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How Entrepreneurs Can Help Solve the Worlds Biggest Problems

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Entrepreneurs can apply creativity, urgency and execution to challenges such as poverty, hunger, disease and clean water while building organizations that create lasting impact.

Entrepreneurs are not only some of today's most successful business owners, but also some of our best problem solvers. Now more than ever, the world's humanitarian and environmental challenges need their help.

The best entrepreneurs can create the solutions, processes and jobs that address critical global issues. They are highly efficient and productive; strive for top quality control and execute timely delivery...all key ingredients for becoming a successful entrepreneur and business owner. But the world's most celebrated entrepreneurs have something else: a commitment to making an impact on the world outside their business. For example, PayPal founder Peter Thiel started a new initiative called the Thiel Fellowship, (http://thielfellowship.org/) which offers grants of up to $100,000 for kids to *drop out of school*. Crazy as it sounds, Thiel's goal is to get the best minds thinking about big ideas early on in life. This is how true disruption is born, and helps encourage today's youth to think creatively and have an impact.

I had my own epiphany when I attended a breakfast talk by entrepreneur Mike Fernandez to discuss his book "Humbled by the Journey". (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3O-ABd7oLM0) While I once was an executive for two prestigious museums -- New York's Guggenheim and the Miami Art Museum -- a few years ago I began yearning for a closer connection with the world. As an entrepreneur or "tinkerer," as I like to call myself, I am always fascinated by the humble beginnings of some of today's most successful entrepreneurs. Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Paul Allen, Michael Dell, Richard Schulze and Fernandez all dropped out of school to launch successful businesses.

Fernandez, the once-penniless Cuban immigrant who founded the private equity firm MBF Healthcare Partners, swears his secret formula for success is sacrifice, urgency, passion, execution and results. He challenges conventional wisdom and champions "the greater good" (corporate social responsibility), both attributes that set this successful group of entrepreneurs apart. In his speech Fernandez encouraged all to take the "greater good challenge" and look for ways they can make a difference.

My mentor David Lawrence, who was Mike's travel companion in his book, encouraged me to follow my dream. After an arduous trip to assist a distressed orphanage in Bamako, Mali during their coup d'etat in 2012, I decided to take the plunge. On my return flight home I came up with the name for my volunteer-based nonprofit and laid the groundwork for my website. A week later Bridging Humanity(http://www.bridging-humanity.org) was born with a goal to eradicate poverty, here in the US and abroad. The platform for accomplishing this monumental task is simple and straightforward. It is called 9 Steps to Eradicate Poverty.

Today more than 805 million people across the globe are hungry. More than 800 women die every day in childbirth. The number one killer of children is contaminated water. Now more than ever, our world desperately needs all of its global citizens and tinkerers to step up to the greater good challenge. Entrepreneurs worldwide, both known and about to become known, are rising to the challenge. And individuals who want to

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put their money where their heart is are becoming more actively engaged.

The UN, USAID and CDC, when recently faced with the world's largest Ebola epidemic in history, created the Fighting Ebola: A Grand Challenge initiative. Their mandate? To enlist the world's greatest entrepreneurial minds to address the solutions they were seeking in their fight against Ebola. The Grand Challenge drew entrepreneurs from all corners of the earth, who in a matter of a month shared lifesaving, pioneering ideas that delivered practical and cost-effective innovations that helped strengthen the fight against Ebola.

Entrepreneurs are rapidly taking front stage today, and it is no longer relevant how old you are (Baby Boomer age 50-64, Generation X age 35-49, or a Millennial age 21-34). But the group to watch now is Generation Z (under 20). Just look at Shubham Banerjee, the 13-year-old inventor who created a *braille printer* using *Legos.* Jack Andraka, 16, found a new way to detect cancer. Teen Eesha Khare invented a rapid phone recharging device.

Today we simply have no more excuses to sit back and watch the cycle of extreme poverty continue. With the support from entrepreneurs both young and old and the world's global citizens, for the first time in history the end of extreme poverty is indeed within our reach.

Additional Search Terms: Gates Foundation, charity, philanthropy, helping others through my business

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