

# THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A STARTUP HOPEFUL

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It starts with a frenzied explanation of the brilliant idea you just had to your best friend and potential future business partner. Mouth frothing, words jumbled, palms sweaty, knees weak, arms heavy, vomit on your sweater already: mum's *kola bharta*. Your friend kind of gets it, but it'll take you at least three hour-long lunches to get the idea across in all its brilliance. Over the next four weeks, you'll throw around ideas while spending the last of your monthly savings on food you can't even keep down properly, *kola bharta* or not, because your food hole is too busy spewing out ideas that make you feel warm and fuzzy. You'll tell yourself that this will work out, it has to—in the bleakest of times, when all hope for name, fame and greatness is nearly lost, what else can you bank on other than your biggest asset, your brain?

It starts the same way for most people. Irrespective of how many business competitions you've been to, how many TED Talks you've seen on YouTube delivered by global startup icons, or that A+ you somehow managed in Principles of Management, you'll most likely go through the sickening motions outlined above. You'll be motivated, energised, ready to take on the world of startup entrepreneurship and all its perks—handing out business cards to acquaintances, basking in the warm glow of compliments as you tell people you founded a startup, waiting patiently while knowing your friends will mention 'it' at some point or the other because they're so proud of you. If only you'd known that it's slightly more useful putting some effort into planning and execution than daydreaming of a life of success and upward mobility.

The problems start after the initial phase of excitement is over. A quick search reveals at least 10 other people have had the same idea as you, and at least two of them are quite successful. You start wondering if your idea is even worth it, whether it has any merit out there in the world. Disappointed, you start clutching at

WELCOME TO OUR START-UP. WITH INITIAL FUNDING, WE CAME UP WITH THE IDEA OF AN OFFICE CONCEPT. WITH MORE FUNDING, WE CAN BUY FURNITURE TO SIT ON AND THINK OF AN IDEA.



CARTOON: E. R. RONNY

straws to try and differentiate your idea from all the rest, telling more people about the idea than you actually need to, in search of some useless validation. Your idea morphs into a complicated monstrosity you don't even recognise anymore—to your best friend and perhaps future business partner, you call the move a "pivot", hoping fancy startup terms will make your bloated brainchild more convincing.

As if pivoting wasn't difficult enough, it's around this time that you're forced to think of ways to actually finance your idea towards fruition. Considering you've spent the last of your meagre savings on "business lunches" where nothing got done aside from vague agreements and coming up with hurriedly scribbled, half-baked solutions to issues that don't exist yet (since your company is little more than a seedling in your fertile brain at this point), you're stumped. Loans? Hah. As if any respectable bank would willingly fund a couple of 25-year-olds with no experience and a business plan that largely exists on post-its. Desperate, you think of calling up your friend, the one you bullied into giving you his lunch in school, because he has a rich uncle knee-deep in the readymade garments industry and more money than he knows what to do

with. That conversation predictably goes south, ending with crushing regret as you realise that short-term satisfaction in the form of forcefully obtained sausages and chocolate chip cookies doesn't always work as well as a lifelong friend with a rich uncle.

Long after you've given up the idea of being a startup entrepreneur and settled into a 9-5 job that involves disdainfully staring at ugly monitors and meaningless numbers all day, you'll have accepted the fact that you're actually not all that cool or hip, at least not enough to be the founder of a successful startup. You'll also come to the realisation that you're quite lazy, and the superhuman effort you'd otherwise have to expend at the helm of a startup is really not who you are. Still, you'll take any chance during weekend soirees to loudly proclaim that you were "almost a startup owner" to anyone who will listen, before going into the bathroom and hurling the contents of your stomach down the commode in between quiet sobs. That, my hopeful startup entrepreneur, is where your miserable story ends.

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## Sandalina

মানেই বিশ্বের সেবা  
Sandal Wood Extract এর সর্বোচ্চ নিশ্চয়তা...

# ম্যান্ডালিনা

## সোপ

স্যান্ডালিনা স্যান্ডাল সোপ এখন স্যান্ডাল এন্ড ময়েচারাইজার সমৃদ্ধ

নতুন রূপে খাঁটি চন্দন ও গার্ডেন ফ্রেশ গোলাপের সুগন্ধে স্যান্ডাল এন্ড রোজ

রূপচর্চায় আড়িজাত্য...

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