

Take your next step to connect to us. Email us if you have an interesting story to share related to career.

facebook.com/
thedaily.nextstep
Email: nextstep@thedaily.net

The Daily Star
DHAKA, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2015
e-mail: nextstep@thedaily.net

NEXT STEP

DIGITAL HAMMER

Breaking geographical boundaries with internet for all

In conversation with Yasir Azman, Chief Marketing Officer of Grameenphone

With 17 years of commercial experience, including 5 years of executive management experience in the FMCG and telecom sectors, Yasir Azman served as Head of Distribution & eBusiness of Telenor. He has worked in various operational and leadership roles in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, and joined as Chief Marketing Officer of Grameenphone in June 2015.

What is it like to be back?

I've worked for 14 different countries where Telenor has its operations. That brings in a lot of experience from other markets. While most of those markets are far more progressed than Bangladesh, there are others that are quite behind. What I noticed is that Bangladesh has changed a lot since 2010 heralding an exponential advancement in technology. When I see local televised dramas, I hardly see the previous actors anymore. It's all new faces. Same with corporate partners. New faces are everywhere. New and young faces. It's exciting that the country is so vibrant in terms of its youth.

What are your plans for the youth?

We are in the communication business and our job is to engage with stakeholders. By 2016 we'd like to take 3G coverage to the entire country—bring in real content by involving the youth. What do you do beyond communication services? When we say internet for all, it's not only to get connected. The goal now is to bring relevant products and services to our subscribers. We want to bring in music and TV channels and 'over-the-counter' content on social media.

Mobile communication is also going beyond connectivity and entertainment.



I try to follow my 12 year old son. They are the next generation and I try to learn how they interact with the world.

It's one of the biggest tools for development. mHealth and Wowbox are two such products.

What's Wowbox targeting now?

It's a platform where we provide our commercial information as well as educational content. If you've noticed, we have not made any communication about Wowbox but we have millions of subscribers. The plan is to build it into a one-to-one platform where people get the content they are searching for. The youth is interacting regardless of whether there is a physical shop or not.

Where is telecom headed in Bangladesh?

More than 50 percent of mature markets

are involved in digital media. It's a challenge but it is also a comfort zone for us, being part of the Telenor group. We have massive expertise in the digital arena.

How does home life create an impact on your work life?

I try to follow my 12 year old son. They are the next generation and I try to learn how they interact with the world. It seems everything they do is via the internet. They exchange currency through games. I try to learn how and what kind of videos he uploads online. For those of us from the 'voice communication' era, it will require a different, more limited source of information to learn the things

young people do.

The internet is breaking the geographical barrier. It has become an enabler for looking for a new experience.

The geographical barrier is gone for the younger generation. For young people, geographical boundaries melt away as long as there is the internet to connect them. For me, when I am abroad, I primarily hang out with my friends there, when I am here, it is with the people I know here. While I still rely on the visible and tangible experiences, the youth go looking for much more beyond that. And the internet is their greatest enabler.

That should help reduce the disparity between the information among rural and urban groups.

Empowering the rural sector is an immense boost. I met a 76 year old woman from my village who was so excited to see me that she invited me over to tell her story. She is able to live comfortably while her family members work outside. She receives a stipend that she feels would not have been possible without mobile telecommunication. She might not have let her grandson work outside if she couldn't be in touch with him over the distance. Breaking down spatial differences is our biggest goal and challenge.

For the full interview, check out the Next Step website

INTERVIEWED BY EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

The interviewer is Editor of the career, tech and automobile publications of The Daily Star. He is also an entrepreneur of a baby clothing business and previously worked in advertising as a Senior Copywriter

NEWS

VC of BRAC University invited as panelist for WMS 2015

World Marketing Summit 2015 was held in Tokyo from October 13-14. With more than 30 speakers and 2,500 attendees, this year's WMS represents a major event in the world of marketing. Building on the knowledge and know-how of Professor Phillip Kotler, the guru of modern marketing, an international group of marketing all-stars comprised of academics and practitioners was brought together at WMS, to reflect on making a better world through marketing.

Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb, Vice Chancellor of BRAC University, was invited by Professor Kotler as a panelist for an interactive session on diversity in marketing, where he deliberated on the 'Effectiveness of Diversity in Marketing in Emerging Markets'. Dramatic changes in society caused by the digital revolution, including social media and big data, have created new opportunities and unique challenges which every country needs to address. Presentations and discussions over the two days covered new marketing trends aimed at building a new sense of dynamism for companies and industries.

For the first time this year, the format of the presentations was interactive. Interactive sessions covered topics such as branding, 21st century marketing models and social marketing.

Seedstars World is coming to Bangladesh

Seedstars World, the global seed-stage startup competition for emerging markets and fast-growing startup scenes, is coming to Bangladesh for the first time on November 14th.

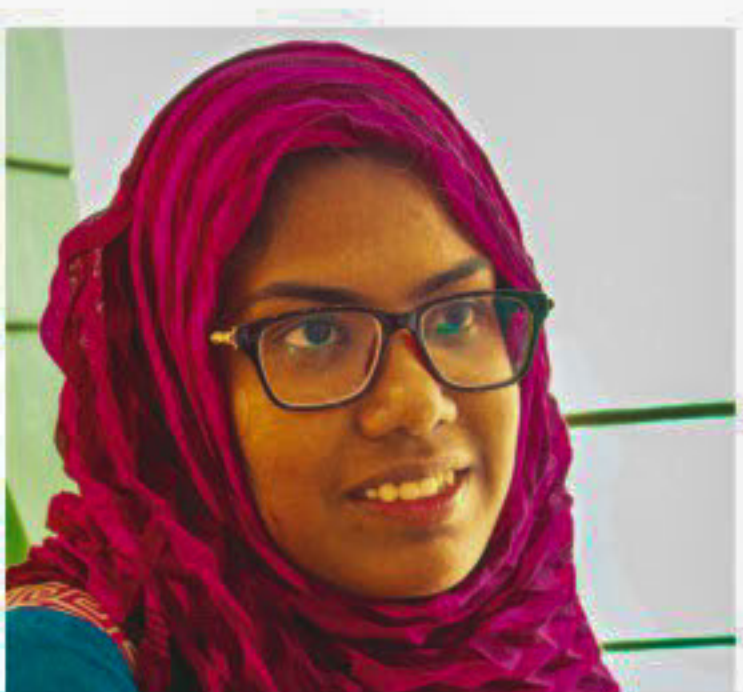
Seedstars World focuses on three major tracks: FinTech, TravelTech and StarTech. Each of these investment tracks will have a USD 500,000 equity prize for its winner. Various other prizes can be won outside the tracks such as the Space Prize, a USD 50,000 grant awarded by Inmarsat and AP-Swiss. All regional winners of the local events will be invited back to Switzerland to pitch at the final event. There will be four local workshops on November 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 13th on FinTech, TravelTech, StarTech and Women in IT.

Other than the basic criteria for a seed-stage company—operating for less than 2 years with under USD 500,000 in funding and an available MVP—Seedstars World is also looking for smart startups that solve regional issues and/or develop profitable products for the global market.

Participants can register for the workshops at: <http://bit.ly/sswdhaka>, and in the main event and bootcamp at: <http://www.seedstarsworld.com/event/seedstars-dhaka-2015/>

A thought becomes an idea

If you haven't already gotten a buzz of it, this year's Telenor Youth Forum 2015 had its Grand Finale two weeks back at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka. The top three semi-finalists were chosen in a glorious ceremony, which had guests starting from the Ambassador of Norway to founders of various startups. One of them will soon represent Bangladesh in the three-day conference to be held in Oslo, Norway. This year's theme was 'Knowledge for All'. Who are these potential representatives, and what are the ideas that set them apart?

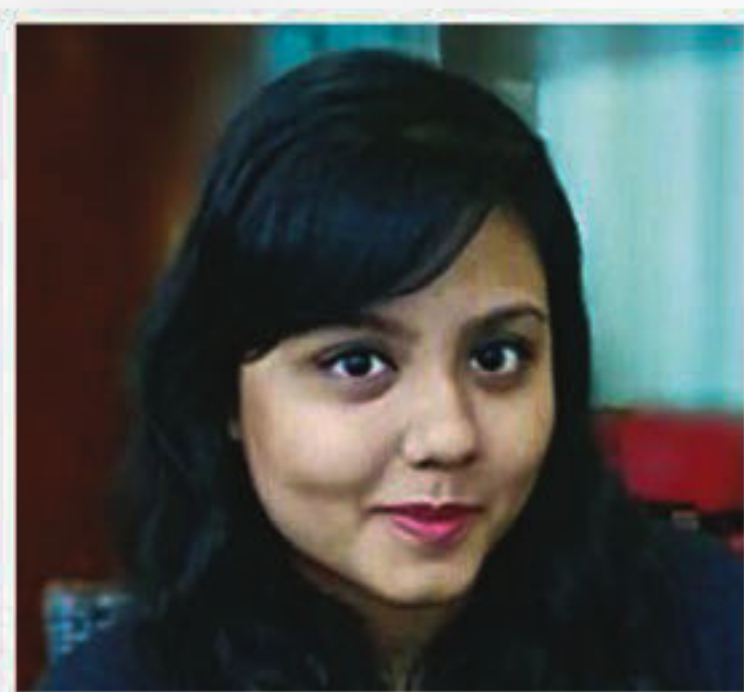


Sadia Afrin Binte Azad and The Left Side Classroom

While working for Teach for Bangladesh, Sadia observed the problems that many of the underprivileged children of our country face. For families challenged to provide a proper meal on their tables at least once a day, buying school stationery is a luxury. These underlying reasons create the pool of problems that eventually force children to drop out of schools.

This is what drove Sadia, along with a co-fellow of hers, to initiate their project. The Left Side Classroom allows the more privileged and generous members of the society to connect to these children and donate stationery. The project has managed to raise enough awareness. She is currently working on the launch of the website by the end of 2015. TYF 2015 has helped her expose her initiative on a global scale, as well as connect to young minds trying to solve various problems in our society in unique ways.

Sadia is currently getting an MBA from the University of Dhaka and an M.Ed in Educational Leadership, Planning and Management from the Institute of Educational Development at BRAC University. She hopes to keep working in the educational field, particularly in the curriculum development and policy making sector.

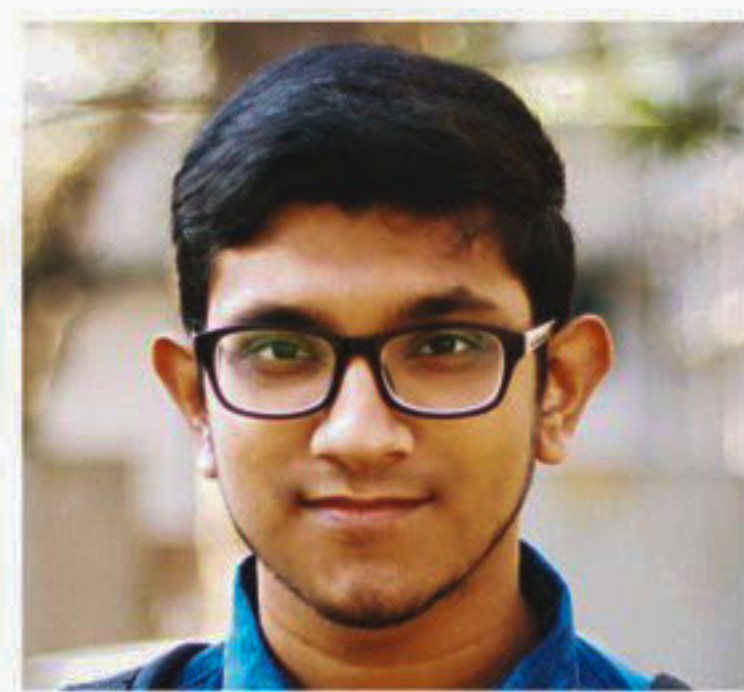


Abreshmee Adeeba Haque and MuthoSchooL

Most students in our country lose interest in studies because of the poor quality photocopied books, shortage of quality teachers and the emphasis on memorising over practically applying yourself. These lead to shortcomings when pursuing higher education, as well as a lack of confidence and work-passion.

A free online platform to attend to the individual needs of students by means of learning resources such as e-books, video tutorials and fun DIY experiment instructions, MuthoSchooL aims to revolutionise the meaning of knowledge from being merely a means of earning bread to something that can be enjoyed and applied. Students can connect with volunteer teachers to clear their confusions, practice from exercises with explanations and earn points by completing study tasks. This will encourage studying by rewarding the effort of the students as well as making learning an interactive, lively and productive experience.

A third year student of IBA, University of Dhaka, Abreshmee hopes to make a positive difference in the society. She claims to be a big time Potterhead and a believer of the quote "You are as responsible for your successes as you are for your failures".



Sabab Rahman and The Classroom

Racism is an issue that is ingrained during the formative years of life, which is why it is crucial and most effective to target children if we want to make a dent on racism. This is where The Classroom—a cross-cultural program incorporated in the global school coursework—comes in. One-on-one video-conference sessions with students from different parts of the world will help students learn and appreciate cultural diversity. Discussions about their rituals, festivals, traditions, culture and way of life will help eliminate common misconceptions, ethnocentrism and stereotypical behaviours.

The answer to racism is to change the way we see people and the world around us, which is why the motto of The Classroom is "Change the perception, change the world".

Sabab is a first year student of IBA, University of Dhaka. He genuinely fears public speaking, which is one of the reasons why he decided to participate in TYF. Sabab aspires to become an entrepreneur and believes that optimism and hard work can do miracles.

SABRINA RAHMAN

The writer is a freshman at the Institute of Business Administration, University of Dhaka

Making a DIFFERENCE

Types of employees you should avoid being

Over the span of a lifetime, you're going to run into a few people you wish you hadn't run into. More often than not, they will be people you meet in your professional life. Putting up with them might not always be an option. If you're lucky, they might grow on you. But in the (un)likely circumstance that you are in fact one of these people and identify with any of the personalities described below, be cautious about your behaviours and make a conscious effort to change.

The boss's pet

Always playing on your phone? And in front of the boss? So what. Showing up on time? Ludicrous.

Boss's pets are under the impression that they aren't subject to the rules of professional life. And most of the time, their bosses perpetuate this kind of toxic behaviour. While they invoke the wrath of every other cubicle-mate and co-workers from a different department, HR can't really do anything about them until the manager makes a formal complaint. But watch out, sooner or later, karma is going to catch up to you. There's still time to change your old ways, before you end up jobless.

The goody two-shoes

Your colleague showed up late? Thank you for that information. The guy from marketing spent three hours away at lunch? Nobody cares. Reporting petty incidents committed by your co-workers is not your job. You weren't hired to keep the rest of the team in line. Have some useful advice? Give it to the person you have a problem with instead of haranguing your boss. Managers aren't blind—they will do something about employees who are slacking off. Now get back to your paperwork.

The overly attached employee

It's the first day of the weekend; you've hardly gotten out of bed. Five missed calls from the minion at the office. You call them back right away. What's the emergency? But you should know better, it's never an emergency. The overly attached employee will call

Bangladesh is rapidly moving towards middle income status by 2021. Our businesses definitely offer immense opportunities for the growing economy and this diversity needs a stage for the stories untold. See Bangladesh make its mark on the global map as Making a Difference brings you our proudest success stories from across the country.

and text and email and inbox you on Facebook at all hours—and for no good reason. Since voicemail isn't really a thing in Bangladesh, there's just one thing the rest of us would like these types to know—send an explanatory text, don't ramble, stick to the point; we'll get back to you.

The drama queen/king

Your boss criticised your work? No, you're not going to be fired. Someone squinted in your direction? What does it matter?

Just the other day, I got a number of calls in the evening from an unknown number, after work hours, followed by a text from the caller (who turned out to be a colleague) that said there was an emergency and I should call back right away. Being the overly anxious type, my heart skipped a beat and I called right back, 95 percent sure I was in serious trouble. Turns out it wasn't a big deal at all, just needed to hand in some papers. Don't throw around the term 'emergency', especially at work. Leave the drama at home, before you give somebody a mini-heart attack.

'It-wasn't-in-my-JD' guy

Most job descriptions will not give you a line by line explanation of exactly what you have to do. Most jobs these days are dynamic, especially if you're starting out. More importantly, there's nothing wrong with going beyond the call of duty once in a while to help a brother out. In the event, you are given a responsibility that is so far-off that there is no way you could possibly do it without losing an arm, you can explain why you can't help and direct the asker of the favour to someone who can. If you can't avoid it, ask somebody to help you out instead.

AMIYA HALDER

The writer is Sub-Editor of the career publication of The Daily Star. She is also a junior at the Institute of Business Administration, University of Dhaka

