

## Conferences



Entrepreneur Danny Weissberg with hi-tech guru, Dr. Yossi Vardi

## The New Entrepreneurs Club

Danny Weissberg, a respected entrepreneur among the University's alumni, recommended the establishment of an Entrepreneurs Club to encourage the spirit of entrepreneurialism amidst the University's graduates and students. The recommendation was accepted and the first Entrepreneurs Club at Open University was launched.

The Open University's first Entrepreneurs Club – established to enrich the culture of innovation and help enhance education towards innovation among the University's students and alumni – was launched in October.

Hundreds of University graduates and students have successfully integrated a brilliant idea, entrepreneurial thinking, motivation and determination to launch start-up businesses. Many have already succeeded and others are on their way. Each one, however, whether already on his way, or deliberating as to which way to proceed, feels the need for additional knowledge and advice, as well as having an open channel to those more experienced.

### Do You Have a Winner?

Dr. Yossi Vardi, who has been monickered in Israel as "Mr. High-

*"I look to invest in very talented people. I like people who are committed to their idea – and not necessarily money-wise."* Dr. Yossi Vardi

Tech" because of his involvement in founding and/or building over 50 high-tech companies, served as the guest speaker at the Club's initial meeting. "How do you know if you have a winning idea" was the title of his lecture, and he offered the room full of hundreds of attendees some incisive and compelling insights.

Dr. Vardi cautioned the audience, "You can lose your investment once, but gain ten-fold many times. Yet, since it is in man's nature to fear loss, most people are wont to stay far away from risky situations." At the same time, he offered them encouragement, "Don't be afraid. You may lose the first time, but if you have good a good idea, you will succeed, and do so in a big way."

Dr. Vardi, who has, in the past 12 years, invested in more than 70 different situations (not all were companies), offered the audience some of his own personal guidelines for choosing winners.

"I look to invest in very talented people. I like people who are committed to their idea – and not necessarily money-wise. The qualities that I look for in people are: credibility, good values, modesty and honesty. I also have to be convinced of the individual's ability and capability."

The Entrepreneurs Club meets on a monthly basis, with each session featuring a guest speaker from among Israel's top business leaders and an opportunity for individuals to use the forum to network. The Club is open to any and all Open University students and alumni interested in fulfilling their entrepreneurial potential.