



FROM GRASSHOPPER TO MASTER

Opening up Your Own Coaching Centre

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With the weight of our wallets rapidly decreasing and our free time somewhat increasing, most of us who have just finished O Levels or HSC or are taking a gap year before university, are trying to find ways to earn some fast cash and also bag some valuable ECA. One of the most common work opportunities for young people these days is opening up their own coaching centres. It is no easy task and a lot of factors must be taken into account before dipping your feet into these uncharted waters.

COMMITMENT

I had a teacher whom we constantly bugged about giving us a treat. Every time, he gave us the same answer: "I'm giving you the best treat of all! I'm treating your brains to knowledge!" The free food still sounded pretty good to me, but the point is, you become a teacher to share your learning. The kind of satisfaction you get by teaching a kid how to do long division for the first time is priceless. A good teacher always needs to have passion. You could be in it for the pay, sure, but it's also important to enjoy teaching. If you don't like what you're doing, your students won't like it either. So make sure you actually want to do this before you take any steps forward.

FINDING STUDENTS

The number of teachers has multiplied by so much that finding students can become difficult and could force you to reconsider opening the coaching centre altogether. Before you begin broadcasting your new teaching plans, make sure you visit potential classrooms and find one that you like. Keep its rent in mind and then try to find enough students so that their tuition fees will allow you to pay off the rent in the future. (Profit could be considered later since you'll get the majority of your students after a while of teaching as it takes time for word to get out.) Start telling your friends about your plans and ask them if they have younger siblings or cousins or anyone that would like to join. Secondly, don't be shy to ask your old teachers or even mere acquaintances for students. You have nothing to lose, only students to gain.

RENTING A CLASSROOM

Student budgets are usually low so the first big hurdle you need to conquer while starting your own coaching centre is finding a way to pay the initial rent for your classroom. The rent depends on the location of the building, the size of the classroom, the frequency of classes you want to take per week and the amount of hours you want per day. The rent for a single classroom in Dhanmondi usually starts from around BDT 8,000. If you have savings you could use, go for it but

be careful if you need to take loans to make the first rent. One wrong move and you could end up with not enough students and a whole lot of debt. If asking your parents for a loan is an option, don't be ashamed to take it. Another big problem that young people face while trying to rent a classroom is that most landlords are reluctant to talk to them. Syed Akhbar Ahsan, 16, a teacher at Aphelion Juniors, shared his experience while discussing the rent with the landlord of his current classroom: "He was sceptical about whether I'd actually be able to pay the rent and this was hon-

There are, of course, exceptions who will give you a shot. Don't let them down. Work hard and make the students want to attend your classes. Keep their parents updated and convince them that you are taking great care of their children. Gossip travels fast, especially in the Aunty District, so if you can win over a few of them, you've pretty much won yourself a lot more new students.

ADVERTISING

Once your coaching has been open for a substantial amount of time and has been going steady with a handful of students, you might consider broadening your

Patience, hard work, and dedication – if you have these three key elements down, your success as a teacher is inevitable. All students want is a good teacher, so if you can be that, they're going to come to you even without all the advertising. Just handle all your students with care and patience and let them reach their potential. That's all you need."

GOING BIG

Now, most students who get into the whole teaching business don't really want to do this in the long run. Most of us have a different set of goals. But in my opinion, teaching is a respectable profes-



estly a bit offensive. I persevered nonetheless and told him that the values instilled in me as a human being would never allow me to promise something without intending to fulfil it. He went quiet immediately." Sometimes all it takes is to be confident and show them that you mean business.

HANDLING YOUR STUDENTS' GUARDIANS

A common issue among parents is that they cannot put their trust in young students who have become teachers. They want "real" teachers. The ones that have years' worth of teaching experience, the ones that they think they can rely on.

horizons. You could take to social media and instead of spending hours trying to make senpai notice you, you could invest the time in promoting your coaching centre. Ask friends to share a status update about your centre. You would not need to ask people individually for students any more, let the news reach them and wait for them to come to you. Chairman and Mathematics teacher of the coaching centre, Vertical Horizon, Md. Sayem Rais, shared, "It's all about word of mouth. If your students like the way you teach, they're going to tell their friends and that is how your centre is going to expand. What you need to do is become the best teacher that you can be.

sion so why not consider making it your main goal? Students can start teaching professionally right after they finish their undergraduate degree. It's all up to what every individual wants but it is surely something worth thinking about. You could shift from your one classroom to an entire building, begin taking multiple batches of students, create something big on your own. Of course, it will take time, but as Md. Sayem Rais said, "Patience is key."

Happy teaching!

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