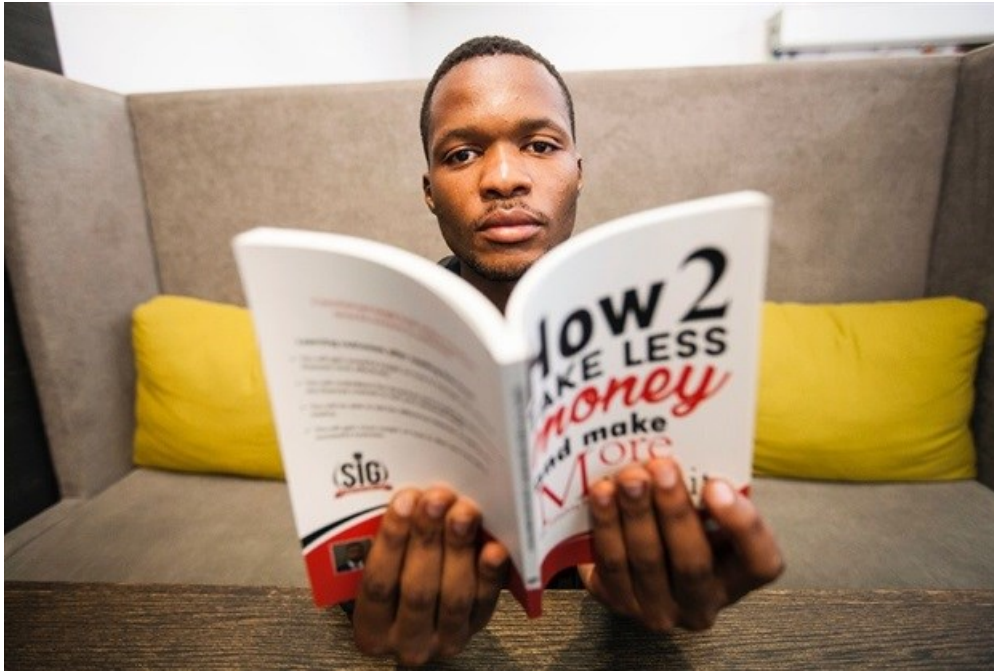


Persevering to become Selfmade

By  Shan Raddiffe

27 Sep 2017

After struggling to find his way on the path well-traveled, Ntlahla Nkukwana, a 23-year-old CPUT graduate and author of *How to take less money and make more with it*, took a step off the beaten track to become self-made.



Ntlahla Nkukwana

Nkukwana, a candidate in the 2017 Red Bull Amaphiko Academy, is no stranger to the stress and strain of unemployment. Following his graduation from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology with a National Diploma in Mathematical Technology (Business Stream), he struggled to find work in his home town. After moving to Cape Town, he again struggled to find a job. His first business start-up failed due to a lack of funding, and he found himself too broke to even print CVs. Despite his qualifications, he ended up working at a newspaper factory for less than R11 an hour, and swept and mopped floors at restaurants. When Nkukwana finally landed his dream job, he says he was "fired after a week because of a criminal record under my name that I had no knowledge of." Eventually winding up back in retail, he made the move to try his hand at entrepreneurship once again...

■ Tell us about your start-up and the inspiration behind it?

I realised that most people were struggling with managing their finances - mainly because financial literacy is not taught at schools and the subject of money management and investing is not discussed in our homes, especially black families. This leads to people being highly in debt and falling on the same routine that 90% of South African's are in, which is pay bills and die. Some of them fall victim to the get-rich-quick schemes that promise them huge returns over a short period of time and run away with their money. This lead me to start "I Am Selfmade", which seeks to educate people about these get-rich-quick schemes and teach people to be financially literate and help them to be financially independent by providing them with products and services that will give them the necessary skills they need to live a financially free life.

■ Where do you plan on taking it from here?

I plan on having branches in all the provinces in South Africa.

■ How important do you feel it is to be introduced to entrepreneurship and innovation at educational level?

Entrepreneurship is the solution to most of the problems that we are having in South Africa. It is important to introduce it at educational level to change the mindset of students not to always think of employment but to think of creating employment.

▣ ***How necessary are initiatives like the Red Bull Amaphiko Academy to the development of entrepreneurship in South Africa?***

The entrepreneurial journey is very lonely and difficult especially when you have to do it on your own with no support and resources, which is why initiatives like Red Bull Amaphiko are very important because they provide entrepreneurs with all the support and the resources they need.

▣ ***What advice do you have for young entrepreneurs who are just starting out themselves?***

Make sure you do something that you love and are passionate about and never to give up until you succeed.

ABOUT SHAN RADCLIFFE

Shan Radcliffe is the editor of Bizcommunity HR, Education and Legal.

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