

2020 Memphis Scipreneur Challenge: Participant's Experience

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My MSC story should start from a cold rainy night in December 2019. I attended a social celebration event held by Life Science Tennessee Academic Alliance at UMRF research park. There was a practice pitch game section that members brainstormed together and made a business proposal based on a few keywords. In the end, one member of each team presented in front of the audience. I was impressed by their confident performance and creative thoughts. Those skills are just something I'm longing for. Right then, I knew confidence was rudiment of a business pitch. I also discovered that professional entrepreneur skills are gained by business training workshops and constant practice, which I got from MSC later on.

It was a big challenge for me to step forward and participate in the MSC competition. Because I'm not only a newcomer to America/Memphis, but also a business layman. I'm glad I seized the opportunity and won the first place of the final pitch. I want to encourage someone like me not to hesitate to take on such an opportunity despite their lack of experience in the business world. MSC is beginner-friendly, and you will grow from this process very quickly.

When it comes to our success, I would like to appreciate my incredible team. Our team is the most international (Scientist mentor Dr. Emilia Pinto, Brazil; Business mentor Elizabeth Lemmonds, America; Team members Nancy Bolous, Egypt; Nikolai Fattakhov, Russia; Me, China). I could tell cross-culture brings intelligence from a different aspect.

Considering the key to our success, I think, is the active and aggressive attitude each member brought to the team. We made an agreement instead of a joke that we are the winning team, even from the first time we were introduced to our team members and scientific mentor. This positive attitude was the engine of us during the whole process. We participated in every seminar and always raised questions to speakers. The presentation was prepared just after the first week and upgraded every week after each workshop. We did our best to put what we learn into practice. Yes, we had a hard time. When we thought we are almost done, an inevitable divergence of business model arouses, which may overturn all of our work. I still remembered that day. Three of us felt depressed in my car after meeting our business mentor. We parked on the street and kept discussing it for a long time. Gradually things became apparent, and we made a combined solution. How joyful it was to work together as a team.

I want to thank our Scientist mentor Dr. Emilia Pinto, Business mentor Elizabeth Lemmonds, and the Executive director Chidi Zacheaus. Our team always had a lot of questions, and they were still ready to help and spared their precious time for us to meet. I was also grateful for all the great speeches, food, and places that MSC provided. This made the whole training as a delightful journey. After this pitch, I'm even more interested in entrepreneurship and willing to go far beyond.