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Sharlene Wells Hawkes: Miss America, Sportscaster, and Entrepreneur

From brains to beauty to business, Sharlene Hawkes has just about done it all. After winning the Miss America Pageant in 1985, Hawkes earned her bachelor's degree in Communications from BYU, and later, a master's degree from the University of Utah. She began her professional career at ESPN where she worked for 16 years as an award-winning sportscaster until she realized she was tired of living her life from the sidelines. Sharlene's decision to be a part of the action has led her to what she considers her happiest career yet—founder of Remember My Service, a digital scrapbook for military service members and their families. However, her road from Miss America to a successful entrepreneur wasn't all smooth sailing. Sharlene shared her top 5 principles for success (which coincidentally all start with the letter P) with the Entrepreneur Leadership Series (ELS) class this last Wednesday March 25th.

1. **People:** People really matter. It's just as important to be the connector as it is to be connected. Helping other people connect and network will allow them to value you as much as you value them.
2. **Passion:** You have to love what you do and think that what you are doing is noble. This is the key to making things happen.
3. **Persistence & Patience:** When you're doing something important it's never going to be easy. You must be patient and persistent, knowing that the hard things will be worth the wait.
4. **Pivot:** There's always a different way to do something. You have to be able to pivot and get creative when you run into a roadblock.
5. **Partner-up:** When you're a little company, partner up with someone bigger. Do your research to find out who you would like to meet, and who could add the most value to what you do.

Sharlene's 5 P's are sure to help Aggies in their business ventures, as well as the adventure called life. People, passion, persistence, patience, pivoting, and partnering up with those who've been where you want to be are lessons we can use now, and take into all of our future endeavors.