



New Ventures - The 2015 Open University Entrepreneurship Competition

Kleio

Mikhail Devitt:

I really love education and helping kids develop what they do. A key part of that at primary school is really about learning to read and that's the real main aim of my company - to get reading at the heart of the school.

The product that we're designing is called Kleio; and Kleio is a smartphone and mobile application, as well as a web based bit of software. It mixes the traditional way of doing reading with your child into a digitalised form. Alongside other things that have become essential to schools, so parent to teacher contact and virtual learning environments.

The name Kleio came from the library at Alexandria. When I was looking at, you know, redesigning a library, I went back to where libraries really started from and that was the real stand out example in history, and it really changed the way things were done. And we hope that our application can really change the way school library systems are run, are delivered, are managed.

Having an idea, seeing the end goal but not knowing necessarily how you're going to get there is a little bit scary; and a little bit frustrating as well because you can see the end product in your head, you can see what it should look like, what it should do, how it should make a child feel, how it should make jobs easier and relationships better. But you don't see how you are going to get there.

You go through these highs and lows and you think some days that, this is brilliant, this is exactly what I want to do, this is what I want to achieve and then other days you just, you want to break down and cry.

Business, I think, is just something that's in my blood. I think, you know, family monopoly games get quite heated. Growing up, I was always around business activities but I think the real main influence I had, when I was 15 I saw James Caan and he was the one that told me to go into a sector, learn it really, really well and then the business ideas - if you want them - will be there.

Taking part of the competition gave me a bit more focus. It streamlined all of my ideas into just the key aspects. There's so many things that you could do and actually, realistically, you can't do all of those things.

I want to be a company that is always going forward and pushing more and more. I want it to be a big player in the education sector.