

Job versus higher studies: How to make choice

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Never stop learning is a saying that many hear but rarely follow. For me, it was different. I had worked as a surveillance engineer in the IT industry for 24 months before I felt the need to hone

my skills to better advance in my career. That is when I decided to pursue a Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGPM).

There were many things that triggered my decision to take a sabbatical and become a student again. I was inspired by my seniors who had pursued MBA and were doing well in their respective fields. Although my technical knowledge was on point, I felt that I needed to better understand business ethics in order to grow within the company.

For instance, I never understood why our company was not getting any business from Australia or North America. I was able to question this during the course and got a better perspective of the geo-socio-political constraints that cause this to occur. I may now be able to use this knowledge to help my company grow and that works perfectly in line with my aim of following the path to business management.

The strangest thing about shifting from work-life to an academic life is that your pay-cheques stop coming in. You get so used to the work routine that adjusting to the vigorous life of a student feels odd. However, for me this went away quickly and I began to enjoy what was being taught.

What made my position among my peers better is that I had no worries about the placements since I already have a job. This let me concentrate on the learning process than distracting me with worries about interviews and entrances. What further added to the learning experience was the diversity of the students that I was surrounded with. Each of them had different backgrounds and different fields of expertise. Through interactions, we learnt many things that we didn't know before and promoted in each others' learning.

Among my peers, I had another advantage. When you have already worked in an industry for some time, you have a fair understanding of work place dynamics. Having worked before pursuing this course, I could understand some of the concepts that many of my peers with no work experience did not.

This does not mean that you have to work before pursuing a course in management but do what you aspire to. For me, management was the best path. Since my major is marketing, it goes in line with my aspiration to work towards business relations or business management. The course structure helped me learn a variety of subjects within a rigorous schedule that led me to enhance my skills. I can now prioritise tasks, work better in a team, be more agile and adapt easily to different scenarios.

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