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# NEXT STEP

## A MAJOR DILEMMA

Choosing major as business students

*Graduating from high school, most of us are pretty clueless about who we are and who we want to be in life. Typically, there's a lot of external pressure from families to go after conventionally respectable options such as engineering, medicine or law. But if you're like me and decide to bite the bullet and go down the BBA road, even then choosing a major remains a tough decision that you must make.*

Unless you're from a business studies background and are absolutely sure about your major, it is advisable to take a few fundamental courses in subjects that interest you before you make the ultimate choice. If you are still stuck in a dilemma even after having taken several courses, this article is for you. We will discuss some of the most common business majors offered by Bangladeshi universities and help you figure out which one is the right one for you.

At present, finance jobs are the highest paid jobs both in Bangladesh and abroad. That is to say, theoretically, in terms of possibility, you will potentially earn more from a finance background. However, money shouldn't be the most important deciding factor for you. You have to know, finance courses in universities are usually more rigorous and demanding than marketing or human resource (HR) courses. So unless you want to specifically work in financial management and you really enjoy all the number crunching that comes with it, finance may not be for you. Conversely, if you're a hardworking individual who is willing to invest additional hours into building impressive academic credentials, go for finance. Finance is the best option for those who aren't scared of numbers and find great pleasure in the technical workings of all things quantitative. Additionally, if you plan to later pursue Masters abroad, finance will definitely give you a boost in your application. You need to remember, you should only go for a finance degree if you genuinely enjoy it. At the end of the day, if you choose finance just because it has better prospects, you will either graduate with a low CGPA and ultimately delve into a non-finance line of career, or graduate with a good CGPA and score a good job but end up spending every moment at work hating your job and hating yourself even more for putting yourself through it. Finance is like committing yourself to a serious relationship; you should only go for it if you truly enjoy it.

If finance isn't your thing, you can look into marketing and HR. After having spoken to a few graduates working in different MNCs, I have come to the

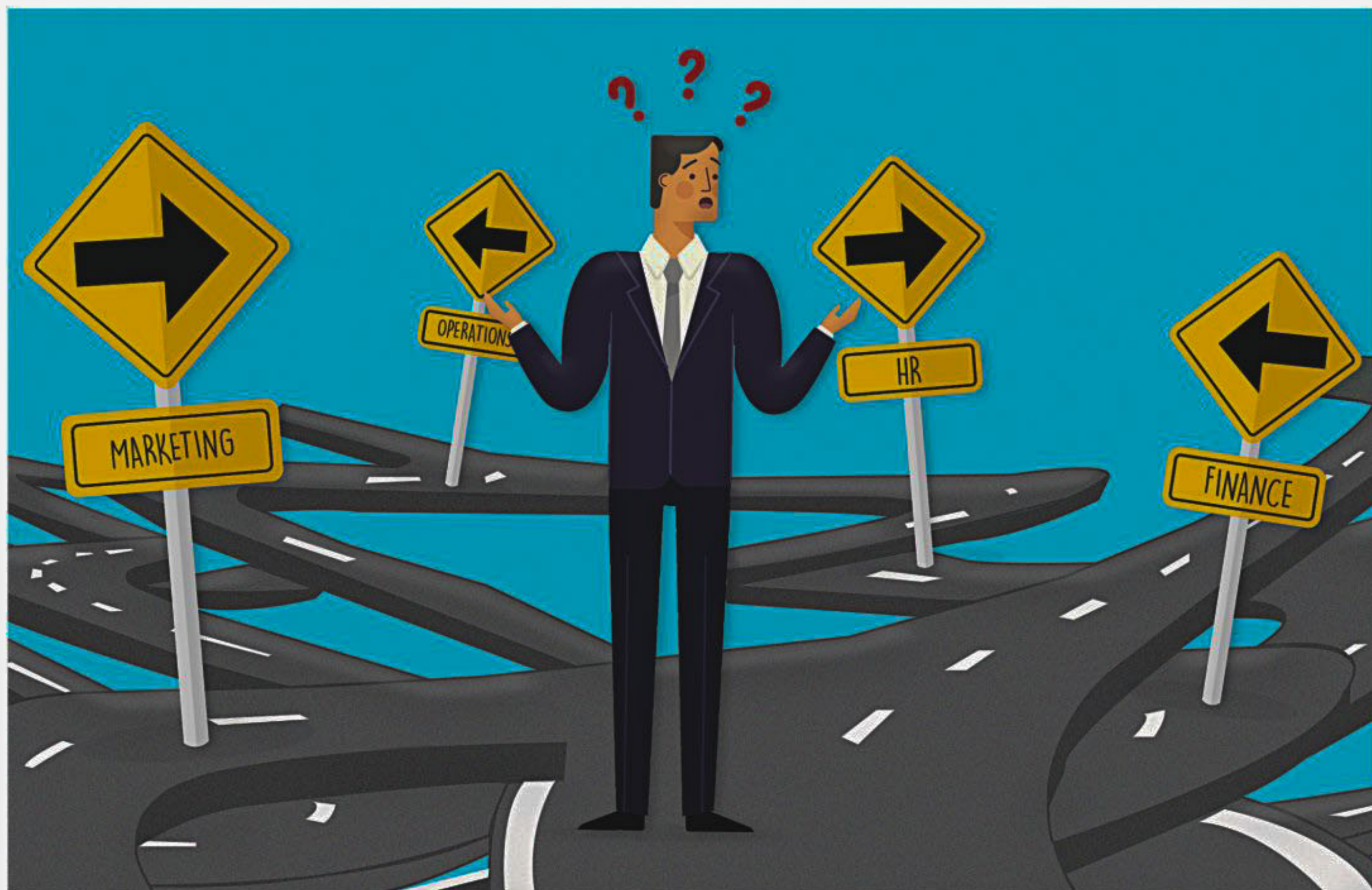


ILLUSTRATION: NONY KHONDAKER

conclusion that majors don't determine much, unless of course you want a finance job in which case finance majors are almost always preferred. For marketing/HR jobs, recruiters don't expect you to have come from that specific field of study. This is because, unlike hardcore, discipline-centric jobs such as finance jobs where theoretical knowledge is fundamental to your job performance, marketing/HR fields require you to learn most things on the go. Regardless of your background, you will end up relearning everything in a practical setting. So it again comes down to what you enjoy. Marketing deals with value creation and branding of products or services. Marketing related jobs almost always require you to derive maximum engagement from your target audience that ultimately leads to maximum sales for your

products or services. So marketing is probably right for you if find yourself being fascinated by TV commercial concepts and can think of a few alternative ways you would've done it yourself. If you think you are good at creatively expressing yourself, working in groups, and handling criticism, you are likely to enjoy a marketing job. On the other hand, human resource is all about reengineering the workplace. HR professionals are strategic partners who restructure the way the organization manages talent in order to ensure the best possible work ecosystem. An HR career will give you the opportunity to play a central role in countless aspects of the organization through recruitment, training and managing employees at different levels. So if you are really good with people, and see yourself as a capable decision maker in

terms of development of the work force, you should go for HR. Both Marketing and HR courses provided in university tend to be quite laid back, which will give you plenty of time to build important skills that will help you advance in your career. If you wish to score a competitive job in these fields, it is important for you to develop effective communication skills throughout your undergrad years. Because at the end of the day, recruiters prioritize soft skills more than your undergrad major.

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After a severe case of chronic indecision, Adiba Arif finally decided to major in marketing. Email her at [adibaarif.3@gmail.com](mailto:adibaarif.3@gmail.com) to change her mind.

## THE BOSSMAN

BY E. RAZA RONNY



## Introverts can't survive in the corporate world

FACT OR MYTH?



Many people perceive introverts as unkempt hermits shying away from the world while hating everybody they meet. These false stereotypes get masses to believe in a dangerously flawed myth that introverts aren't fit for the corporate world. In reality, introverts make some of the most prolific workers and moving leaders. Below are some key reasons why introverts are in reality perfect for the corporate world:

**Introverts are amazing team players** While working in groups, sometimes things tend to get very stressful. Unregulated influx of different opinions and ideas tend to hinder healthy group dynamics. Ego battles and urges to out-speak others often lead to undesirable circumstances that are uncongenial with progress. In such situations, introverts help create a balance to restore synergic dynamics in the group. Introverts don't lash out. They contain their emotions and speak in a well calculated manner. Without the driving need to always be speaking, they tend to actually listen to fellow team members and make perceptive choices. This makes them excellent team players.

**Introverts are more focused** Introverts don't let themselves get

easily distracted, and as such they tend to be more fixated on the task in hand. This trait is even more helpful for completing hefty projects that demand long stretches of attention and seclusion. Introverts do not rush into completeness, instead they opt for a more thorough approach. Being internally driven by productivity, they never settle for mediocrity, and instead always aspire to display great standards of quality in completing tasks. In a chaotic work environment, where meaningless small talk severely impairs work ethics, introverts are withstanding focused workers.

**Introverts are strategic salespeople** Previously, extroverts used to be preferred when it came to sales calls due to the predominant idea that clients needed to be aggressively pursued and mindlessly convinced into buying products. That idea is no longer prevalent. As such, introverts as strategic thinkers make great salespeople. Unlike extroverts, they don't tend to dominate conversations. Instead, they intently listen to what the customer really wants. Customers now prefer the more consultative line of sales pitch that introverts can provide by striking a

good equilibrium between zeal and conception.

**Introverts create meaningful connections**

Introverts tend to have different priorities when it comes to developing relationships. They steer clear of filler conversations, and carefully invest in connections that they find meaning in. Their interactions are often guided by a sense of significance. They are hence more apt at grasping a deeper understanding of their clients and employees, while extroverts focus more on the superficial identities. This makes them useful assets for companies they work for. In leadership roles, they tend to be better leaders to proactive people. They are very receptive towards good ideas suggested by individuals in the team and are willing to prioritize new concepts with merit. Experts say that the real challenge is when introverts have to lead a passive team. That's when the introverted leaders need to strike up a balance between restraint and enthusiasm in order to prevent group think and ensure constructive progress.

SYEDA ADIBA ARIF

## 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.

## How not to ask for a recommendation letter

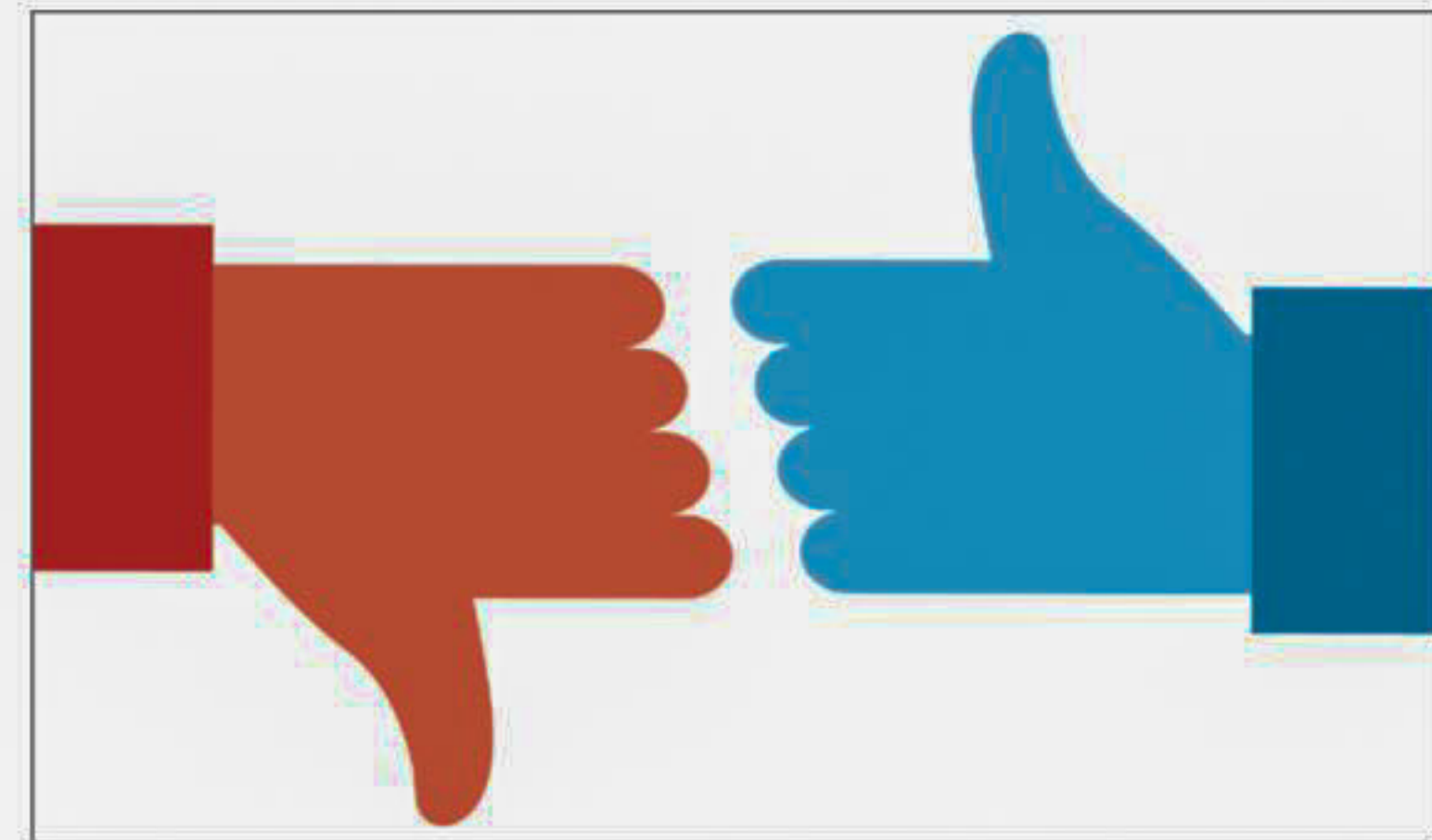
A recommendation letter is a crucial part of any application. It works as an endorsement by those who personally worked with you in order to reinforce aspects you've highlighted in your application. Watch out for the following red flags while you ask someone for a recommendation letter.

**"Can you write me a recommendation letter by tomorrow?"**

This screams insincerity. It makes you look like a lazy procrastinator who waited till the very last minute to apply for a role. Not just that, this is also extremely disrespectful to the person you're asking, because it seems like you are assuming that the person just happens to have all the free time in the world.

**"I asked X to write me a recommendation letter but he refused. Will you write me one?"**

There are many things wrong with this one. Firstly, it looks bad on you, because nice, capable people don't usually get rejected when asking for a letter of recommendation. Secondly, it looks bad on the person you're asking, because let's face it, nobody wants to be anybody's second choice.



**"I know we haven't really interacted much, but I would really appreciate it if you wrote me a recommendation letter."**

This is perhaps the most desperate attempt at trying to get a letter of recommendation. It makes you look like somebody who has made no meaningful connection with people in their professional field and will be happy with a random letter written by a random person about a random 2-minute encounter. More importantly, if they do agree to write you that letter, it will probably not be a

convincing one.

**"Can you please send me the letter before you email it?"**

This makes it very obvious that you're worried about the quality and/or content of the letter and would just like to ensure that they aren't going to embarrass you with their inferior writing skills. It's better to not ask somebody for a recommendation letter if you don't have faith in their abilities to write you a good one.

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