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NEXT STEP



SURVIVAL TIPS FOR MANAGEMENT TRAINEES

Joining as a Management Trainee (MT), or being enrolled in any fast-track program of a company, is obviously a great achievement. But there are certain things you have to take into consideration as well.

No, I'm not going to go on a tangent and tell you that being an MT is one of the most stressful things in the world, because it actually isn't. Being in a fast-tracked career program means you are going to rise quicker, but you do need to prove yourself. A lot of us take our job for granted and end up not taking advantage of many of the benefits we are given. There will be people to help us out, teach us all that we need to know, and look after us when we're given major tasks. All you need to do is ask for help when you need it. Do not make the mistake of sitting around and "chilling" all day when your boss tells you to get acquainted with the team and the tasks. Roam around, observe, try not to be too intrusive but do ask questions. If the person cannot help you out immediately, ask them when it'll be a convenient time for them.

A lot of the times, you'll find yourself in training sessions. Here, a lot of high-ranking people will come in and brief you

about many important aspects of the company. It'd be a good idea to not stare at the ceiling when a Brand Manager is telling you how your company comes up with its brand strategies. If your attention span cannot keep up, you're going to miss out on a lot of useful information and that can result in a blank face from your part when you get asked about which brands are leading the market currently. Carry a notepad wherever you go, take detailed but concise notes. Don't put in the random jokes that your seniors make, you'll have a hard time sifting through all those off-topic notes.

Speaking of your seniors, it's generally a good idea to find out people from your university who have been MTs in the past. You and a senior from your institution have gone through the same education. So it is easier for you to relate to his or her experiences. Yes, it is recommended that you mix in with people from everywhere, and you might find the perfect mentor who actually isn't from your university. But finding your alumni is a good starting point.

Remember that all of the information (barring certain general things) you are

given is confidential. Yes, it might seem like a great idea to brag about your company's upcoming projects and projected revenue. But know that, most of your friends might end up working for your competitors or worse, and they might leak the information. So it's best to avoid work-related conversations that might steer towards confidential topics. And if you have nothing to talk about with your friends other than the secrets of your company, you need new friends.

Often times, you'll hear flowery things like:

"Oh, you're the best of the best."

"We've selected you guys after a lot of testing."

"You are going to lead this organisation into the future."

Yes, you can be proud. There's nothing wrong with that but it's important to not let it get to your head. You have a lot to prove to the company and the hard part starts here. But rest assured, this is the most fun part as well. You are given the opportunity to scrutinise and criticise. If you can back up your claims that a product is failing with solid data and justification, people will listen. Do not be afraid

to challenge the norms but do it respectfully. Something that doesn't make sense to you, should definitely not be looked at in a negative light until you know the details of what it actually is.

Last advice I have for all of you future or current MTs, do not be afraid of going outside Dhaka. There will come a time when you might have to go on sales stints outside of the capital. Most people feel like they are going to go through hell. But know that, without knowing what an average customer looks like in a country where the Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP) is the vast majority, you are crippled. If you do not know what those people look for in products and services, you will never be able to conceive product ideas and market, distribute, or design them. It is highly important that you jump on these opportunities the first chance you get.

The world of business is exciting, dynamic and challenging. The competition scenario can change at any moment. New strategies and new ways of disrupting conventional norms are being thought of every day. So go out there and make your mark in this exciting arena.

THE BOSSMAN

BY E. RAZA RONNY



Unconventional avenues of networking

Those of us who enjoy sitting at a corner, headphones on, minding our own business, often face the hurdle of fleeting connections or scanty social resource.

To tackle such predicaments, universities often dedicate courses such as "business communications" in order to help undergrad students master the art of networking. Fun fact, it doesn't tell us how networking is something that can be done anywhere, anytime. Today, we look into how unconventional avenues can turn out to be the best places to broaden your connections.

Cricket stadiums are goldmines for networking. Imagine, sitting beside an equally frustrated spectator and lamenting your pent-up anger at your favourite team.

Likewise, such interactions can not only determine your degree of cricket punditry, but with the right people and the right cards played, a cricketer's poor form can be your ticket to success.

Golf is a game that is easy on the physique yet fulfilling to achieveable degrees. Golf tournaments usually have huge corporations backing them up. Even to extents where high end corporates take time out of their 9 to 5 lives to play the game. So if you putt it right on the golf course you're most likely to putt it right with the big boys.

Football aficionados are becoming more and more active and we now see corporate football as a common phenomenon. Many international brands that sponsor football clubs are operating in



Bangladesh, and they arrange events that bring together football fans. These events are an eclectic of diverse corporate individuals sharing the same passion for the team. Futsal, a less stressful version of the game is immensely popular in the professional arena. That explains the emergence of tournaments like the "Ascent Cup," where companies in the shape of a 5-membered teams, face off. Everything said and done, it's a great way to develop interpersonal communication and networks with corporates outside of one's working paradigm.

High school or university reunions may seem like a waste of time and energy to you, but really these can be quite useful. Remember that one senior at school all your teachers spoke highly of? Imagine

meeting them, years later at your school reunion. Reunions are the best way to rekindle the memories we all cherish but it's also a great way to connect with individuals who can have a positive impact on your journey into the job market.

The world has shrunk tremendously and works substantially on networks. Networks can culminate in the form of recommendations, referrals, or just advice. So go to that event, attend that cricket match, and it might just prove to be a turning point for you.

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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.

4 networking mistakes you shouldn't make

As much as you might like to add every single person you know on LinkedIn, or strike a conversation with any random guy at an event, these actions aren't really very useful. If you want to create valuable connections, don't do the following things.

DON'T ADD ALL THE PEOPLE

Look, you don't have to add everyone from your university on LinkedIn. You don't have to add all your relatives either. Only add people who are relevant to your work, those who can help you out somewhere down the line.

DON'T SCHMOOZE TOO MUCH

Some people don't enjoy it when



you kiss up to them. If you can't hold a practical, substantial conversation, then it's best to not talk at all.

DON'T FAKE IT

Listen to the Disney movies for once and be yourself. Don't try to portray yourself as someone that you're not, and don't claim to have skills or experience that you

don't really possess.

DON'T EXPECT IMMEDIATE RESULTS

Don't reinforce the stereotype that millennials want instant gratification. It takes time to reap the benefits of networking, so be patient. You never know when one of those contacts you made years ago will come in useful.