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***The “Macho man” attitude is not good at business;
Women are better and work harder”***

Wearing his suit and tie, Ken Morse seems serious at first sight, but the conversation made clear that he enjoys using humor while delivering serious messages. Morse manages the MIT Entrepreneurship Center in the U.S.A, which is the global center of entrepreneurship teaching and research. Professor Ken Morse educates, inspires and supports new generations of entrepreneurs. These days, he is visiting Spain to participate in the MIT \$100K Global Startup Workshop that MIT students have organized, together with EOI Business School and the collaboration of Caixa Forum.

An Eurostat study recently revealed that European companies rarely innovate, and Spain is among the lowest ranking. What should we do?

Radical innovation occurs mostly in small companies, rather than big companies. In fact, especially in U.S large companies work closely with small companies to achieve innovation. I wish that big Spanish firms could work more actively and effectively with local startups. The most important success factor for the big companies is to make fast decisions to buy products from small and medium companies. These small companies need important clients to grow, and also to help them be able to raise funds and borrow money from banks. This is the best way to improve the pace of innovation in Spain.

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What are some of the differences that you observe among the various Spanish regions?

Madrid is sleeping compared to Barcelona. Everything is faster in Catalunya. But, you know, the second best region is the Basque Country. Its traditional companies have been forced to innovate!

What should be changed in Spain?

Spain should give prizes not only to the successful startup companies, but also to entrepreneurs who try and fail. Why? Because failure is part of the process. In Taiwan they say: "Failure is the mother of success."

Who would give out those prizes?

I believe it should be done at the local level, by the regional governments.

Who make better entrepreneurs: men or women?

Women are much better. They work harder, pay more attention to their obligations, and they don't make rush decisions. Men with macho attitudes are not as good in business.

Women are good but have they done the best?

In the Middle East, more than a third of the startups I work with have been initiated by women. Pakistan is very active and successful: MIT organized a Business Acceleration Competition. Forty seven companies entered the competition; seven finalists were selected. All seven finalists

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had women in the top management team. If you pay attention to the startups in Spain, there are not as many women participating in startups as there are in the Middle East or Asia. By the way, do you know which country appears to be the worst? Holland! I was teaching classes of 150 CEOs and there was only one woman!

Eurostat's classification reveals that the Portuguese, Italians and Greeks are more entrepreneurial than we are. Only eleven countries are worse than we are. There are also studies that prove our lack of productivity. Are we lacking enthusiasm?

I don't believe so: Spanish people might be less productive, but they are not indolent. The problem is the lack of ambition in the Spanish people.

You are a serial entrepreneur; has it always been easy?

I started six companies, with MIT friends. One was a complete disaster: we went from 88 to 4 employees in one afternoon.

What did you learn from that experience?

I learned a lot from this disaster. I learned one hard lesson: If the CEO doesn't love customers then the company will fail. I am sure the disaster experience was a major reason why I was recruited to come run the MIT Entrepreneurship Center.

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Do you love customers?

Yes, indeed, I love customers but at that time I was not the CEO! I learned that the toughest problem for a company is not the money or technology but the selling process. Spanish startup companies should understand that it is essential to have excellent sales skills.

What do you mean?

They must think globally from the start, and have a plan to enter markets one by one.

What advice would you give to young entrepreneurs?

Build your network and seek mentors --people who were also entrepreneurs-- and learn from them. And don't be afraid to fail: It's part of the process ☺.