

AN INTERVIEW

"I never knew I **wanted to be an **entrepreneur**, until I had to become one. I'm **happy** I did."**

GHIZLANE BENABDALLAH

Founder StudentPlek


**#She
DIDIT**

When you didn't know you had it in you

When they tell you to enjoy your time as a student, that doesn't include being stressed when looking for silent studyplaces or where students can find one another in times of exams. Combining a fulltime job, teaching Dutch on the side and keeping herself busy with other things, Ghizlane decided to pursue another education. All this while the pandemic was happening aka everything happened at home.

Very demotivated, she started looking for nearby places to work and study, trying to escape the homely atmosphere. With her eyes wide open she looked for places where students could gather, in her hometown. That's when the disappointment hit: **how is the future generation supposed to prepare itself when there is no place?** She asked other students and saw how they experienced the same problem.

Her unexpected entrepreneurial instinct was activated and before she knew it, StudentPlek was founded. Her hidden talents flourished. By creating a network of study spots, she hopes to motivate and create a safe space for students in her hometown to work on their future.



“Do not underestimate yourself. Uncertainty holds you back in many things. I have tried to eliminate that characteristic as much as possible by really grabbing every opportunity that came my way. And I look back on this today in a very positive light.”

— GHIZLANE

**#She
DIDIT**

The value of people

The process is more important than the destination. Ghizlane loves getting to know herself better, the challenges and growth, and meeting new people that impact you, all of it is untradeable. It's also a way to let go, like her perfectionism. **You can plan as much as you want, but the learning only happens during the execution.**

Having a strong network, going out to talk with other entrepreneurs or organizations made her more confident. Als being surrounded by a team also made an impact. Ghizlane continues to feel a deep sense of gratitude for the people she meets along the way. Ambitious, talented, fun and with their heart on the right spot. It's something she cherishes, because everyone she meets taught her something. **As if they held a piece to her puzzle.** She might be young, but she quickly understood the basics of entrepreneurship.

But what about her future? Her love for StudentPlek and education in general, will always be her driving force. She aspires to create more of these safe spaces, and make sure every student gets the chance and care they deserve to take care of their future.



GHIZLANE'S GOLDEN RULES

Know what you stand for and stick to it. There's no need to let others tell you how to fill in your story if you know what you stand for.

Be sincerely grateful for what you achieve and for the people you work with. From time to time, you should consciously reflect on the foundation you have created.