

DO ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS ADDRESS THE ISSUES ENTREPRENEURS FACE?

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Abstract

Entrepreneurs play a very important role in economic growth and social well-being that almost all universities offer entrepreneurship programs. However, in this ever-changing world, situations and obstacles entrepreneurs face are very dynamic. Therefore, an entrepreneurship program must be reviewed continuously to ensure that it addresses the dynamic essentials of successful entrepreneurship. The purpose of this research was to determine the attributes of successful entrepreneurs by collecting data about the skill, knowledge, and attitude of successful entrepreneurs and then to compare these attributes to the courses in existing entrepreneurship curricula in order to identify whether the coursework addresses and encourages these attributes of success. Fifteen successful owners of small food-processing businesses (The owners of the entities that survive more than five years and are listed in the databases of local governments.) with different products participated in the in-depth interviews. All of the business owners indicated that the factors that best support business success are product quality, product differentiation, and honesty. Other factors mentioned include direct experience, specific production technique, ability to save, and long-term employment for employees. Their major problems are market expansion and competition. The supports needed from supporting organizations include marketing and business knowledge. The gaps found in the selected entrepreneurship programs include the failure to address adequately issues related to honesty, quality management, product differentiation, and specific production techniques.