

# GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF INTRAPRENEURS

Drakkar & Partners is a company that relies heavily on intrapreneurship. As a true incubator, Drakkar & Partners has fostered the development of several intraprises, including Trinet Transportation and Trinet Express. The enterprise's journey within the Intrapreneurial Initiative all began when company co-founder, Michel Blaquière, detected the qualities of a good intrapreneur in his son Nicolas.



## Drakkar & Partners: A Birthplace for Successful Intraprises

Over 25 years ago, Denis Deschamps and Michel Blaquière created Drakkar & Partners; today, the company is renowned for its specialized recruitment and strategic operational outsourcing services. Through active development, dynamic growth, and the creation of numerous divisions, Drakkar & Partners has grown to employ more than 1,200 people.

Drakkar & Partners has pushed for many intrapreneurial projects and their success is not due to chance — the company's management approach is clearly outlined in the organization's charter of values and oriented toward risk-taking, creative improvement, and empowering innovative ideas: *Achieving excellence through the desire to innovate and to surpass ourselves*. By focusing on intrapreneurship as a tool to re-energize their company, Drakkar & Partners has been able to capitalize on numerous business opportunities and remain at the forefront of their industry, while motivating employees and keeping competition at bay.

# Drakkar

## A Visionary Father & Determined Son

Nicolas's journey in the family business began when his father Michel Blaquière detected his motivation, ambition, and drive. In order to learn and understand all aspects of the business, Nicolas worked for numerous years in various departments ranging from Human Resources, Sales and Logistics, and at the young age of 23, he launched an intraprise of the family business: Trinet Lost & Ship.

## Trinet Lost & Ship

Finding a lost item has never been so quick and easy: Trinet Lost & Ship helps people find and ensure the return of their lost or forgotten items at hotels in a simple and inexpensive way. Everyone has experienced that feeling of forgetting a valuable or sentimental item, so Nicolas created a mobile application to offer a solution to this common problem. In a few quick and easy steps, the app's user can register a lost or forgotten item. Not only does the app take inventory of items, but it also offers delivery of the item as a part of its array of services.

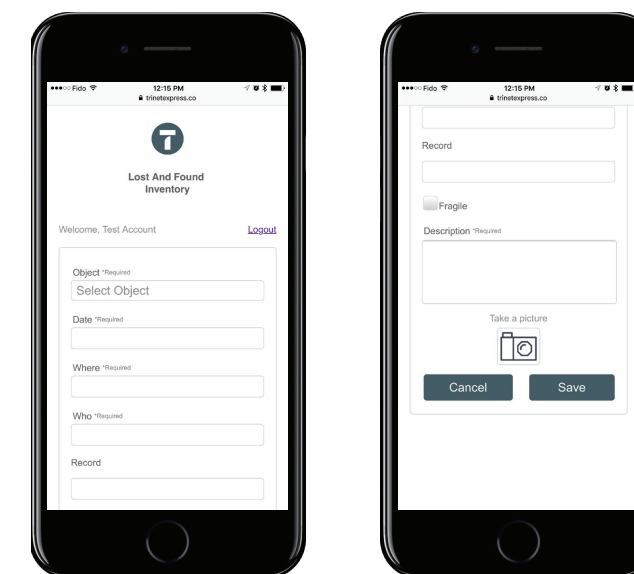
Trinet Lost & Ship has been able to simplify the management of lost items, save time, and offer extremely competitive prices by taking advantage of the resources from its parent company, Trinet Express, by capitalizing on their existing transportation services.

## Michel and Nicolas's Intrapreneurial Experience

Nicolas participated in the first cohort of the Intrapreneurial Program with his father, Michel, as his mentor. From the beginning, the program helped the intrapreneurial duo connect through their values, ambitions and objectives, and facilitated project guidance in weekly meetings. They were exposed to a network of entrepreneurial experts and received coaching and consulting for best practices throughout the intraprise-creation process. Of all the tools provided, Nicolas found a lot of value in the Business Model Canvas, which enabled him to establish a concrete structure and identify his key priorities for beginning the project. Nicolas was also able to adapt, review, and rework his business model in real time amongst his peers and with seasoned experts, which helped create an end product, Trinet Lost & Ship, optimized for success.



Aside from the obvious training aspects that the Program offers, it also helps two generations face each other and find the keys to successful intergenerational communication.



**Trinet**  
Lost & Ship

## Project Development and Journey Within the Cohort

Nicolas began his journey as a mentee eager to learn and motivated to succeed, with his father Michel as his mentor. With the evolution of the project, it made sense for the Director of Operations at Trinet Express to step in as Nicolas's next mentor so that they could complete the application's development. Nicolas still maintained weekly meetings with his father and attributes his entrepreneurial inspiration to him.

Thanks to the guidance and support of the Intrapreneurial Initiative, Nicolas was able to add a new dimension to his initial project without altering the core, and was able to create a solid foundation to launch his app and maximize its chances of long-term success. Nicolas was also able to keep his father's corporate vision and the parent company's values of excellence, passion, collaboration and determination preserved.

## FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HER FAMILY

Chanel Alepin followed in the footsteps of her family and became a lawyer at the Alepin Gauthier law firm. She participated in the first intrapreneurial cohort with her father, François Alepin, founder of the firm. Her career path, as well as her personal experience enriched her appreciation of the Intrapreneurship Initiative, and allowed her to view her project with a fresh perspective.



As a co-founder of *Groupe La Relève*, Chanel was already familiar with Business Families Foundation, as they are partners. It was through this connection that she learned of the Intrapreneurial Initiative. Chanel was eager to join the program when she saw the services being offered and the commitment of the people involved. In her words, "You have to have a project or an idea of a project to take part, so, in my case, I jumped in feet first". In addition to these important features, she believes that Business Families Foundation has a unique ability to understand the family business environment and the particular context that provides. This was enough to compel her to embark on this business venture with her father's guidance and sponsorship. When asked how she chose her father as a mentor, Chanel explained "although my brother Maxime, and my mother Brigitte are also there, I collaborate more closely with my father on a daily basis. Additionally, the intra-company project was more closely aligned with his field of expertise."

### Chanel's Intrapreneurial Adventure

For Chanel, meeting colleagues from varied fields who could relate to the realities of a family business was invaluable experience. She credits the Intrapreneurial Initiative with providing equal and valuable support, as much for the intrapreneur as for the sponsor. In her opinion, this is the greatest strength of the program. The ability to see both



sides of the issue and provide expertise is what sets this program apart. The strength of the network is evidenced by the commitment of the people involved.

Being challenged on the viability of her project, and on its synergies, proved to be very constructive and pushed her to be adequately prepared. "Some will say that the Initiative leads us to far more challenges, but from my point of view, it's a real gift. It compels us to adjust our thinking and anticipate any future concerns that our prospective customers may have."

At times Chanel was tempted to believe "I don't have the time to develop such an extensive project" but with support from the Initiative and support, her project continued to evolve, and she was able to develop it under the best working conditions.

### The *Bras Droit* service

Having always wanted to get involved in her parents law firm, Chanel completed the bar exam, required by the professional order, "This obviously added an extra stress, but it gives us that legitimacy within the firm". Once this step was completed, Chanel joined the Alepin Gauthier team. Being somewhat of a visionary, she quickly saw an opportunity to get more involved and improve certain services offered to the clientele of the firm. Hence, the *Bras Droit* service was born in January 2018. *Bras Droit* offers unlimited legal support and quick access to advice at a fixed annual rate.

The Initiative responds to current modern day issues: "Our project is truly innovative with its unlimited character. To be honest, if I had talked to my father about this project in 1978, he would have said 'We are not doing that. It will be the end for the firm.' But today, I can proudly say, he thinks differently."

Well aware of the realities of the market and the legal world, the pair have received much praise for their intrapreneurial management focus. Benefiting from the resources of the parent company has allowed Chanel to have access to an abundance of history and data. It has saved them valuable time in the course of the project development: "For example, for *Bras Droit*, we launched a pilot project with 10 clients of the family law firm. We would not have had access to these 10 clients without intrapreneurship." For Chanel, the additional access to material resources greatly facilitated the process. Therefore, she elected to go one step further and invest her own financial resources in the project.

"Our project is truly innovative with its unlimited character. To be honest, if I had talked to my father about this project in 1978, he would have said 'We are not doing that. It will be the end for the firm.' But today, I can proudly say, he thinks differently."

### Succession and Intrapreneurship, Two Related Notions

For Chanel, Intrapreneurship opened the door to many opportunities in her family business and she believes that it has the power to do the same for many other family businesses as well. Whether it be through information sessions, brochures about the Intrapreneurial Initiative, or creative idea building sessions, there is always a resource to help families learn more and discover whether the Intrapreneurial Initiative is the right fit for their business.

According to this young lawyer, there is no doubt that intrapreneurship creates jobs and brings concrete answers

"From the team, experts and coaches through to the guest speakers, everyone is truly passionate about their involvement."

to short-term problems. However, not everyone can be an entrepreneur or an intrapreneur: "Intrapreneurship helps to build confidence in one's abilities and entrepreneurial skills, but it does not create entrepreneurs, it simply reveals them."

Chanel is the perfect example of intrapreneurial success within a family business. She demonstrates that through her career path, her project, and her ambition, the next generation can indeed find their passion within intrapreneurship. By creating their own projects, while relying on the support of a parent company, success is much more likely for a new venture and family solidarity is strengthened. She says, without any hesitation: "If you have an idea that you are incubating, and you want to bring it to life, there is no better place than the Intrapreneurial Initiative, especially for family businesses."



# INNOVATION IS HER DRIVING FORCE

As a young woman in business, Marie-Hélène took the reins of the North American division of *Composites VCI*, a company run by her father and two other shareholders.



Having participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort of the Intrapreneurial Initiative, Marie-Hélène's main focus was to ensure the succession of the company with her innovative management style. She approached this challenge with a clear vision and a multitude of knowledge gleaned from her career, and personal experience.

## Driven to Find Innovative Solutions

Although *Composites VCI* isn't a 100% family owned business, it is founded on a non-hierarchical model in which the team evolves like a family in a relaxed, transparent and cooperative atmosphere.

*Composites VCI* invests heavily in energies such as wind and solar. Marie-Hélène recognized that in developing countries, electricity can be an unstable resource, so she identified the need to accelerate the use of alternative energies to generate electricity. This particular aspect of sustainable development within the company fascinated her, and compelled her to become increasingly involved within *Composites VCI*.

For the past 5 years, Marie-Hélène has been working hand-in-hand with engineers to find innovative and creative solutions in the Composites industry. Innovation is her driving force, and she makes sure that it is at the heart of every project and decision she makes.

## Marie-Hélène's Vision

Marie-Hélène's goal is to restructure the traditional model of the North American division. As a first step, she plans to create a sales team and create a full branch of the company dedicated to innovation. The focus will be on research and discovery of new trends, understanding and developing them, while transforming traditional elements of the business model.

In essence, her project targets 3 sectors. Namely:

- Conventional energy.
- Renewable energy.
- Aeronautics.

By focusing on innovation, the young intrapreneur intends to create added value for *Composites VCI* by creating 3D prints, which will improve their competitiveness within the industry, and thereby convince people to invest in stronger composite parts.



## Intrapreneurship, a Springboard For The Next Generation

For Marie-Hélène, a main objective of her role at *Composites VCI*, has always been clear: to manage operations so that her father, while remaining president, is able to distance himself from the day-to-day details of the business.

In her new position, Marie-Hélène sees the possibility of infusing the team with her own culture and dynamism. By including her father in her vision from the beginning, he now shows her the trust required to share in the decision making, and allows her the space she needs to innovate.

## Returning to Intrapreneurship

It had been 3 years since the subject of succession had been discussed within the company, but nothing had actually changed in the structure. After being immersed into the Intrapreneurial Initiative, all transition decisions had been made, "The intrapreneurial journey helped me identify my strengths."



## The course helped them understand how each of their strategies varied and how they could work together toward a shared vision for the future.

Marie-Hélène and her father took advantage of all the intrapreneurial expertise offered during the course through in person and online learnings, as well as consultations with industry experts. Marie-Hélène says that she truly structured her career plan and learnt how to facilitate constructive communication with her father. In short, the course helped them understand how each of their strategies varied and how they could work together toward a shared vision for the future.

For Marie-Hélène and her father, the Intrapreneurial Initiative Program was the impetus needed to begin a shift within *Composites VCI*, and acted as a catalyst for positive change.

On June 1, 2017, at the end of the 12 weeks of intrapreneurial training, Marie-Hélène became General Manager of VCI's North American division.

## "The courses helped me build confidence in my skills and truly solidified that I was in the right place."

In Marie-Hélène's own words, the program allowed her to see that she was not chosen for her role because she was the leader's daughter, but because she had real abilities and skills that made her the best candidate for the job.

She is confident that as long as she maintains her drive and ambition, along with her natural ability to motivate, listen attentively, and mediate, her project will take a prominent place in the industry. She knows that when managing a team there will always be obstacles but Marie-Hélène is now confident in her leadership skills and feels well prepared to face challenges head on!



# INNOVITECH: INNOVATION DRIVING DEVELOPMENT

Jean-Philippe Gagnon is a young man who holds the future of his family's business, Innovitech, close to heart. After obtaining a bachelor's degree in business administration, majoring in entrepreneurship, he has spent the last six years exploring a number of positions within the company, founded by his father in 1989. By working in communications and as analyst, Jean-Philippe has learned the ins and outs of being an innovation strategist — a role perfected by his parents.



## Athletc.

Jean-Philippe was always very passionate about sports, he always believed that there is more to sports than simply entertainment. After meeting with entrepreneurs and visiting research facilities from Montreal's sports industry, Jean-Philippe began to envision new markets and new opportunities to create value for Innovitech. Intrapreneurship turned out to be the perfect solution. It would allow Jean-Philippe to keep his foot firmly in the family business while exploring new avenues for development. This is how Athletc. was born.

## Innovitech: Innovation at Every Level

Innovitech has 35 employees and over 25 years of experience as innovation strategists. It sets itself apart through its mature business line and collaborative industrial R&D projects. The company supports three research consortia in aerospace (CRIAQ, GARDN and CARIC) and another in medical technologies (MEDTEQ), which currently boasts 110 members and 30 funded research projects adding up to roughly \$15 million. Innovitech's role is essentially to network — by connecting business researchers and their academic counterparts, and by funding their resulting projects with the help of governments.

Innovitech has made a name for itself over the years through its extensive networks and bold economic development mandates. It's also known for its expertise in



strategic support and ability to mobilize professionals from high-tech fields.

In recent months, Innovitech has been developing a new business line: Marketing. Among other things, this expansion has led to a joint venture with Starburst Accelerator, a group specializing in connecting start-ups with major aerospace customers. Alongside Jean-Philippe's project, Starburst Accelerator has also developed within Innovitech.

## The Beginnings of the Intrapreneurial Project

For Jean-Philippe, launching his project within the family business was an easy decision. With his parents by his side as mentors, he joined the first cohort of the Intrapreneurial Program. He says that the Program's detailed roadmap, weekly meetings and impressive experts in the form of coaches and mentors created an environment uniquely conducive to development.

Since joining the Intrapreneurial Program, Jean-Philippe's initial project has changed entirely. After conducting an extensive field survey, holding several dozen meetings, getting feedback from experts mobilized by the Program, and using the tools (Business Model Canvas by Strategyzer,

Value Proposition Canvas) available on the Program's web platform, a much clearer image of his project started to emerge.

The Program also allowed Jean-Philippe to address the issue of communication within the family business. With two generations working side by side, he needed to come up with a management model that would meet the expectations of both parent and son. Thanks to the discussions prompted by the Program, the two generations were able to find common ground. Rather than arriving at a compromise, however, Jean-Philippe and his parents created their own unique method for bringing their two visions together. The result? A shared vision that has led to a more powerful and efficient strategy that better promotes successful project development.

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## Creating Opportunities & Collaboration

So what exactly is Jean-Philippe's project? Athletc. is a private group of innovators in the field of sports and health whose mission is to generate collaborations that create business opportunities for its members. Jean-Philippe had long been fascinated by the inner workings of sports and — through his parent company — he already had the necessary health network in place to generate strategic connections.

Jean-Philippe believes there is more to sports than simply entertainment. He views sports as a laboratory for health and human performance, just as Formula 1 racing is a laboratory for automotive performance. Furthermore, there are many types of athletes out there: elite sports, industrial workers, the general public and the elderly. Technology developed for elite athletes is also relevant to these other market segments. Hence the need for Athletc.

Jean-Philippe's value proposition is to accelerate exchanges among members of the group via personalized connections and exclusive events. Just as Innovitech has been doing for the past 25 years, Athletc. is essentially a scout and connection agent.

Since finishing the Program in December 2016, Jean-Philippe has worked non-stop to get his project up and running. His first task was to complete his field



## Athletc.

survey of potential customers and collaborators to better target the market's actual needs. He then meticulously studied other organizations with similar missions to further refine his business model. As a final step, he carefully built the intraprise's method for delivering value and the communications tools needed for its operations. In October 2017, Jean-Philippe officially launched Athletc.'s first event.

For this intrapreneur, launching the company was never meant to be a sprint, but more of a marathon. Jean-Philippe's goal was to create a successful business and to do that, he wanted to be sure the right foundations were in place. After an extremely busy summer, Athletc. now has more than a dozen start-ups and three founding members: the Institut National du Sport du Québec (INS), the Concordia University PERFORM Centre and the Montreal Alouettes.

## Athletc.'s Next Step

Jean-Philippe wants Quebec to become a global tech hub for both athletes and the general public. Through Athletc., sports and health organizations can come together as one critical mass — a league of innovators — with the ultimate goal of accelerating high-impact solutions for the general public inspired by innovations designed for elite athletes.

# WHEN INTRAPRENEURSHIP FOSTERS INNOVATION

Jessica was only 25 years old when she completed her Bachelor's degree in Administration and decided she wanted to innovate the family business's existing telephone order process and build a specialized application that would facilitate orders for Hector Larivée's clients.



## An Industry Leader

Hector Larivée began to operate as a fruit and vegetable distributor in the food services sector a little over 75 years ago, and has become an industry leader through personalized customer experiences, growth, and reliability. The company prides itself on its mission to offer the widest variety of fresh fruits and vegetables in Canada, while ensuring the best quality-price ratio for clients.

Hector Larivée has thrived for so many years because it has been able to evolve, advance, and adapt to change, rather than seeing it as an obstacle. Guy Larivée, being the founder's grandson and now the company's Chief Executive Officer, is mindful and extremely passionate about ensuring constant evolution to keep the core values of the company alive.

When Guy's daughter Jessica showed interest in the family business and challenged the organization's supply chain, he knew it was time to once again embrace change. She wanted to implement a platform for placing orders online, in the hopes of better managing and facilitating client orders.



## From Idea to Action

In the spring of 2017, Jessica and Guy decided to participate in the Intrapreneurial Initiative Program. It gave them the resources to seize the opportunity to move online and develop Jessica's project inspired by her suggestions from clients and her attentiveness to their needs. Committed to turning the request into a real project, her initial goal was to optimize the company operations through an electronic platform that would simplify orders.

Jessica's ambitious project presented the father-daughter duo with many strategic challenges, but the biggest test proved to be communication. Both belonging to different generations, Jessica and Guy had different views on management and found it difficult to mix both their professional and family relationships. Even though their father-daughter relationship had always been good, their challenge now was to navigate their new roles in a very different context.

Communication was a main point of discussion and improvement, amongst many things, during the program. Jessica believes that the program gave her the necessary tools for improving business communication with her father, as well as a solid framework for her project.

Thanks to the Initiative, Jessica and Guy learned how to successfully implement a new business strategy for their family business together.



## Growth and Innovation Through Intrapreneurship

In order to implement her project, Jessica had to manage all client requests and consider each client's expectations. For Jessica, it was sometimes difficult to integrate the personalization of client contracts, and so innovating without altering the established relationship was quite the task. This caused her to consider each close transaction her father had with individual clients and each was managed on a case-by-case basis. Another goal was to make the platform user-friendly — the program had to save time and simplify the order process, not complicate it.

With determination and a detailed business plan, Jessica was able to analyze, structure, and build the family business's new order system. She achieved her objectives by working with the company's employees and her father, Guy.

**When Guy's daughter Jessica showed interest in the family business and challenged the organization's supply chain, he knew it was time to once again embrace change.**

## Launching the Platform

Since joining the family business, Jessica has gained more management experience every day and has become aware of the reality of the growing business. Hector Larivée has experienced impressive growth in recent months, much greater than anticipated, and a record high in years.

With increasing growth and prioritizing tasks, she and her collaborators have decided to officially launch the project in the fall of 2017, a calmer time of year for the company. This will allow Jessica to continue testing her project, make any necessary

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adjustments, and improve certain features. Along with implementing a new online platform, Jessica also wanted to ensure employees would be available to support clients placing their first online orders.

## A Vision for Future Development

Numerous challenges await the Hector Larivée team, and while Jessica is currently working on refreshing the website and brand image, intrapreneurial projects are never far from mind. Guy and Jessica fully intend to make intrapreneurship the core of their strategy for future development.





# CHOOSING INTRAPRENEURSHIP OVER ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Hugues participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort of the Intrapreneurial Initiative. While he has always worked in the family business related to the pharmaceutical industry, this young man decided to embark on an intrapreneurial adventure to propel a project that he was very passionate about.



## Focusing on the Family Business

After having graduated in Business Administration and Marketing, Hugues began working in the family business in 1999. His career began with the logistics team. Two short years later, he became a sales representative. With hard work and determination, he progressed through the business, step by step. Eventually, this led him to become the Vice President of Sales and Marketing for *Biomed and Pharmapar* in 2008.

As the V.P. Sales and Marketing Manager, with a strong focus on business development, he had always strived to find creative ways to improve service. This is where the idea for *PlanSanté* was born. Given that he had to better manage the schedules and appointments of various professionals on a daily basis, and improve the promotion of their service, designing a platform that would fulfill these objectives seemed obvious to him.

## Introducing PlanSanté

At its core, *PlanSanté* is a search engine and an independent web platform that includes all health professionals, regardless of their affiliation. In addition to facilitating the making of appointments, the free platform, which is also open to the public, aims to encourage collaboration among health professionals. For example, a pharmacist can advise another specialist on methods that might help their patient solve a problem faster. The application also helps to inform

and educate pharmaceutical professionals through resource sharing, such as relevant articles. The possibilities of the platform are numerous, but the primary goal of *PlanSanté* is to optimize the collaboration between the different players in the pharmaceutical world, so that services to patients can improve.

While this project was integrated into the family business already, Hugues was forced to suspend it for reasons beyond his control. Unfortunately, in August 2016, the family-owned company *Biomed and Pharmapar* was sold. Undeterred and fuelled by his determination and passion for *PlanSanté*, Hugues knew that his project had massive potential and that the demand was there. He vowed that *PlanSanté* would see the light of day, sooner or later.



## Choosing Intrapreneurship Over Entrepreneurship

Hugues began looking at several different options: Should he start a business? Should he continue on the Intrapreneurial path and rely on a host company? He decided to go with the second option because, at its core, *PlanSanté* acted as a sales and marketing tool for *Biomed and Pharmapar*. The project was intended to provide greater satisfaction to the customers of this company. Therefore, with the skills of a parent company and its already established network of professionals, the *PlanSanté* project could develop in the best possible environment.

## A Rewarding Journey

In the spring of 2017, Hugues joined the Intrapreneurial Initiative. Having only a vague idea of what the Initiative consisted of, he was thrilled to learn all the benefits of the program as the tools available proved to be very useful in the development of his platform. Accompanied by his mentor, François Viens, a web development specialist, the suitability of the course for both of them was perfect. They easily combined Hugues knowledge of the pharmaceutical sector with François' IT expertise.

**"The greatest value of the program is in structuring your development plan with specific milestones and tight deadlines. The key to success: a viable project in line with the market."**

During the cohort, intrapreneurs are required to do a sales pitch which helps with resolving uncertainties. Hugues did a pitch in front of Alexandre Taillefer, the founder of TeoTaxi. He explained that he was passionate about *PlanSanté* being a free service, however he was advised that it would only be profitable if it were a paid platform. Alexandre supported Hugues idea of providing a free service and this allowed Hugues to feel confident in his vision, in his progress, and more at ease with this strategic choice.

The Intrapreneurial Initiative allowed Hugues to become extremely focused and organized in his project, while also learning the importance of maintaining momentum.

**The Intrapreneurial Initiative allowed Hugues to become extremely focused and organized on his project, while also learning the importance of maintaining momentum to complete his project.**

## The Evolution of PlanSanté

Today, Hugues works part-time on *PlanSanté* as he recently purchased *Biomed*. This strategic decision places *PlanSanté* in a great position with many opportunities to share resources associated with *Biomed*. "*Biomed* is a vehicle for marketing *PlanSanté*. The company will use the platform to improve customer satisfaction and in return, the platform has a privileged network thanks to *Biomed*, it's a win-win!".

The upcoming challenges for Hugues will be improving market share in the pharmacy community and developing opportunities for collaboration with other health professionals.

# ÉLODIE DOUA: CORPORATE INTRAPRENEURSHIP AT ITS BEST

Élodie Doua is the epitome of a corporate intrapreneur. No, she wasn't born into a family business. Instead, it was her ambition, determination and skills that led her host company, the highly renowned Havas agency, to champion her as its next intrapreneur.



## The Journey Begins

Élodie's path to success was anything but typical. Unlike most of our participants, this young woman was hand-picked by her host company. Havas had already decided to take part in the Intrapreneurial Initiative Program. All it needed was the right employee and project to champion.

Fast forward to the end of the selection process and Élodie and her Club Social – Studio DIY project found themselves among our spring cohort (along with her mentor, Stéphane Mailhot, VP of Strategy at Havas). It was Élodie's skills, proactivity and eagerness that made all the difference in the final choice.

## Élodie's Project

Even before being selected to take part in the Program, Élodie, who is a project manager at Havas, already had a very clear idea in mind. Not only that, but she had already put her idea into motion — although she's quick to admit that it was more of a hobby. Founded with her friend Carolina Machado Cabral, Club Social focuses on the events sector and offers four services:

- Event design
- Custom creation
- Planning and coordination
- À la carte events



What makes Club Social – Studio DIY stand out from the pack is its accessible approach and quality events at reasonable prices. The Club uses a number of tools, including a digital platform, to substantially reduce costs, which in turn allows it to offer more affordable services to its customers. According to Élodie, one of the firm's trademarks is the attention to detail that goes into the Studio's creative work.

So why take part in the Intrapreneurial Initiative Program if her project was already up and running? "Before the Program, we were operating solely on instinct; we didn't really have a business plan. I didn't feel like an intrapreneur or an entrepreneur; it was more a hobby than an actual professional activity."

## Looking Back at Her Intrapreneurial Experience

By taking part in the Program, Élodie was able to not only develop her project, but thanks to her mentor, she also learned how to rethink her firm's clientele, approach and especially values. Surprisingly, Élodie and Stéphane had never actually worked together prior to the Program. For

Élodie, this was a huge opportunity. Starting off on neutral footing also made it easier to move forward together with the best of intentions.



"I didn't want to disappoint Stéphane or my host company, Havas, which had given me this incredible opportunity. I'm normally a thorough and determined person to begin with, but I pushed myself harder than ever. I was very fortunate to have Stéphane devoting time to my project, but it also put more responsibility on my shoulders. There was no way I was going to let the company or my mentor down, so I gave it my all."

**Participants were constantly inspired and motivated by everyone's projects and ambition. Plus everyone was driven to succeed and not shy about challenging one another.**

Were they a compatible duo? Élodie says she learned a lot from Stéphane's strategic and marketing knowledge, and that having a mentor to support and empower her was extremely rewarding. Among other things, she was able to draw from his experience and avoid needless mistakes. His advice also allowed her to advance more rapidly, in the right direction.

Élodie says that one of the most memorable moments of the Program was her meeting with Alexandre Taillefer. To this day, she tries to use all of the tips she gleaned from this successful entrepreneur when making a pitch.

"That was one of the areas I really wanted to work on, so I latched on to his every word. I was extremely lucky to be able to meet with Alexandre and to discuss my project with him. So many people would love to have an opportunity like this; it's a day I'll never forget!"

## Putting Every Moment and Available Resource to Good Use

So why was the Program so successful for Élodie? She took advantage of every resource that was available to her, whether it was help with creating a business plan, the meetings with other intrapreneurs, the inspiring dinners or the workshops. She used every possible opportunity to take her business further.



Élodie has a lot of great things to say about the Program. Participants were constantly inspired and motivated by everyone's projects and ambition. Plus everyone was driven to succeed and not shy about challenging one another. And unlike working alone, the group dynamic forced everyone to keep questioning themselves and moving forward. All this made for a great working atmosphere among the intrapreneurs. Best of all, the contacts she made during the twelve weeks will endure long after the Program ends.

Aside from Élodie's personal drive, her success can also be attributed to the fact her host company gave her the means to succeed. Havas gave Élodie flexible working hours so that she could attend classes and develop her project. They also gave her the leeway to dedicate as much time as possible to her Intrapreneurial project while retaining her position at the host company.

Today, Club Social – DIY Studio is growing on a daily basis and is booming in the consumer sector (weddings, birthdays & private parties). The company now does 60% B2B and 40% B2C — an impressive feat considering that it did very little business in the consumer sector prior to the Program.

Élodie now hopes that the company's à la carte services that adapt to each customer's specific needs, will make Club Social – DIY Studio the go-to firm for individuals and SMEs. Élodie says that thanks to the Program, she now feels better equipped to keep going and that despite her initial doubts, she now knows she's an accomplished intrapreneur.