

At B-school, you learn to multitask



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My first week at XLRI was a grounding experience. It was a great leveller and also a humbling experience to find that you are just one among the pack. Everyone is a topper, head boy, head girl or super achiever. To earn the respect of this peer group, then, becomes a driving force.

Business school helps you deal with a pressure cooker situation, 18-20 hours a day, which is what it is

in real life at the organizational level too. You learn to multitask, understand different leadership styles and you prepare yourself accordingly.

The college had a very committed faculty available 24x7. They provoked us to always ask the bigger question—as to what our social, ethical, environmental decisions would be, and how we would create talent capacity in the country once we donned senior management roles. XLRI was one of the few business schools at the time that had a course on business ethics.

Spending time chatting and deliberating on world events on the JLT steps (just like that) of the building formed a big chunk of our memories. I had an engineering background but opted for human resources because I was convinced people are centre stage to everything we do. It's not touchy-feely, rather it's a science based on models and concepts, and being an analytical technical engineer made me better at application to technology, people and situations.

TIPS

- Break out of the herd mentality. Just because everyone is chasing investment banking jobs, does not mean you do the same. Identify your strengths and weaknesses and then decide what you want to do and where you want to be.
- Develop IQ, EQ and SQ (intelligence, emotional and spiritual quotient)—have anchors in life, introspect and have faith.
- Don't try to play armchair strategic roles from Day 1. Opt to be a workman at the grass-root level, roll up your sleeves on the front line and always be prepared for pitches and presentations by having your data and facts in place. As an HR person, learn to be sensitive to corporate life, to build relationships and to like being close to people. You cannot do HR by sitting in front of the computer and shooting out emails. And finally, follow the most basic Jesuit principle of delivering what you promise.

As told to Taru Bahl
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