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NEXT STEP

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A TERRITORY MANAGER

We reach a certain point every semester when we are buried deep in quizzes, assignments, reports, and whatever other atrocities our faculties decide to put us through. It is precisely at this moment that we want university to end, because c'mon, life after university is going to be so much better right? Working 9 to 5 at a cosy office, post-work hangouts with friends/colleagues at a cafe, and finally a fat pay-check all to yourself.

However if you are employed as a territory manager (TM), life is going to be the exact opposite. If you plan on working for an FMCG or some other consumer goods company, chances are you will start out as a TM of some rural area. And that means that particular village or town will become your new address for an indefinite period of time. Even if you're not a TM, some companies require new recruits to embark on a similar stint for a few months. So what are the challenges, transitions, and developments of territory managers and people in similar positions?

GOING AWAY FROM HOME

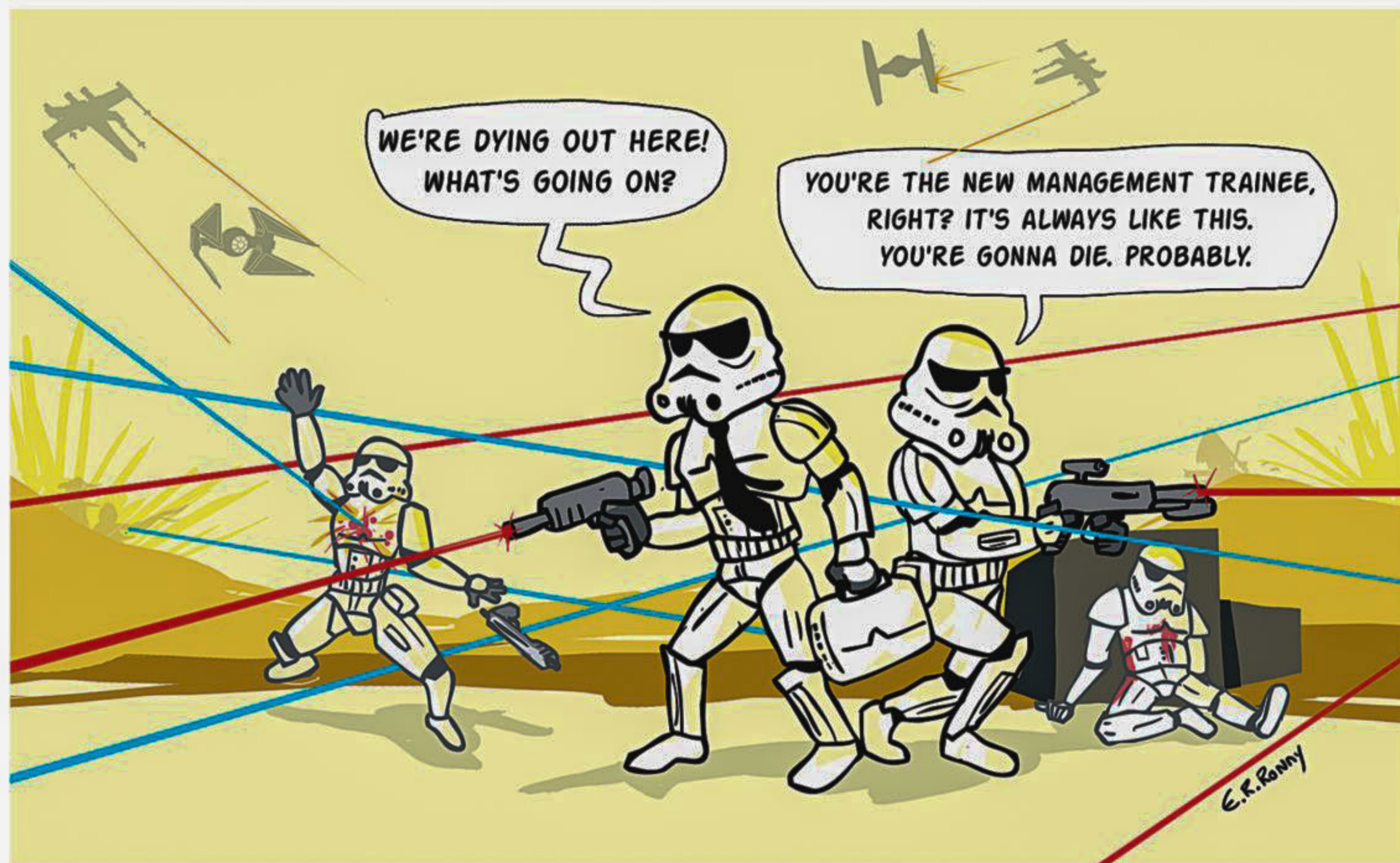
The most apparent transition you will go through will be leaving all the comforts of home, including cooked food, clean clothes, etc. You will be left to fend for yourself and although your employer will likely compensate you, it will be your responsibility to arrange accommodation, food, and domestic help. Depending on your location, finding clean water for consumption and use could also be a challenge.

LEAVING BEHIND LOVED ONES

Another point closely linked to the first is the fact that moving to a new location means going away from your friends and family. A finance Management Trainee (MT) at Unilever Bangladesh Limited (UBL), Sudipto Saha says, "I would say the biggest challenge was to live in a place without your family, and it makes you realise that you take certain things for granted". Staying away from your loved ones for so long will definitely make you crave their company while making you homesick as well.

COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

TMs have very demanding jobs and are required to spend a large portion of their time on the field interacting with lots of different people. However, these interactions



are not the ones we're generally used to, as TMs must communicate with retailers, distributors, and others. Just the geographical and socio-economic context makes communication tough, and no academic learning can expose us to this.

DAUNTING CHALLENGES

Fahim Hara, TM at UBL, shared another

account: "Working with people who have a different background from yours has its own challenges. They will not always be receptive of you and your requests because they view you as an outsider. You will have to think of clever ways to get things done by them and this is not something taught in class. In the end you must learn to gel with them."

OVERWHELMING RESPONSIBILITY

It goes without saying that TMs have to be very responsible as they oversee the sales of a whole area. They must meet sales targets, resolve problems, and work out the strategies and math needed to optimise sales. You will be working in the field, but you will also be required to do many of the things that a

regular desk job requires. So it's obvious that you'll need some mettle if you plan on taking on this position.

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

Despite all the evident hardships TMs must go through, there are countless of benefits and personal development opportunities up for grabs. The overall compensation package is usually very attractive, including a handsome salary and various perks depending on your contract. You will have access to some of the best sales and leadership training to equip you with the skills required to perform your best. And last but not least, a good TM run will enable you to advance within the organisation.

The experiences you will gain will without a doubt help you develop as an individual. You will gain hands-on experience of working with a sales team. Some of the skills you will acquire can only be learnt through working on the field. Moreover, living alone will teach you to take on more responsibility than you would otherwise. You will have to shop for groceries, make a budget, and run a household all by yourself—most of which are a vital element of growing up. Nafi Aman, Territory Officer at British American Tobacco Bangladesh Limited, summarises the whole experience as: "Although a posting outside Dhaka is a challenge and it can be hard to live alone, you grow not only in your professional life, but in your personal life as well. So at the end of the day, it's worth it."

What are your thoughts on being a TM? Would you prefer it over other jobs? Let us know your opinion.

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Choosing a career that does justice to one's traits and dreams plays a key role in finding happiness in life. After graduating, people become over-burdened with the pressure of getting absorbed by the job market as soon as possible. In the process, they ignore some factors that are crucial to choosing a career.

Sometimes people get carried away and go with the flow, only to pay the price in terms of frustration, failure and disregard for one's own capabilities and possibilities later on. Today, let's see what it takes when it comes to choosing teaching as a profession.

HAVING THE RIGHT VISION

A strong and clear vision is required because one must be able to imagine herself or himself as a teacher in practice. The person must have no discomfort with the idea of being a teacher and interacting with a class full of people at a time.

PREPARATION LED BY PASSION

One needs passion to start and sustain a career in teaching. Unlike most professions, it is best to decide to become a teacher at an early stage in life. Observing faculty members, their lifestyles, and their body of work will help a student preparing for his or her career.

LOVE OF PERFORMING

Today, teaching is not about indoctrinating. Think of it as a performance art instead. The aspiring candidate must have a love of performing and presenting in front of a class in a classroom setting. Strong communication skills and use of humour are requisite, along with persuasion skills. Sometimes the subject matter might not be that interesting, but it's the duty of the teacher to make it seem like the most happening thing around, and to grab and hold the attention of students.

COMPASSION FOR OTHERS

A person becomes a teacher and enjoys the status because of his or her students. The teacher must possess compassion for this target group. There will be all kinds of students, in terms of attitude, level of knowledge, learning ability, means of self-expression, and problems faced. The teacher needs to accommodate all and mould his or her style with love and care.

People look up to teachers. So a teacher must show characteristics that scream that he or she loves to work with people and encourage others to work. A teacher has to analyse the unique traits of students and inspire them to sharpen those traits to excel. In this regard, a teacher

should be the epitome of inspiration and motivation.

STAYING RELEVANT

A teacher has to bring as many real life examples of concepts as required in the classroom to complement the text. The teacher must be expert in picking relevant examples from the factors affecting our lives from local and global standpoints.

LEARN AND GROW

One must accept the fact before becoming a teacher that continuous learning and growing are prime features of the job. Observing the environment, pursuing higher studies and conducting research are requirements of all higher level teachers.

Teaching is a sacred duty and we can see that certain factors must be met in order to truly shine as a teacher. Maintaining strong ethics with a sense of morality is the basic assumption in acquiring those qualities. Considering these facts, if you think you've got what it takes, don't waste any time to embrace teaching. You were made for each other.

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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.

THE TRICK WOMEN IN THE WHITE HOUSE USE TO STOP BEING INTERRUPTED

If you thought a White House aide was pretty much set for life because she or he has gotten the metaphorical foot in the door, think again. Because once you get your foot in the door, you have to get a seat at the table. And 21st century or not, for women, it's double the work.

With most senior advisers getting selected from the male-dominated ranks of campaigns, high-up female aides often complain that men have more access to

table, we're constantly trying to one-up each other. But women in White House are taking a different approach.

Staffers have adopted a strategy they call "amplification." According to an article by the Washington Post, "When a woman made a key point, other women would repeat it, giving credit to its author. This forced the men in the room to recognise the contribution — and denied them the chance to claim

to, but if you truly agree with what someone has said and constructive ideas are being made, you should definitely speak, even if you don't have a point of your own, even if it's better than your own idea. Because face it: a meeting where everyone is constantly cutting each other person off, goes nowhere. Plus, if you speak up, you can finally get out of that non-committal dark corner of the table where no one can see you.



the president and often force them out of major policy talks. Jimmy Carter's assistant for public outreach was reportedly never invited to daily meetings where aides offered ideas to the president. Sound familiar?

When even the speaking order in meetings can make a difference. In the hyper-aggressive world of office politics, if we haven't submitted to a non-committal corner at the long

the idea as their own."

And it worked! Obama noticed and began calling on women and junior aides more often. This certainly doesn't just apply for women in politics. Instead of choosing to ignore a good idea someone has brought up or staying quiet about it out of the overwhelming fear of the sound of your own voice, we could choose to support one another.

You don't need to feel obligated

It's when you bother to earnestly listen and draw out one or two meaningful thoughts that something substantial is set in motion. So speak up, get acknowledged, engender a culture of support, and avoid getting nicknamed "Mumble", and not affectionately either, behind your back.

WORDS AND ILLUSTRATION:
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