

Transcript for Group A: Participant 3

Interviewer: Good day, thank you for being part of this interview. I'll start by providing a definition of micro credentials, so they're defined as short, verified courses where successful candidates are presented with a digital certificate or digital badge after completion of the course. It's basically a micro credential. Every time I speak of micro credentials just remember this definition.

Interviewee: Alright, thank you.

Interviewer: OK, so this interview is unstructured, so there's no right or wrong answer. You can talk about anything you want. The questions I have are just to guide our conversation basically.

Interviewee: OK.

Interviewer: So the first question is what are the technological skills that you think entrepreneurs need to acquire micro credentials? What technological skills do you think they'll need to complete these programs.

Interviewee: Some of the basic ones like how to use your computer, your excel and yeah, PowerPoint word, those ones.

Interviewer: Alright, then how much effort do you think it takes to actually acquire micro credentials?

Interviewee: Not really much time per say. I think it's more of your investment in it, like how invested are you? Yeah, because it's more of a do-it-yourself thing. Yeah so you just have to dedicate your time to it.

Interviewer: OK, then what are the facilitating conditions that you need to have a micro credential? And by that I mean like things that you need in order to do this course?

Interviewee: Stable internet. You need a computer. Yeah and planning as well. You need to plan like to actually schedule them into your day or your timetable depending with I don't know how your day is structured. If you go to work, then maybe when you come back to from work or before you go to work. Yeah. So planning, uh, stable Internet, and then your computer, maybe books and a pen.

Interviewer: That is a good one, to take notes, you need to take notes, actually.

Interviewee: Yes. Yes. Hmm. And maybe if you can actually get, I don't know. For short courses, do they have, like, even if they don't, you can actually get a book. For the course, maybe. If the course is on sewing, actually getting like sewing course books. Yes, with information and stuff you need.

Interviewer: OK, that's a good one. Then how easy do you think it is to access a micro credential course?

Interviewee: People are starting to know about these micro credentials. We know about it more. I think we're the younger generation. We know a lot that's going on. Really. Yeah. I think if you actually are connected to the Internet and social media. Also, I think the algorithm as well if you, for example, if I heard someone talking about it and I google now micro credentials. If I open my TikTok it's going to give me something in line with that. Maybe someone talking about a Microsoft certificate that they did or that's open for applications that's free. So I think if you have access to the Internet, it's easy. Yeah. And also if you have people who are woke, you know. Because if you don't have friends or family who has heard about it before then, which means your chances of you hearing about it, I think it's 50/50.

Interviewer: So it also depends if you even know about them. OK, I get you. How do you think acquiring a macro credential contributes to an entrepreneur skills levels?

Interviewee: Definitely improves them and I don't know, it helps them to gain obviously a better skill. And it also helps them improve their CV. I've actually had people who say that they only did courses for the job they have. So they didn't go to college or like a university, they actually stacked the courses until they got, into a certain position.

Interviewer: Interesting, and how is training currently conducted in your business?

Interviewee: We have training through internships and such programs. So they have different programs that are named after whatever it is for a particular department.

Interviewer: And then are they done online or in person usually?

Interviewee: Both. If you want to do it online, you can do it online. If you want to do it remotely, you can. If you want to physically go, you can actually physically go.

Interviewer: And what is your preference? For this training, do you prefer to do it online or in person?

Interviewee: I think both. There are things that you actually need to physically be there for, and when you come, I feel like if it's just the learning process, it's fine to do it online, but if it comes to the practical part, I think you need to actually be there physically.

Interviewer: Very good point, then as an entrepreneur in which skills do you aim to improve through micro credentials?

Interviewee: Yeah, that's a good one. Oh, I'm actually doing a software engineering short course, software programming and stuff.

Interviewer: Then how long does it usually take to complete a micro credential? So let's say that the one you're trying to do now.

Interviewee: What I'm doing is for a year, there are six months one, there are three months. There are two months. There are six weeks. It depends. It depends with the one you're taking and I guess the level of difficulty of the content that makes it differ. That makes it longer. The six month one I'm doing, you learn more stuff than the shorter ones, it's more, it's more detailed and like advanced. And also you can really learn because they start from basics. So it makes it longer.

Interviewer: Alright. Then do you find any value in acquiring micro credentials instead of in a traditional university degree? You know, why or why not?

Interviewee: There is value but then when it comes to being hired and stuff, I think they wouldn't look at a person with those first compared to one with a degree. Although like practically, uh, someone who did those is actually more advanced compared to someone who went to university for it.

Interviewer: I actually agree with that.

Interviewee: Yes, you because someone with credentials can actually do more. You actually have to work, unlike in university you can just I don't know you can ask your friend to do your work just to pass.

Interviewer: So basically, have to work through it. And it's more specialized as well.

Interviewee: You have to.

Interviewer: OK, we agree on that. Then the next thing is how do you decide which micro credential to adopt? Do you look at affordability cause I mean some are free but some have to be like paid for.

Interviewee: I think you look at yourself like, what do you want, right? So for example, let's say you did maybe you have a degree already in what in IT right, but then you need to gain more skills, or maybe you didn't end up majoring. You see, like the informatics one. Yeah, you can major more into the business field compared to the programming field. So maybe if you don't have a passion for the programming, but you actually enjoy the business one more. So your interests, where are they invested? So if you now want to pursue a something in programming, then you can choose a certificate based on that. Yeah. Also your schedule. How would that fit into your day-to-day life? If, for example, you're going to work. When will you be able to do this? Whatever course it is. Yeah. So your time as well, how does it fit into your day?

Interviewer: Thank you for that. Currently, how do you measure your skills levels as an entrepreneur.

Interviewee: You know, like experience matters compared to your degree right or whatever certificate.. Experience is important please because yeah, because you can't

just say I have this qualification and you haven't used it. It's not going to work. You can't measure your skills with the paper.

Interviewer: Hmm, you need the experience, alright. What do you wish to gain from micro credentials? You already say you're working on your software development skills. Then the next one, how much flexibility does macro credentials allow you in comparison to a traditional university degree?

Interviewee: You don't have to attend lectures, like you're doing it at your own pace at your own time. Yeah, you don't have to have, like, a specific time to do it. It's flexible.

Interviewer: Then would you say that micro credentials are as credible? Like they are credible qualifications in comparison to degrees? I feel like there's a big question around this.

Interviewee: I think it goes on to the course part. Not everyone can afford to go to university. And like doing a course is cheaper also because it's shorter. You're not spending three years doing this thing or four years or five. So in six weeks I'm getting the certificate, while in six weeks you haven't even started with your exams for one course. So yeah, and like you said before, it's specific. You're not doing a bunch of things at the same time. So I think in terms of credibility, because there are universities, there's actually someone spending more to go and sit and learn, you know, putting their time into that. It becomes more credible compared to the certificates. But I also think it depends on where the certificate is from. If it's a Microsoft certificate, I don't think there is any problem like no one is going to question unless it's like a random website or something.

Interviewer: Yeah, that's a good point.

Interviewee: Because if you actually write an exam for that certificate. I think it should be as credible as a degree because you wrote an exam, you were tested for the skill, isn't it?

Interviewer: Yeah, good point.

Interviewee: Then wait. But don't you think like it should be the same like after you complete like your let's say like first year your accounting 101 whatever. You should get a certificate for it, but because you cannot finish, you're going to get it at the end. I just think it's the same thing. So you're taking it if you take it on to accounting. Second year level, you're taking your accounting, isn't it?.

Interviewer: That's a good point, but I don't think other people see it like that.

Interviewee: Like it's just the pressure.

Interviewer: That's a good point. Do you think micro credentials accurately depict a person's skills levels?

Interviewee: I think they do. If they actually have like an exam or a test of some sort. Then yes, then they definitely do. Unless you're just learning without being tested, yeah. If you have like assessments throughout the process, when you actually have tests and exam. Then yes. You know in university; you actually have to schedule the time with the lecturer or whoever. For short courses you can go anytime. You can call anytime you're not, like, limited to you see.

Interviewer: Interesting. And then ah, you already sort of answered this one can credentials increase the person's employability. Then which method of learning do you would you prefer? Like, let's say you're covering your micro credential, you're doing a micro dental program. What would you prefer, game based learning or the traditional way of learning like classroom or lectures? The normal way that we're used to or something that is game based.

Interviewee: It's hard to remember a lecturer standing in front of you saying something cause and 80% of the time, you're not even in class or you're thinking about something else. So I think it will make it fun and easier to remember to learn through games. I'm a very visual person. Like I remember pictures more than if they're slides more than notes. Yeah, so I think game-based compared to the traditional way.

Interviewer: Alright, then what are some of your goals, your business goals? And would you need to improve your entrepreneurial skills in order to achieve those goals that you have?

Interviewee: I definitely need more skills and more knowledge on software development which I'm already working on, I also need general business management skills, and marketing skills for my business.

Interviewer: Do you think micro credentials can assist you actually in achieving some of your business goals?

Interviewee: Yes. They can definitely help.

Interviewer: Thank you very much. Any last thoughts?

Interviewee: Thank you. No last thoughts.