

satire.

How to Start a Youth Organisation

ARYAH JAMIL

Listen, we're all on the same boat here. A couple of months left until university/college applications and you've suddenly come upon the realisation that you have no extracurriculars and your CV is looking pretty dry. You curse your parents for not forcing you into a thousand different hobbies at age two and set out on your own journey of CV building. You only have three months to do as much as possible and pray that the admissions officer doesn't see through it. You stumble upon the concept of youth organisations, and after going through 739 Facebook recruitment posts you realise that you won't just join a youth organisation, you are going to start your own. But how?

Follow these steps to build a "youth org", and remember your existence will be a tautology to the actual problem you're trying to fix. It doesn't really matter if you're there or not.

STEP 1
 Find your cause but make sure you're raising awareness and capitalising on your privilege by becoming "The Voice of the Voiceless" because power and privilege totally aren't limited resources and you definitely need to add your voice into the narrative instead of amplifying those who have lived said experiences.



STEP 2
 Build your team. Throw up a recruitment post and watch like-minded CV builders pour into your inbox. See, they need dramatic titles to make themselves feel important. Using Canva templates and fancy fonts doesn't sound great; let's call it Head of Social Media. Sending a "please like and follow" isn't going to cut it, call it Head of Marketing. Make sure your first 12 posts are announcing every

member of your made-up departments.

STEP 3
 Start the work and spread the news. Make your research team rephrase Wikipedia articles and insert them into the same four overused templates, maybe you can really spice up your content and add some stickers and stock images. Remember you can only post infographics of whatever is trending on Twitter. If you're a news page, be sure to have a graphic designer who

carries the entire account on their back. You have to make them put in hours of their time and not pay them a penny for their work. Exposure to your school friends is the best compensation, right?

STEP 4
 Add CEO/Founder to your Instagram bio because everyone knowing about your work is more important than your actual work. Bonus points if your "organisation" has a single Bangla word as a name which has some vague association with your purpose. When you leave for college or university, and so do your friends, your page will become another 600-follower page that has been abandoned after it has served its purpose.

So, you've built your youth organisation or have a plan of action ready to go. Let's meet Zameer, founder of a "youth organisation". He lives in Norway in his own little privilege bubble. He writes about poverty and protest pieces on his MacBook Pro and adds his voice-overs to trauma ASMR. Zameer's organisation is called "Zameer's Stick", he has a brilliant unpaid graphic designer, and adds nothing new to the narrative. He is like the news if it was a month late and only did it for views.

Aryah Jamil is mediocre at everything except laughing at their own jokes. Tell her to stop talking at jamil.aryah@gmail.com

Finding the Right Balance Between Academic and Social Life

AYRA AREEBA ABID

Reconsider the times you spent an awful amount of time *only* studying. As a student, studying is essential, I agree. However, have people (especially Bangladeshi parents) stopped to think that life for the youth is so much more than "porashona"?

Time management is imperative. Forget what procrastination is and focus on what is essential to you as an individual. Press your ears and listen to none but yourself. As clichéd as it sounds, follow your heart. You will never regret using your heart as a map, especially when you are lost and in dire need of a guide. Your youth cannot be salvaged once it passes. So, I urge you to find your voice.

It is alright to go at your own pace because life is not a race but having a definite routine can help make sure you are on the right track. If you are interested in something, it is likely that you will be attracted to it like a magnet. Attraction is inevitable. Once you discover your forte, keep brushing upon it to prevent your skill(s) from becoming rusty.

Invest your free time in video calling or at least texting friends and family to stay in touch. Cherish your connections. Pour the significant amount you spend on social media to events that will keep you engaged with the brighter side of life. If you are an introvert, you can definitely immerse yourself in books because sometimes we socialise better with fictional characters than actual people.

Nevertheless, I encourage you to go out there, show what you have to offer the world and fly free like a butterfly out of your cocoon instead of keeping to yourself, which might deliver warmth but will always restrict you from the beauty of life. Who likes restrictions anyway?

Search for the right balance. There are people who pull all-nighters, forgo all sorts of leisure activities and entirely focus on school grades only. I believe this is absolutely unhealthy, both physically and mentally.

Nawal Naz, soon flying off to start her undergraduate studies at Yale University this fall, says, "I think for the students who focus solely on grades, it's important for them to understand that there's a life beyond the margins of a textbook."

She adds, "I agree with you: it's very unhealthy and I have gone through that myself and I have nothing but regrets. There's a world beyond academic pursuit and I think the sooner we start to realise that, the less regrets we'll have."

There must be something that attracts you. Do not repel if you hate repentances. Acing grades can become easier if you are happy and happiness arrives along with peace. The latter can be truly sensed only when the see-saw called life is balanced.

Ayra Areeba Abid's favourite word is 'serendipity' and she's a linguistics geek. Connect with her at areeba.ayra@gmail.com

