

Launch of Google Foundation - Technoserve Believe Begin Become National Business Plan Competition

Remarks by Patrick Awuah, Founder and President, Ashesi University
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To be, or not to be; that is the question.

When Shakespeare's Hamlet spoke these words, he was asking a question that all entrepreneurs face.

Hamlet was asking the big question that confronts all of us about whether to make a big leap; whether to take a risk. And he was desperately trying to assess whether he would succeed or fail if he took that risk.

To be, or not to be; that is the question.

The Believe Begin Become competition suggests an answer for all aspiring entrepreneurs. Our answer is, "Be!" "Become!"

Take that leap. Make a commitment. Believe in yourself and in your vision, begin to take the steps that will get you to your goal, and in so doing, become the success story that our country needs.

The Believe Begin Become National Business Plan Competition presents a wonderful opportunity to entrepreneurs. It provides an environment that will help mold successful entrepreneurs, through a competitive process that builds each contestant's capacity to run a successful business.

All participants will acquire new knowledge, new tools, and new networks that will prove invaluable in their business enterprises. A few lucky winners will receive cash grants, and many others, including those who don't win this competition, will still connect with financiers for their businesses.

This competition will serve as a marketplace for knowledge, inspiration, and finance, all of which are essential for success.

As Ghanaian entrepreneurs confront the tough question about taking risk, they need to assess the needs of the market, and their ability to meet their need. Writing a business will help them make that assessment, and in so doing, will help boost their confidence. I know that writing a business plan for Ashesi University made a huge difference to our founding team.

The entrepreneurs who participate in this competition will also need to make personal sacrifices, maintain a strong sense of integrity, and work extremely hard to achieve success. When I speak of integrity, I mean it in the broadest sense of the word. Certainly, integrity means being honest and incorruptible, but more broadly, it means being trustworthy. You must be committed to delivering on your promises to your investors, your customers, and your business partners. Your word should count for something; that is the secret to building a sustainable business.

We can help, but in the end, each entrepreneur will have to decide for him or herself, the answer to the question, "To be, or not to be?" I look forward to a very interesting competition, and I wish you all the best of successes in your quest.

I would like to close my remarks by saying a big thank you to the Google Foundation and Technoserve. Your inspired engagement in Ghana's economic development will make a significant impact to the lives of many people here.