ICT Incubator

Don't chicken out, try the incubator - and fly with your own wings!

Start-up, or launching your own business, is among the fast growing concept in the IT sector of Mauritian business. Our Faculty of IT recognises the importance of equipping our students with the necessary tools and expertise to launch their own start-ups. In this regard, it recently invited representatives of the government's - *ICT Incubator Project* to present to its faculty and students the "*incubator*" concept and the facilities offered to future business entrepreneurs.

Tuesday 19 July, 9:50 am: Students begin to fill the main lecture room. A packed audience made up of mostly IT students. All are looking forward to finding out more. Soon after 10:00 am, the presentation begins with Mr Seebaluck introducing the "incubator" project by dissipating first and foremost the miscon-ceptions of "incubator" and explaining its origin to the attentive audience. I am surprised to learn that the expression "business incubator" does *not* stem from the process of nurturing businesses but from the business that adopted this model in the first instance.

We are told that in 1959, the owner of the Batavia Industrial Centre, New York, wanted to rent some space to attract tenants. It turned out that the first tenant was a chicken incubator company hence the concept of "incubator"! It is only later that the term was adopted by the business community.

The facts and figures produced by Mr. Seebaluck capture the imagination of the young business minds in the audience. Facts like 90% start ups still survive after three years in an incubator and incubators are a world-wide phenomenon prove to be reassuring. The audience takes note that the NCB incubator centre will offer certain facilities to future entrepreneurs, such as ADSL access, fax and photocopying facilities, common secretariat, meeting rooms, security, etc, all for a minimal fee of Rs 6 000 per month during the first year of joining in.

Roshan Kumar Seebaluck from the NCB Incubator

For many however, the most important and interesting aspect of the presentation was the apparent ease with which we can set up our own business. To conclude the presentation, we were all invited to drop by and visit the NCB centre, and familiarize ourselves with its facilities and modus operandum.