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FALGUN 26, 1423 BS

e-mail: nextstep@thedaily.net

NEXT STEP

TO WORK OR TO NOT WORK

With constant quizzes, assignments and competitions, university life is stressful enough as it is. Add a job to the already overwhelming workload and the pressure becomes almost too much to bear. With each side demanding a lot of time and dedication, maintaining a work-study balance is no easy feat. Whether driven by necessity or passion, plenty of students are attempting to make the best of both worlds. So, why go the extra mile? Or more importantly, how?

PROS

Monetary benefits

Many parents find it difficult to bear costly university expenses. Especially if you are living away from home, there are also accommodation and living costs to take care of. In these circumstances, the extra money can really reduce the burden on your parents, besides giving you a chance to save up for that cool phone you have wanted for a while now. Moreover, you are likely to be better at budgeting once you start earning on your own.

Time management

Once you get used to the pressure, you will surely get better at time management, and are likely to pick up a few organising tricks. These are important skills in all aspects of life and will surely help you maintain balance when you fully step into the professional world after graduation.

Networking prospects

Working part-time could give you an edge over those who are not working when you start your career. You can use your part-time job to get an introduction to the corporate world, using this chance to further explore your interested career. You can begin networking with others in your chosen field before others, giving yourself a head start that will help you stand out at interviews after graduation.

Transferable skills

Working part-time can provide you with a skill set that is desirable to employers. Since you have already been exposed to the working world, you would be more aware of the corporate culture. Not only know would you know how things work better than your batch-mates, you would also learn teamwork and be more adaptable to different environments. In fact, just the mere fact that you are simultaneously working and studying shows employers that you are ambitious and have an admirable work ethic.

CONS

Falling grades

Many parents believe that a job can be detrimental to studies. With the shortage of time, it is often difficult to attend all classes, maintain assignment deadlines, and manage good grades at the same time. Often



one finds himself/herself struggling to maintain a good CGPA, which can have a bad effect on one's career later.

Finding the right job

Realistically, students are often new to the working world and with zero experience, finding the right job is rather difficult, especially one that is relevant to your field. Students are also prone to exploitation in terms of hours or pay. And while tutoring jobs are great to jog your memory on high-school theories and can pay great, they do not make your CV stand out.

Missing out

University life is supposed to be one of the best times of your life. With inspiring teachers and a diversified student body, university life is rather dynamic and if you spend more time at work, which you will be doing 24/7 after graduation anyway, there is a chance that you will miss out on university experiences. Many suggest being involved in voluntary work and club work in the university instead of working outside so that you can take away more from

your university while you are there.

HOW TO MAKE THINGS EASIER

Whether you chose to work while studying, or want to concentrate just on studies is entirely up to you. Even the amount of work that you plan on doing is something only you can decide. While jobs such as tutoring or freelance photography should not take up too much of your time, the same may not be the case for jobs that are much more demanding and require you to work in an office. So, here are a few tips to make this easier for you.

Prioritise

If you have an assignment due the next day, it may not be wise to be start working for something that is due two weeks later. Use a diary or colour-code your calendar—anything that helps you keep track of your shifts, important deadlines, and social events.

Communication is key

Make sure you let your boss know early if you have important lectures or quizzes

that you need to attend. Employers working with students usually know the limitations of a student's life, and should be pretty flexible with hours. Talk to your professors as well. In case you miss classes or lectures, do not be shy to ask for help from your peers and tutors.

Take a break

Yes, it is going to get overwhelming which is why it is so important to take a break once in a while. Plan a weekend getaway with friends or take a stroll in the park if you are too busy to take a whole day off. Alternatively, just take the day off and catch up on sleep or movies. Not only will it improve your efficiency once you get back, it will also help you maintain a healthy lifestyle so that you do not overwork yourself and get sick. That way, you can easily get the best of both worlds!

WORDS: ADIBA MAHBUB PROMA
ILLUSTRATION: EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

Adiba is a second-year student of Computer Science and Engineering at BRAC University

StartUp Cup '17 kicks off

StartUp Cup, the international business model competition, is back for the second year in Bangladesh. On March 6, the organisers announced that a special bus will travel across the country to pick up the winners of the seven divisional rounds. Launched by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands, India-based impact investment firm Aavishkaar and BetterStories Limited, this year's cup is themed 'Nurture locally, scale nationally.'

The tailor made 'immersion' bus will travel across all the divisional cities, with the exception of Dhaka. The aim of the competition is twofold: first, to identify and coach promising entrepreneurs from rural areas who are addressing social challenges. By offering targeted training to these budding companies, they are better able to present themselves to potential investors and are better positioned to launch successful companies. Secondly, to create a startup ecosys-



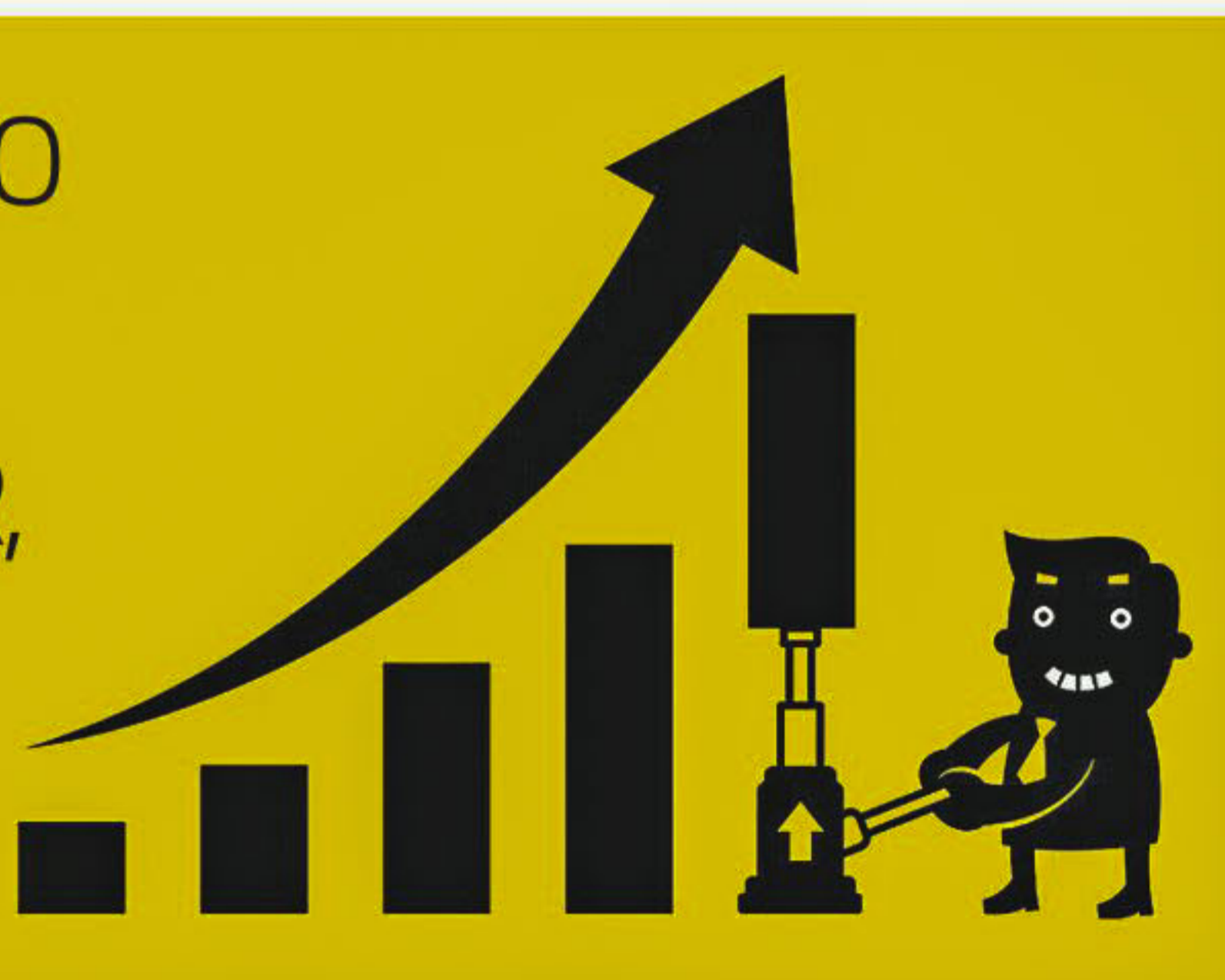
tem across the seven divisional cities that, once seeded, will hopefully be able to grow and sustain itself. The ecosystem will support startup entrepreneurs in early stages, and when mature, become a driving force for the growth of SMEs and startups, influencing policy, and transforming the rural private sector.

The launching ceremony of Bangladesh StartUp Cup 2017 was graced by Leoni Cuelenaere, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands; Kabir Bin Anwar, Project Director, a2i & Director General (Admin), Prime Minister's Office; and Selima Hossain Allen, Project Director, Bangladesh StartUp Cup 2017.

"What continues to strike me is the resilience of the people, the entrepreneurs, of Bangladesh. They are, despite often challenging conditions, taking advantage of the continuing levels of economic growth to improve their lives. This results in a vibrant private sector, and a vibrant private sector reaches more consumers and drives better innovation to solve tough problems," said Leoni Cuelenaere at the event.

To apply, visit: bangladesh.startupcup.com or call 01754141188. Applications are open till March 25, 2017.

7 WAYS TO WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER



Start with making a plan for the day

What do you need to get done? Prioritise. What is the most important work that you need to do? Make a plan that works for you. If you like working with rigid time based plans, make those. If you like more flexible list type plans, then stick to those. Whatever you do, make sure you have a prioritised list of tasks that you need to get done for the day made.

Don't be all over the place with your work. You have an assignment? Narrow down what needs to be done and formulate a plan (or a method) as to how you are going to get the work done. Think about the work before diving right in, have a strategic way to go at it. Have a series of different tasks? Work in blocks. Finish one block of work or half of each to stay motivated.

And finally, know what time of the day works for you. If you aren't a morning person, don't push yourself to work in the morning. Find the time when you reach your peak efficiency and block out distractions during that time and work.

Gather your information

You won't get stuck as often your task if you knew how to go ahead with it. Learn as much you can, as

a matter of fact, always maintain a high learning curve. Keep learning skills and information that will help you out, for example, master those excel skills and invest in critical. Try asking a colleague or senior about how to get the work done, someone who has done it before. Ask their advice and learn from their experience

Take naps and breaks

This is fairly simple. Remember, naps, not full blown six hours of sleep and breaks, not two entire seasons of a series. Keep your mind well rested and efficient. A tired mind can't perform well. So go grab a KitKat and take a break.

Delegate

You cannot possibly do everything on your own. Delegate tasks to your team. And do not beat around the bush. Tell them precisely and properly what needs to be done and what is expected of them. Delegate tasks to the best person for the job and push the worry out of your head. Concentrate on your part of the job and trust your team to deliver.

Kick distractions out of the room

I know, much easier said than done. You can either lock the source of distraction out of your workspace, if possible. Or you can

formulate a 'To Don't' list. Basically, list down things you are not allowed to do, and stick it above your workspace. You can also take help from various apps, such as StayFocused, Freedom or Focus Lock.

Know your limits

Remember, you too have to draw a line. Know when you are finished for the day and stop working. Establish a closing ritual. At the end of the day, clean up your workspace, check how much you got done, and make a list of what to do the next day. Plan out the next day and what you intend to get done. And Most importantly, back up all the work you have done up until now

Evaluate your progress

Self-evaluate and congratulate yourself on a job well done. Measure whatever work you are doing and set goals to improve that. Consistently improve. Self-evaluations help you pinpoint where you are inefficient and you can work on that bit. Basically, master the skill of working smarter.

RAHMA MIRZA

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

Making a DIFFERENCE

4 ESSENTIALS FOR STAYING ALIVE AS YOU WORK AND STUDY

Most of my middle to final years of university involved haphazard study and a killer work schedule. Two jobs and a few tutoring gigs meant I had to get to three different places most days of the week. I needed to study to make money to study further to make more money to pay off studying costs. It was a cycle more vicious than the repeat storylines of Hindi serials. Here are four tips to help you survive without becoming a zombie.

Use technology

Take fewer notes and listen instead. Abbreviate your text and write quicker. Use apps like Evernote or Simplenote to type, scribble or take quick snapshots of the diagrams on the board. At work, use same apps to update tasks. This comes in handy during 'dead zones'.

Utilise the dead zones

Dead zone is just a fancy name for those times when nothing happens. Times are so slow you actively look for mosquitoes to kill. Traffic jams, noon lunch breaks and being asked for ideas at a meeting. Use the dead zones to sit back, look at some notes and catch up on some studying. Alternately, utilise those quiet times to prepare some ideas to shoot. Many people have the strange habit of taking a phone to the bathroom. Catch up on notes there instead of updating social media statuses.

Ignore delicious distractions

Facebook. A spot of selfie taking with some #nofilter filters. They eat up valuable time that a student/worker/zombie cannot afford to waste. Offtime or Cloze

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.



offer great ways to block off social media so you can focus on what you really need to do. If you're not doing business or building a brand, you can avoid social media for large chunks of the day. The world and your life will continue as it was. Or you can sleep.

Sleep

A student working at a job not owned by the parents is under a lot of stress. There are a hundred different things to do and a few inevitable time clashing screw-ups to survive. Sleep. A tired mind is like a stale shawarma. It works but

it is nasty and prone to cause upsets. A 20-minute nap is the perfect short, quick recharge, resulting in improved alertness and enhanced performance. You will wake up a little groggy but it wears off quick and your mood improves. And if you're hungry, eat half a fresh shawarma.

EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

The writer 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