

Entrepreneurship in Analytics and AI 2025-2026

Week 4 – February 23, due at 11:00

Ockham Case

In week 4's lecture we will discuss entrepreneurial resource acquisition challenges and solutions. In particular, we focus on the strategies entrepreneurs can use to assemble key human resources for their ventures and discuss common pitfalls associated with forming a founding team.

To prepare for class, first read the Ockham case study:

Ockham Technologies: Living on the Razor's Edge (HBS case No. 9-804-129)

Synopsis of the case

Ockham Technologies is a young Atlanta company that has met with a lot of early success and is now on the verge of raising its first round of financing on attractive terms. One of the initial two founders decided not to join the company; Jim Triandiflou, the case protagonist and the remaining founder, teamed up with Mike Meisenheimer, a former colleague, to start the company. To fill a hole in the team, they tapped Ron Hardin, who worked for Flex Solutions, a technology firm to which Ockham outsourced the development of its initial prototype. However, when Jim and Mike lost confidence in Ron and his development team, they ended their relationship with Flex Solutions and began exploring other options for getting the system developed. At the same time, they began raising their first round of outside financing and are now faced with two financing options that differ considerably in their effect on the composition of the board and in the attractiveness of their financial terms.

Assignment question

In your write-up, use the Stuart et al. (1999) paper to answer the following question:

“Based on the findings by Stuart et al. (1999), what would be your recommendation to Jim Triandiflou regarding which of the two financing offers (i.e., Texas angels offer vs. Noro-Mosely/Monarch venture capitalist syndicate offer) he should accept?”

References (available on Canvas)

Stuart, T. E., Hoang, H., & Hybels, R. C. (1999). Interorganizational endorsements and the performance of entrepreneurial ventures. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), 315-349.