

Technological Entrepreneurship - Key to World Peace and Prosperity

Dan Shechtman

Technion, Haifa, Israel

ISU, Ames, Iowa, USA

Over the past several decades we witness a shift toward national policies that encourage innovation and technological entrepreneurship. The call for more investment in entrepreneurship echoes around the globe as it becomes clear that except for a few countries, natural resources like oil and minerals are not enough to sustain economies, while human ingenuity is indeed the most important, sustainable natural resource.

So, is there hope for everybody on the globe to improve their lives? Can technological entrepreneurship be motivated and taught so that generations of determined entrepreneurs will build up thriving economies? The clear answer to both questions is yes and it all starts with education in general and scientific-technical education in particular. This is a long process, but there is a way to expedite it— start with the already educated engineers and scientists. These are the first candidates to open entrepreneurial endeavors. They can make the difference, but need motivation, instruction and encouraging economic environment that fosters creation of successful start-ups. These pioneering entrepreneurs can then serve as role models to others. The name of the game is motivation. If this nucleus of capable people are motivated toward entrepreneurship, a process can start that will make a huge difference in a life of a country. Living examples to countries that underwent this process are China, Israel and Singapore whose societies shifted from agrarian to industrial within several decades thanks to the spirit of entrepreneurship and the motivation to create high-tech industries led and guided by individual engineers and scientists.

In my talk I will explain the need for technological entrepreneurship and describe my involvement in turning Israel into a startup nation.