



# Career path for young talents

SUMAN SAHA

**Y**OUNG talents should refrain from building a career in one particular sector. They should pursue a career based on understanding market trends, passion and development opportunities to be successful in their working life, say career experts.

"In our county, there is a strong tendency that a large group of graduates prefers a particular sector," says M Zulfiqar Hussain, chief executive officer of Grow n Excel, a leading human resources and management consultation organisation in Bangladesh. "A few years back, many graduates opted for a career in telecoms and today, same thing is happening for the financial sector."

A good graduate can build a career in any sector, given that he/she performs well and the organisation creates an enabling environment by nurturing, developing and retaining talent with appropriate people management practices, says Hussain.

Dr MA Mannan, professor of management studies at Dhaka University, says, "Many fresh graduates in our country make career decisions influenced by peer groups. But they should pursue a career by reviewing industry growth potential."

So, the career experts ask young talents to make career decisions by understanding the trends, not following others blindly.

They say fresh graduates can explore opportunities in large local corporates in sectors like ready-made garments (RMG) and textile, information technology (IT), telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, hospitality and other service industries.

Today, local corporates have grown substantially and many organisations are going through transformations where growth perspective is enormous. In order to move forward, graduates in Bangladesh can contribute a lot more in these identified sectors, says Hussain.

Apart from the banking sector, there are many areas where they can explore their career. If one looks at economic indicators, the service sectors have done well in the recent past and trends are expected to be positive, he adds.

"The prospect of having a career in the RMG sector is also quite good as this industry is at a booming stage due to an increment in living costs in China," says Saleh U Ahmed, head of HR, administration and compliance of IDS Group, a leading garments manufacturer and exporter in Bangladesh.



Global companies are looking for alternative destinations to source garments. Bangladesh will have preference because of cost competitiveness. Hence, the industry would require a lot of skilled human resources, says Ahmed.

Besides, a capable graduate can pursue a career in the RMG and textile industry because many leading group of companies have recently focused on developing their own talent pool by pursuing structured professional development programmes.

The IDS group provides both on-the-job and off-the-job training for its employees. "We have recently launched the management training programme to develop future leaders in this sector," says Ahmed

He says they will recruit the next batch of management trainees this year. From now on, they plan to train them at Indian Institute of Management in Kolkata.

Aslam Baig, vice president for HRM and administration of Kohinoor Chemical Co (BD) Ltd, says the prospect of having a career in the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector is good because it has steady growth over the last three decades. For example, Kohinoor, a leading local company in FMCG goods, has steady growth since in 1956, he claims.

The youth of today is smart enough regarding career choices. But they should consider job security, reasonable compensation, and a good working environment to choose a career, says Baig.

SM Moniruzzaman, vice president for corporate affairs at Flora Ltd, a local IT giant, says the county recently witnessed a digital revolution from rural to urban areas. Besides, all the banks are going to automate their operations. As a result, a large number of skilled human resources will be needed to cater to this segment.

There are also huge growth prospects in business process outsourcing because Bangladesh was recently included in the list of top 30-outsourcing destinations, he adds.

Moniruzzaman says young talents should build a career in this sector because most leading IT organisations in Bangladesh follow a structured management system by adopting the best practices from global organisations.

Dominic Bennett, general manager for HR and training at Aarong, says, "The prospect of a career in the retail sector is promising as more people in our country like to go shopping for entertainment. So, a growing number of companies have come into this sector."

For example, Aarong, a leading fashion house in Bangladesh, provides a structured professional development programme for its employees.

Lutful Kabir, senior advisor of GIZ, says talented young professionals can build a career in the development sector because this sector mainly works for capacity development of its partner organisations. So, the development organisations have to arrange intensive training programmes for its employee so that they can build expertise on a particular segment.

However, the CEO of Grow n Excel suggests that freshers review Employment Value Proposition (EVP) in choosing a future employer. The EVP is a set of attributes that the employment market and employees perceive as the value they gain through employment in an organisation. It includes important factors like compensation, organisation stability, development opportunities, future career opportunities, respect, quality of managers and work environment.

Professor Dr Mannan also urges fresh graduates to choose a career by taking suggestions from teachers, family members and industry insiders.

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# Managing your career – some tips

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**E**ACH individual wants to have a pleasant career path throughout one's life. They strive to build a career that truly suit their desires and exhibits their potential.

However, many fail to enjoy it because they choose careers on a short-term perspective.

A career expert says people should make career choices based on personal needs, wants and capabilities.

"A fulfilling lifelong career is a rarity because many people, especially the youth, make career decision on short term perspectives," says NEA Shibly, chief executive officer (CEO) of Pro-edge, a leading management and human resources (HR) consultation house in Bangladesh.

"They often make fundamental decisions before they realise the full implications of their choice."

In our context, there is no one formula that will provide a person with a 'good' career. The objective should be to find an excellent 'fit' between what the person is and what he or she does.

Universally, an individual's wants and needs vary greatly. For example, an apparently successful managing director of a multinational corporation

may be totally dissatisfied with his or her jet-set lifestyle and desire to move into a far less stressful occupation, while a middle manager of a local company may long to be promoted to a managing director's role, says Shibly.

Shibly, who has over 25 years of experience in HR, says finding the right career is serious business, as a 'good' career is the outcome of a struggle to fit personal needs, wants and capabilities into what the world has to offer.

It is also essential to learn how to make sound decisions at key moments. People who enjoy a good career teach us that there are stances, attitudes, skills and competencies that help to fashion a better fit between a person and their work, he adds.

Unfortunately, people tend to become victims of habit, and close their minds to personal development. There is a lot of scope for career development, but it is not infinite. No matter how much an individual wants a particular role or achievement, there are objective limitations and constraints.

"A youth who is unable to sing a tune simply can't be a singer, and an intellectually dull man can never be a university professor," says Shibly, who also teaches in a couple of



NEA Shibly

leading business school in Bangladesh.

"Almost all of us face major career decisions at different points in our lives." Typical examples include women who want to take up work again after having children, people made redundant at middle age

and people who want to exploit their latent potential.

Shibly, a certified human resources professional and a former army official, urges careerists to consider three key issues -- look inward: who are you; look outward: what does the world want, and then, fit

into the world while making a career decision. So, he suggests pursuing the following steps to manage one's career successfully.

While looking inwards, the first step will be to decide, 'who takes my career decision?'

Secondly, one should identify the main 'career drivers' as careerists are energised by motives that drive them.

As a third step, ask yourself, 'How effective am I?' It helps one to reach valid conclusions about the strengths, non-strengths and weaknesses.

A fourth step would be to ask, 'How satisfied am I?' That is the job satisfaction.

The fifth step will be to ask, 'What are my talents?' For careerists, the task of identifying talent is especially important, as talent means currency. Personal talents are coinage in your purse. So, it is crucial to identify, develop and exploit one's own talent and transform into marketable competencies.

The sixth step to ask is, 'What constrains me?' One has to explore the dark side: these are the factors that constrain and confine personal choices.

In looking outwards, careerist should ask only one question, 'What organisation suits me?'

That is the seventh step after having reflected upon the most important personal factors that

determine the direction and scope of the career choices.

In fitting yourself into the world, the eighth step should start with the basic question, 'What is my aim?'

Where do you go from here - paint a picture of it. That is, one should create a 'vision of the future' and the vision should be long term, bold, speculative, and partly derived from intuition.

In the ninth step, the question should be, 'What are my objectives?' It is time to transform the vision into action and develop concrete objectives so that one can move forward.

The crucial question in the tenth step-- 'How should I develop myself?' This is about building competence. The easiest way of building a progressive career is to be offered a succession of desirable opportunities -- the trick is to be 'right' for the promotion.

The last question would be, 'How can I best exploit the present?'

A careerist should make the best of the present in a current work role. "Today is the first day of the rest of your career. Each day, you should ask how I can get most out of doing this. That is the way to making progress -- each day you are nearer to your vision."

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