johnson, 2003:8).

'The function of metaphor in literature is twofold. The first, and more practical, function is to allow the reader greater understanding of the concept, object, or character being described. This is done by comparing it to an item that may be more familiar to the reader. This function is purely artistic: to create an image that is beautiful or profound or otherwise produces the effect that the writer desires. For these reasons, writers have used the metaphors in the earliest recorded stories' (Online 5).

#### **Irony**

"The word "irony" has come to mean far more than just saying one thing and meaning another." Its field of reference has expanded to include it, humour, and the comic, as well as what we now call dramatic and tragic irony, situational irony' (Linda Hutcheon, 1992:219).

#### **Personification**

‘The function of personification in literature is to give a concept or object human features, usually to describe its qualities or to make a statement about human behaviour. Personification is the term for assigning human qualities to non-human entities, sometimes also called anthropomorphism’ (Online 6).

‘Personification metaphorically represents an animal or inanimate object as having human attributes - attributes of form, character, feelings, behaviour, and soon. Ideas and abstractions can also be personified’ (Online 7).

### **Oxymoron**

‘Oxymoron has great expressive potential. It is normally used in cases when there is a necessity to point out contradictory and complicated nature of the object under description.’  
(Єфімов Л. П., 2004:64.-65.)

### **Simile**

‘Simile is one of the most frequent and effective means of making speech expressive. The more unexpected the confrontation of two objects is, the more expressive sounds simile. Simile should not be confused with logical comparison which is devoid of any stylistic meaning. The sentence "John can run as fast as Jack" contains purely logical confrontation of two objects’  
(Єфімов Л. П., 2004:64-65).

### **Hyperbole**

‘Hyperbole is a deliberate exaggeration of a certain quality of an object or phenomenon. Assigned features. Hyperbole can be expressed by all notional parts of speech. The most typical cases of expression are: by pronouns (all, every, everybody, everything); by numerical nouns (a million, a thousand); by adverbs of time (ever, never)’ (Online 8).

### **Synecdoche**

‘This variety of metonymy is realized in two variants. The first variant is naming the whole object by mentioning part of it: Caroline lives with Jack under the same roof (under the same roof – in the same house). The second variant of synecdoche is using the name of the whole object to denote a constituent part of this object: The hall applauded (the hall = the people inside)’  
(Єфімов Л. П., Ясінецька О. А. 2004: 50).

## CHAPTER II

### BLOGS IN BUSINESS DISCOURSE

Chapter II deals with business blogs. Furthermore, specifically business related blogs as a part of business discourse have been looked at as well as the process of blogging.

What exactly is business discourse? Bargiela-Chiappini defines it as “all about how people communicate using talk or writing in commercial organizations to get their work done”, as “social action in business contexts” (Bargiela-Chiappini et al., 2013:3).

To better realize how business discourse has changes through years, a short history has been offered. Franceska Bargiela-Chiappini, Catherine Nickerson and Brigitte Planken in their research ‘Business discourse’ notes that: ‘Business discourse has been influenced by a number of different fields and disciplines including discourse analysis, conversation analysis, the pragmatics of interaction, ethnography, genre theory and organizational communication’ (2013).

Nowadays business related topics are becoming more and more relevant in language studies. Business discourse is a very broad area. ‘Business discourse reveals its own communicative, pragmatic, lexical, syntactic, textual, composite, visual-graphic, normative, genre-stylistic and other features’ (2013). Today business discourse is very topical between linguists and other researchers: To continue: ‘These reasons seem sufficient to introduce “Business Linguistics” as a separate discipline within the framework of Applied Linguistics, and to initiate the development of its methodology and scientific apparatus’ (2013).

In fact, according to Rita Salvi&Julia Bamford ‘business discourse is actually difficult to pin down, because it is usually very heterogeneous, take place in/outside the workplace, be written or oral, use various channels (for example, telephone, face to face, conversations) and exploit various registers and genres’ (2012: 1)

Definition of a blog: ‘the interaction which takes place between individuals whose main activities are located within business and whose contact is motivated by matters relating to their respective businesses’ (Bargiela - Chiappini and Nickerson, 1999:2).

#### **2.1 Business Blogs and Blogging**

In recent years blogging has become more and more popular among enthusiasts at home and at the office. People use blogs as a way of communication with other people all over the world. It is simple and possible for everyone who is up to do blogging, because the only things a person has to have for this process is a computer (a smartphone, ipad or any other device with an Internet

connection) and some writing skills to announce the thoughts, feelings, information. Lately people are sharing the information needed or wanted in this way, thus blogging has become a separate and settled genre of writing.

‘A blog is a type of website that is written by one or more people about a specific topic, that the blogger is interested in to share with another people. In most of the cases blog is updated regularly’ - **arranged in chronological order from the most recent ‘post’ or entry at the top of the main page to the older entries towards the bottom.** A blog is usually about a particular topic, where people can learn, share ideas, make friends with and even do business with people with similar interests from around the world. (Пацеля&Кудряшова, 2008)

As many as there are researchers in science who focus on blogs, as many definitions of them could be found. A very simplified definition for the term blog says: ‘A blog is basically a journal that is available on the web. The activity of updating a blog is “blogging” and someone who keeps a blog is a “blogger.”’ (Online 1)

Flynn N., writer and electronic communications expert, defines blog as ‘an electronic communications powerhouse that is likely to have greater impact on business communications and corporate reputations than e-mail, instant messaging, and traditional marketing-oriented websites combined’ (2006:4). Another well-known writer and also blogger Joy Deangdeelert Cho explains the meaning of a blog as:

A truncation of the term *Web log* is an interactive ‘Web site that delivers regular content to its readers. Whether it’s run by one person or multiple people, a blog is essentially a dynamic and ever-changing Web site that grows with every entry, or ‘post,’ that’s created. Blogs are typically formatted as a newsfeed: the newest contents appear at a top of the site, with the older posts descending below in reverse chronological order’ (Deangdeelert, 2012:12).

A blogging expert Joy Deangdeelert Cho in his book ‘Blog, Inc.: Blogging for Passion, Profit, and to Create Community’ (2012) affirms that ‘blogging gives you a way to continually grab readers’ attention with new posts and fresh doses of information’ (2012:12). He continues with the fact about the number of the possible readers of blogs available on the Internet:

‘In an increasingly wired society, more and more of the mainstream population are browsing the Internet every day and spending at least part of that time reading blogs. What does that mean for you? It means that your possible audience is pretty big- including the billions of people in the world who currently use the Internet’ (ibid).

## 2.2 Business blogs for entrepreneurs

As far as the title of the current paper is 'Use of lexical stylistic devices in Business Blogs for Entrepreneurs', this chapter deals with business blogs for entrepreneurs.

It is a well-known fact that people related to business, especially entrepreneurs, are very busy. Also, the information that they are searching and reading mostly differs from other people interests. Therefore, not without the reason, business blogs for entrepreneurs has been subdivided from business blogs in general. Business blogs for entrepreneurs in most cases include stories of experience of other business runners, news or important notices from entrepreneurs/companies who share the information by posting a new article in their blog. (Online 11)

In addition, another important condition is 'Blogging is also incomplete, open, and ongoing. It is about process, not product. It is about a shared space.' (Online 12) Moreover, 'blogging is conversational. There are two key features to the blog: links, and comments. Fail to include either, and you're talking to yourself' (ibid). Not less important is the context of the blog: 'Running the gamut from hilarious, to informational, to controversial, to thought-provoking, these blogs are all must-reads for anyone who's running a business' (Online 11)

When we look from the other point of view, either it is a big company or one person, who runs his/her own business, business blogging for entrepreneurs is also an instrument of earning money. Entrepreneurship participants can share a new post about, for example, a new product/service they have, bad/good experience in their activities, or anything else that catches virtual world travelers, meanwhile advertising their product/service/company as such. Although, it is stated by Mai ThiThanh Thai & Ekaterina Turkina, that 'e-commerce on blogs was not a major income source for the respondents' (2013: 110). 'Among the 14 bloggers who answered that they had made money from blogs, blog banners were a minor income source (2013: ibid). Furthermore, not only blog banners are the instrument that can earn money from blogging, but also 'the other bloggers answered that they earned money throughout another sources, including products review.' (ibid)

To sum up, business blogs for entrepreneurs have basically the same structure as business blog in general. Also, blogging is conversational; integral parts of blog are links and viewers comments.

To sum up, a blog is a personal journal posted on the internet. It can be written about any theme from personal interests to very formal context. Also, the primary target audiences can vary immeasurably. Lately also companies have started to create their own blogs on the internet. They

share different things with readers as latest news or interesting experience. The main conditions to be successful in blogging are chronology and regularity. Blog is written in informal style, language used in blogs in most cases is figurative, so, there can be different lexical stylistic devices found.

## CHAPTER III

### USE OF LEXICAL STYLISTIC DEVICES IN BUSINESS BLOGS FOR ENTREPRENEURS

This chapter analyses 20 selected business blog articles for entrepreneurs in the context of theory provided in the first two chapters and presents the findings of the conducted analysis. The empirical research method chosen is a qualitative analysis as well as quantitative analysis of lexical stylistic devices in 20 business and entrepreneurship related blog entries. The research procedure consists of a survey of 20 business blog entries; a selection of a corpus of text; an identification of lexical stylistic devices; a frequency count and conclusion. As regards the source of the business blog articles for entrepreneurs, it was the internet. Business blog articles from different internet websites were gathered and investigated. At the end of the chapter research results have been gathered.

#### 3.1 Research Methodology

The present chapter focuses on the empirical part of the present research. For the purposes of the analysis, twenty business blog articles were selected from different authors' blogs from the internet. Although, the areas of expertise of several authors differ, they are still connected to entrepreneurship. Moreover, the primary audience is supposed to be the same – people who run their own business or those, who are closely connected to entrepreneurship.

In the current Bachelor Thesis paper qualitative as well as quantitative analysis has been conducted.

For the purpose to conduct the current analysis, first of all, 20 business blog articles related to entrepreneurship have been selected. Second, each lexical stylistic device used in the blog articles has been marked and afterwards, put in the table 3.2. After that the type of lexical stylistic device and also the purpose of using it have been established. Furthermore, the frequency of use of lexical stylistic devices has been indicated. Finally, the main findings have been drawn.

*Table 3.1 Selected business blogs for the analysis*

	The Title	The Link
1.	<i>Reset</i>	<a href="http://www.entrepreneuronfire.com/reset/">http://www.entrepreneuronfire.com/reset/</a>
2.	<i>Why the Best Marketing Campaigns Put Customer Experience First</i>	<a href="http://www.convinceandconvert.com/social-media-case-studies/put-customer-experience-first/">http://www.convinceandconvert.com/social-media-case-studies/put-customer-experience-first/</a>

3.	<i>The 4 Things No One Tells You About Funding</i>	<a href="http://www.inc.com/adam-fridman/the-4-things-no-one-tells-you-about-funding.html">http://www.inc.com/adam-fridman/the-4-things-no-one-tells-you-about-funding.html</a>
4.	<i>4 Steps to Being an Entrepreneur Without Quitting Your Job</i>	<a href="http://www.inc.com/robin-camarote/4-steps-to-being-an-entrepreneur-without-quitting-your-job.html">http://www.inc.com/robin-camarote/4-steps-to-being-an-entrepreneur-without-quitting-your-job.html</a>
5.	<i>Fear of Failure and Lack of Speed In a Large Corporation</i>	<a href="http://blogs.berkeley.edu/2015/03/11/fear-of-failure-and-lack-of-speed-in-a-large-corporation/">http://blogs.berkeley.edu/2015/03/11/fear-of-failure-and-lack-of-speed-in-a-large-corporation/</a>
6.	<i>7 Email Hacks That'll Turn You Into an Insanely Productive Entrepreneur [Infographic]</i>	<a href="http://www.chrisducker.com/email-hacks-productive-entrepreneur/">http://www.chrisducker.com/email-hacks-productive-entrepreneur/</a>
7.	<i>6 Ways to Make Money While Building an Online Business</i>	<a href="http://www.chrisducker.com/building-an-online-business/">http://www.chrisducker.com/building-an-online-business/</a>
8.	<i>O, entrepreneurs, most of you don't need angel investors or venture capitalists – The Washington Post</i>	<a href="http://ceoblognation.com/2015/03/no-entrepreneurs-most-of-you-dont-need-angel-investors-or-venture-capitalists-the-washington-post/">http://ceoblognation.com/2015/03/no-entrepreneurs-most-of-you-dont-need-angel-investors-or-venture-capitalists-the-washington-post/</a>
9.	<i>Entrepreneurs explain what Entrepreneurship means [Hearpreneurship]</i>	<a href="http://ceoblognation.com/2015/02/entrepreneurs-explain-what-entrepreneurship-means-hearpreneur/">http://ceoblognation.com/2015/02/entrepreneurs-explain-what-entrepreneurship-means-hearpreneur/</a>
10.	<i>3 Productivity Hacks for Launching a Business While Holding Down a Day Job</i>	<a href="http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/246807">http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/246807</a>
11.	<i>6 Benefits of Writing Job Descriptions for Your Business</i>	<a href="http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/247829">http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/247829</a>
12.	<i>How I Met 75 Investors and Raised \$650,000</i>	<a href="http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/246980">http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/246980</a>
13.	<i>The big secret to finding new product ideas</i>	<a href="http://smallbizsurvival.com/2013/03/the-big-secret-to-finding-new-product-ideas.html">http://smallbizsurvival.com/2013/03/the-big-secret-to-finding-new-product-ideas.html</a>
14.	<i>Every week, I fail in my business.</i>	<a href="http://smallbizsurvival.com/2012/09/every-week-i-fail-in-business.html">http://smallbizsurvival.com/2012/09/every-week-i-fail-in-business.html</a>
15.	<i>What if your business is not making it?</i>	<a href="http://smallbizsurvival.com/2011/10/what-if-your-business-is-not-making-it.html">http://smallbizsurvival.com/2011/10/what-if-your-business-is-not-making-it.html</a>
16.	<i>Knowledge as a Financial Asset</i>	<a href="http://blog.dilbert.com/post/120441834951/knowledge-as-a-financial-asset">http://blog.dilbert.com/post/120441834951/knowledge-as-a-financial-asset</a>
17.	<i>Proven Strategies for Local Lead Generation</i>	<a href="http://www.ducttapemarketing.com/blog/2015/06/24/local-lead-generation/">http://www.ducttapemarketing.com/blog/2015/06/24/local-lead-generation/</a>
18.	<i>Why Do Buyers Trust Content So Much?</i>	<a href="http://www.ducttapemarketing.com/blog/2015/05/13/content">http://www.ducttapemarketing.com/blog/2015/05/13/content</a>

.		t-sales-lion/
19	<i>Pulling a hat out of a rabbit</i>	<a href="http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/2015/06/pulling-a-hat-out-of-a-rabbit.html">http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/2015/06/pulling-a-hat-out-of-a-rabbit.html</a>
20	<i>Overpriced</i>	<a href="http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/2015/06/overpriced.html">http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/2015/06/overpriced.html</a>

The links in the table above are to 20 business blog entries for entrepreneurs that are also analyzed further on in the current paper. Taking into account that each blog author has his own writing style, blog entries have been selected from the internet randomly. To add, as the current bachelor thesis paper investigates blogs for entrepreneurs, blog articles mentioned in the table above are all related to business.

### 3.2 Quantitative Analysis of Business Blogs for Entrepreneurs

There are a lot of lexical stylistic devices that are used in business blogs. However, not all of them are used equally. The reason for this fact is that each lexical stylistic device has functions that it performs in the context. The following table provides twenty articles that not only include business language and expressions, but also lexical stylistic devices:

Not only there are lexical stylistic devices in the blogs selected, but they can be also found in the titles and even comments of blogs. One of the lexical stylistic devices which were found in the titles of the blogs analyzed is oxymoron; the example is *pulling a hat out of a rabbit*. In this example a well-known saying “to pull a rabbit out of the hat” (meaning – to produce something seemingly out of nowhere) two basic things are inversed to make a contradictive effect. Another lexical stylistic device found in the title of blogs articles selected is simile: *knowledge as a financial asset*. By putting these two important things as a simile to each other, it is clearly seen, how valuable knowledge is; even more – a person can earn money with the corresponding knowledge. Another lexical stylistic device found in the titles of business blog articles is pun – *hearpreneurship*. This is a play of words “entrepreneurship” and “to hear”, which have been put together for the purpose, that the reader hears what smart and experienced business connected people say about running a business.

To continue, lexical stylistic devices, examples found from the business blog articles and the purpose for using each lexical stylistic device are gathered in Tables below (Online 13)

Table 3.2. Metaphor

Lexical Stylistic Device	Examples	Function
<b>Metaphor</b>	<p>Have you ever stopped, taken a step back, and realized <b><u>you need a reset?</u></b> *</p> <p><b><u>I could feel myself becoming robotic*;</u></b> <b><u>I would have just jumped into creating more and more;</u></b> *</p> <p>Here are some of the realizations I had when I <b><u>took a step back;</u></b> *</p> <p>To <b><u>hear a deep dive on</u></b> the realizations and lessons learned from <b><u>my reset</u></b>, tune in to this episode of Kate’s Take! *</p> <p>A great and brilliant investor can help many companies, but if it's not a <b><u>nice fit;</u></b> *</p> <p>Whether I was up or down in terms of my positive outlook, when anyone asked what I liked most about my work, at <b><u>the top of my list</u></b> was the freedom to shape and lead business development while remaining in the comforts and structure of the larger business; *</p> <p>Someone with a lot to offer and not just another <b><u>cog in the wheel;</u></b> *</p> <p>The mindset shift alone removes you from the reactive <b><u>"do" loop and puts you in the driver's seat of your personal business.</u></b> *</p> <p>And when we do <b><u>make bets, they’re small bets on incremental products;</u></b> *</p> <p>I decided to put together this infographic with my top tips and hacks to help you manage <b><u>the inbox madness</u></b> and become <b><u>an insanely productive entrepreneur</u></b> (this one is more like a case of irony) in the process; *</p> <p>However, it is possible – <b><u>if you play your cards right;</u></b> *</p> <p>Every day, I have had so many <b><u>balls in the air that I might as well be a professional juggler;</u></b> *</p> <p>When combined with my other skill sets it probably gave me a 30% chance of earning an extra \$100,000 over my career no matter <b><u>what path I took;</u></b> *</p> <p>Oh, but if you produce useful content on a regular basis you can <b><u>leave your competition in the dust;</u></b></p>	<p>Compares two different things in a figurative sense. (Unlike in a simile - A is like B.) Used to engage and encourage reader.</p>

	* Leads are <b><u>the life-blood of your</u></b> marketing efforts;	
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Table 3.3. Irony

Lexical Stylistic Device	Examples	Function
<b>Irony</b>	<p>It's understandable, perhaps even inevitable, to walk away from events like South by Southwest with the impression that <b><u>entrepreneurs must persuade investors to write them a big fat check</u></b> in order to succeed in today's start-up world;</p> <p>*</p> <p>In many cases, it's as much about validation as it is the money and with some of the most renowned investors strolling the streets of Austin in search of <b><u>hot new companies</u></b>, you could be forgiven for assuming something must be wrong when a new company mentions <b><u>it's – gasp – self-funded</u></b>;</p> <p>*</p> <p>You know, <b><u>the funny hand tools mechanics use for all sorts of little jobs. The kind of thing nobody makes a tool for</u></b>, so mechanics modify their own tool or they make something themselves;</p> <p>*</p> <p><b><u>Real estate, fine art and start up investments have something in common: the good ones always seem too expensive when we have a chance to buy them. (And so do the lame ones, actually).</u></b></p> <p>*</p> <p><b><u>Everything is overpriced. Until it's not.</u></b></p>	Used to achieve a humorous effect.

Table 3.3. Personification

Lexical Stylistic Device	Examples	Function
<b>Personification</b>	<p><b><u>A</u></b>lighthearted brand voice;</p> <p>*</p> <p><b><u>More agile competitors are starting to eat into</u></b> our business;</p> <p>*</p> <p>So many 'productive entrepreneurs' continue to be</p>	By representing animals, inanimate objects or abstractions as having human characteristics make a narration more

	bogged down <b><u>by the never ending abuse that their inboxes battle with;</u></b>	interesting and lively.
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*Table 3.4. Oxymoron*

Lexical Stylistic Device	Examples	Function
<b>Oxymoron</b>	<b><u>Pulling a hat out of a rabbit</u></b>	Creates humor or additional meaning by using two contradictory terms together.

*Table 3.5. Simile*

Lexical Stylistic Device	Examples	Function
<b>Simile</b>	There are days where I'd have five meetings back to back, <b><u>keeping me bouncing like a ping pong ball all over the Bay Area.</u></b>	Used to compare two things and to highlight the similarity/difference between them.

*Table 3.6. Hyperbole*

Lexical Stylistic Device	Examples	Function
<b>Hyperbole</b>	<b><u>I'd been working on for a long time – months and months of creating, planning, setting up, delegating;</u></b> * <b><u>I've worked with thousands of entrepreneurs over the years.</u></b>	Used to get the audience's attention and make them curious; also to introduce a new area of discussion.

*Table 3.7. Synecdoche*

Lexical Stylistic Device	Examples	Function
<b>Synecdoche</b>	No previous relationship is necessarily required for them <b><u>to write a check</u></b> , but putting forth the effort to establish a rapport makes a world of difference; * And no one in this day and age wants <b><u>to give away a cent</u></b> until they see something firm; * "However, it's important that entrepreneurs think carefully about who they take money from and consider what value-add investors can provide <b><u>beyond just writing cheque;</u></b>	Used to generalize or specify a part, a member or a characteristic of what is meant.

	<p>* It's understandable, perhaps even inevitable, to walk away from events like South by Southwest with the impression that <b><u>entrepreneurs must persuade investors to write them a big fat check</u></b> in order to succeed in today's start-up world;</p>	
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Table 3.8. Pun

Lexical Stylistic Device	Examples	Function
<b>Pun</b>	<b>Hearpreneurship</b>	Used to add profound meaning to texts and shape the way in which the text is interpreted by the readers

For the purpose of **qualitative analysis** the lexical stylistic devices were analyzed according to their meaning and function in a descending order of frequency.

As regards the findings, the main functions of metaphors in the selected blog articles are two: to allow the reader of the blog article to better understand the concept, object, or character being described. That has been achieved by comparing it to an item that is more familiar to the reader. For example, “*however, it is possible – **if you play your cards right**”*. In this example a hard situation is mentioned, however it can be solved, if everything is done smart, step by step.

The functions of using irony in business blog articles are to bring about some added meanings to a situation and what is important –in a polite way. This humorous way also creates a connection between the author and reader. Here is an example of irony found in business blog articles: “You know, **the funny hand tools mechanics use for all sorts of little jobs. The kind of thing nobody makes a tool for,** so mechanics modify their own tool or they make something themselves”.

The reason behind using synecdoche is that it emphasizes specific part of the thing or person it represents, meanwhile lowering the importance of the thing itself. This example: ” *It's understandable, perhaps even inevitable, to walk away from events like South by Southwest with the impression that **entrepreneurs must persuade investors to write them a big fat check** in order to succeed in today's start-up world* shows that although there is a problem, there is one and the most important thing to do to solve the problem.

### 3.3 Quantitative analysis and findings

This subchapter deals with the frequency of lexical stylistic devices found in 20 selected and analyzed business blog articles for entrepreneurs.

In broad terms, quantitative analysis is simply a way of measuring things. In the current quantitative analysis the lexical stylistic devices used in 20 blog articles have been counted to learn the frequency of their usage, to approve the most and the least popular lexical stylistic device in the business blog articles selected.

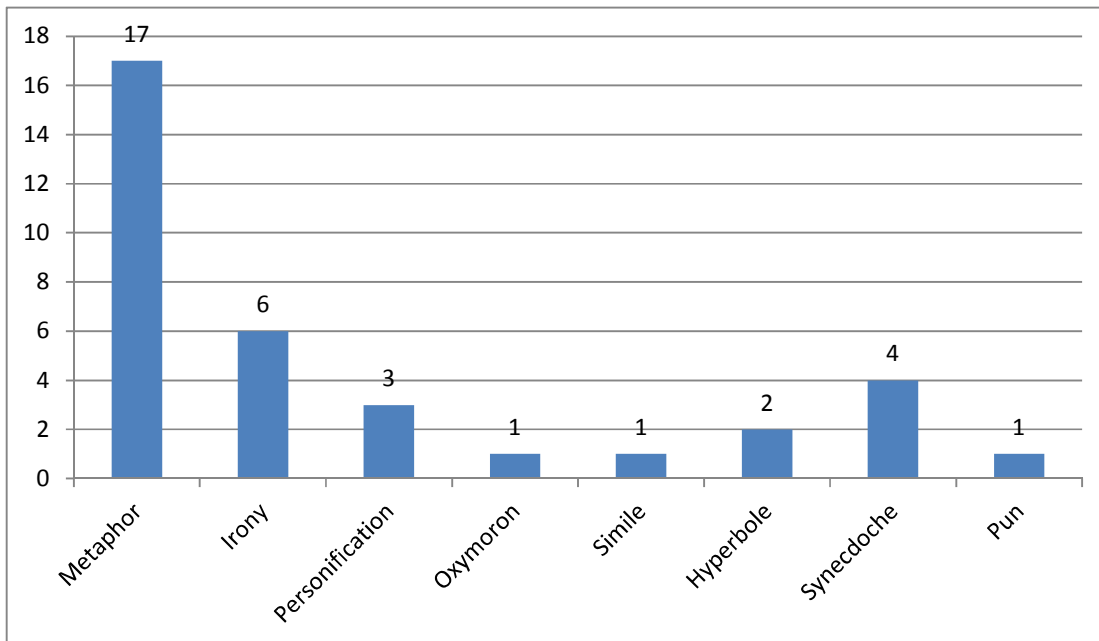


Figure 3.1. Frequency of lexical stylistic devices in business blogs

Figure 3.1 shows that the most popular lexical stylistic device used in the selected blog articles is metaphor – used 17 times. It is also a well-known fact that metaphor is the most often used lexical stylistic device in both – written and spoken discourse. The second most popular lexical stylistic device in the current analysis is irony. The third place takes synecdoche and only after that comes personification. Also, in the blog articles, which were looked at in the conducted analysis, 2 hyperboles were found as well as pun, simile and oxymoron – each for 1 time. The other lexical stylistic devices from the classification mentioned in the theoretical part: metonymy, zeugma, epithet, periphrasis, were not found at all in the current analysis. In addition, 35 lexical stylistic devices were found in 20 blog articles.

Taking this into account, it can be observed that various lexical stylistic devices were used in the business related blog articles investigated. There were 8 lexical stylistic devices found from all 13 classified in the Chapter I. Of course, this number is lower than it is, for example, in poetry. However, this is still an improvement that the language used in the blog articles investigated is figurative.

## CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this research paper was to analyse the use of lexical stylistic devices in business blog articles for entrepreneurs in terms of form, frequency and function. The following enabling objectives were put forward: reviewing theoretical literature available on lexical stylistic devices and their types; studying relevant literature on business discourse, specifically on blogs and blogging; selecting business blog articles for entrepreneurs and classifying lexical stylistic devices used in the selected blog articles; drawing relevant conclusions.

Lexical stylistic devices are a part of language stylistics. By using these expressive means, people make language more vivid and colorful. However, not always people realize that they use a specific device. To notice these devices in a written or spoken discourse, a person has to have a specific linguistic knowledge.

The literature review contributed the language stylistics and figurative language has been studied thoroughly. However, there are a few researchers analyzing particularly the use of lexical stylistic devices in business blogs for entrepreneurs.

The empirical research showed that there were 35 stylistic devices in the corpus of 20 blog articles found. However, just the half of lexical stylistic devices mentioned in literature review, were common in business blog articles. As regards to the functions, of lexical stylistic devices used in blog articles, each function is used for different purpose as well as it creates different functions. The most frequent functions of lexical stylistic devices found in the selected business blog articles are: to add profound meaning, to emphasize something, and the most important- to attract readers' attention.

The most frequently used lexical stylistic device in the selected business blog articles for entrepreneurs was metaphor as it was found in 17 of them. Metaphor's main function is to attract attention and to emphasize the importance of the idea. As far as the author is concerned, oxymoron is used to create humor by putting together two contradicting things.

As regards the hypothesis that has been formed at the beginning of the research, the author of the current Bachelor Thesis paper believes that hypothesis is proven as the research revealed that the most common function of the use of lexical stylistic devices in business blogs is to attract attention.

The most important limitation of the present research might be the number of business blogs that were selected for the analysis. To draw more precise conclusions a larger corpus of business blogs should be analyzed.

There is room for further investigation of the topic, as a larger corpus of text and a different classification might be used for further research.

## **THESES**

1. The blog posts are more personal than articles in business journals and magazines.
2. The business blogs are oriented on a wide public of professional and non-professional audience.
3. Business blogs for entrepreneurs help the entrepreneurs earn money.
4. The register of the business blogs is neutral.
5. The most popular of the lexical stylistic devices among business bloggers are metaphors.
6. The least popular of the lexical stylistic devices used by business bloggers are mixed and absolute metaphors, pun, anaphora and allusion.
7. Comments as well as links are an integral part of a blog.
8. Even though language stylistics in business discourse has been studied, there has been little research focusing precisely on lexical stylistic devices in blogging.
9. During the empirical analysis there were 35 lexical stylistic devices found in 20 blog articles for entrepreneurs.
10. Lexical stylistic devices have various functions; the main function is to attract the reader's attention.

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## APPENDIX 1

**Reset** (<http://www.entrepreneuronfire.com/reset/>)

*Have you ever stopped, taken a step back, and realized you need a reset?*

*That was me a few weeks ago: I could feel myself becoming robotic in my business, which is the absolute last thing I want to be.*

*What made me stop to even think about it?*

*Well, I had just finished a big project that I'd been working on for a long time – months and months of creating, planning, setting up, delegating. Suddenly, it was “done”, and I almost felt like I was at a loss for what to do.*

*I thought what would get me back on track was to start another project, and that's when I realized that running a business and feeling productive isn't just about starting project after project. It's about taking purposeful action in order to create meaningful content for your audience – something I wouldn't have been doing if I would have just jumped into creating more and more.*

### **Realizations**

*Here are some of the realizations I had when I took a step back:*

- *I was obsessed with “doing”;*
- *I wasn't taking time out to learn new things;*
- *Because I wasn't learning, I was having trouble teaching new content;*
- *I didn't feel productive unless I was creating something.*

### **Lessons learned**

*Here are some of the lessons learned from my reset:*

- *Doing doesn't = being productive;*
- *Just because something doesn't feel productive doesn't mean the end result won't be positive;*
- *Some learning is about straight consumption;*
- *Quality over quantity.*

*To hear a deep dive on the realizations and lessons learned from my reset, tune in to this episode of Kate's Take! (The audio play is just at the top of this post).*

**Why the Best Marketing Campaigns Put Customer Experience First**

(<http://www.convinceandconvert.com/social-media-case-studies/put-customer-experience-first/>)

*As part of JetBlue’s mission to inspire humanity at every touch point, the company recently took a unique approach to activating an interactive storefront display in New York City. On the outside, people saw what looked like an interactive holographic display with options to learn more about JetBlue’s offerings with pre-recorded answers from a JetBlue crewmember.*

*However, once people started to interact with the display, a live “bait and switch” took place, with the crewmember responding to questions and posing some unique ones of her own all in real-time. Dubbed “A Better Wingman,” the experience was designed to showcase how JetBlue brings award-winning customer service to new heights.*

*The end results of JetBlue’s activation are pretty hilarious. As seen in the video, even though people realized this wasn’t an ordinary interactive display, many played along, even going to extreme lengths. Those patient enough to play along received free airline vouchers and a hug from the crewmember who came out from inside the display.*

*The display generated more than 2,600 unique participants over one weekend, and the video is currently at over 19,000 views on YouTube. The company partnered with both Pearl Media and Mullen Lowe U.S. as part of the activation.*

*JetBlue is also leveraging social media to extend this campaign around the hashtag #JetBlueWingman with additional content not featured in the initial video.*

*Ultimately, what makes this campaign so unique is how it speaks to the human experience. JetBlue is known for delivering incredible customer service and alighthearted brand voice, both of which come to life in this activation. While the interactions were humorous, the company was also able to highlight core differentiators like extra legroom and unlimited snacks in a way that was uniquely JetBlue.*

*Now, more than ever, companies are defined by the customer experience they deliver at every touchpoint.<sup>10</sup> (highlight to tweet) JetBlue’s campaign is a great reminder that we should err on the side of humanity and go beyond simply marketing to creating amazing customer experiences.*

*Get more content like this, plus the very BEST marketing education, totally free. Get our Definitive email newsletter.*

## **The 4 Things No One Tells You About Funding**

<http://www.inc.com/adam-fridman/the-4-things-no-one-tells-you-about-funding.html>

*The idea of securing funding for a startup is incredibly exciting. In fact, it's downright exhilarating. Investors making large offers to make dreams come true, entrepreneurs launching new companies - it's an exciting scene. The problem, though, is that this glamorous image is about two percent of the overall process. Securing funding takes a staggering amount of work, which is glossed over by most people. Here are four things that people seem to forget when talking about funding.*

### **1. It's All About Personal Relationships**

*Investing is all about connections. No previous relationship is necessarily required for them to write a check, but putting forth the effort to establish a rapport makes a world of difference. Having a previous positive relationship with an investor make the entire process drastically easier. Of course, it has to be a professional relationship - very few will give a single dollar to a friend, as it can be a massive conflict of interest and cause a few too many problems. Still, understand that it's a relationship that will likely last for quite a while and treat it as such.*

### **2. MVP Is Practically Required**

*We live in an era of changing standards, constant movement, and crowd funding, which has had a stunning impact on funding. People now want some sort of proof that what they're getting into is, well, viable, and investors really can't be swayed by mere words. A minimum viable product eases a lot of worries while also clarifying countless questions and reservations. Everyone is getting increasingly selective on what they spend their money on, and no one in this day and age wants to give away a cent until they see something firm, especially investors.*

### **3. You Can Raise Too Much**

*Let's say you pitch your new idea to an investor and they love it. You're expecting, say, \$500,000, but they cut you a check for \$1.3 million. That's excellent, right? Not necessarily. More money is great, but it raises expectations and can scare off other investors. In terms of the general public, they see a company securing massive funding and their expectations immediately go through the roof. When the final product is delivered, matching those expectations is exceptionally difficult, no matter how good the product is.*

### **4. You Have To Find The Right Investor**

*Finding the right investor is a challenge; that's well established at this point. Not just anyone will do - they absolutely have to be the right fit. A common mistake is thinking that the wrong investor is inherently a bad investor - that's not true at all. A great and brilliant investor can help many companies, but if it's not a nice fit, the best investor in the world can only do so much. Instead, take the extra time to make sure that they understand and fully connect with your idea. Think of Russ Hanneman from the ever-poignant Silicon Valley - not all investors are right for you. "With the proliferation of equity crowd funding, angel networks, and micro-VCs over the past few years, there's an abundance of capital available to early-stage startups," says Brendan Syron, Principal at Scout Ventures, a New York based VC fund. "However, it's important that entrepreneurs think carefully about who they take money from and consider what value-add investors can provide beyond just writing a check."*

#### ***4 Steps to Being an Entrepreneur Without Quitting Your Job***

<http://www.inc.com/robin-camarote/4-steps-to-being-an-entrepreneur-without-quitting-your-job.html>

*If you swivel your chair and can see everyone your business employs, then you all collectively are the company. But if you have a staff of more than 10, some semblance (or a lot of) organization structure, and some defined roles, then you're more likely part of close-knit family of smaller business interests.*

*What's great about this sort of family in medium-to-larger organizations is that you have the opportunity to build your business within the business: a "b w/i b." Internal entrepreneurship is an underused yet amazing opportunity to create something new, pitch projects, win work, and build a following--all within the structure (and comfort) of a larger organization that is taking care of things like, um, your regular paycheck.*

*For 18 years before I started off on my own, I toyed with this internal entrepreneurial mindset--sometimes with more fervor than at other times, depending on my boss at the time and what was going on in our management consulting market. Whether I was up or down in terms of my positive outlook, when anyone asked what I liked most about my work, at the top of my list was the freedom to shape and lead business development while remaining in the comforts and structure of the larger business.*

*Being entrepreneurial from right where you are can be done--and done quite elegantly so that everyone benefits. Here's how:*

- 1. Shift your mindset. You must view yourself as an integral member of the organization--someone with a lot to offer and not just another cog in the wheel.*
- 2. Don't expect to receive or seek out anyone's approval to make this mindset shift. This decision and action is yours and yours alone.*
- 3. Compare the broader organizational objectives with your goals and your defined role. Whether you begin this exercise knowing everyone's role inside or take a little time to explore, create a list of your clients and customers, suppliers, board of directors, and consultants.*
- 4. Document your growth goals, key technologies, new test markets, and the feedback loops you will use to codify your role by making your contributions indispensable. Do a quick (personal) assessment of where your business within the business is today. Capture the baseline impact you have and begin measuring your accomplishments against your goals and those with positive ripple effects to the bigger business bottom-line.*

*Internal entrepreneurship can be empowering for you as an employee. The mindset shift alone removes you from the reactive "do" loop and puts you in the driver's seat of your personal business. Your organization wins, too. Any time someone is willing to personally invest and take ownership for their outcomes, the impact to the broader bottom line can be significant.*

## ***Fear of Failure and Lack of Speed In a Large Corporation***

<http://blogs.berkeley.edu/2015/03/11/fear-of-failure-and-lack-of-speed-in-a-large-corporation/>

*I just spent a day working with Bob, the Chief Innovation Officer of a very smart large company I'll call Acme Widgets.*

*Bob summarized Acme's impediments to innovation. "At our company we have a culture that fears failure. A failed project is considered a negative to a corporate career. As a result, few people want to start a project that might not succeed. And worse, even if someone does manage to start something new, our management structure has so many financial, legal and HR hurdles that every initiative needs to match our existing business financial metrics, processes and procedures. So we end up in "paralysis by analysis" – moving slowly to ensure we don't make mistakes and that everyone signs off on every idea (so we can spread the collective blame if it fails). And when we do make bets, they're small bets on incremental products or acquisitions that simply add to the bottom line."*

*Bob looked wistful, "Our founders built a company known for taking risks and moving fast. Now we're known for "making the numbers," living on our past successes. More agile competitors are starting to eat into our business. How can we restart our innovation culture?"*

### ***What Drives Innovation?***

*I pointed out to Bob the irony – in a large company "fear of failure" inhibits speed and risk taking while in a startup "fear of failure" drives speed and urgency.*

*If we could understand the root cause of that difference, I said, we could help Acme build a system for continuous innovation.*

*I suggested the best place to start the conversation is with the 21st century definition of a startup: A startup is a temporary organization designed to search for a repeatable and scalable business model.*

*Startups have finite time and resources to find product/market fit before they run out of money. Therefore startups trade off certainty for speed, adopting "good enough decision making" and iterating and pivoting as they fail, learn, and discover their business model*

*The corollary for a large company is: A company is a permanent organization designed to execute a repeatable and scalable business model.*

*That means in their core business, large companies have a series of knowns. They've found product/market fit (what products customers want to buy). They've learned the best distribution channel to get the product from their company to the customer. They've figured out the revenue model (subscription, license, direct sale, etc.) and how to price the product. They know the activities, resources and partners (manufacturing, regulation, IP, supply chain, etc.) – and the costs to deliver the product/service and have well defined product development and product management tools that emphasize the linear nature of shipping products to existing customers. There are financial metrics (Return on Investment, Hurdle Rate, etc.) for new product development that emphasize immediate returns. And everyone has job titles and job descriptions that describe their role in execution.*

### ***Why Execution and Innovation Need Different Tools, Cultures and Organizations***

*Talking to Bob I realized that at Acme Widgets (and in most large companies) the word "failure" was being used to describe two very different events:*

*failure in execution of a known product in known market*

*failure in searching for innovation when there are many unknowns*

*Therefore, in a large company, failure to meet a goal – revenue, product delivery, service, etc. – is a failure in execution of an individual and/or organization to perform to a known set of success criteria. In*

corporations the penalty for repeated failure on known tasks is being reassigned to other tasks or asked to leave the company.

As I sat with Bob and his innovation team, I realized that all of Acme's new product innovation initiatives were being held to the same standard as those of existing products. Acme was approaching innovation and disruptive product ideas using the same processes, procedures, schedules, and incentives within the same organizational structure and culture as its existing businesses.

No wonder innovation at Acme had stalled.

### ***The Ambidextrous Organization – Execution and Innovation***

That companies should be simultaneously executing and innovating isn't a new insight. For decades others have observed that companies needed to be ambidextrous. So while we did not lack the insight that execution and innovation need to be separate, we did lack the processes, tools, culture and organizational structures to implement it. Corporate innovation initiatives have spent decades looking at other corporate structures as models for innovation when in fact we should have been looking at startups for innovation models – and adapting and adopting them for corporate use.

That's now changed. The strategy and structure for 21st corporate innovation will come from emulating the speed, urgency, agility and low-cost, rapid experimentation of startups.

### ***What We Now Know about Corporate Innovation***

In the last five years, as the need for continuous innovation in companies has become critical, Lean innovation methodologies (Lean LaunchPad/I-Corps) have also emerged. These methods allow rapid experimentation – at startup speed – with the same rigor and discipline as traditional execution processes. Adopted by the National Science Foundation and large companies, over 1000 teams have used the process, and the resulting commercialization success speaks for itself.

But running a Lean Startup inside an organization designed for execution is an exercise in futility. Working with large corporations we've learned that innovation groups need their own structure, culture, tools (Lean, Design Thinking, etc.), metrics (validated/invalidated hypotheses, Investment Readiness Level) and processes. And both organizations – execution and innovation – need to understand that the success of the company rests on how well they can cooperate.

Bob's eyes lit up as he said, "Now I understand why innovation seemed beyond our reach. We were missing four ideas:

Accepting failure and running at speed are part of an innovation culture.

We need to separate out innovation risks from execution risks.

There are now proven Lean innovation methodologies (Lean LaunchPad/I-Corps) that we can use off the shelf in building an innovation culture without inventing our own.

We need to make sure that management no longer uses execution metrics to manage and judge our innovation teams.

### ***Lessons Learned***

In a startup "fear of failure" drives speed and urgency.

In a large company "fear of failure" inhibits speed and risk.

Innovation means experimentation in searching for a business model. Often failure is the norm not the exception.

*Innovation processes and metrics need to be different from those of the execution organizations.*

*There are proven Lean innovation methodologies that work in large existing companies.*

**7 Email Hacks That'll Turn You Into an Insanely Productive Entrepreneur [Infographic]**

<http://www.chrisducker.com/email-hacks-productive-entrepreneur/>

*Let's face it, there isn't an entrepreneur on this green earth of ours that wouldn't want to cut down the time they have to spend managing their email on a daily basis.*

*It's a subject that I've blogged about countless times, as well as covered on the podcast, too. Yet, for some reason so many 'productive entrepreneurs' continue to be bogged down by the never ending abuse that their inboxes battle with – and not all that productive in the process!*

*Nowadays, email has become the go-to source of communication. Some of us have learned to handle it in ways that doesn't stun our productivity, some haven't.*

*To help in the struggle, I decided to put together this infographic with my top tips and hacks to help you manage the inbox madness and become an insanely productive entrepreneur in the process.*

- 1. Unsubscribe from email lists*
- 2. Remove yourself from any internal company and business threads*
- 3. Use the one-click rule*
- 4. Apply the "3 sentence" rule (If you need more than 3 sentences to reply, pick up the phone.)*
- 5. Use a project management system.*
- 6. Get you email into the cloud. (The pay-off is that you can access your email anywhere from any device and you can manage it wherever you are, whenever you want)*
- 7. Stop using your inbox as your to-do list.*

## **6 Ways to Make Money While Building an Online Business**

<http://www.chrisducker.com/building-an-online-business/>

*I've worked with thousands of entrepreneurs over the years. Coaching, consulting, speaking engagements, workshops, masterminds, through my Free 7-day 'New Business' Bootcamp (if you've not signed up for instant access yet, do so today – it'll be gone soon!) – you name it, I've done it.*

*And from all the struggles and fears that I've come across, there's one that crops up more than others on a regular basis... lack of income.*

*Actually making money while you're in the process of building an online business is not as easy as many online will have you believe. However, it is possible – if you play your cards right, hustle a little, and position yourself in a market where there are people that need what you have to offer.*

*Notice how I said **need** what you have to offer – **not want**. That's the biggest 'secret'. Creating something that people truly **need** – something that solves a problem.*

*To solve the problem of coming up with ideas to work on, to help create income while building an online business, I put together this infographic, which I hope serves as a little inspiration, as well as practical guide to making money online – a topic I generally stay away from, in the broad sense of the term.*

*Bottom line is that **this is business** – we do need to be seen to sell and to be a successful business owner, you've got to make money – that simple.*

***O, entrepreneurs, most of you don't need angel investors or venture capitalists – The Washington Post***  
<http://ceoblognation.com/2015/03/no-entrepreneurs-most-of-you-dont-need-angel-investors-or-venture-capitalists-the-washington-post/>

*AUSTIN, Texas—It's understandable, perhaps even inevitable, to walk away from events like South by Southwest with the impression that entrepreneurs must persuade investors to write them a big fat check in order to succeed in today's start-up world. In many cases, it's as much about validation as it is the money and with some of the most renowned investors strolling the streets of Austin in search of hot new companies, you could be forgiven for assuming something must be wrong when a new company mentions it's – gasp – self-funded.*

*During an event in Austin on Monday, the Kauffman Foundation outlined research dispelling some of the most common myths that distort America's idea of the #business-building process, tops among them the notion that most successful start-ups raise money from outside investors. Check out the chart below, from a decade-long study the Kansas City-based research and advocacy organization conducted on more than 5,000 new firms.*

*Kauffman's researchers discovered that roughly two-thirds of the companies were financed by either personal savings, investments by friends and family or traditional loans. Only one in 10 obtained funding from venture firms or angel investors (individual start-up backers). In fact, credit cards – among the most expensive mechanisms of financing – was used more commonly by start-ups than either angel or venture funding.*

*“It's very different than the stereotypical start-up story we hear about,” Arnobio Morelix, one of the group's economic researchers, said during a presentation.*

*Now, wait. While that may be true for new companies across the entire economy – including everything from dry cleaners to law firms – it doesn't capture the importance of outside investors to those fast-growing start-ups we think of in places like Silicon Valley, right? Surely, the businesses that actually take off and grow and create jobs rely much more heavily on well-heeled investors.*

***Entrepreneurs explain what Entrepreneurship means [Hearpreneurship]***

<http://ceoblognation.com/2015/02/entrepreneurs-explain-what-entrepreneurship-means-hearpreneur/>

*Being an #entrepreneur is a source of pride. It also evidences an individual with a huge amount of discipline and focus to be able to build a #business a lot of times from just an idea. It is the ambition of an entrepreneur that built the most profitable and successful companies. The only issue is that the word entrepreneurship can often vary from person to person.*

*Some people just want to be their own boss. Although being my own boss is nice, I started on the path of Entrepreneurship because I wanted to use my ability to create value for myself and others without requiring permission from anyone else. As a result, becoming an Entrepreneur meant empowering myself with the responsibility to succeed. I also see entrepreneurship as a process of creating financial and personal freedom through the creation and growth of a business. Don't become an entrepreneur if you want less responsibility.*

### **3 Productivity Hacks for Launching a Business While Holding Down a Day Job**

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/246807>

*Launching a business is incredibly time-consuming. It's even more challenging when you're holding down a full-time job. With only 24 hours in the day, how can you manage your time so that you can fulfill your existing personal and professional commitments while dedicating the time required to launch your business?*

*For the past year, I have struggled with this problem myself. Every day, I have had so many balls in the air that I might as well be a professional juggler. To survive this period and be effective, an entrepreneur-with-a-job needs a system to identify the best use of his or her time; otherwise life will spiral out of control, causing burnout.*

*I found my own system by seeking counsel from my mentor, and discovered the following three productivity hacks for launching a business while holding down a day job:*

*1. Ask yourself the right questions ahead of time.*

*Every night before you go to bed, sit down with a blank sheet of paper and ask yourself the following questions, then write the answers down:*

*What are the highest income and impact actions I can take for my day job?*

*What are the highest income and impact actions I can take for my new business?*

*What are the highest impact actions I can take for my relationships with my family and friends?*

*What are the highest impact actions I can take for myself personally?*

*2. Prioritize.*

*By this step, you have a list of the highest income and impact actions you need to take. Many people would just start taking action on the list, but to be effective and ensure that the right things are being done, you should first prioritize them.*

*Your goal is to get the maximum results with the minimum effort required. To do this, ask yourself: "If I could complete only one thing on this list by the end of tomorrow, what would that one thing be that would make me feel like the day was a success?" Then repeat this process, assuming the first task has been completed, until your list is fully prioritized.*

*3. Block your time.*

*If you were to complete just steps 1 and 2, you would likely see gains in your productivity. However, the reality is that there are more items on your list than can be done in a day, not to mention the infinite distractions you'll find will constantly threaten your productivity.*

*For my part, as I began these steps, I constantly felt scattered and was still not getting things done to my satisfaction. The solution came during my interview with Jay Papasan for my podcast *The Mentee*.*

*Papasan and his partner Gary Keller of Keller Williams wrote about the concept of "time blocking" in their book *The One Thing*, which I recommend.*

*You are probably already used to scheduling important meetings in your calendar. Time blocking just means doing the same thing: making appointments with yourself to accomplish the vital actions you identified in Step 2.*

*By proactively blocking off your time, you can move through your day with the confidence that every item on your calendar will be the best use of your time and will generate the maximum results. I saw the biggest*

*productivity gains because I stopped having to ask, "What should I be doing next?"*

*It was already decided. And I didn't get distracted and end up checking email or social media. I would simply look to my calendar, see what the next "appointment" was and take action.*

*At the point at which you become disciplined in implementing these three productivity hacks, you will find yourself accomplishing more in one day than you did the whole entire week before.*

*These three hacks are not earth-shattering, of course. But like anything in business, the results lie in your ability to take action and execute. You just invested your most valuable resource, your time, to read this article.*

*Will you next ensure a return on your investment by taking action and implementing what you just read? For those of you who do, I'm confident you will be pleased with the results.*

## **6 Benefits of Writing Job Descriptions for Your Business**

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/247829>

*No law requires business owners to have written job descriptions for the positions in their companies. They take time to write -- and time is precious for businesses.*

*On the other hand, job descriptions can be very useful. Job descriptions are the result of analysis -- the process of identifying and determining the particular duties and requirements and the relative importance of these duties for a given position. Once you have determined the duties and requirements you can write a job description, but you can also use the document to:*

### *1. Write job ads and interview questions.*

*The first step in finding the right employee is to know what you need. Performing job analysis and writing a job description will help you to determine exactly what skills, experience, cognitive capabilities and behaviors you want in your new employee. Once you have determined these specifics, you can use them to write your job ad and interview questions.*

### *2. Develop new employee orientation.*

*Fully understanding the job duties can help you to make sure that nothing is left out when you put together the orientation plan for your new hire. The job description provides you a list of essential and secondary duties. It gives you a complete picture. It will prompt you to remember the daily tasks and those that are performed less frequently as well as the individuals the employee will interact with.*

### *3. Create training and development specific to the needs of the job.*

*What do you need to teach your employee to do? You know the skills your employee has. A job description outlines the skills required by the job. What better way to identify gaps between the two? What skills or experience does the employee need to acquire to be able to move into another job? Job descriptions can help you to identify development needs.*

### *4. Determine compensation and other rewards.*

*Before you can decide how much you should pay for a particular position, you need to know what is required to perform the job. Job analysis will help you think through education requirements, specific skills and licenses, levels and length of experience. All of these effect compensation.*

### *5. Manage performance.*

*Managing employee performance is easier if you have thought through the job requirements. In addition, many job descriptions will list performance expectations. For example, you may write that the employee will answer the phone, within three rings, using a specific greeting and a pleasant voice.*

### *6. Decrease liability.*

*The Americans with Disabilities Act, The Family Medical Leave Act, The Fair Labor Standards Act and Worker's Compensation all rely on knowing what an employee must be able to do and/or under what conditions they work. These include, but are not limited to, essential job functions, when an employee can return to work from an injury or illness, whether a job is exempt and what physical or environmental conditions the employee can expect to experience on the job. Having your jobs documented can help to*

*protect the organization and give guidance to employees and their physicians when necessary.*

*While you are not required to have written job descriptions, doing so can make many of the human resources aspects of running your small business easier. If you need help, look for an experienced HR professional who can assist you in the process.*

### **How I Met 75 Investors and Raised \$650,000**

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/246980>

*In June of 2012, my startup Love With Food -- which helps food companies build brand awareness online and off -- raised \$650,000 following graduation from the 500 Startups accelerator program.*

*Sounds great, right? But if you think fundraising was a piece of cake because we were a 500 alum, think again. In fact those three months were painful and filled with discouragement. They were physically exhausting. And along the way, I constantly had to battle my own thoughts that I was a failure. I had to defend myself against others' doubts that I couldn't succeed because I didn't have an Ivy League education or wasn't qualified in other ways to run a startup. I was at the brink of giving up countless times.*

*In the end, however, I pitched to 75 investors and raised more money than we even needed. I also learned some valuable lessons and tips that not only helped me with that first round three years ago, but have helped me raise additional funds since.*

#### **1. Get your company on to the Angel List.**

*Get on to the Angel List. I can't stress enough how important it is to have your company profiled there. After we started to trend on the List, we had many inbound interests. In the end, three investors on the Angel List invested and one of them eventually became our lead. If it hadn't been for the list, I wouldn't have met these contacts!*

#### **2. Be flexible.**

*Be ready to fly or drive to meetings at a moment's notice. There are days where I'd have five meetings back to back, keeping me bouncing like a ping pong ball all over the Bay Area. Yes, it was a lot of driving and may have felt "out of the way," but being flexible helped me get investor meetings at times that worked for them.*

#### **3. Reach out to your network.**

*I reached out to my network of entrepreneur friends and asked for intros to their investors. Everyone I reached out to was so generous. Leverage your own relationships!*

#### **4. Follow up with updates.**

*After every meeting, I wrote a thank-you email and in the following weeks continued to provide updates and progress to potential investors. This is of paramount importance in fundraising. It's the only way to show persistence. For an early-stage startup, there's really no good data to show. But you can show persistence. You want potential investors to see that!*

#### **5. Email potential investors once a week.**

*Investors get pitched all the time. You want to be on their radar constantly so that they won't forget you. I kept a spreadsheet with their names and our dates of interaction: when we first met; the date of my first "progress-report" email; the date of my second "progress-report" email; and so on. If I don't hear back after sending three update emails, that's usually a sign that the prospect is not interested. It's also a great way to filter out those that are really interested vs. those that are mere maybes.*

#### **6. Get current investors to make introductions for you.**

*Warm introductions are the best introductions. Your current investors want to see you reach the finish line. Get them to connect you to their other investor friends.*

#### **7. Don't be afraid to talk to the press.**

*I once basically kidnapped a TechCrunch reporter in the ladies room at Demo Day to get her to pick Love With Food as one of the Top 7 Startups at the event. She did that, and even mentioned our meeting in her article, which led two*

*investors to reach out because they liked my tenacity!*

**8. Wear your company t-shirt.**

*Be proud of your brand. There's no better way to show your passion to complete strangers. Showing people how passionate you are and how proud you are of your brand leaves a memorable impression.*

*There's no cookie cutter formula to fundraising, but I believe that the common denominator in fundraising is **perseverance**. Prove your naysayers wrong!*

***The big secret to finding new product ideas***

<http://smallbizsurvival.com/2013/03/the-big-secret-to-finding-new-product-ideas.html>

*Are you looking for new product ideas for your business? Have you asked your customers?*

*First rule of product ideas: The people in field doing the work always come up with the best ideas.*

*Lisle Corporation (Clarinda, Iowa, population 5,500) makes, among other things, automotive specialty tools. You know, the funny hand tools mechanics use for all sorts of little jobs. The kind of thing nobody makes a tool for, so mechanics modify their own tool or they make something themselves. Things like brake spring pliers, battery terminal clamp spreaders, or magnets on long telescoping handles to retrieve those bolts that always seem to mysteriously fall into unreachable locations.*

*Where do they get their ideas? They are always asking their customers. This photo is from the back of one of their product packages. Bonus points to Lisle for showing off a successful mechanic who sent them a tool idea and earned some money for it.*

*Notice that Lisle talks through the process. By talking about royalties, protecting the mechanic's idea, and the process to follow, they make it a little less intimidating.*

*Are you asking your customers for ideas? Do you pay up for the good ideas?*

***Every week, I fail in my business.***

<http://smallbizsurvival.com/2012/09/every-week-i-fail-in-business.html>

*Every business person, no matter how successful they appear, deals with failure daily. It's just a part of doing business.*

*Every week, I fail in my business.*

*I never can outguess the customers!*

*Looking in from the outside, you don't see the whole picture. A smart friend told me he's intimidated when he looks at people he considers successful in business, including me. I started listing off a few of my more notable failures, from personnel to assets, to marketing and advertising.*

*Every week of the world, I put in my stock order based on my best guess of what people will want to buy for the next week. I'm never completely correct. I get close, but there are always misses and sometimes horrible mistakes. It's just that no one sees them, except for the hole in the shelf.*

*But from the outside, you don't see it that way. You think it's all planned and precise, when I know that it's really messy.*

*My weekly stock ordering failures remind me that failure is a constant in business. If you're not committing some errors and experiencing some failures, you're probably not doing anything.*

*Don't be afraid of the failures. They are the only way you can learn and grow.*

***What if your business is not making it?***

<http://smallbizsurvival.com/2011/10/what-if-your-business-is-not-making-it.html>

*Sometimes I ask the hard questions or make the hard points. This is one of those times.*

*If your business is not making it, then it is time to change something.*

*Let me share a couple of examples.*

***But I Can't Afford To! Part 1***

*When I suggested small business people delegate some tasks, one response I got was:*

*Delegate to whom? Most of the small business owners and farmers I know are owner operators and hire folks on an as needed basis. We have no full or even part time labor other than ourselves.*

*If you can, grow that business. Then let it hire, either on payroll or on contract as appropriate. You may have to change your thinking. If you have an "I'll do it all myself" attitude, you better change it.*

*Certainly, there are ways to get by for a while. Here are 10 ways to delegate without hiring, for example. But that doesn't mean you keep limping along forever. If you can't grow the business up to the point it can pay for its own help, then that business is a candidate to abandon.*

***But I Can't Afford To! Part 2***

*In another conversation, I talked about how freelancers could draw the line between what to give away and what to charge for. The discussion veered off with this comment:*

*How about entrepreneurs that can't afford to pay someone?*

*If you really can't afford to pay anyone, you need to fix your business, and fast. I realize that every entrepreneur has to be frugal, and we all go through rough patches. However, we hold on to a "can't afford to" mindset much longer than we should. We end up spending our \$100 per hour time doing \$25 per hour work.*

*Sounds harsh, I know. Sometimes reality is harsh.*

## **Knowledge as a Financial Asset**

<http://blog.dilbert.com/post/120441834951/knowledge-as-a-financial-asset>

*If someone offered you \$100,000 to take a class for a few weeks, would you do it? I believe most of you would, assuming there is nothing terrible about the class itself.*

*But if I change the offer to say you have a 30% chance of making \$100,000, would you take the class then? You should, if you need the money and you are rational. But ideally you would find a bunch of classes you could take that all have the same odds. If you take every one of the classes that have a 30% chance of giving you \$100,000, one class at a time, your odds of eventually getting the \$100,000 are good.*

*Investors know that diversifying a portfolio is the smart way to go. But does diversification have the same benefits when applied to learning? I think it does, because knowledge acts like a financial asset.*

*I have always looked at learning as money. I evaluate a topic for its economic potential, now and in the future. I have never taken a calligraphy class, for example, because in my case I don't see how it would ever provide an economic return.*

*But years ago I did take the Dale Carnegie course to learn how to become a better public speaker. When combined with my other skill sets it probably gave me a 30% chance of earning an extra \$100,000 over my career no matter what path I took. Within any group, the best public speaker often bubbles up to a leadership position.*

*I also took classes in my twenties to learn hypnosis. Trust me when I say that understanding hypnosis (and better understanding human minds) is worth more than \$100,000 over your lifetime.*

*During my corporate career I signed up for a two-day class on business writing. I didn't know it at the time, but business writing is almost the same as humor writing. In both cases you leave out the useless words and get to the point. That class was easily worth \$100,000 to me because I would have used that skill no matter my career path. And it makes a BIG difference in how people view you.*

*My point is that some types of learning are so valuable that they should be ranked by their economic potential. In California, for example, being fluent in Spanish and English is probably worth more than \$100,000 over a career, on average.*

*Knowing how to do A-B testing on a website is probably worth \$100,000 a year.*

*Learning how to eat right and exercise right is probably worth more than \$100,000 because we know that a person's appearance influences opportunities. As a bonus, you will be healthier, more energetic, and smarter if you are healthier. That stuff can translate into economic value over time.*

*I could go on, but you get the point: Knowledge can be ranked by economic potential. And doing so would change how people approach the "extra" learning after formal schooling is done.*

*It seems to me that one could create a software service that would evaluate what skills you already have, along with your location, age, and other relevant economic factors, and create a learning plan that would give you the greatest odds of higher income later.*

*[Side note: This is a system, as opposed to a goal, because you are improving your odds without knowing where it leads.]*

*This way of thinking is why I almost never read fiction. One could make an argument that all reading is good for you, and any sort of mental stimulation can translate into economic potential. But I can't justify reading something with low economic potential when I could be reading something that has greater odds of being useful with my skill set.*

*My hypothesis is that successful people see knowledge as a financial asset and manage it that way. They create portfolios of knowledge that make sense as a whole. You could call that a systems-view.*

*People who are struggling (per this hypothesis) are more likely to see the world in terms of goals. A goal-oriented person would not take a class that has unpredictable future benefits when that time could be used instead to focus on a specific goal.*

*So I put the question to you. Do you see learning as a system in which you create a diversified portfolio of knowledge that makes sense in your situation?*

*Or do you learn what you need when you need it? Let's call that a goal-oriented approach.*

***Proven Strategies for Local Lead Generation***

<http://www.ducttapemarketing.com/blog/2015/06/24/local-lead-generation/>

*Every local-based business wants to improve their local lead generation process. Leads are the life-blood of your marketing efforts. The best salespeople can convert those leads into sales, but without leads even the best sales force on the planet can't bring you more business.*

*That is why lead generation is one of my favorite subjects to discuss, and the topic of a new book from a group of my friends and Duct Tape Marketing Certified Consultants called **Local Lead Generation: Proven Tips to Help Grow Your Business**.*

*My guests for this week's episode of the Duct Tape Marketing Podcast are Mark Z. Fortune and Kevin Jordan, Certified Duct Tape Marketing Consultants and co-authors (among others) of **The Small Business Owner's Guide to Local Lead Generation: Proven Strategies and Tips to Grow Your Business**. We discuss the new book, how to improve your total online presence.*

***Why Do Buyers Trust Content So Much?***

<http://www.ducttapemarketing.com/blog/2015/05/13/content-sales-lion/>

*Today, educational content is the price of admission. If you're not consistently producing high quality, useful content that addresses the questions, concerns and needs of your prospects and customers there's a really good chance you won't get found, won't stand out and won't garner the kind of trust needed to make a sale.*

*Oh, but if you produce useful content on a regular basis you can leave your competition in the dust – particularly if you're in one of those industries where “nobody blogs.”*

*My guest for this week's episode of the Duct Tape Marketing Podcast is “The Sales Lion” Marcus Sheridan, one of the most sought-after speakers on the topic of content marketing. He is also the owner of River Pools and Spas.*

*Sheridan did not start out as a content marketing expert. He started out as a guy trying to figure out how not to go bankrupt trying to sell swimming pools. What he discovered, and soon latched on to, was that pool buyers had lots of questions, lots of concerns and did lots of research. When he started producing content that addressed all of the above, he saw traffic, leads and eventually sales begin to spike.*

*Sheridan got so good at inbound and content marketing that his pool business became one of the biggest in the region and eventually people started asking him to come tell them how he did.*

*Plain and simple – a commitment to consistently producing high quality, useful information and then making content everyone's job.*

***Pulling a hat out of a rabbit***

[http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths\\_blog/2015/06/pulling-a-hat-out-of-a-rabbit.html](http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/2015/06/pulling-a-hat-out-of-a-rabbit.html)

*It's tempting to do what's been done before, certain in the belief that if you do it, it'll be a little better and a little more popular, merely because you're the one doing it.*

*In fact, though, that's unlikely. You'll care more, but it's unlikely the market will.*

*Consider the alternative, which is choosing to turn the question upside down, to do it backwards, sideways, or in a significantly more generous or risky way.*

*Remarkable often starts with the problem you set out to solve and the way you choose to solve it.*

**Overpriced**

[http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths\\_blog/2015/06/overpriced.html](http://sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog/2015/06/overpriced.html)

*Things that are going up in value almost always appear to be overpriced.*

*Real estate, fine art and start up investments have something in common: the good ones always seem too expensive when we have a chance to buy them. (And so do the lame ones, actually).*

*That New York condo that's going for \$8 million? You didn't buy it when it was only a tenth that, when it was on a block where no one wanted to live. Of course, if everyone saw what was about to happen, it wouldn't have been for sale at the price being offered.*

*And you could have bought stock in (name company here) for just a dollar or two, but back then, no one thought they had a chance... which is precisely why the stock was so cheap.*

*And the lousy investments also seem overpriced, because they are.*

*Investments don't always take cash. They often require our effort, our focus, or our commitment. And the good ones always seem like they take too much, until later, when we realize what a bargain that effort would have been.*

*The challenge isn't in finding an overlooked obvious bargain that people didn't notice. The challenge is in learning to tell the difference between the ones that feel overpriced and the ones that actually are.*

*The insight is that when dealing with the future, there's no right answer, no obvious choice—everything is overpriced. Until it's not.*