

Entrepreneur... TO BE or NOT TO BE

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Motivation to be an entrepreneur.

Why do people choose to be Entrepreneurs? Many people are attracted to becoming entrepreneurs for financial benefits. They are business people and business is generally carried out to make profits. While this may serve as a starting point, this motivation alone is not likely to lead to persistence and perseverance in entrepreneurship. Successful entrepreneurs operate based on two important considerations. Successful businesspeople recognize and realize that they have some natural or acquired knowledge, skills, dispositions, and creative abilities to design goods or services, and they believe that their goods and services can satisfy people's needs and make their lives more satisfying and comfortable. It is a match between what people have and what other people need. The better the match between these two, the more successful a business is likely to be.

Goods and Services:

Human beings have many needs, and they will always be motivated to satisfy their needs. At the same time, they realize that they cannot satisfy their needs entirely through their efforts, and therefore they look outward to find others who can satisfy their needs. They are prepared to pay for their needed goods and services because they know that quality goods and services can indeed help them to satisfy their needs better. Goods enhance the quality of life. People need all sorts of goods, personal and otherwise, to make a living convenient, comfortable, and satisfying. Likewise, people need all sorts of services to satisfy their needs. Human living conditions are complex, and people are always looking for better ways of satisfying their lives. In today's living, it is almost impossible for people to live a totally independent life. Everyone needs the services of other people to satisfy their needs. The more quality services people have access to the better their living conditions are likely to be. Entrepreneurs are people who see the needs of the people and design services that can satisfy people's needs.

Capability to Satisfy These Needs:

Successful entrepreneurs study the needs of people and at the same time, they examine themselves to see if a match can be achieved between the needs of the people and the resources they must satisfy people's needs. A successful match leads to success in entrepreneurship.

Successful entrepreneurs are people-oriented people; they are sensitive to the needs of people. They get a sense of accomplishment by satisfying the needs of people. In many ways, their outlook is similar to that of other helping professionals like doctors, teachers, social workers, nurses, etc., who need to make other people happy and satisfied. Unfortunately, this is not the reputation that entrepreneurs generally enjoy, and that is because there are too many entrepreneurs who are only interested in making money by hook or by crook. It is unfortunate that a few rotten apples destroy all the good apples. Educational institutions are interested in training entrepreneurs and must pay special attention to make sure that the graduates will come out of the school with a strong sense of commitment to service orientation. What makes good entrepreneurs make money is this service orientation. When buyers get quality goods and services, buyers continue to come back and purchase their goods and services. This is how good entrepreneurs make money, not by producing flashy goods and services just to attract the attention of the buyers. Sure, flashiness will attract some buyers, but as soon as they realize that they have been duped, they will never go back and purchase the goods and services again; they will also make sure that they will talk to others and let them know that certain companies produce goods and service only to impress the buyer, but their quality is sub-level. This is their way of retaliating against entrepreneurs who cheat people through their flashiness and sensationalism.

Prepare for Entrepreneurship:

Schools, colleges, institutes, and universities specializing in training entrepreneurs need to examine the validity of these basic premises. Without such an examination, training given to students is likely to take them on the road to frustration, disappointment, and discouragement. Quality education must make it possible for students to bring out the best of their abilities and creativity and as a result, they must examine themselves and see their talents and capabilities to design goods and services that will enhance the quality of the people. Teaching often gives more importance to book learning which is often based on the experiences of the author. Good entrepreneurs are not copycats; they design their ways of developing products and services to

satisfy people. The buying public will always compare the quality of the products and services they buy; they want maximum returns for the money they spend. They are always assessing and evaluating to see if they are getting their money's worth. When they are not satisfied, they go to other places to buy what they need.

Teaching Content vs. Educating the Student:

Colleges and universities have a prescribed syllabus, and professors are asked to teach the prescribed syllabus. After they teach the given syllabus, they assess and evaluate their students. If they give evidence of having achieved reasonable mastery of content acquisition at different levels, they are given a grade or they are told that they have achieved certain levels of mastery. Book-smart students often do a very good job taking in the information given, hold it until the test is taken and after taking the test they shove it or delete the information acquired. These students often do not do very well in life. Life-smart students, while not always doing well on tests, seem to pick up something that makes them do well in real life. This is not the dichotomy that higher learning institutions need to accomplish. Good teaching institutions will make their students both book-smart and life-smart. They help students acquire the knowledge and skills contained in the syllabus and use them to generate more knowledge and skills. They also teach desirable dispositions such as values, beliefs, and attitudes. Good students will come out of schools and colleges with a clear understanding of their unique abilities and with readiness to utilize them to design new products and services that will enhance the quality of life of the people.

Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions:

Content is necessary for students to acquire knowledge, skills, and dispositions. The information is simply the raw materials given to students through the given syllabus. The information given needs to be received by the students. This requires attention and concentration. It also requires students to develop certain attitudes, values, and beliefs, about the incoming information. Existing attitudes, values and beliefs give meaning and purpose to the information given and taken in. What is received needs to be processed further. Information can become knowledge only when it is adequately processed. Learning and eating are similar in many ways. Food is not nutrients, but food can be converted into nutrients. Food needs to be processed to pull out the nutrients from the food taken in. It is the nutrients that promote physical growth. Information taken in needs to be processed to convert it into knowledge. It is the knowledge that enhances mental growth.

Knowledge is applied in different ways. From these different applications of knowledge, people develop skills. Skills are necessary to make it in life. Human beings need all sorts of intrapersonal, inter-personal and contextual skills to live a life of success and fulfilment. Knowledge should help students become interpersonally, interpersonally, and contextually more competent.

Attitudes, values, and beliefs play a vital role in all these processes. They are the switches that activate the different processing functions within human beings. In teaching, perhaps the most important element is one's disposition. Without dispositions, human beings are not likely to learn anything. Learning is not a passive process; it is rather a very active process. The higher the activity level, the better their learning is likely to be. For too many students, learning is simply a passive recording of the information given in class and giving it back to the professor at the time of the examination. This is not learning; this is simply a mechanical process.

Quality Goods and Services:

Successful entrepreneurs must actively search for and explore the needs of the people and then identify creative ways of satisfying these needs in original and unique ways. This is the product of intense mental work. The goods and services they generate must be guided by sound ethical and moral principles as they explore varied and creative ways of satisfying people's needs. Successful entrepreneurs are honest and truthful people. They are not guided by the urge to make money. Sure, they want to make money and they will indeed make money by satisfying the needs of people. The goods and services they provide are not made to appeal to people's senses, but rather to make sure that the goods and services provided will make a difference in the quality of their life. Good entrepreneurs will do what is needed to make people come back and purchase their goods and services again and again. It is simply by increasing the number of their clientele that good entrepreneurs make money. If they lose their clientele, they do not make money. If people realize that the goods and services they purchase are only appealing to their senses, they do not come back to purchase them again. The more efforts entrepreneurs make to enhance the quality and utility of the goods and services they sell, the more successful entrepreneurs are likely to be, and they are likely to increase their profit margin significantly.

Practicality and Longevity:

People buy goods and services to satisfy their practical needs and they expect the purchased goods

and services to last for a long time. People do not buy goods and services if they are only good for a short time. Goods and services should contribute towards easier, more comfortable and fulfilling living. People do not buy goods and services that are so complex and difficult; most people want to live a simple and practical life. What they do but should satisfy this need. Successful entrepreneurs keep this simple principle when they design new products and services. People do not buy goods and services to make their living even more complex. Longevity is also another important factor when people buy goods and services. People generally have a realistic expectation of getting something in return for their money and they have an estimate of how long they think given products and services must last. If their expectation is not met, they will look elsewhere to buy what they need. Successful entrepreneurs will always study the expectations of the buyer and make efforts to go beyond their expectations in the quality of the goods and services they sell.

Need for Self-Examination:

Human beings are endowed with many gifts and talents. Aspiring entrepreneurs need to examine themselves and identify their unique talents and abilities. They need to be identified and perfected during their training. These natural gifts serve as the foundation for building special skills and abilities that can be used to provide services to people or to develop new goods and services that satisfy people's needs. The Marketplace is full of examples of very successful entrepreneurs; it also has many examples of unsuccessful entrepreneurs. Successful entrepreneurs are individuals who make efforts to identify their unique talents and abilities and who spend time to further develop them. Then they can use them to design and develop goods and services people need in their lives.

The Mission of Higher Learning Institutions:

Institutions are established to allow students to identify and develop their unique gifts and talents. They establish syllabuses to help students discover their gifts and talents and provide experiences in the classroom and elsewhere to further develop them. Students spend much time in college, but the time spent must make it possible for them to acquire knowledge, develop skills and build up needed dispositions. The syllabus must produce certain outcomes for the students. Students should not view learning as a garbage-in and garbage-out process. Through their syllabus, they should discover themselves and develop needed knowledge, skills and dispositions that can help

them design new goods and services to enhance the quality of life for the people of the community.

Institutions' Responsibility:

Institutions must help students become efficient, efficacious, and successful entrepreneurs. They must have a clear definition of who a successful entrepreneur is. The knowledge, skills, dispositions, and attributes taught should make the students successful entrepreneurs and guide them to utilize their creative abilities to design and generate new goods and services to help people. Institutions must engage in formative assessment to make sure that the students are indeed achieving the expected outcomes. Formative assessment's goal is to help students learn what they need to learn. They must also make sure that students have achieved all the expected goals; this is done through summative assessment; which is an assessment for learning. Summative assessments are carried out to make sure that every student has indeed achieved the established goals. Its goal is to document the fact that students have indeed learned what they are expected to learn; it is an assessment of learning.

Student's Responsibility:

Passing an exam is not sufficient to become a successful entrepreneur. Students need to assess themselves to make sure that they have indeed acquired the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and attributes needed to become successful entrepreneurs. During the formative evaluations, students must take an active role in identifying their strengths and weaknesses and get needed help to build up their strength and modify their weaknesses. They must recognize that they are in school to achieve their dreams, not simply to fulfil the requirements of the institutions. Sure, they need to fulfil the institution's requirements, but the requirements should bring about needed changes in the students. They need to take responsibility for their learning and for becoming successful entrepreneurs.

Successful Entrepreneurs:

Successful entrepreneurs are an asset to every community. They make their life better and that of the community better. They are honest and truthful people, sincerely interested in making life better for everyone. They will indeed make money and their business will thrive. If, instead, they are only interested in making money by hood or by crook, the buyer will soon recognize their

deceit and they will move to other entrepreneurs. Colleges and universities are not in the business of producing crooks. They graduate quality people who can enhance themselves and the community at large.

A Good Business Model:

Good businesses are concerned about satisfying people and getting more and more buyers to purchase their goods and services. Satisfied buyers will always talk about their satisfaction to other people and that will serve as the finest advertisement for their goods and services. People hearing them talk about their satisfaction get motivated and they rush to purchase the goods and services provided. TO BE or NOT TO BE an entrepreneur? The answer to the question is: are you ready to develop what is needed to become a good and successful entrepreneur? Successful entrepreneurs are not born. They are indeed being made but they need to subscribe to a desired philosophy of entrepreneurship, and they must acquire the needed knowledge, skills, disposition, and attributes to generate novel ways of designing new products and services to make a difference in the lives of people and their community. As a result, they will indeed make money and take their businesses to new heights and horizons.