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## Dr Mamdouh Barakat (H. 1978-83) - OB of the Month, March 2014

Thursday, 06 March 2014

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**Mamdouh generously gave up time to be one of our judges for the 6th Form Entrepreneurship Programme this year, having founded a number of entrepreneurial businesses across the Middle East, North Africa and the UK and grown them to industry niche leaders. He has a fascinating array of companies and an endless amount of passion and energy for all that he does, which is quite infectious.**

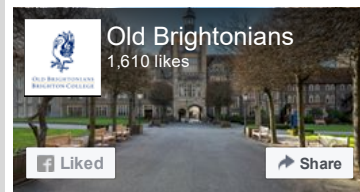
1. When you were at Brighton College, what did you want to be when you 'grew-up'?  
I was at Brighton College 1978 - 1983. Having natural affinity with mathematics, I recall at a career advisory session where I initially wanted to be an accountant.

2. What are you now you've grown up?  
I am the founder and Managing Director of MB Group (<http://www.mbarakat.com/>) which is a long term investor in people and their ideas. Being a talent scout, it often feels like I am in a real-life amalgamation of The Apprentice and Dragons' Den. Though even at my age, I try not to call myself "grown up" since I am constantly learning new things.

3. What is your best memory of school?  
Firstly I am eternally grateful for Mr. Anthony Whitestone (Brighton College Common Room 1971-2006) for being an understanding and guiding Head of Hampden House who guided me to a top University.  
I also recall, in my first year, we had to be involved in an activity during break, but I was in a courtyard and I saw a prefect coming so I dived into the nearest classroom. It just so happened to be the computer room (in an age when having 4KB of memory was huge and the computer was a teleprinter which was later upgraded to a Commodore PET computer). The teacher, Mr. Paul Boswell said if I was there, I had to take part, and 14 years later I had a PhD in the field of Artificial Intelligence from the London School of Economics.

4. What was the best piece of advice you were given  
I recall Mr. Boswell commenting that whenever I hit a problem, I always found a way round it and, in his view, this was an indicator of my likely future success. This acted as an inspiration for me to carry on. I apply the "nothing is impossible" mindset to everything I now do.  
I also recollect a piece of advice in logic testing that if you wanted to check a theory, check the extremes to see if the theory still holds and if not then you immediately know the theory is not correct.

5. What do you do /did you do as a career  
I joined international investment bank Drexel Burnham Lambert as a quantitative analyst. I subsequently held the post of Senior Managing Director of the Philadelphia based FNX Limited, who provide global risk management systems to the largest institutions in the world.  
In 1988 I founded my firm "MBRM - MB Risk Management" who are pioneers of the



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financial add-in and toolkit market segments and have been continuously providing leading edge analytical solutions.  
 In 2003, I joined the Education and Standards Committee of the Professional Risk Managers' International Association (PRMIA). The Committee is charged with the development of PRMIA's Standards of Practice, Conduct and Ethics (Code of Conduct) and the Professional Risk Manager (PRM) program which is both a certification and professional development program.

6. What does your job involve?

As founder and Managing Director of MB Group, I coordinate investments and ventures in various sectors.

7. What are the most challenging parts of your job?

Multi-tasking all the different divisions of the group (we have Financial, Fashion, Medical, Legal and Software), as well as maintaining a healthy balance of time between family, social, networking and business.

8. What have you done that you are most proud of

Firstly I am most proud of my children.

Secondly helping others achieve their maximum potential (whether by directly working together or helping via charities).

I am especially proud of being a founder and trustee of PACES, a UK registered charity (<http://pacescharity.org/>). "PACES" was founded in June of 2006 with the central aim of providing healthy, structured after-school sports programs for Palestinian girls and boys; for boys who would otherwise be on the streets and exposed to violence and negative, or destructive, influences, and for girls as a means of getting them out of their homes and into programs that empower them.

9. What is the single thing that would most improve the quality of your life?

25 hours in a day.

10. What are the three objects you would take with you to a desert island?

#1 : A chess set (since I won the Brighton & Hove Junior and Senior chess competition whilst I was at Brighton College).

#2 : Book : "The Future of Drug Discovery: Who Decides Which Diseases to Treat?" By Dr. Tamas Bartfai & Graham V. Lees

#3 : Fresh Water

11. How would you like to be remembered?

Someone who tried to change the world to be a happier, healthier and more peaceful place.

Last modified on Thursday, 06 March 2014

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