
Willard Levy

Angelica Corporation

By Barbara J. Flowers

LESSON DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students will explore the concept of “value added” as they explore the contributions of entrepreneurs Cherubino Angelica, Alfred Levy, Mont Levy, and Willard Levy in their roles with Angelica Corporation. Students will read the story of Angelica and will participate in creating games, which they will later improve.

ECONOMIC CONCEPTS

- entrepreneur
- value added

RELATED CONCEPTS

- reading comprehension

MATERIALS

- Mid-sized paper or plastic bags for each group of three students
- A variety of craft items for each bag (i.e. paper plates, ping-pong balls, styrofoam balls, pipe cleaners, construction paper, paper clips, popsicle sticks, string, markers, clothespins, beads, buttons, scraps of material, ribbons, etc.)
- Scissors for each group
- White glue for each group
- One copy of “Willard Levy” reading for each student
- One card from Activity 1 – “Value Added Cards” for each group
- One copy of Activity 2 – “Was There Value Added?” for each student

TIME

- 60 minutes

PROCEDURE

1. Explain that an “entrepreneur” is someone who thinks of a good or service that someone would like to buy and produces it. An entrepreneur takes a risk that people will not like the good or service, and that all of the time, effort, and money he or she has spent to make the product will have been for nothing.

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2. Explain that some entrepreneurs think of goods or services that have never been thought of before, like the Hula Hoop, the first video game, the first car, or the first television. We often think about entrepreneurs as being the first in their areas of business, but most entrepreneurs begin a business producing something that has already been produced by someone else. These entrepreneurs have an idea of how to improve the good or service or how to produce it better.
 3. Explain that we also think of entrepreneurs as people who start a business. However, the person who starts the business eventually ages, and someone else must take over. If the person who takes over develops new products and improves the old products, that person is entrepreneurial, and can also be thought of as an entrepreneur.
 4. Distribute the story of Willard Levy, and explain that the students are going to read about an entrepreneur who developed new products, improved old products, and introduced the products to new customers. Instruct the students to read the story and underline the new products or improvements the entrepreneurs, Alfred Levy, Mont Levy, and Willard Levy created while leading the company, Angelica Corporation.
 5. When the reading is completed, help students define any words with which they are unfamiliar. Focus on the words, “added value.” Ask the following questions:
 - a. Who began the Angelica Company? (Cherubino Angelica)
 - b. What good did Cherubino introduce? (a chef’s uniform and a chef’s hat)
 - c. What was special about the chef uniform? (It was designed to protect the chef from heat and grease splatters; it had cuffs that could be used as potholders.)
 - d. Who bought the company in 1903? (Alfred Levy)
 - e. What new products did Alfred Levy and his brother, Mont, develop? (aprons, white jackets, washable uniforms, uniforms made with colored fabrics, combat jackets, factory uniforms for women)
 - f. What new products and services did Willard Levy develop? (patient gowns, a way to order uniforms through the mail, uniform stores, hospital laundry service)
 6. Explain that entrepreneurs add value to companies when they develop new goods and services and improve the old goods and services. This is called “value added.” Willard Levy, and his father and uncle, brought “value added” to Cherubino Angelica’s little uniform company.
 7. Place students in groups of three. Provide each group with a bag containing the craft items as prepared before the lesson, a scissors, and white glue. Explain that students are going to act as entrepreneurs in creating a good. Instruct students to create a game, using the items in their group’s bag. Ask each group to decide on a spokesperson who will
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- describe and demonstrate the game. Allow 25 minutes for students to construct their games.
8. When games are completed, ask the spokesperson in each group to present the group's game. This should include a demonstration.
 9. When the demonstrations are completed, trade the games among the groups. Instruct each group to improve the game using the materials they have left over in their bags. Allow 10 minutes for improvements.
 10. Instruct each group spokesperson to present and demonstrate the improvement.
 11. Explain that there was "value added" to each game that was improved. Entrepreneurs are always looking for opportunities to bring a new or improved product to consumers.

CLOSURE

Distribute a card from Activity 1 – "Value Added Products" to each group. Distribute Activity 2 – "Was There Value Added?" to each student. Moving from group to group, review the activity by asking the questions on Activity 2, as follows:

- a. Describe the product on your card.
- b. What existing product does it improve? (Answers will vary.)
- c. What is the value added? (Answers will vary. Students should cite improvements to existing products.)
- d. Is this an improvement that consumers will like? (Answers will vary.)
- e. What is an entrepreneur? (someone who thinks of a good or service that someone would like to buy and produces it. An entrepreneur takes a risk that people will not like the good or service, and that all of the time, effort, and money he or she has spent to make the product will have been for nothing.)

ACTIVITY 1- VALUE ADDED CARDS



Energy chips containing vitamins and caffeine



Paper shreds right into hamster cage



This tool is a smaller version of the plumber snake. It has Velcro on the end so that it will pick up hair that is clogging a drain.



Sunshades provide shade over your eyes so that you don't have to wear shaded lenses over your eyes.



After you hit the "snooze" button on this alarm clock, it jumps from your nightstand and runs around the floor, finding a place to hide. You won't hit the snooze a second time!



For people who have a pen but can't find any paper to take a message, this product provides both.



This is a kitchen timer. Is this better than the timers you've seen?

ACTIVITY 2- WAS THERE VALUE ADDED?

Name _____ Date _____

Describe the product on your card.

What existing product does it improve?

What is the value added?

Is this an improvement that consumers will like?

What is an entrepreneur?

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Angelica Corporation was founded in St. Louis in 1878 when a chef named Cherubino Angelica created a coat and hat to be worn by chefs. Being a chef himself, Angelica knew what features a good chef's coat should have. He and his wife designed a coat with two layers of cloth in front to protect the chef from heat and grease splatters. The cuffs on the sleeves were split on the sides so that the chef could use his cuffs as potholders. The hat looked like a tall, white mushroom, which to this day is identified as a chef's hat. Angelica wore the chef's uniform everyday and took orders from other chef's who wanted a uniform like his. He and his wife began producing other types of uniforms, such as those worn by waitresses, called Harvey Girls, in Fred Harvey Restaurants which were located in train stations all over the country.

Angelica died in 1897, and the business was run by Angelica family members for the next 25 years. In 1903, the business, with its six sewing machines, was purchased by Alfred J. Levy. Levy asked his brother, Mont, to help him, and the Levy brothers began running the Angelica Jacket Company. They began advertising uniforms to service workers in hotels, restaurants, food companies, and railroad waiters. They had many more customers, so they had to produce many more types of uniforms and by 1910, the company had 32 sewing machines. The brothers developed many new products, including a variety of apron styles for waitresses and white jackets for waiters.

They developed washable white uniforms for waiters. This was a very important new product because the mohair coats that waiters were wearing were not washable and, therefore, were not sanitary. After the success of their washable white uniforms, the Levy brothers introduced uniforms using colored fabrics. The company grew so large that it had to have warehouses in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. During World War II, Angelica Jacket was one of the largest makers of combat jackets for American troops. Angelica Jacket Company also designed uniforms especially for women who went to work in factories during the war.

In 1946, at the age of 32, Willard Levy became president and bought Alfred's share of the company. Although the company had been producing uniforms for hospital workers, under Willard's leadership, the company began to produce gowns for patients. As companies providing services grew, more uniforms were needed for their workers. Angelica Jacket Company changed its name to Angelica Uniform Company. The company created many new products and became the largest supplier of washable uniforms for hospital, restaurant, and hotel workers. In the mid-1960s, Willard recognized that more and more companies were having their workers buy their own uniforms, so Angelica started two new methods of selling: 1) the company started selling uniforms through catalogs in the mail and 2) the company opened its first retail store, Life Uniform Shop. Angelica Uniform Company became Angelica Corporation in 1967. Angelica began providing sheets and towels to hospitals and doing hospitals'

laundry. The company even made some of the special clothing for the first astronauts on the moon!

The hospital uniform and linen business was greatly successful, but so were other areas of Angelica's business. Life Uniform Shops were expanding and grew to 140 stores in the 1980s. In addition to all of those stores, the company was the largest manufacturer of uniforms and rented the largest number of garments, such as hospital gowns, and textiles, such as sheets and towels to hospitals and other businesses.

Willard Levy added tremendous value to Angelica, from the time he became president in 1946 through his time as chief executive officer and chairman, until his retirement in 1984. He recognized that the growing health care industry would need uniforms for doctors, nurses, and technicians; patient gowns, sheets, and towels; and special protective clothing. He recognized that uniforms had to be washable. He saw the need for people to buy their own uniforms, so he started the Life Uniform Shops. He was a great entrepreneur, following in the footsteps of his father, his uncle, and Cherubino Angelica.