

Presentation for Vocational Month

Fellow Rotarians and guests I welcome the opportunity to share with you bits of information regarding the profession to which I am dedicated. As I began thinking about what I would say, I felt I had to be sure about what I was been asked to present on and I found out that 'vocation' means **"a strong feeling of fitness for a particular career or occupation."** At the time of embarking on my journey along the chosen path I had not thought much of this. But now, I think I can describe myself as an entrepreneur with some decent management skills, who runs an Information Technology company and shares the experience with young people.

Although, it is often said that entrepreneurs do not make good managers,

I will be bold and introduce myself as an Entrepreneur with Management Expertise.

According to the psychologist Abraham Maslow

- ***"The most valuable 100 people to bring into a deteriorating society would not be 100 chemists, or politicians, or professors, or engineers, but rather 100 entrepreneurs"***

and since Maslow is so highly respected I think I can posit that the role of the entrepreneur is a very important one in any society.

But who is an entrepreneur? And is such an individual born or made? What are the skills and traits he/she possesses?

Let's examine this from an intellectual perspective. The documented research suggests that Entrepreneurs are:

Risk Bearing

Innovative

Desire responsibility

A source of authority

Have a need for achievement

Desire for independence

Mental drive

Autonomy

Aggression

A need for power

Self-confident

Ability to communicate well

Technical knowledge (about some specific area)

From an Anecdotal perspective we hear that:

- *Entrepreneurs are gamblers*
 - Calculated risk takers
- *Money is the most important input*

- Talent first money follows
- *Entrepreneurs are born not made*
 - Desirable attributes / learned skills
- *The entrepreneur must be an industry / product inventor*
 - They take good industries and necessary services and products and make them better, by re-inventing the rules of the game.

'Entrepreneurship' is about:

- *Finding and exploiting an opportunity (story about Seth)*
- *Creating and building something of value*
- *And making the pie bigger so all concerned can benefit*
- *I dare say it is the single most powerful force to create economic and social mobility*

Benefits of being an Entrepreneur

- Create your own destiny
- Make a difference
- Reach your full potential
- Reap unlimited profits
- Contribute to society
- Do what you enjoy and have fun

Drawbacks

- Uncertainty of income (at least in the initial phase)
- Risk of losing investment
- Long hours and hard work
- Lower quality of life (until business established)
- High stress
- Complete responsibility

Business Acumen

I began my entrepreneurial journey back in 1997 founding SSP APTEC, of which I am the Managing Director. Later on in 2002 we opened a branch in Fort Lauderdale, Florida offering similar products and services.

Being Managing Director of SSP APTEC Limited

And CEO of SSP APTEC Inc

What do I do in addition to looking out for opportunities?

- Responsibility for the overall Strategic Direction and Management of the company (which involves)
- Developing & Implementing Marketing Strategies.
- Recruiting and Training

- In a nutshell making the tough decisions

What does SSP APTEC do?

Information Technology Solutions Provider

We provide:

Hardware & Software e.g printers, plotters, PCs and Notebooks

Networking Products and Services e.g Routers, Switches and cabling

Power Protection (UPSs) e.g

Specialised Business Applications – EaglePoint (software for land development and) used by Architects, Civil Engineers, Structural Engineers and Planners.

Pre and Post-sales support such as:

Equipment Installation

Equipment repair and servicing

We also offer Consumables and Accessories

And I can't miss the opportunity to mention that we have the most fashionable notebook carrying cases for women and men.

SSP APTEC is one of the few IT companies which provide Audio Visual Equipment for Rental and Sale

This area of the business focuses on designing and installing electronic conference/training/boardrooms/lecture rooms and places of worship
We also sell Multimedia Projectors, Screens, Audio equipment and presentation accessories for business and entertainment

We also rent so Multimedia projectors and screens can be rented on demand. To the best of my knowledge we are the only company that does half day rentals.

So that's what I manage while looking out for new opportunities

Sharing/Teaching

I also wear another hat

I obtained a Doctorate in Information Technology Management a few years ago, so I am not a prescription writing Doctor.

I find it interesting that when I did my first degree (majoring in Politics and Economics). I had no understanding of what 'vocation meant. Now I know it is -'a strong feeling of fitness for a particular career or occupation.' At the time I believed I would be the first female Prime

Minister. Well that didn't quite work out, as you know. But that's a story for another day.

As I was saying I wear another hat - Because of my passion for entrepreneurship I spend quite a bit of my time teaching young people that there is another ticket to the good life and that's to print their own ticket. This I do through my work at the Mona School of Business and Northern Caribbean University, teaching courses in New Venture Creations and Entrepreneurship, drawing extensively on my own experiences. Its about creating wealth instead of waiting on a lucky break like the right job. The reality is that there aren't many VP positions opened as those who occupy them aren't going anywhere soon. So there goes the myth of an MBA giving you the ticket to the good life.

So I think I have found JOY in my JOB.

I seized an opportunity, searched for the resources and started an Information Technology Company. Now I share the story of my journey with young people, while I continue to write the story.

I trust that you found these bits of information useful in determining what it is that I do.