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NEXT STEP

REDEFINING 'WIN-WIN' YOUTH IN SOCIAL BUSINESS

Shazeeb M Khairul Islam, Founder & President of Social Business Youth Alliance-Global and CEO of Spark* Bangladesh, has encouraged numerous youths to get involved in social business, besides mentoring a lucky handful on the path to success in the sector. With the third season of Social Business Youth Summit (SBYS) 2016 knocking at the door, we get into the mind of this brilliant social entrepreneur, as he tells us about why SBYS is the must-attend conference of the season.

Shazeeb, you have played an instrumental role in redefining the dynamics of entrepreneurship among today's young generation. How would you describe your responsibilities?

As they say, we are what we do. I am just an ordinary man who envisions a poverty-free world where young people take initiatives to solve social problems. The platforms I am involved with helped me serve as a volunteer for social businesses. SBYA gives me the opportunity to work with university students where I help them refine innovative business ideas. At Spark* Bangladesh, we back startup entrepreneurs who change lives. In my capacity as a One Young World Ambassador and US Department of State Alumni, I promote the cause of social business to young leaders across the globe.

What draws you to the concept of social business? People do have an idea about how it works. But how do you, as a young person, channel your inner altruistic self into generating sustainable business models?

I grew amid a lot of challenges and adversities. I loathed the archaic culture of winning at the expense of others. Since childhood I have believed in win-win—winning at your work while helping people win over their disadvantage is the best feeling one could have. That's what draws me to social business. Social business is all about creating social change in a sustainable manner. If I can change even one life or the collective economy of a small community, it makes my success all the more valuable and worth expe-

riencing.

With increased globalisation and connectivity, networking and communication are becoming vital as breeding grounds of 'social capital'. How would you emphasise the necessity of 'social capital' in today's world?

I cannot possibly overstate the importance of social capital and its long term benefits on entrepreneurship. Ideas are the most valuable resource any business can breed or be bred from; social capital is one such asset that always yields increasing returns to scale once you break even.

I had the privilege to engage with communities such as One Young World, President Obama's Global Entrepreneurship Summit and US Department of State-funded programme Jolkona Catalyst. These programmes not only gave me the opportunity to learn from others, they came with opportunities to network with like-minded individuals from around the world. Such networks have facilitated dissemination of ideas, capacity building as well as acceleration to several social business ventures. Most importantly, my stock of social capital has shaped me as a leader and mentor to the talented young entrepreneurs I come across every day.

How does SBYS serve as an optimum platform for maximising social capital? Why do you believe it's 'the complete package' for every aspiring young entrepreneur?

SBYS remains one of my most favourite projects because it helped me realise the bounties



of networking. Being a shy and introverted person myself, I now realise how essential it is for young people to connect. Many brilliant ideas pass on as deadweight loss, simply because we may not find someone equally crazy or excited to work hand in hand. That is what we are trying to provide—a resourceful platform for young people to build, share and develop social capital.

We are bringing 300 bright minds together

at one eventful hub for two days of exciting networking opportunities. Participants from universities, social businesses, startup communities, incubators, accelerators and various social business funds are coming together to discuss the possibilities and challenges that face social business today. It is the 'complete package'—as you said—because we are offering access to knowledge, human resources and possible funding prospects.

You have witnessed your brainchild (SBYS) coming into maturity over the last three years. What are your expectations from this season's show?

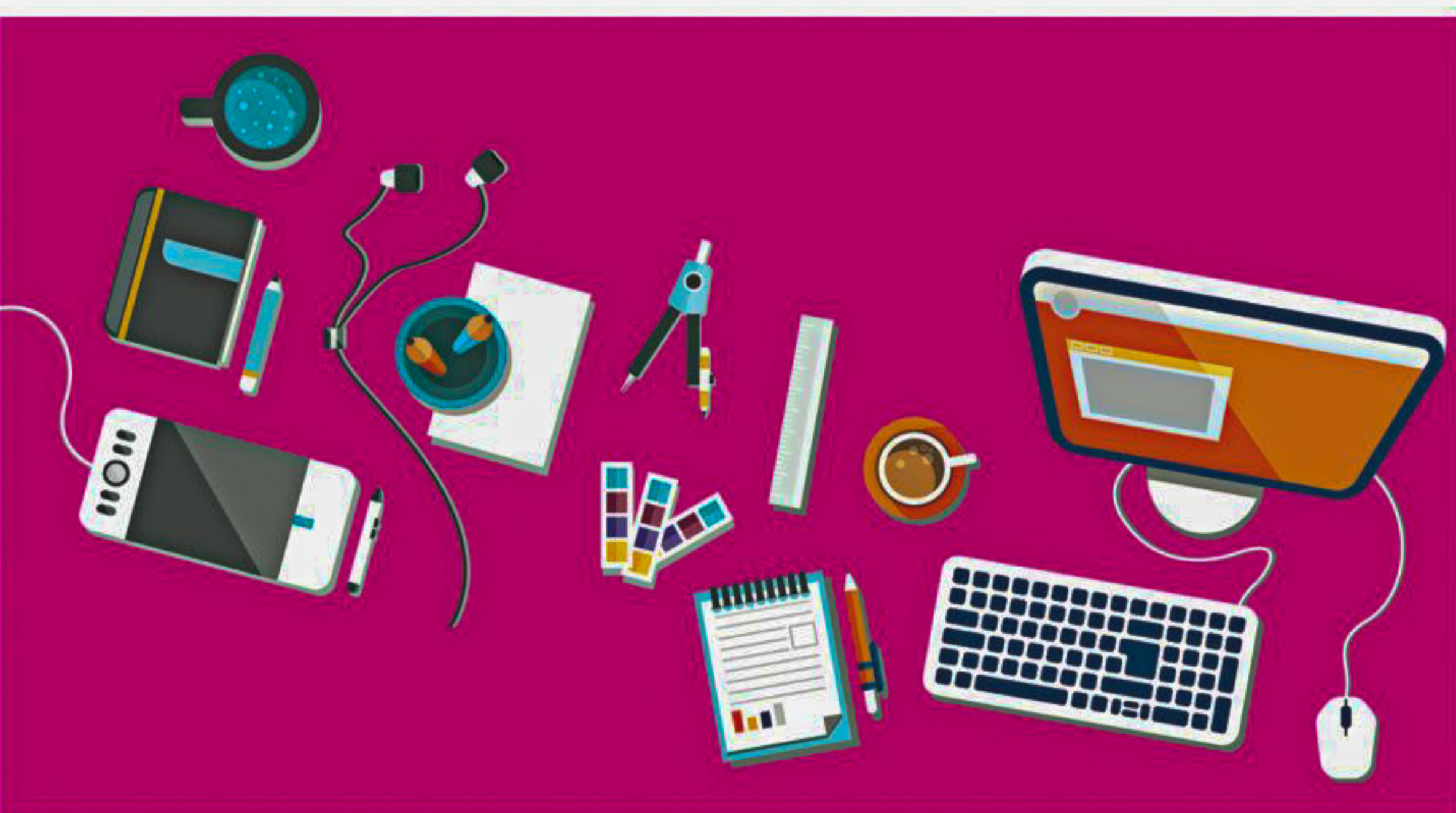
SBYS as an event has come a long way, but there's always room for improvement. For the past three years our main goal has been to make youth more aware about the possibilities of social business and bringing sustainable change to their communities. Moreover, SBYS helped us build a significant presence in 30 universities within and beyond Bangladesh. We have launched six social businesses besides providing mentorship, office space and seed capital to two of them. From this season of Social Business Youth Summit, SBYA will reach young professionals as well. As I said before and will say again—it's all about giving people the chance to build social capital. My expectation this year would be for young people to make the best possible use of this opportunity.

Last but not the least—what would be your advice to passionate youngsters?

Never give up and never take no for an answer. Being an entrepreneur requires determination of the highest degree. There are so many pitfalls in the road to success. It's work in progress all the time. But if you want to achieve something great, you need to keep going no matter what.

INTERVIEWED BY: SYEDA NAFISA NAWAL

The interviewer is Co-Founder of Youth Thinkers' Society Bangladesh and an alumna of Asian University for Women



HOW TO MAKE GREAT GRAPHICS WITHOUT ANY DESIGN SKILLS

We can't all be Illustrator and Photoshop gurus. Some of us just need a leg up to create what we need without years of experience or a flaming pocket. Luckily there's this thing called the Internet where you can do magic with a few clicks. Check out these online platforms that help you design all sorts of stuff for free.

CANVA

The best thing about Canva will always be how fun and easy it is to use. Loads of free templates and resources in one place, this should be your go-to site for creating social media graphics, infographics, resumes or even book covers. Pre-designed elements that you can customise to your preferences and write on, is a wonderful feature to have. Everything from the background to the fonts and colour schemes can be changed. And yes, you don't have to stick to templates. Add your own dimensions and start off from scratch in no time.

PIKTOCHART

Infographics have been the cool new thing for a long time now. They're not going anywhere and if you haven't been using them for your cause, you've been depriving your audience of quality content. A lot like Canva, but with fewer free

options, Piktochart is another great platform to visually display data. You can also create posters and presentations. They've got a pretty sleek editor and you can import your own resources.

FLATICON

Icons are underestimated. They're minimalistic and a brilliant way to associate text with a visual element. And FlatIcon is the best site online to download all sorts of icons. From the basic easily recognisable ones to fairly complex illustrations, you can get it all here for free. You can also switch between colors and sizes and choose different file types based on what you need.

INFOGRAM

Charts and graphs don't need to be boring. Infogram exists to take care of that for you. You've got decent free templates to start with and then you've got your fancier premium ones. Import data from another

spreadsheet or just choose from a preset and enter all the info yourself. Maps are another unique feature of Infogram for when you need to show regional data.

FREE STOCK PHOTOS

Images are king in the world of visual communication. But hey, you don't need to be a kickass photographer or own an expensive camera to get breathtaking photos for your project. There are multiple sites that provide free stock photos with or without creative common rights so you don't have to worry about legal issues. Pexels lets you browse photos by filtering colors. Gratisography has amazing photos taken with interesting twists and perspectives, while Unsplash and Little Visuals upload beautiful sceneries.

ABHIK HASNAIN

Making a DIFFERENCE

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.

BEATING EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Retaining employees or reducing employee turnover is a challenge for most organisations. Although while joining, employees sign contracts promising to stay for a minimum time period, they end up leaving or having to leave anyway. Organisation invest in recruitment and selection, so when employees leave or switch all of a sudden, it becomes difficult to maintain the regular workflow and thus the need for sound employee retention practice becomes inevitable. So let's have a closer look in order to find the causes behind poor employee retention:

UNAWARE OF HIDDEN TALENT

Apart from the regular and expected activities of employees, each incumbent is skilled in other areas which tend to remain unnoticed and unexplored by the authority of the organisation. Sometimes incumbents with rich extracurricular backgrounds remain under-utilised. The department heads need to work on this and take note in order to utilise the organisational talent better.

NOT EXPERIMENTING

Organisations tend to go for tried and tested formulas each time they have to carry out projects. When only employees with similar track records are given a chance to prove their mettle, other employees start to become dissatisfied. A simple job rotation helps in this regard. Experimenting with different employees conveys the notion that the organisation has a fair judgment.

INDIFFERENCE TO EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

When employees perform well in solving crucial

problems and show ingenuity in addition to their prescribed list of duties, sincere appreciation and recognition is due. But when their good work goes completely unnoticed and there is no effort shown, employees feel undervalued and detached, leading to job dissatisfaction.

LACK OF FOLLOW-UP

Today, many organisations become so involved in recruitment that they forget to follow up after a certain time, especially when the 'newness' of the recruited pool is gone. Sometimes the enthusiasm is more focussed on hiring fresh recruits than looking after the current ones. When loyal and senior employees don't feel special, in spite of their work and tenure, they feel that their efforts have been in vain. It is imperative that after the selection of employees, there must be regular follow-ups.

These reasons coupled with inertia from the side of organisation lead to poor retention. It is also true that there will always be some difference in opinions between employer and employee, but the loss of an experienced and talented incumbent shouldn't be the end result. Although today, replacement happens quickly because of the availability of applicants, letting go of a sincere employee without valid reason exhibits that the organisation is practising below par employee retention techniques, which will only demotivate the remaining employees.

ABU MD. ABDULLAH

