

## **Entrepreneurial Choice: Can the Jack-of-All-Trades Attitude be trained?**

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Entrepreneurs are believed to be the ultimate engine of modern economic systems. Yet, the study of entrepreneurship suffers from the lack of consensus on the most crucial question: what makes an entrepreneur? A recent theory developed by Edward Lazear suggests that individuals mastering a balanced set of talents across different fields, i.e. the Jack-of-All-Trades (JAT), have a high probability of becoming entrepreneurs. In this paper, I extend the original set-up to investigate whether the JAT Attitude is just an innate characteristic, driving both educational and occupational choices, or a skill that can be trained to enhance individuals' chances of becoming entrepreneurs. Both the theoretical and the empirical frameworks are reconsidered to account for individuals' incentives to invest in education; the longitudinal dimension of two Italian datasets is then exploited to control for unobservables which may affect cross-sectional regression findings. Panel data estimation results reveal that the impact of knowledge in a variety of fields on the probability of being an EN is either non significant or negative. This suggests that the JAT Attitude is an innate form of entrepreneurship driving educational and occupational outcomes, rather than a character that can be developed to improve access to the entrepreneurial function. Individuals lacking of a JAT Attitude cannot be trained to become JATs.

**Theme:** Occupational choice and mobility, professional labour markets.

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