

Turn off Joe Duffy, Dragon tells start-up businesses

BY CATHERINE KETCH

"STOP listening to Joe Duffy", "forget the begrudgers" and "negative energy is contagious" ... just about sums up rule number one in a ten point plan for life and business from RTE Dragon Bobby Kerr.

Mr Kerr, who also launched the programme nine months ago, gave the keynote speech at the inaugural 'Greenshoots' awards at Macrooom E on Thursday last.

Certificates were presented to nine businesses that completed the programme; Autumn Angels, B Introduced, Castle Gate Crafts, Computer Xplorers, Food for Living, Ground Sol, Heart Aid, Newport Geographic and Triskle Technology.

Programme participants, trainers, mentors and sponsors Cork County Council and South Cork Enterprise Board and members of Macrooom Town Council and Lee Valley Enterprise Board attended.

Mr Kerr said he was "hugely impressed" with the participants, describing a dynamic in the room and a "collective vision" for each business.



Participants in the inaugural Green Shoots programme who were presented with their awards by RTE Dragon's Den star Bobby Kerr at a presentation ceremony at Macrooom E on Thursday last. Also included are representatives of Macrooom E who hosted the programme and sponsors Cork County Council and the South Cork Enterprise Board as well as Macrooom Town Council.

"Mentoring, presentation skills, writing business plans - all the things you learn are absolutely fantastic but the most important thing you have here is you have each other," Mr Kerr said, describing it as tremendously lonely to start up a business on your own. The camaraderie of the past nine months, he said, would really stand to them.

Listing his ten top tips, he emphasised the

importance of people. "Life is about people and business is about the people and sometimes the best people in business are the people who understand the other people," Mr Kerr said.

The next stage of Greenshoots starts in September. Online applications can be found at www.greenshootscork.ie or contact Catherine Costello Macrooom E on 026-20520 or [\[e.com\]\(mailto:ccostello@macrooom-\).](mailto:ccostello@macrooom-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

The next seven of Mr Kerr's rules were: enjoy what you do, health and family is everything, honesty and integrity is critical, everything can be negotiated, have a plan, make sure the plan is flexible and work hard and stay working hard. The final two were summed up as "it takes twice as long and it costs twice as much" and "stay in the ring because it is going to get better".