



MICROSOFT TO SUPPORT BANGLADESHI STARTUPS

After launching the Scale Up program in several countries, 'Microsoft for Startups' is now set to launch in Bangladesh.

Lathika S Pai, Country Head at Microsoft for Startups, MENA and SAARC, inaugurated the event at Lakeshore Hotel, on the 30th of September 2018. 'Microsoft for Startups' runs the Scale Up program, where promising startups from Bangladesh can apply to receive technology support, strategic mentoring and the opportunity to be included in Microsoft's Marketplace. A key part of the program is to get Startups "co-sell ready", where the Startups get access to global markets leveraging Microsoft's global sales presence. Microsoft for Startups does not provide equity funding but offers up to \$250k in Azure credits to those that qualify for the Scale Up Program.

"The Bangladeshi startup ecosystem

is evolving. I believe that in the next few years if the startups adopt cutting edge technologies like what Microsoft has to offer in AI/NLP/Cognitive, Azure IOT services etc, leverage access to global markets, and the government makes it conducive for global investors to come into Bangladesh, we will definitely see Unicorns (\$1 Billion valuations) coming from Bangladesh" says Lathika S Pai to The Daily Star.

The Scale Up program consists of deep strategic and technology mentoring that will be provided to selected startups to grow. "Our target is to make sure that the best startups are ready to compete and operate globally. With Microsoft's support we help startups go from market ready to enterprise ready, ensuring access to Microsoft's enterprise clients. To ensure a flourishing ecosystem, B2B startups

will be mentored and provided with support at every step. They will be connected to a huge audience where Microsoft will play a big role in collaborating with technological support". She added.

When she was asked to provide a viewpoint about the Bangladeshi startups competing on global scale, she said, "I have witnessed startup ecosystems in a number of nations, and I believe that Bangladesh will definitely progress and have a global impact with their innovative ideas. It won't be very long before the startup ecosystem in Bangladesh will be blooming on a global scale."

'Microsoft for Startups' has rolling admissions where 'Series A' funded, B2B, revenue generating and enterprise technology startups can apply to the Scale Up Program.

Always late to work?

We've got some tips for damage control.

You skipped your breakfast. You skipped combing your hair. You wore unmatched sandals but you didn't go back and change them. You even broke a few traffic rules to get to work faster. And yet, you were still late... for the third time this week. Now what?

GIVE THEM THE TRUTH

If your reason is genuine, tell them exactly what happened. If you were late because you didn't have any household help, and had no one to take your kids to school, then tell your boss what happened. Yes, it may sound like a typical excuse, but if your boss is a human being, they will probably listen to you. Give details about all the things you did to avoid being late, and sincerely express how terrible you feel about it. Owning up to your mistakes is half the ticket out of being told off. However, remember to not spend too much time explaining- you don't want to waste even more time with details, and you also don't want to sound like you're faking an excuse even when you aren't.

BE SMART:

If you go with your gut and use a fake emergency as excuse, like "My aunt had to be rushed to the ICU," chances are, when these situations really do come up, they won't believe you. You don't want to become the boy who cried wolf. If you must lie, lie smartly. Your aunt having a stroke will usually not be followed by three other family members facing crises in the same week (hopefully). Avoid repetitive usage of the various forms of the "I was really sick" excuse. They might be reluctant to give you bigger responsibilities that may help your career: either they will believe you actually get sick often (hence, giving you more responsibility would be too much for you) or realise that you make excuses too often (because you don't care about your job). Either way, it's a loss.

DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT:

- As soon as you realise you are going to be late, call, or formally email them and let them



know you are running late, and give them an estimate of how much longer it will take for you to get there – this shows that you genuinely care about the valuable output and time you lost from your working hours.

- If you're going to be very late, call up a colleague and ask them to cover for you for a little while.
- Work extra hard. Show them that even though you are a little tardy, you are still worthy of your position and that you give your work importance.
- Do overtime if needed.
- Prove to them that you will honestly try to not let it happen again. Don't show up late the very next day and be surprised if they don't believe your excuse.

SUSMITA NEWAZ

Susmita is a Literature major who lives on tea and sweet toast. Reach her at susmita.newaz@gmail.com.

EXCUSES YOUR BOSS IS TIRED OF HEARING

1. Dog ate my slides

You can use this excuse only if you're the sort of person who likes to draw their presentation slides on printer paper. But there might still be a chance that your dog eats your pendrive, so make sure to keep all your files uploaded on a drive folder.

2. There was a cockroach in my room

Unless the cockroach was 5 feet tall, had helicopter propellers for wings, and spoke in a Nicolas Cage voice, an adult human has reason to fear it.

3. It's World Drink Coffee with Your Neighbour's Pet Day

That does sound like a delightful holiday, but unfortunately you and your neighbour's cat are the only ones celebrating it.

4. My fried egg had a hard yolk

I too feel personally offended by yolks that aren't runny, but sadly this isn't a good enough excuse. Sometimes you have to man up and eat that horrible, hard yolk.

5. My ride-sharing app stopped working

There are 563 ride-sharing apps available in Dhaka. If one stops working, surely at least one of the other 562 would work.

6. I read my horoscope and it told me not to get out of the house

If you still believe in horoscope, then you aren't smart enough to have a job.

7. I woke up too early so I went to sleep again

Waking up too early is a blessing, not a curse. Get some exercise, make yourself some breakfast, just do anything other than going back to sleep.

8. Traffic

Dhaka will always have horrible traffic. You have to calculate your ETA at work accordingly, traffic is no longer a valid excuse, even if you live in a pineapple under the sea.

9. I woke up on the wrong side of the bed

The trick to avoiding such tragic incidents is to sleep on a single bed that has only one side.

By Anila Kishwar Tarannum



RITUMEIKAN ASIA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY A GATEWAY TO EXPERIENCING DIVERSITY

More and more Bangladeshi students are choosing to pursue higher education in Japan. Since studying abroad is a substantial investment and a major life decision, students need to consider several criteria in universities as they proceed to apply - quality of education, environment, campus facilities, on-campus opportunities, offered programs, cost of education, living expenses, scholarships, application process, and career opportunities. Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University is one of Japan's top global universities, and it fares well in all of these parameters - making it one of the top choices for any student.

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) started its journey in 2000 with the aim of creating global leaders who can find innovative solutions to the issues around the world. It is an AACSB accredited university with a unique education system focused on global knowledge, communication, business leadership, language proficiency and peer learning.

Imagine stepping out of your comfort zone in a foreign university to pursue higher education only to find that your own culture is also celebrated there. Half of the student body of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University is made up of domestic Japanese students and half (51.4%) international students. The campus is comprised of students, faculty and alumni with 89 countries and regions represented by students, 24 countries and regions represented by faculty and 144 countries and regions represented by alumni. The intercultural coexistence and engagement with dedicated faculty encourages interactive learning.

APU has a Japanese/English bilingual education system that allows admission of students without prior proficiency in Japanese unlike some universities in Japan where it is a requirement. This is a huge advantage for Bangladeshi students deciding to apply. However, learning Japanese is mandatory after enrolment and is also necessary for ensuring an easier life in Japan and becoming well suited for the workforce. Learning Japanese on-campus also comes with the benefit of experiencing Japan's rich culture and modern tradition. For students wanting to add more languages to their repertoire, the university offers additional language courses such as Chinese, Korean, Malay, Spanish etc.

Apart from all modern facilities including libraries, gyms, and dining halls with multiple cuisines, APU also has an on-campus residence hall. It's compulsory for freshmen to live in the dormitory, to make their first days in Japan easier. To help new students



adapt in APU's environment, FLAG, a student group arranges orientations and assists newcomers.

On-campus opportunities at APU are endless. From taking part in student-led activities to joining overseas exchange programs, APU students are doing it all and strengthening their skills. The university has 146 exchange partners in 48 countries and regions. Therefore, students have a scope of building their international portfolio by joining an exchange program for a semester or a year at one of APU's partner universities. As part of their on-campus activity, students are serving the society as responsible global citizens. For example, the project "Clean up Dhaka" in 2015 was carried out by a team of APU students. Furthermore, APU offers many on-campus jobs to students and provides them an opportunity to represent the university. A Bangladeshi student studying in APU, Junaid Abdullah Saad said, "I am working in the Presidential office as a student Ambassador of APU as a result of which I have represented APU in many different places, including television media."

APU offers specialised majors that are demand responsive- Innovation and Economics, Marketing, Strategic Management and Organization, Accounting and Finance under the College of International Management (APM) and Environment and Development, Hospitality and Tourism, International Relations and Peace Studies Culture, Society and Media under the College of Asia Pacific studies (APS). APM and APS offers BBA and BSocSc degree respectively. Students have the flexibility to switch their majors.

APU alumni are working across all fields and industries. Often times, representatives from reputed Japanese and international companies visit APU's campus and recruit students. The employment success rate among graduates is 96.7%, with majority students getting a job before graduation.

Admission fee for students amount to around 1130 USD, tuition fee for the first-year amount to 11,548 USD and 12,278 USD for the second to fourth year of studies. However, the university awards APU Tuition Reduction Scholarship to international students which cover 30% to 100% to

make the cost of education affordable for students. One of the most fascinating aspect of this scholarship is that it remains valid even when students are on the exchange programs. Managing Partner at Maces, an overseas educational consultancy firm, Rouham Manzoor shared that many Bangladeshi students are recipients of the tuition fee reduction scholarship. Although the competition is increasing with time, "Students obtained brilliant results in HSC/A-Levels, actively participated in extra-curricular activities, scored above average in English language proficiency tests, performed well in the interview can expect fantastic scholarships", said Rouham Manzoor. APU offers additional merit-based scholarships after enrolment, other scholarships such as JES (Exchange and Services), MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science & Technology) can also be options. Living expenses for a year amount to approximately 8696 USD including AP house rent. To bear the cost of living, students can take part-time jobs, on and off campus up to 28 hours a week during the semester, and 40 hours a week during vacation.