

■ CAREER ■

The realities of working at an MNC



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Jobs at multinational corporations (MNCs) have always been highly coveted due to the prestige, lucrative compensation packages, and career progression opportunities associated with them. The allure of these companies lies in the belief that they attract some of the brightest minds in their respective industries. However, it's difficult to ignore the fact that these perks often come at the cost of living up to high expectations, intense competition, and job insecurity.

It is easy to view the prospect of working at an MNC with rose tinted glasses when we only focus on the positives. So, what is the reality of working for these industry giants?

Securing a job at an MNC is no easy feat. Competing with hundreds of applicants, clearing several stages of assessment, and coming out on top is an uphill battle. These companies often require candidates to participate in written assessments, panel interviews, focus group discussions, and more before they are hired. The process can be incredibly mentally taxing.

"The recruitment process at my company is very thorough. I had to clear six stages of assessments before getting hired," says Saif Rahman* a renewals desk specialist at a software development and consultancy MNC.

Despite being talented candidates, majority still come in short due to the exclusive nature of these companies. However, a few things can help candidates gain a competitive edge over the others.

"My company does not hire a lot of people. Moreover, there is a huge supply of candidates, due to which over a hundred resumes get sent in for a specific role. Ultimately, only one or two people make the cut, bringing the acceptance rate to somewhere around one percent," says Asif Syed*, a senior executive at an e-commerce MNC.

"It is important to participate in extra-curricular activities alongside having good grades as it shows that the candidate is good at multi-tasking," he adds.

After overcoming a challenging recruitment process, new employees look forward to enjoying the perks of the job which come in the form of international standards, respectable company culture, impressive salary structures, and more. The offerings of companies vary as some focus on fostering a healthy work environment and prioritising work-

life balance, which may come at the cost of a tier two salary structure. Whereas others often push employees to their limits, but make sure they are well compensated for their efforts. However, it is true that a select number of MNCs offer their employees the best of both worlds.

When asked what he likes about working for his company, Asif stated, "I like the company culture my employer offers. Many of my colleagues are of a similar age as me and the work environment is healthy. Yes, there is office politics, but that is the case with any organisation. The office politics is not very toxic so it's not too big of a deal."

On the other hand, Samrin Amin*, a planning strategist at a media agency MNC, has some mixed feelings about working at her company. "My company fosters a vibrant and collaborative culture, and it's inspiring to be a part of a team where everyone is passionate about delivering exceptional results. I feel supported in my career aspirations and empowered to take on new challenges. However, I don't feel adequately compensated for the level of commitment I bring to the table, especially considering current inflationary pressures. It's crucial for the company to reassess compensation packages to ensure they fairly reflect the employees' efforts," she says.

Employees may feel satisfied knowing their expectations are largely being met. Realistically, this happens on the condition that the employees meet the company's expectations in return. Working for an organisation that has large-scale operations and countless stakeholders can entail demanding clients, tight deadlines, and long hours. When employees fall short, they often feel the heat from management as there is no room for excuses when the stakes are this high.

"Advertisement media is a fast-paced industry. This can be exhilarating, but also exhausting. It's competitive and constantly evolving, which is why staying ahead of the competition requires constant learning and dedication. There are times when work demands require working on the weekends, which can impact work-life balance," says Samrin.

Although some roles are exceptionally demanding like those in sales and product management, others can be relatively laid-back.

"My job is fairly demanding, but it hasn't impacted my work-life balance negatively because my manager is lenient and prioritises his own and the team members' well-being. We don't have to work overtime unless we are running huge campaigns," says Asif*.

Job insecurity is another factor affecting people's work experience. Like other private companies, MNCs also implement cost-cutting tactics through lay-offs and retracting employee privileges whenever they feel necessary. If the company is not thriving, it is an ominous sign for the workers.

"A huge number of employees recently got laid off due to cost-cutting and many of my colleagues were let go. This has definitely lowered morale," he adds.

Ultimately, working for an MNC comes with a mix of advantages and disadvantages. It is important to acknowledge both sides of the coin to make an informed decision about which direction to steer your career in.

**Names have been changed for privacy upon request*

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