

Culture of Entrepreneurship

Bill Lowry's observation that Muskegon needs to foster a culture of entrepreneurship should resonate throughout Muskegon Community College. We are an agent of positive change for our lakeshore community. If we choose, MCC is perfectly positioned to play a major role in building a local culture of entrepreneurship. It is time for some of our students to look to employ themselves instead of looking for an employer.

Integrated Educational Programs

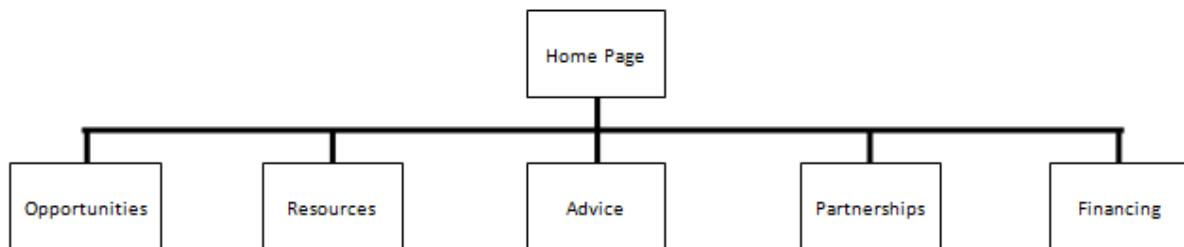
MCC teaches people how to do things. We do it through seminars and classes. This is our medium for teaching skills and how to bring these skills to market. Let's now look at these resources through an entrepreneurial lens and rethink how we might bring it all together:

- Single session seminars with main speaker(s) that overview different aspects of setting up a personal business. MCC has a long history of successfully offering Small Business seminars.
- Multi-session college classes that can be combined together into certificates and two-year entrepreneurial degrees.

Providing Entrepreneurs with the Next Step

Education is just the beginning. Schools have a long history with Job Placement offices as a way of transitioning students into the job market. The college's entrepreneurs also need a launching pad for their first business. It starts with helping them formulate everything from vision statements to business plans. This environment is often referred to as an incubator.

At this time the college does not have the resources to create a brick and mortar incubator like the one in Newaygo. However, for a fraction of the cost, we can develop an online entrepreneur incubator to get people started. The organization of such a Web site might look like this:



As a new generation of entrepreneurs grows up on social networks, an online incubator may be a preferred stopping point for information, advice and financing ideas. It certainly would promote a culture of entrepreneurship inside and outside of the college.

Overseeing the Integrity of MCC's Entrepreneurship Programs

MCC is also strategically positioned to provide the continuity of leadership needed to watch over the integrity of these entrepreneurial academic programs and the related online resources. By its' very nature, this type of program includes intellectual property and personal information that we must be careful to safeguard. Someone is needed to act as the moderator for the online incubator and advisor to students interested in participating in the college's entrepreneurial seminars, classes and degrees. This Entrepreneur program coordinator could also teach related seminars and classes for MCC.

What Can MCC Do to Promote a Culture of Entrepreneurship?

1. Provide integrated seminars and classes that promote skill sets which people can use to become their own boss. Seminars could easily be taught at downtown, Newaygo and Ottawa locations.
2. Maintain the hardware and software infrastructure, including domain name, for an online entrepreneur incubator as mentioned above.
3. Hire an Entrepreneur program coordinator.
4. Work with community members to develop and oversee the Internet resources that promote and support people who want to start their own business.