

# Open Letter to the Students Interested to Undertake Post-graduate Management Education and their Parents

By  
Prof. Haribandhu Panda, Ph.D, Director  
hari@hdf.ac.in

Director, HDF School of Management  
Bhubaneswar

Dear Students and parents,

The purpose of this letter is to help you in getting right answer to some questions that might be in your mind. Some such questions along with clarifications are presented below. Should you have any further doubts on the subject in your mind I will be happy to clarify them.

## 1. Whether I should study management or not?

Any graduate can consider management as a career option. Modern society is full of organisations and institutions and they require managers to run them. Millions of jobs are available for a professional manager. In many occasions, persons running the organisation may not have right education that makes a professional manager. But, having an understanding of the functions of management and the associated skill are required for effective operation of the organisation. The knowledge and skill of management can be acquired (i) through experiential learning on the job in an organisation or (ii) through an intensive education in a management school or (iii) through a combination of both (few years of work in an organisation and then study in a management school). Depending on the individual situation, one can choose one of the above options.

The job of a manager is to help the organisation achieve its objective within the limited resources at its disposal. The manager needs to have certain skills such as decision making, organising resources, staffing the organisation, planning and controlling resources and activities, communicating and providing leadership. All these skills can be acquired. At the postgraduate management education level, to quickly learn the above skills in a limited time of two years, one must have good foundation in the form of communication (written and verbal) skill, analytical skill and quantitative skill, to start with. Unfortunately, most of the students from rural and middle and lower middle class background lack in these fundamental building blocks. Hence, they must be ready to undertake additional tasks to repair the above weaknesses. They must be ready to put extra hours of hard work to learn how to read, write and speak English. They must be ready to solve numerous assignments given during the course to improve their analytical skills. They must do their best to enhance their quantitative skills through exercises. The management education provides opportunity for the above, only to those who have the right attitude. It is sad that the students who come from less rigorous educational system, that is prevailing in most parts of Odisha, fail to come up to such standards required in management education. Their condition is further vitiated by the parents, who fail to instill a sense of discipline, honesty, sincerity and a culture of hard-work within them. Both students and parents are lured by the

false promises of unscrupulous management schools, their promoters and agents. Both parents and students must realise that only hard work, honesty and sincerity can bring success. They must realise that the management school can play the role of a facilitator only, and the student has to carry the burden of learning and personal growth on his/her shoulder. Students who have followed the above dictum have been successful. Those who have not followed such a principle have often been failures.

Hence, any graduate at any level of previous achievement can become a successful professional manager, if he/she works for at least 16 to 17 hours per day, honestly does all the assignments and exercises given during the course and possesses the temperament to learn from everybody. He/She must be ready to say no to all the shortcuts and unrealistic and unethical promises.

## **2. In which institute the student should study management?**

One may select the School in order of the following priority.

- i) Learning environment
  - a) Quality of faculty
  - b) Level of importance given to teaching and academic activities in the institute
  - c) Level of research, consulting and training activities undertaken by the faculty of the School (this indicates the level of real industry linkage)
  - d) Quality of library
  - e) Level of mentorship of students and personality development initiatives
- ii) Percent of students getting placed genuinely
- iii) Total fee charged

Any management institute taking care of the learning environment will automatically result in good placement. Often to camouflage the weaknesses, some institutes resort to huge advertisement. Students and parents must be careful about the non-essential features projected by the institutes. As a thumb rule, the institute that advertises more are likely to have inadequate learning environment. Money spent on advertisements and non-essential activities are collected from students in the form of high fees. Institutes like IIMs, IRMA, XLRI, XIMB, MDI and Faculty of Management Studies (FMS) of different Universities do not waste money in advertisement or film actors and actresses. Parents and students must be aware of it.

Sometime students fail to understand the meaning of equivalence in degrees offered by different schools. For example, Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) offered by an autonomous institution is equivalent to MBA offered by a University. Students should be bothered about the status of approval of the program by the statutory bodies such as the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) and /or government universities.

Parents and students taking admission in a management institute must visit other comparable Schools before taking a decision. Life-time decisions must be taken after due consideration and first hand information.

## **3. What is expected of the student during the post-graduate study?**

Management position is not a privilege, but a responsibility. This philosophy is instilled in the mind and heart of the student during the two-years of postgraduate management education. It is done through rigorous education in the class room and field. The student is expected to work long hours everyday, seven days in a week, and throughout the year. He/she must be punctual in the class, attend the class with full preparation, work in team, avoid downloading verbatim assignment work, submit the assignments on time and avoid malpractices in the examinations. The student must be ready to explore new areas of learning and take leadership in assignments. All through he/she must maintain high level of integrity. Scoring high mark is not the objective. Right knowledge, skill and attitude are what matter. One must strive to acquire them, under the active guidance of faculty.

#### **4. Can one get a job after the postgraduate study? What can be the nature of Job? What can be the expected salary after the post-graduate study?**

There are plenty of jobs in numerous organisations in the country for management professionals. They remain unfulfilled because of insufficient number of right kind of available professional managers. A student, irrespective of his/her initial background condition, can get a job if he/she remains sincere, honest and punctual in study and other extracurricular activities.

The job of a manager can be in specific functions such as operation, finance, marketing, human resource management, etc. or in general management. The student must be ready to accept from manual work to a discussion on strategy of the organisation.

The salary varies with the nature of job and the skill level of the person concerned. The student must be capable of earning for the organisation a number of times the salary he/she is looking for. To start with a student must chose an organisation where he/she can get maximum opportunity to learn. While throughout life one learns, more specifically, during the initial years, a student must think that he/she is being paid while learning in the job. The salary can vary from few thousand rupees per month to crores of rupees per month. The salary of a student is not linked to the amount of monthly installment that he/she has to pay to the bank, in case of a study-loan. It is wise to go for as smaller bank loan as possible for the study.