

Graduation is perhaps the best day in a student's life. It is a treat to watch them clad in black robes, bouncing their caps high in the air, faces brimming with excitement, energy and hope of a bright and promising future.

The question is how long does that hope last? If you meet the same students two years after their graduation, after they have had time to get absorbed in the corporate sector, you will come across two distinct groups:

- A minority enjoying the challenges of professional life
- A vast majority cribbing about the stifling work environment in corporate sector

Why is that?

Well, one can debate endlessly on the issues faced by the vast majority – things like, continuing recession in job market, quality of jobs available, corporate work environment, or simply getting stuck with a difficult boss.

Fact of the matter is that we usually begin our professional journey with a foggy mind which causes limited or distorted vision and as it happens in most cases we get lost in the haze and miss our destination! End result? We become frustrated and disgruntled professionals.

Job FUNDA is a simple tool that enables business students to analyze themselves and their options before stepping into the corporate life.

Job FUNDA is an acronym of five essential requisites for personal goal setting:

F – Focus, U – Understanding self and options, N – Networking, D – Determination and

diligence

A - Attitude, the fundamental key to success

Let's see how Job FUNDA can help us navigate through into the world of professionals.

Focus

Keep your goal in mind at the outset. Razor sharp focus means that you must be clear and confident of your dreams, aspirations & priorities in life. Interestingly, we will never buy a ticket worth a few rupees only if we are not absolutely sure about our travel plan and date but when it comes to us making a professional journey we, knowingly or unknowingly, become a sail boat, drifting with the winds aimlessly, without adjusting the sails.

Focus works like a thin streak of daylight at the end of a dark tunnel, which gives you strength and motivation to keep moving ahead.

In simple words, achieving focus is a three step process

- Write down your professional goals
- Divide goals into yearly action plans
- Execute your plans with unwavering self-discipline and measure your performance periodically with utmost honesty

As it happens, most of the time, life doesn't go as we have planned it - very true but this is also true for whatever route you may take, you will hit the destination if you have your heart, mind and eyes set in the right direction.

Understand

Understand your internal and external world. Internal world means understanding yourself, the highs and lows of your personality. Conduct an in-depth personal scan, celebrate your strengths by amplifying those and address your areas to improve through self-challenge and discipline.

Understanding the external world is equally important; keep an open eye on emerging market trends, new business practices and potential opportunities and threats.

How to do all this? Very simple – read, absorb and discuss. Business magazines are perhaps the best source to stay abreast with new developments.

Network

In today's competitive business world, networking is becoming increasingly important for professional growth and well being. It is a source of contacts for collaborations, good jobs, and business opportunities and business solutions

Career experts estimate that the vast majority of job openings are never advertised or publicly announced, but filled through word-of-mouth or networking - known as the "hidden job market." The likelihood of a job opening not being advertised at all increases with the level of the job. Yet, even with this knowledge, most job seekers fail to fully utilize networking for all it's worth.

Networking means developing a broad list of contacts - people you've met through various social and business functions - and using them to mutual advantage. People in your network may be able to give you job leads, offer you advice and information about a particular company or industry, and introduce you to others so that you can expand your set of connections.

The best place to start developing your network is with your family, friends, and neighbors -- and with their family, friends, and neighbors, but don't stop there. Talk to co-workers, colleagues in your industry, and those you meet at industry gatherings, such as trade shows and conferences. Talk with former co-workers, bosses, and teachers.

The key to successful networking is deciding to put your energy where it works. First, you need to get organized (for example, keeping a business card file or a computer database). Second, you need to stay in contact (for example, through regular phone calls, email, and holiday greetings). Third, you need to set goals for yourself (such as 5 new contacts per week).

Determination & Diligence

“Doing your best means never stop trying”

‘Times are tough, job market is limited and there is a huge supply of qualified professionals in the market. Do I stand any chance?’

Yes, you do; But you have to hunt for it. The truth is finding the right good job is like looking for a needle in a pile of hay; it demands patience & the will to win. You may fall a dozen times but the strength lies in pulling yourself up and pursuing your goals with absolute determination.

Take Job interviews as opportunities to learn, conduct a post-interview evaluation, analyze your performance, and see what worked for you and what didn't - the key words are analyze, learn and move forward with greater confidence.

Surround yourself with achievers, people with a positive frame of mind as this will give you energy and drive to keep you moving on.

Attitude

“Life is 10 % what happens to you and 90 % how you deal with it”

Volumes have been written on wonders of positive attitude yet we don't understand the implications of our attitude on our personal and professional life. We get so devastated by the 10 % that we forget to play our part which is actually 90%.

A positive attitude is undoubtedly the qualification any dynamic and progressive company looks for. However, this is the subject scarcely discussed and least practiced in most of the educational institutions. Consequently, young professionals end up learning this after getting into the professional world.

Never undermine the strength of a periodic reality check. The feedback you receive from your interactions with teachers, family, friends, boss, colleagues and customers, irrespective of being positive or negative will prove to be just a change of gear for higher speed provided it is appropriately channelized. Your ability to interpret negative feedback as a window of learning is surely wrapped in positive attitude.
