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NEXT STEP

PAPERFLY

The story of a 'to-your-doorstep' startup

For a couch potato like me, e-commerce is a blessing in disguise. In the last couple of years, the profound boom of e-commerce in Bangladesh has changed everyone's spending pattern, particularly that of the millennials. But have you ever wondered how e-commerce businesses grow steadily by ensuring you are getting all the things that you ordered? Yes, you guessed right. It's the 'logistics' companies that are toiling in the sun and the mud and in traffic to make sure you are getting your 'package' at the comfort of your home at an affordable price.

Paperfly, a startup that claims to be the first true homegrown logistic-tech venture, shares how they were able to scale from a one-room business to a mammoth logistic-tech startup that delivers to over 4400 unions.

Paperfly didn't start overnight. The three co-founders of Paperfly have been working in the corporate arena for more than ten years before entering the world of startup. When asked why leave all the luxury and stability that a 9 to 5 job was offering, Shahriar Hassan, CEO of Paperfly chuckled. That demure smile said it all. He said, 'We wanted to do more and start something of our own.' He added, 'We tried several other startup ideas. Some worked but were ahead of their time; some crashed and burned completely. But the startup that can fuel the booming e-bizes of Bangladesh actually stood out.'

Shahriar started to work with this idea and was later joined by two other co-founders: Md. Razibul Islam and A.K Rahath Ahmed. Razibul now heads operations, while Rahath looks after marketing.

When asked how Paperfly's core business concept was developed, Razibul depicted the bigger picture of the e-commerce industry. He answered without a pause, 'After the order has been made in e-commerce or f-commerce platforms, wouldn't it be great if a logistics venture took over the entire responsibility of picking up the product, performing quality check, doing the packaging, and delivering the goods to customers? That's how Paperfly was born.'

Rahath added, 'Surprisingly, as Bangladesh is a CoD dominated market at 99%, logistics here also has to serve as a financial platform to collect the cash from the consumers and transfer the amount to the merchants. And even after closing the sales, if there is a situation where the consumer wants to return it, replace it or get a refund, the logistics has to come to the rescue. Hence our arena of work is much bigger than you might think.'



The co-founders of Paperfly are actually right. They have correctly recognised that no matter how fancy an e-commerce site or how superior its product lines are, it will definitely fail if they can't deliver the goods in the agreed time. And in a country that has more than 70 million potential internet users, the online orders can come from any part of

the country. One has to have a solid delivery coverage as a core marketing strength in order to open up the possibilities of serving more consumers.

Paperfly did exactly that!

Paperfly started its journey 2 years ago, after observing the huge growth potential of e-commerce in Bangladesh. Initially they

had a small setup only covering Dhaka city. Gradually Paperfly increased its footprint to Chittagong and Sylhet. And now, it covers all 64 districts.

'We currently are the only e-commerce logistics company, which has door-to-door delivery coverage in 64 districts with CoD services. We are managing it all with our own

employees and fleet. On average, we deliver packages to more than 40 districts every day. We have reached places like Hatia and even the hill districts. Internet has activated e-commerce in even the farthest corners, and Paperfly is being able to serve them all,' said Rahath. A sense of pride was clearly visible in his eyes.

Paperfly claims to have the widest reach and it's now concentrating on building the strongest door-to-door delivery coverage nationwide, so that it can serve every corner of the country.

When asked how they are adding value to their clients compared to the competition, Razibul said, 'We have expanded our expertise to the fulfillment service and started our own QC and packaging facility. We also aim to get more involved in the backend integration such as warehousing to gain more efficiency for faster delivery. 'Wings' is our home-grown software, which automates our entire logistics system. This one software is used for merchant registration, order management, tracking, invoicing, bank transfers, etc. We are currently working on 'Wings 2.0' which will be more AI based and will address fulfillment requirements more holistically.'

Paperfly is also working closely with A2i to activate more than 4,000 government digital centres as e-commerce hubs so that the rural people can experience online shopping. 'This is a great initiative from A2i to educate the general people on the strength of e-commerce. In the 1st phase, Paperfly will be delivering the online orders in over 400 digital centers across Bangladesh,' said Shahriar.

When asked what the future looks like, Shahriar said with a cozy smile, 'To be as big as Amazon in terms of delivery in Bangladesh.'

Indeed, that's ambitious.

SHAHRIAR RAHMAN

What to do when your boss is yelling at you

Getting yelled at by your boss is a rite of passage for some – we've all been there at some point. With or without reason, it does not feel good to be on the receiving end of yelling. It is because they are your boss and not some random person on the streets, that it might be hard to grapple on how to react.

Unless they're harassing or bullying you (in which case you should go straight to HR), your reaction could cost you your job in the worst case scenario. Here is what you could do when your boss is yelling at you.

KEEP YOUR COOL

Do not fight fire with fire. Instead, in the face of all that fire, opt to collect yourself. Ask yourself what the reason behind your boss's wrath could be or whether they are offloading their anger. After you've analysed the situation, you have to formulate a response.

EXPLAIN YOURSELF

If your boss has the wrong idea about something, say so. Keep a matter-of-fact tone, and explain yourself. If your boss is demanding answers, give them. If you can be direct in your communication, chances are your shouting boss will calm down.

OWN UP TO YOUR MISTAKES

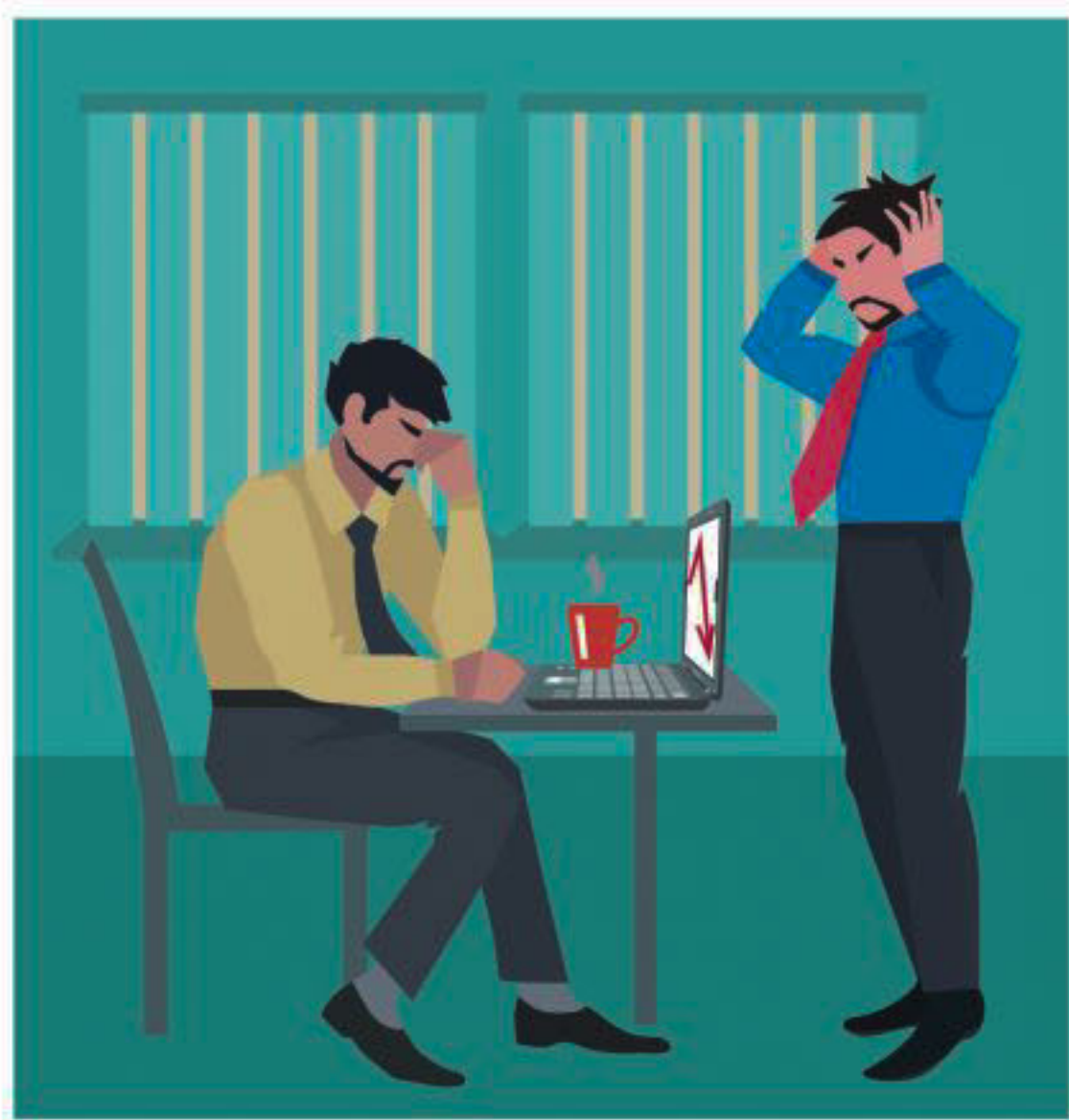
If you're getting yelled at because you messed up, own it. Denying it will only make your boss madder. Let your boss know that you understand your mistake, are very sorry, and will work as hard as you can to fix the problem as fast as possible.

OFFER A SOLUTION

Whatever's going on, whether it's because of your folly or something out of your control, offer a solution. Yelling comes from frustration, so chances are your boss feels cornered. If you can be creative and show initiative in moving forward, you might be offering your boss a solution they couldn't see on their own.

ESCAPE

When your boss yells at you almost every other day, there will come a point, when the screamer just isn't worth putting up with. If the stress of the situation is making you miserable both at and outside work, you're better



off looking for ways to get away from your boss - either through a transfer or a new job. You don't deserve to be treated discourteously.

Lastly, always follow up. When you've had a conflict at work, always follow up to see that it's resolved. After you've been yelled at by your boss, follow up the next day to make sure everything is square. Whether that's working towards the solution, or finalising the solution, stay on top of it, and show that you care about your job and making things work. No one wants to be in their boss's bad books, especially when that boss is prone to flying off the hook, so be proactive to earn your good graces back.

SHABIRA BENTA HABIB

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.

THE VALUE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

In every sphere of our lives, emotions encompass a huge area, ranging from our daily interactions to reciprocal actions and influences. Humans are prone to emotions and their intermediary actions which is why honing the skills of Emotional Intelligence (EI) is very crucial. Having a grasp at one's emotions is elementary to finding out what it is that will make the person more high-functioning and eventually enable work progress. Working for BRAC University's Centre for Emotional Intelligence and Innovation has shown me how these skills are connected to every aspect of our lives.

Being emotionally intelligent helps us become more self-aware. Knowing your strengths, weaknesses and personal management goals is quintessential in whatever work you do. Daniel Goleman, American psychologist & journalist, calls it the keystone of emotional intelligence. Self-awareness is built on every sphere of our lives on many diverse planes which includes our body, physical behaviours, emotions, preferences, intentions, values and objectives. It develops conscience as to how we come off to other people. The more we develop this in ourselves, the easier it will be for us to fine-tune our responses to others, adding synergy to our relations and connections.



For our personal and professional growth, we need to grow consciousness about the people residing around us and identify certain behavioural traits that will establish effective interpersonal communications. By virtue of this, everyone can make their daily conversations more satisfying and mutually productive.

High emotional intelligence is connected to improved job performance and team work, amplified creativity and adaptation, etc. Moreover, researches have shown how awareness about relationship between parents has an impact on the emotional development of children (Field & Kolbert, 2006). Thus, it will not only help us in professional management but also in our personal family lives.

Emotional intelligence is useful to you in things such as controlling your impulse, appropriately regulating your temper and averting depression. Hence it is critical that we develop a better understanding of the undiscovered emotions lurking within us.

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