



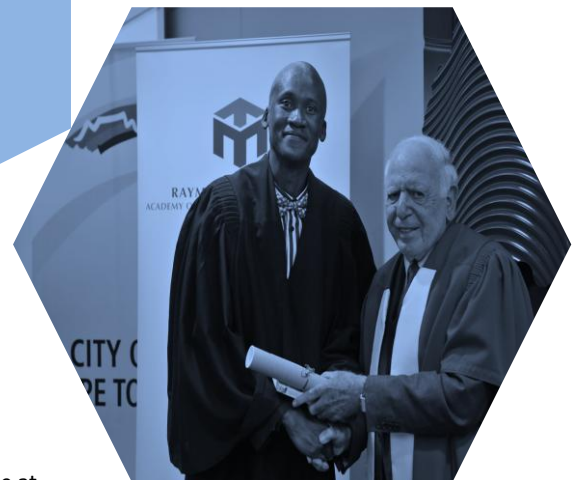
RAYMOND ACKERMAN
ACADEMY OF ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ernest Shupinyaneng

CLASS OF JANUARY 2013

Story told by
Ernest Shupinyaneng
& Carol Williams

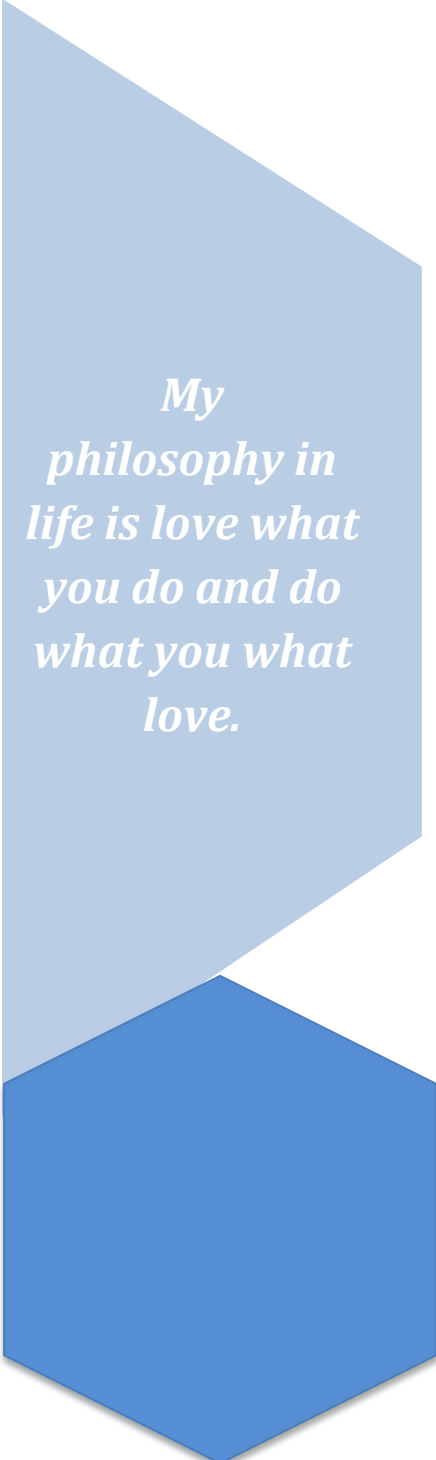
PERSEVERANCE PAYS OFF



Ernest Lerato Shuripyeneng or “Manaung” as he was affectionately called during his time at the RAA is someone who stands out in a crowd...partly because he is at least a head taller than everyone else, but mostly because he is such an engaging individual it is hard not to notice him. Something that I really appreciated about Ernest when he was at the RAA was how hungry he was for opportunities. He did not let any opportunities pass him by and showed enormous dedication to his development. Life has not always been easy for this young man, but he is an example of someone who has persevered through the tough times and is now enjoying some great rewards.

WHEN I WAS YOUNGER I was exposed to entrepreneurship through my parents, they owned a supermarket and a bottle store. Seeing them work very hard, building the business and giving us a better life is one of the things that I am most grateful for in my life. At an early age I was already aware that my little sister and I were more privileged than most of our friends. They did not have the same experiences as we did and my parents instilled humility in us. My parents made sure we lacked nothing; we went to the best schools and often went on holidays to great destinations in the country. I can still remember being asked at primary school what I wanted to be when I grow up, my response was always that I wanted to be a businessman. This idea was informed by what I saw in my parents as entrepreneurs and I wanted to be just like them.

A MAJOR CHALLENGE IN MY LIFE WAS when I graduated from high school in 2000 and realised that I would not be able to study further. My parents’ business had gone under and all of a sudden we had to adapt to a new situation. The life we once lived was no more. My family went from owning a house to begging for a place to stay. Once we found a place to stay I had to assume the responsibility of going out to find a job and provide food for the family. My parents had instilled a brilliant work ethic in me, for example while they were in business I was expected to report to work during school holidays. At times I thought this was unreasonable of them, but this work ethic helped me a lot after I matriculated because I could get any job and do it. At one time I was employed to dig pit toilets in township and I did that job with pride.



*My
philosophy in
life is love what
you do and do
what you what
love.*

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE OF BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR WAS selling sweets at school to my friends. After I graduated from High School I was always looking for ways to supplement the income I got from the odd jobs I had. I then went on to sell clothing to guys, I did this by buying stock from Johannesburg and selling the items in Bloemfontein. I regularly used the train or buses to commute to Johannesburg from Bloemfontein. In 2007 I registered an events company called ELS (Ernest Lerato Shupinyaneng). Through the company I have staged a few events. The highlight was staging a women's month event in Bloemfontein where we hosted local celebrity, Thami Ngubeni.

MY ROLE MODELS ARE my parents. They dared to be different and live the best life that they could. As an entrepreneur I was exposed to what life can be like if you take the risk of being an entrepreneur. My parents are in their mid-70s and even now they are still entrepreneurial. I have had the privilege to witness them in their prime in business. I also witnessed how they weathered the storms of life, losing their business and yet they are still standing. I have been shaped by their life experiences and I constantly draw inspiration from them every time I face challenges.

MY EXPERIENCE AT RAA WAS very informative, enlightening and refreshing. The structure of the course allows the learner to be fully engaged in different aspects of entrepreneurship. I thoroughly enjoyed the lectures we had and they were presented in such a way that I understood, but most importantly my perspective of different subjects was challenged and I have been empowered through them. Networking was always emphasised and I enjoyed the way it was presented. Since then I'm constantly aware of my networks, I now have a different view of what it means to have networks. My fellow students also made the experience great, each of them had something to offer which meant that there was never a dull moment in class. The support that we received from the staff was phenomenal, they're committed to making this the best experience for each student and for that I'm eternally grateful. There were two highlights for me during my time at RAA; the first one was meeting Mr Ackerman and attending his famous lecture on the *Four Legs of the Table* (the strategy used to build Pick n Pay) and secondly presenting my business idea to Mr Ackerman and the panel.

THE BUSINESS IDEA I CAME UP WITH AT RAA was *HLAZA POOLS*, a franchise swimming pool company that targets the township market. The idea was generated during our sessions with Charles Maisel (innovation lecturer at the RAA). What we identified was that in all townships in South Africa there is no access to swimming pools. The only ones that exist are communal pools which are erected by the municipality and these pools can't cope with the population size of these areas. My solution to this problem is to franchise swimming pools in the townships, by erecting a pool in your own yard. You would then grant access to people living closer to your house, and also provide swimming lessons to schools nearby. This allows the home owner to increase the value of their property and at the same time earn an income by installing a franchise swimming pool.

THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON I LEARNED AT RAA WAS that you must appreciate the people around you at all times and view them as networks. Use the resources that are available to you.

MY FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT. After graduating from the RAA I was employed by my work experience company *WORLDSPORT*. This is very exciting because the company operates in the events industry and I have a passion for events. I have plans to start a travel business to add to the events business that I'm already running. I'm also interested in real estate, and I'm attending workshops and learning more about the industry.