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EARLY START GETS BRAINS GOING

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Eleven wannabe entrepreneurs have spent a day focusing on the financial lessons needed to succeed in business. The 11 men and women are taking part in the Entrepreneurs' Bootcamp event, a business challenge which aims to give those taking part the chance to develop five years of business experience in just five days.

The hopefuls are today starting the third day of the event.

Yesterday began at 6.45am with an exercise session, including a power walk around the Hoe aimed at waking them up and improving their physical fitness.

The day then moved on to a more cerebral level with a breakfast presentation from entrepreneur Malcolm Ferris, who talked about how to achieve success.

"The participants are like any group of entrepreneurs. What sets them apart is a willingness to take the first steps," he said. "If they gain confidence from the bootcamp then they can achieve success."

Mr Ferris praised the bootcamp experience, saying it would serve as inspiration to other people in Plymouth who were thinking of starting up a business.

"If the objective is to provide inspiration to others, then it's a great way to show what can be done. If it takes hold and they succeed, then it'll be a great example to others," he added.

After a presentation about intellectual property followed by a session on finance from HSBC, the participants were given a presentation from Bishop Fleming about investment and taxation.

They then had some individual time to work on their business plans, followed by a working dinner with business experts.

Gary Furzeland, aged 27, said: "It's been a really good experience. I'm amazed at what I've learned. It's very intense but very enjoyable."

Sarah Sanderson, 26, said: "It's so far so good. I've really learned a lot.

"We've had an overview of product ideas, which is something I've known about for a long time but haven't known what to do about it."

Lorna Pearce, 40, said: "Learning about trademarks and that sort of things has been good. I've been in business quite a long time but it's never entered my head."

Vanessa Hammond, 34, said: "It's been really exciting and interesting and I've learned a lot. The sessions today have encouraged me to think bigger, not just about a small company."

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