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ASHAR 16, 1424 BS

e-mail: nextstep@thedailystar.net

NEXT STEP

AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION FOR THE PRICE OF A BANGLADESHI DEGREE?

Every year, 10 lakh HSC graduates compete for about 50,000 public university seats. Every wondered where the remaining end up? Some look into private universities, which are often quite expensive. A Bachelor's degree from a private university in Bangladesh can set you back by BDT 8-15 lakh. Now that's a big sum of money for the average Bangladeshi household. Add to that the fact that many courses of study are unavailable here and students start looking for options overseas.

Bangladesh has grown steadily as an economy, registering seven percent GDP growth year on year. This has had a positive impact on the currency as well. In 2012, when I first went to pursue my Master's degree from a premier Australian university, I paid BDT 90 per Australian dollar. Now, every Australian dollar will fetch you BDT 60. That's a straight 33 percent decrease in costs if one were to pursue a degree in Australia at present. This means that if one were to pursue a degree from a private university in Bangladesh, he/she would be looking to shell out AUD 13,000-25,000. Some consider this to be a hefty bill to study in Bangladesh as the return on investment is very low considering the average graduate salary in Bangladesh is BDT 20,000 per month. If you take out living expenses, you would be left with nothing at the end of the year. Not to mention, the Bangladeshi corporate world is infamous for long work hours, which is worsened by the fact that it takes two-three hours for a person to commute to work and back.

Paying for your degree

Instead of spending four years at a private university in Bangladesh paying AUD 13,000-25,000, students who can afford a private university education can consider joining a mid-tier university in Australia where the annual fees are about AUD 25,000. Since an Australian degree takes three years to complete, tuition fees would total AUD 75,000, while annual living costs would amount to AUD 12,000.

As a student, you are allowed to work 40 hours per fortnight during term time and unlimited hours during summer and winter breaks. The minimum wage is AUD 18 per hour, but for simplicity's sake we will con-

sider it AUD 20 per hour (which is quite common). So, if you were to work approximately 40 hours per fortnight during term time (36 weeks) and say 60 hours per week during break (16 weeks), then your annual income would be AUD 14,400 during term time and AUD 19,200 during break. As such, your total cost would be AUD 111,000 (tuition fees plus living expenses) and your estimated income for three years would be AUD 100,800. Voila! You get an Australian degree for around AUD 10,000 or BDT 6 lakh, and you break even within a little over three years.

This means that studying in Australia is not as expensive as it appears to be. Moreover, why would you not want to attain a degree from one of the 43 world-class Australian universities, of which seven regularly feature in the world's top 100 universities according to Times Higher Education Rankings and QS World Universities Rankings? Add to that a two-year post-study work visa, which you are guaranteed to get after completion of your studies no matter what degree you pursue. During that time you can seek a graduate job wherein the average Australian graduate salary is AUD 50,000 per annum or BDT 30 lakhs.

Working after you graduate

There is also the option of migrating permanently through the skilled worker stream. Students can check whether their subject of choice is listed in the Skilled Occupation List (SOL) of the Australian government. Once you are sure it is, you have to ensure that you can accumulate at least 60 points to be eligible to apply for an invitation to apply for Permanent Residency (PR). Yes, you cannot apply for a PR straightaway. Once you meet the requirements, you have to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI). Based on the



ILLUSTRATION: EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

cut-offs for the relevant occupation and the application period, you may then be invited to apply for PR. An invitation to apply usually means a guaranteed pathway to PR.

Word of warning: employability is very much determined by the demand for the particular career you train in. So research the job scope of your course of study.

Getting your student visa

In general, there are five main areas where one can gain points, namely education, age, English test scores, duration of course, and location of study. You may seek advice from a reputed education consultant for further details, but you must be wary of dodgy agents. Ask your agent the following questions before signing up:

- Do they have an office in Australia? This is important as they can help you find a place to stay when you arrive in Australia and give you important contacts to look for part time jobs.
- Can they help you write a Statement of Purpose, which is a deciding factor for your visa and scholarship?
- Can they organise the documents that are needed to apply for a student visa?

• Choosing a wrong agent could cost you your student visa for filling wrong or insufficient paperwork. You could also lose out on potential scholarships that could be availed through proper guidance.

So, go and get your degree from a dream education destination. It is one of the most liveable countries in the world with six Australian cities regularly featuring in the top 20 most liveable cities index. Australia also has a higher per capita income compared to its OECD counterparts. It is for good reason that Australia hosts/has hosted world sporting events such as the Australian Open, F1 Racing, Cricket World Cup, and the Olympics. With a work-life balance second to none, a great work culture, a safe living environment, and fantastic locations to explore every weekend, moving to Australia has by far been one of the best decisions of my life.

RANA PRATAP NAG

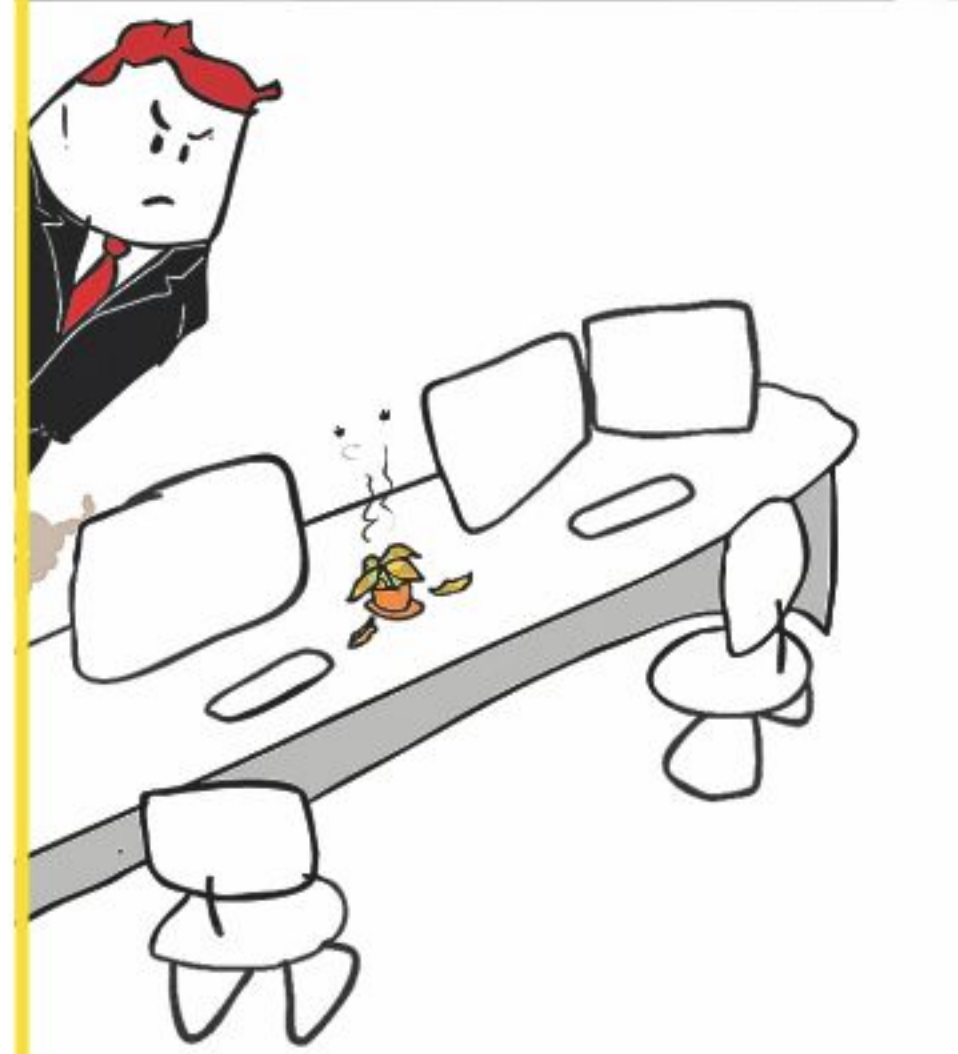
The writer is CEO of Step Up Consulting, an Australian education consulting firm based out of Sydney, Australia. He can be reached at rana@stepupcg.com.

THE BOSSMAN

BY E. RAZA RONNY



HOLIDAY IS OVER JUST AHEAD OF THE WEEKEND. WHY IS NO ONE HERE YET?



BETTER TURN OFF THE HEATER. NONE OF THE EMPLOYEES ARE TURNING UP. THERE IS NO ONE TO FRY AND TORTURE.



UNUSUAL TEAM BUILDING EXERCISES OF FAMOUS COMPANIES

bitly



Every week, Bitly hosts a Cocktails & Dreams meeting, where one employee is nominated to be the bartender. Everyone drinks cocktails together, and discusses current happenings, wins and goals.

Coca-Cola



Flash mobs have been described as one of the most effective team building exercises, involving cohesion, surprise, risk taking, energy and engagement. It's a hit at Coca Cola, Disney, Starbucks and Google.

virgin atlantic



Drawing on skills such as co-operation, co-ordination, problem solving and effective time management, the Sausage Sensation cooking activity enables employees to create their own regional delicacy.

YAHOO!



At Yahoo, employees cook against each other, as well as construct and decorate their own food truck stall, complete with a brand name and logo.

facebook



Facebook's Boston team have learned to sail in Boston Harbour, and had a summer party at a baseball park. Some employees go to boxing or train for half-marathons together, and the company holds regular socials with bowling or mixology classes.

gsk



GSK indulges in unique team building activities including The Viking Saga where teams become a Viking warrior band and take on challenges in the true Viking spirit.

SOURCE: COLONIAL LIFE | INFOGRAPHIC: AMIYA HALDER

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.

HABITS TO-BE ENTREPRENEURS MUST NURTURE

Being independent and making using of one's talent is exhilarating. At a certain point in life, we all say, "Wish I could start it on my own!" A person who thinks creatively, bears a risk to start a business, and does it with passion is an entrepreneur. Sometimes, people get the desire from a very early age, while others just try it out at some point.



Not all can cut it as successful entrepreneurs. For some, it seems effortless while for others it calls for nurturing certain qualities. Let's see what characteristics are required and how some people can relate to the notion of being an entrepreneur.

Think outside the box

People with this trait strive to think differently from others. They don't follow the crowd. This uniqueness can yield to unique business idea. While others think of following the trend, they create a trend.

Analysing cause and effect

Some people are not easily satisfied with any given result or fact. They like to analyse the whole backdrop of an event. This tendency can help in identifying the reasons for success and failure of

business to take action.

Precise finishing

Many of us do things and don't get noticed while others do things and people are bound to notice the precision. This quality can help in developing a product or service with more likability. This quality to put in effort for an error-free finish will add value in creating a loyal customer pool.

Adaptability

Some of us don't like to cope with change and whine about it; on the other hand, some are there to lead the change. They take pride in this ability to adapt. In business it creates flexibility that helps in taking rapid decisions in any given situation.

People orientation

Extroverts are the ones who can mix and mingle with ease. It is an

art which is not easy to master.

This art helps one understand the psychology of the masses. In business this quality is in big demand. The more a person is at ease at being with others, the more helpful it is in dealings with human resource. At the end of the day it is the human factor that has to be faced and managed both in terms of employees and customers in a business.

Sometimes, we are unaware of our qualities and lead an average life as we don't explore their full extent and fail to utilise them. This can be changed if we take a closer look within ourselves.

ABU MD. ABDULLAH

The writer is Assistant Professor, Faculty of Business Administration, Eastern University