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### GAP YEAR SESSION 2017

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As I walked into The Ministry Of Works Club on this Tuesday morning, I couldn't help but reflect on my journey with AKAD. This date marked my one year as an AKAD associate and if I was given a chance to re-live my life changing moments with AKAD I would definitely do so. I have undergone a complete transformation from the way I dress all the way down to the steps I make. So walking into that room in a tie was a surprise to all but one; one who has completely changed my outlook of life through his mentorship.



#### **1 MOW Club-Guest House**

taught me a lot about critical thinking. As the entrepreneurial minds of our generation we should analyse the problems in society and bring relevant solutions that benefit us and the people around us.

The topic of the day was '**critical thinking**', and the fact that we were in a small group meant that everyone had to actively take part in the discussions. Daktari had displayed various items on table from his travels around the world. All we had to do was critically analyse the pieces and try to find out what their meanings were. Not as easy as it sounds really! He had also displayed one of his veterinary products that he used to market years back but it took a while for us to guess what it was used for. This

It was interesting to hear from one of the AKAD mentees, Edwin, about his solution to the issue of lack of wireless internet services in specific areas in Nairobi. He aims to start his own internet distribution service and crush the current companies which aren't very effective. This challenged me to actualize my current innovative ideas and add more value to society with my initiative. Mary Mwangi, one of the AKAD mentees, had been applying to The African

Leadership University and took us through the essay which she wrote and Daktari's opinion on the essay. He had pointed out key areas of the essay question that Mary clearly missed out on. As he was pointing out the relevant areas I thought back to the essays I had previously written when applying to The African Leadership Academy and The Yale Young Global Scholars Program. They had a similar essay question but I don't think I handled them very well given the in-depth analysis that Daktari had done on just this one essay question. This was food for thought for me and it opened my eyes to one of the areas Admission Officers look at and that is: **understanding the question.**



## 2 AKAD mentees networking

your message across in the best way possible. These are small things that people don't really consider when writing their essays but they are the determiners of whether you are accepted or rejected.

One of the mistakes he cautioned on was answering an essay question and appearing to be 'begging' for help. This would be you trying to gain compassion from the Admissions Officer reading your essay. When answering essay questions, your objective should be to prove you are the best candidate to obtain admission and scholarship based on **MERIT** and not on compassionate grounds. This goes back to critical thinking; analysing the questions and what it requires of you, then putting

One of the final topics we discussed was the '**The Change Process**'. The first phase is *Denial* where the person refuses to accept that a situation is real and is taking place. What follow are *Anger*, *Bargaining/Exploration* and then *Resistance*; as new problems are found in the exploration phase. The final phase of this process is *Acceptance*. The challenge that most people face is moving from *Denial* to *Acceptance* as quickly as possible. If one is able to do so then they will quickly be able to adapt to the situation and recalibrate his strategies to be able to move forward with his plans efficiently. In the world that we live in, change is inevitable. Only those who are agile enough to adapt will survive in this evolving world.

Having sat through countless AKAD mentorship ever I have learnt to always grown my networks and this day wasn't any different. After sharing with the other mentees about my initiative, The African Footprint, I gained a new member and the rest were very willing to help me on my new online student platform: **Student54**. A question was posed to us on this day- "How competitive and hungry for success are you?" This got me thinking on how much I have really done to ensure I have a competitive advantage in the global stage. I plan to constantly evolve and be the best version of myself and build up **Student54** to be able to impact as many students in high schools and universities. This I plan to accomplish through the networks that I have built through AKAD and I would like to thank Dr. Weche for his never-ending support.