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ESSAY ON AKAD GAP YEAR MENTORSHIP SESSION ON 21ST JANUARY 2020

The time just after high school but just before university is a very crucial part of one's life thus one must make the most out of it with relevance to building one's profile as well as developing one's brand as a person.

The first session involved picking out an article of interest from a newspaper and giving a brief comprehensive explanation about it.



Akad mentees reading newspaper articles

This exercise helped identify fields of interest as well as harness our impromptu presentation skills bringing about the need to think on the spot. One of the main lessons learnt from the presentations done is that we need to start thinking "GENERATIONALLY". Religious teachings teach of a wise man being one whose wealth will serve up to the third generation. This posed as a wakeup call to me challenging me to come up with self-sustainable solutions that would run and still be relevant for generations to come.

After the short tea break session, Dr. Julius Weche took us through confidence building through writing Business Profiles. In order to write a good profile, one needs to understand their strengths, weaknesses and vulnerabilities as well as one's definition of success. Having a profound call to fame is one component of a good profile hence a challenged posed to re-invent ourselves, have a clear vision, define success and have a strategic plan on how one will use the current situations and resources available to achieve their goal.

As the session continued, a question was posed, ***"What is your definition of success?"***

My definition of success is being able to leave a lasting impact on the lives of those i interact with. "Give the villagers fish and they will starve tomorrow; but teach them how to fish and they will sustain themselves up to the third generation." That is a slogan I live by in my quest to impact lives. Providing practical and sustainable solutions to problems affecting the society is the strategy that I will use to achieve this. The plan to achieve this is already ongoing as I am a member of PACEMAKER INTERNATIONAL volunteering at Mlolongo Primary School where I hope to solve a problem within the Mlolongo Primary community. I am also the acting CEO of African Footprint Initiative as well as an associate of World Youth Alliance that seeks to restore the value of human dignity among people.

As part of the Akad interactions, one will meet different mentors in different fields, have a conversation and even exchange contacts. However, how do these mentees stay relevant to these mentors? That was a critical question because many of the times mentees do not follow up on the mentors they met or interacted with because of being irrelevant to them. A solution to this problem is to do background research on the mentor in reference in order to avoid asking the 'obvious' questions in the conversation. This would also help in building a rapport easily with the mentors for they do not need to begin introducing themselves. Setting up professional and presentable social media accounts would enable these mentors interact with a mentee easily because they can easily look and make a comment as well as acknowledge what has intrigued him or her from your work. As Yuri, one of the accomplished Akad mentees said, one should respond within fifteen minutes if the mentor(s) make any contact.



Akad peer mentor Yuri Coret sharing with the other Akad mentees

Personal presentation as well as communication was also addressed in the mentorship session where everyone had to market themselves in less than one minute. This rigorous exercise required one to clearly identify their achievements, prioritize and list them down in accordance to the relevance of the achievement to the situation or setting. This session taught the mentees to be able to market themselves in the shortest but most efficient way possible achieving the goal of 'selling your brand'.



Akad mentor Dr. Julius Weche sharing with the Akad mentees

The day came to a close with a squash game against Akad's own Yuri Coret from which I learnt to exploit the weaknesses of my opponents to win them. I am grateful for the life-changing sessions and will always be a part of the Akad family.