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FOREWORD

This much needed piece of research seeks to find answers to a simple but confounding problem - employers are unable to find people with the 'right' kind of mindset, and job seekers are unable to find satisfying and rewarding jobs.

Firstly, this paper attempts identifying and naming that 'right' mindset. I have personally struggled with this and almost everyone I know who is in a leadership capacity has. Assigning this mindset a meaningful name that can be understood and accepted by all the stakeholders in the education system - teachers, students, parents, mentors, policymakers - will by itself be a tremendous achievement and relief for both job creators and seekers. The mindset we refer to here is actually an 'entrepreneurial mindset' - made up of a set of competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes). This research also proposes that these competencies are acquired by building a body of work by being involved with activities beyond academics.

Secondly, this paper does the important job of identifying and explaining exactly what knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA) are needed according to industry practitioners. The focus here is on transferable KSAs needed rather than technical or domain specific skills.

The authors have done a very thorough research of several papers written on the subjects of skills gap, future ready-ness, and work/life readiness and also conducted in depth interviews with 18 Employers (business leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals) and studied the learning journeys of 18 young people who have supplemented their academic learning with experiential learning.

It is important to note that this paper addresses the gap that exists between industry and educated (at least graduate) students. Hence the gap exists beyond the baseline literacy levels of reading, writing and arithmetic. Even a student who is average or above average on these parameters and possesses knowledge of various current and relevant subjects - faces the gap.

India is surely moving confidently into the 21st century, and all eyes around the globe are zooming in to participate in our growth into a 5 trillion economy. This growth is led by entrepreneurial minded leaders in social, business and political sectors. To sustain and accelerate this growth, in a manner that creates not just wealth, but also a happy, joyful and sustainable society, a new kind of work/life readiness and sense of self awareness is needed. This paper attempts to outline a structure for this mindset that would be useful to education and industry leaders, students and parents alike.

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GLOSSARY

Employers

Business Leaders, Entrepreneurs

Competencies

Knowledge, Skills & Attitudes

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION



What is now in
the past was once in
the future.

- RAMACHANDRA GUHA



As the world recuperates from the covid crisis and adapts to the growing number of complex socio-ecological challenges that are emerging at an increasing pace, we need people of all ages and backgrounds - especially young people - to channel their creativity and empathy to positively contribute towards the UN SDGs created to address these emerging challenges, while creating meaningful livelihoods of joy and abundance for themselves and others.

For our societies to develop sustainably by addressing these challenges and for people to have meaningful livelihoods, we need young people to be changemakers and cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset to build the competencies needed to positively contribute to their organisations and society at large.

“A changemaker is anyone who takes creative action to solve a problem for the greater good” (The CEO Magazine, 2022).

The young changemaker mindset includes having empathy, collaborative spirit, growth mindset, intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy

to make a positive impact on the world and to address its challenges (Bublitz et al., 2020; Drayton, 2010; Wilcox, 2020).

“An entrepreneurial mindset is defined as a cognitive perspective that enables an individual to create value by recognizing and acting on opportunities, making decisions with limited information, and remaining adaptable and resilient in conditions that are often uncertain and complex” (Daspit et al., 2021).

As stated by Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 – “By 2030 ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of cultures contribution to sustainable development”(United Nations, n.d.).

This is especially crucial for India as given the geography, paired with its population and socio-economic disparities (UNICEF et al., 2022), India is one of the most vulnerable countries to socio-ecological challenges like climate change (IPCC, 2022).

“India will face extreme scenarios emerging from climate change on almost all fronts - from rising sea levels to groundwater scarcity, from extreme weather patterns to a fall in crop production, besides a rise in health hazards” (Jai, 2022). “India is one of the most vulnerable countries globally in terms of the population that will be affected by sea-level rise. By the middle of the century, around 35

million people in India could face annual coastal flooding, with 45-50 million at risk by the end of the century” (IPCC, 2022).

Thus, as the complexity of challenges increase, India will need more young changemakers in each field. Education systems are now being counted on to be catalysts for young people to build skills needed to be changemakers and to become capable to help address the complex social, economic and ecological challenges humanity faces as a civilization (Catalyst 2030, 2022).

However, while many organisations are struggling to find the young talent needed to amplify their work, many young people are struggling to find meaningful livelihoods with organisations in industries of interest to them (Wheebox, 2022).

The problem is that many young people in India are not work/life ready i.e. do not have the competencies that organisations need in their team to amplify their work, and to provide young people meaningful career opportunities.

As we began our research, we defined a work/life ready graduate as someone having competencies like self-awareness, self-efficacy, baseline skills like emotional intelligence, the ability to express thoughts & share about their work in writing/conversations, and is ready to evaluate and grab new opportunities.

Chapter Two

CONSEQUENCES OF THE PROBLEM:

Why does it need to be addressed?

The problem of “many young people not being work/life ready” is already influencing the economy, society and the environment in multitudes of ways, and will continue to do so over the next decade if not addressed. Some of the consequences of the problem now and if it is not addressed going forward are:

01 High Unemployability amongst Youth & Shortage of Skilled Talent for Employers

Only **48.7%** of the Indian youth is employable and **75%** of employers identified a skills gap in their workforce, as reported by the India Skills Report 2022. It features a combination of the assessment of 3,00,000 candidates nationwide who appeared for the Wheebox National Employability Test (WNET), and 150 corporates spanning 15+ industry sectors who took part in the India Hiring Intent Survey (Wheebox, 2022).

Even as more Indians are getting degrees, employers across industries have revealed that students at the graduate level, including MBA holders, struggle with interpersonal skills - from communication, to collaboration. The researchers also found that general awareness amongst these graduates was quite poor, while also highlighting that many, even at the postgraduate level, struggled with reading and comprehension (Kumar, Patel, and Prikshat, nd).

Industries across the board are struggling with finding ambitious and competent talent for entry level roles (Epicor, 2018; Wheebox, 2022); a recent survey by Epicor Software found that only a quarter (23 percent) of businesses found it easy to attract the right talent, with the right industry knowledge - suggesting that the skill deficit has started to manifest itself in entry level hiring, which could have alarming ramifications on our national GDP (Epicor, 2018).

02 People will stay in the rat race for safe and known career options

Despite 250+ career options being available across 40 domains in India, 93% of students were found to have awareness about just 7- “law, engineering, medicine, accounts and finance, design, computer applications and IT, and management,” (Chakrabarty, 2019).

People are often oblivious to the dynamic list of paths available today and tend to play it “safe” - which can also mean pursuing traditionally acceptable choices in favour of a steady income, regardless of future prospects and personal preferences.

Getting a job or hiring someone is one thing, but lack of self-awareness (knowing your own strengths, passions, interests and inclinations) often drives people to think with a ‘scarcity mindset’ - which can often manifest as a vicious cycle - sometimes leading to

self-deception. Individuals with this mindset are more risk-averse than average and tend to think within the confines of their resources; which is understandable but it keeps them from taking bold decisions with a higher risk: reward ratio. This probably holds true on an organisational and individual level (Steiner, 2014).

03

Discontentment-ful Careers - may lead to a generation of dissatisfied people

There is a positive correlation between following one's passion and general life satisfaction. This is ofcourse, only possible after developing self-awareness through reflection and introspection - but provides people with a sense of meaningfulness, self-actualization, connection, and contribution to society (Weisman, 2021). In contrast, if people are not pursuing what they are passionate about or do not align with the values of an organisation, it could lead to dis-satisfaction, fatigued mental health and eventually burnout (Suttie, 2021).

04

Economic, Social and Environmental Challenges will Worsen

When people are not self-aware and conscious of the impact their presence and actions have, they become apathetic and the decisions they take may unintentionally have a negative impact on people, organisations (Steiner, 2014) and value chains they are in a position to influence. If the lack of self-awareness stays the trend in decision makers, it will lead to further economic, social and environmental unsustainability (Robèrt et al., 2017).

05

Less Young People will see themselves as Changemakers and Nation Builders

While lack of self-awareness leads to apathy and discontentment, self-awareness leads to self-efficacy, and helps people understand the strengths that they can contribute with and what they care about contributing to. If youth are not self-aware and work/life ready, they will not have the courage, vision and mindset to see themselves as nation builders and changemakers (Catalyst 2030, 2022).

“Most young people do not receive adequate motivation or support to build their changemaking skills: conscious empathy, leading through collaboration and taking action to solve problems or create opportunities for the common good” (Shirobokova, 2022).

CONSEQUENCES

If the problem is not addressed.

Youth that have clarity on their career paths have a competitive advantage and excel in comparison to their peers who take years to figure out what they want to do.

People stay in the rat race for safe and known career options.

Burnout in late 20's, frustration with work, a generation of discontent people-idle time-addictions, mental health, etc.

Critical social, economic and environmental problems systematically worsen if young people are not aware of who and what they impact.

Talent Gap will widen. Acc. to the India Skills Report 2022, only 48.7% of the Indian youth is employable, 75% of employers identified a skills gap in their workforce and there is a huge demand for early career professionals.

To be able to fully appreciate the depth of these problems, we dissect the consequences it can have on the youth, and understand their impact on our society, economy, and in some cases, our personal lives.

PROBLEM

Many college-age students in India lack self-awareness and work/life readiness.

ROOT CAUSES

(Societal structures & mindsets that feed into the problem)

Lack of awareness of different career paths.

Risk averse societal culture due to an underlying scarcity mindset.

Only academic progress is measured through exams and grades.

Students have a lot of free time during their undergraduate years.

Young people don't learn to take their own decisions.

Gap between academic curriculum and industry reality.

Pace of diffusion of the education innovations developed, tried and tested by social entrepreneurs.

Missing space for self-awareness in schools or colleges.

Lack of resources and infrastructure for vocational education in schools and colleges.

Unequal access to education.

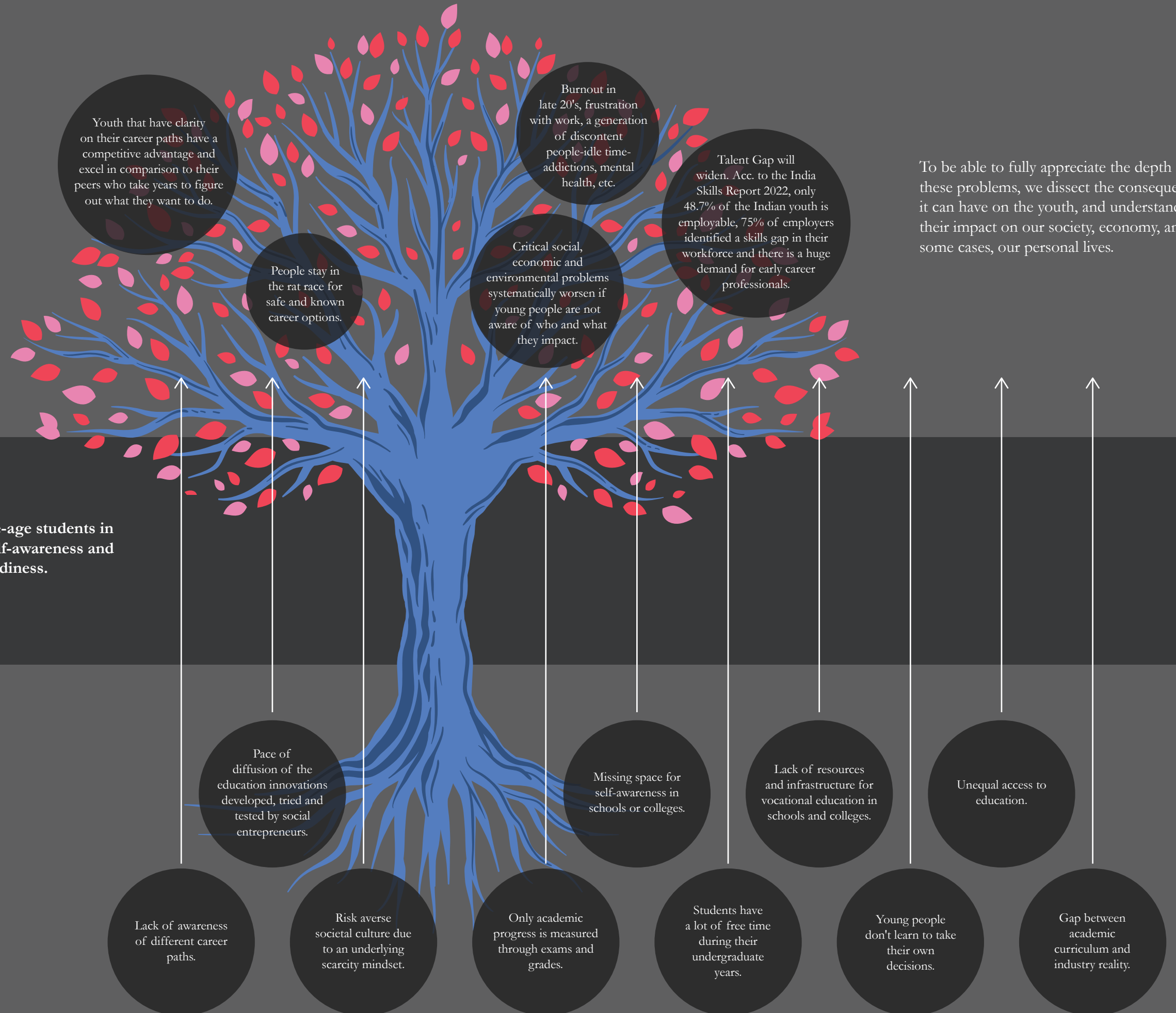


Fig. 1

Chapter Three

CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM:

Why does it exist?

The talent gap, employability rate, discontentment among youth and other issues highlighted above are symptoms of the problem- college-age students in India lacking self-awareness and work/life readiness. To be able to address the problem in a long-lasting, equitable and sustainable way, it is important to understand the underlying societal systems and mindsets that cause the problem:

01 Unequal access to education

Gaps & inconsistencies in learning outcomes among school children have been amplified by the covid pandemic, especially for children from disenfranchised and vulnerable families in India who face integrated and intersectional socio-economic challenges (UNICEF et al., 2022).

As per the 2021 World Economic Forum “Shaping an Equitable, Inclusive, and Sustainable Recovery: Acting Now for a Better Future” paper, 24 million children (predominantly girls) may not have the opportunity to return to school (WEF 2021).

02 Lack of awareness of different career paths

Many students who manage to have access to education, lack information and awareness about diverse career possibilities. According to a study conducted by Mindler with 10,000 participants, 93% of students were found to be aware of just seven career options- “law, engineering, medicine, accounts and finance, design, computer applications and IT, and management,” where as India has a variety of 250 career options available across 40 domains covering 5,000 job types (Chakrabarty, 2019; UNICEF et al., 2022).

03 Risk averse societal culture due to an underlying scarcity mindset that defines success as financial wellbeing

Most families in India have hustled hard to earn a finite set of resources they can dedicate to their children's education and development to enable them to reach financial security at the earliest. This reality often drives families to think with a ‘scarcity mindset’. This scarcity mindset consumes what Shafir calls “mental bandwidth” — brain power that would otherwise go to less pressing concerns, planning ahead, and problem-solving. This deprivation can lead to a life absorbed by preoccupations that impose ongoing cognitive deficits and reinforce self-defeating actions (Novotney, 2014).

This mindset defines success in life as academic performance and financial wellbeing (Shirobokova 2022). Despite having

information and awareness about the different career paths, the scarcity mindset influences decisions like choosing societally-familiar career paths and educational institutions that have more “scope” and seem more likely to guarantee placements. It leads to students focusing solely on academics and competitive exams that influence admissions instead of taking time to explore and choosing a path based on where the students’ strengths, interests and inclinations lie.

04

Missing space for self-awareness in schools or colleges

Schools not creating opportunities for students to practice their agency, creativity and empathy for addressing challenges the world faces, prevents students from seeing how the knowledge they build at school can be of use (Shirobokova 2022). The current education infrastructure barely creates space for students to voice their opinions and participate (Shirobokova 2022) or to reflect on their strengths, interests and inclinations, and use them as a north star in exploration of career pathways.

There is a significant need to train teachers on existing tools and for facilitating space for children to better understand themselves and explore various career options (UNICEF et al., 2022).

STORY OF TRANSFORMATION



| Hatim Choonawaala

Change begins with your thoughts, and when Hatim Choonawaala who had been studying BCOM at the Maharashtra Institute of Technology (MIT), Pune, was confused about what he was doing with his life, and was that what he really wanted to do, it was enough to set his mind ablaze. He decided to get to know himself and explore his interests; to get his hands dirty, experiment and prototype with the ideas that kept him up at night.

Thus began his journey about creating value by working on his own ideas through engagement in multiple



co-curricular activities. Hatim signed up for S.E.A.L (Systematically Enhanced Ability to Lead), a leadership and entrepreneurship program that helps develop skills through coursework, internships, volunteer work, and other activities. He also actively sought resources from his college's E&TC department to build a prototype for one of his own inventions, a "music pillow" - a cushion with a vibration module to replace your alarm and headphone speakers with music.

From researching how to make catapults, performing stand-up comedy sketches, to hosting online community game nights, Hatim gave it all a shot. As he graduates from the fellowship, Hatim is working with his family's corrugated paper tube and container manufacturing company, Prime Containers, in Pune. In addition to concentrating on issues like data administration and site development, he is working on developing a sales pipeline, an overview of the complete stock, and production.

Now more conscious about the importance of relationships, communicating with people and learning from them than ever, Hatim is looking forward to contributing to his family business in his own special way.



**Read the
full story here**

05

Only academic progress is measured through exams and grades

The education system only measures academic progress and development (Shirobokova, 2022). This leads to academics being prioritised over non-academic projects and activities beyond the classroom like part-time jobs, co-curriculars or involvement in student organisations.

These non-academic activities help students build self-awareness (Youniss et al., 1999), develop adaptability (Martin et al., 2013), and most importantly, expose them to professional settings early on in their lives (McLaughlin, 2000; Eccles et al., 2002).

However, since the curriculum learning outcomes usually do not include the non-academic progress, there isn't any systematic incentive for all students to pursue anything outside of the classroom.

06

Gap between academic curriculum and industry reality

Due to the theoretical nature of the curriculum, students often struggle to co-relate what they learn at college to professional scenarios (Ariew, 1982). They suffer from the wide gap

between “the acquired” and “the required” knowledge, as the education experience rarely involves corporate interactions, live projects with companies, and lack of active collaboration with industry leaders for curriculum and course design (MISB Bocconi, 2019).

“Students acquire qualifications but find it difficult to acquire employment because the expectations and aspirations of the employers are different from the educational institutions. The educational institutions emphasise theory and equip students with theoretical inputs and knowledge which is far away from the expectations of the employers. Employers look for ‘plug and play’ candidates to meet the industry’s expectations” (MISB Bocconi, 2019).

This gap has led to the unemployment rate amongst the youth population to rise, while amplifying the industry’s shortage of skilled workers” (Sinha, 2019).

07

Lack of resources and infrastructure for vocational education in schools and colleges

The 2020 National Education Policy has set a target for schools and colleges to provide vocational education to at least 50% of the students in schools and colleges by 2025 to help students up-skill (MHRD India, 2022). However, nearly 85% of schools still have to start integrating vocational courses as a part

of school & higher education curriculums due to lack of trainers, inadequate resources and infrastructure (UNICEF et al., 2022).

08

Pace of diffusion of the education innovations developed, tried and tested by social entrepreneurs

Social entrepreneurs and edu-changemakers across the public, private and social sectors have developed, tried and tested innovative and impactful solutions – curricula, pedagogies and assessment metrics - that keep the learner in the centre and address the evolving learner needs in varied contexts (Catalyst 2030, 2022; UNICEF et al., 2022).

However, the evidence of their viability are not visible, accessible and implementable enough for the different stakeholders to transform learning ecosystems and have as much impact on education systems as they have the potential to do (Catalyst 2030, 2022).

Chapter Four

COMPETENCIES YOUTH NEED TO BUILD:

What does being work/life
ready entail?

There are many different attempts at outlining the competencies that young people need to build to be work ready.

According to an analysis of millions of job postings in the US, Fig 2 maps top baseline skills per career area (BURNING GLASS TECHNOLOGIES, n.d.)."

The India Skills Report highlights the key skills (showcased in Fig 2) for the digital age from their study that included 150 corporates spanning 15+ industry sectors for the India Hiring Intent survey (Wheebox, 2022).

The UNICEF, Yuwaah! and World Economic Forum’s Education 4.0 India Report mentions the skills that all youth need to build as 21st century skills. “21st century skills are understood to include skills such as critical thinking, research, public speaking, teamwork, digital literacy, civic literacy, entrepreneurialism, global awareness, environmental understanding, scientific reasoning and health and wellness literacy” (UNICEF et al., 2022).

Key Skills for Digital Age



Fig. 2

BASELINE SKILLS IN DEMAND

The table shows a ranked list of top baseline skills by career area, highlighting those skills which are more commonly requested, and thus more valued, for each particular group of jobs.

CAREER AREA	SKILL	Communication Skills	Organizational Skills	Writing	Customer Service	Microsoft Excel	Word + Office	Problem Solving	Planning	Comp Skills + Typing	Research	Detailed-Oriented	Building Effective Relationship	Project Management	Supervisory Skills	Multi-Tasking	Time Management	Leadership	Mathematics	Creativity	Presentation Skills	Team Work	Analytical Skills	Bilingual	Meeting Deadlines	Self-Starter	Listener	Critical Thinking	Positive Disposition
	Clerical & Administrative		#1	3	6	8	2	4	12	14	5	10	7	15	24	18	9	16	33	22	30	35	20	31	23	19	27	34	36
Customer & Client Support		2	3	5	#1	9	8	6	18	4	12	7	11	24	20	10	13	23	15	26	21	19	28	14	27	29	16	36	22
Design, Media & Writing		2	4	#1	15	9	7	10	13	17	5	6	19	11	25	12	14	21	27	3	16	18	29	23	8	20	31	34	24
Engineering		#1	3	2	12	8	5	6	7	10	9	11	17	4	14	19	26	15	13	22	23	21	27	34	28	24	37	39	36
Finance		#1	3	4	7	2	5	8	12	10	9	6	11	17	14	13	15	26	18	27	22	23	16	20	19	25	24	29	32
Healthcare		#1	2	3	9	12	10	7	5	4	6	14	11	19	8	15	16	18	25	22	23	21	32	17	31	38	20	13	28
Hospitality, Food & Tourism		#1	2	4	3	16	13	12	10	8	21	9	6	37	5	11	19	14	7	20	32	15	36	24	28	34	22	45	17
Human Resources		#1	2	5	11	3	4	7	10	12	8	6	9	14	18	13	15	24	35	16	17	21	23	22	19	25	32	38	33
Information Technology		#1	3	2	9	10	8	4	5	24	7	11	15	6	26	13	21	12	20	14	16	17	18	39	25	22	32	29	37
Management & Operations		#1	2	3	11	6	8	7	4	14	12	13	9	5	10	18	19	15	31	17	16	24	22	29	26	28	34	38	40
Manufacturing & Production		#1	2	3	14	6	5	4	8	7	13	9	18	12	11	15	20	17	10	26	27	19	21	25	22	24	29	38	28
Marketing & PR		#1	2	3	12	5	9	11	4	17	6	10	13	8	23	16	20	22	32	7	14	15	21	31	18	19	33	35	28
Personal Care & Services		#1	2	4	5	16	15	10	7	9	12	19	3	29	8	18	14	17	13	21	31	22	36	23	25	30	6	37	11
Research, Planning & Analysis		#1	2	4	11	3	7	5	8	16	6	10	13	9	26	14	19	17	18	22	15	21	12	36	20	23	33	28	41
Sales		#1	3	4	2	9	6	7	11	8	18	12	5	22	14	13	10	17	16	20	15	19	31	24	29	21	23	39	25

Table 1

According to an analysis of millions of job postings by Burning Glass (The Human Factor).

Chapter Five

SOLUTIONS:

How can young people build the competencies needed to be work/life ready?



Young people can develop the competencies needed to build work/life readiness if we are able to:

01

Increase vocational trainings and skilling programs. The 2020 National Education Policy has set a target for schools and colleges to provide vocational education to at least 50% of the students in schools and colleges by 2025 to help students up-skill (MHRD India, 2022). However, nearly 85% of schools still have to start integrating vocational courses as a part of school & higher education curriculums due to lack of trainers, inadequate resources and infrastructure (UNICEF et al., 2022).

02

Amplify the reach of innovative education programs that are tried and tested- Social entrepreneurs and edu-changemakers across the public, private and social sectors have developed, tried and tested innovative and impactful solutions – curricula, pedagogies and assessment metrics (Catalyst 2030, 2022; UNICEF et al., 2022). Some such innovations include:

Life Skills Collaborative (n.d.) works with local and state governments in India to contextualise and rationalise life skills.

STORY OF TRANSFORMATION



| Shreeya Mendiratta

Shreeya Mendiratta’s, a naturally curious and vibrant girl did not want to limit her experiences to only academics; she pushed herself to pursue interests outside of her degree at Symbiosis, Pune.

When she came across the Enterprise Fellowship, she took a leap of faith and made good on her intention to explore herself and her strengths by being open minded and getting involved with different kinds of projects.

She worked on more than six projects throughout the course of the



Fellowship, including internal projects like #start, #karo, and Chandrayaan0.0 and projects for clients like Bizchamp & EcoFriends Community. She found it all fascinating because although they were learning these business concepts in class, they were also working on a project to put them into practice.

Hosting spaces for people and communities is a skill that Shreeya has started to develop mastery over. During the lockdown, she created and hosted two content-based sessions for her colleagues called ‘Active Listening’ and ‘Demystifying Excel to Organize Data,’ and she also began holding virtual game evenings for communities and organizations.

Having gained back her lost confidence, Shreeya is all set to learn different disciplines and apply them to solve problems, or to create ideas – and become a ‘business engineer’.



Read the full story here

Changemaker Schools in Brazil working on creating a new narrative of “young people having the interest and ability to solve problems” (Shirobokova, 2022).

Pravah helps design curriculum to help develop leadership capacity of young people to unlock transformational change at the level of self and society (Catalyst 2030, 2022).

Lend a Hand India program focuses on integration of vocational education with existing school curricula for grades 9-12 and internships with small and micro enterprises for students from grades 11-12 (UNICEF et al., 2022).

03

Encourage students to get involved beyond academics.



SPORTS

This includes students that played a sport individually or with a team in their school or area of residence. Students who participate in organised leagues show improved behaviour (Massoni, 2011), as a result of learning how to work better in a team, and take ownership of their performance. This also boosts their self-esteem, and increases confidence.

SCHOOL/COLLEGE CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

This includes student organisations of any nature affiliated to the educational institution; from debate and drama societies, to contingents for other college festivals, robotics clubs, and more. By participating in such societies, students learn lessons in leadership, teamwork, organising, analytical thinking, problem solving and time management (Massoni, 2011).

VOLUNTEER WORK

This includes volunteer work of any nature that was undertaken by the student at will, i.e., not as a prerequisite for any academic progression. This can include, but is not limited to, volunteering at orphanages, with charities, or at centres of religion or worship. Volunteer work in adolescence has been shown to reduce the likelihood of depression, and boost self-esteem in youth (Bang et al., 2020), which is a marker for developing both self-awareness, and social skills.

INTERNSHIPS

Work-based learning can be used as a successful strategy to bridge theoretical knowledge and practice and enhance graduate employability - which directly contributes to work readiness (Silva et al., 2015).

INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES

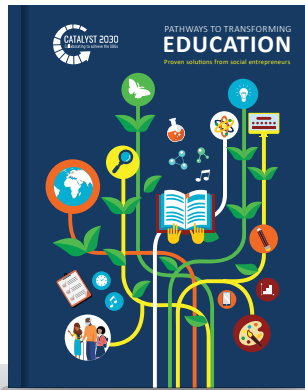
This include any self-started initiatives, from NGOs, to volunteer clubs, to community pages, or even small businesses.

In addition to the benefits outlined above, students who actively take on leadership roles in different kinds of activities build an entrepreneurial mindset (Daspit et al., 2021) and report enhanced levels of self-efficacy, civic engagement, character development, academic performance, and personal development (Benson et al., 2001).



Chapter Six

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES



India Skills Report 2022 reports that only 48.7% of India’s youth is employable. It highlights competencies that the 150+ corporations they surveyed shared are important for young people to build (Wheebox, 2022).

UNICEF, World Economic Forum and Yuwaah!’s Education 4.0 report and the Catalyst 2030 Pathways to Transforming Education report highlight tried and tested pedagogies, curricula and assessment metrics that should be leveraged and amplified across the education ecosystem (Catalyst 2030, 2022; UNICEF et al., 2022). While these innovations, just like the NEP vocational courses, are super impactful, their pace of diffusion is still slow (Catalyst 2030, 2022; MHRD India, 2022).

Our report aims to further explore these findings through a qualitative approach of interviewing employers to understand what competencies they value, and how young people they have worked with built them.

All this with the intention of understanding how students can entrepreneurially leverage the existing settings- infrastructure and resources- to build the competencies that are needed, while the tried and tested innovations, are recognized, contextualised and implemented across the education ecosystem.

This kind of an entrepreneurial mindset will enable students to maximise opportunities in complex scenarios and build the competencies that the industry needs (Dasmit et al., 2021).

RESEARCH QUESTION

How can India build a pool of young entrepreneurial talent that is work/life ready?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1

Understand what competencies do employers deem essential for a young person to be entrepreneurial and work/life ready.

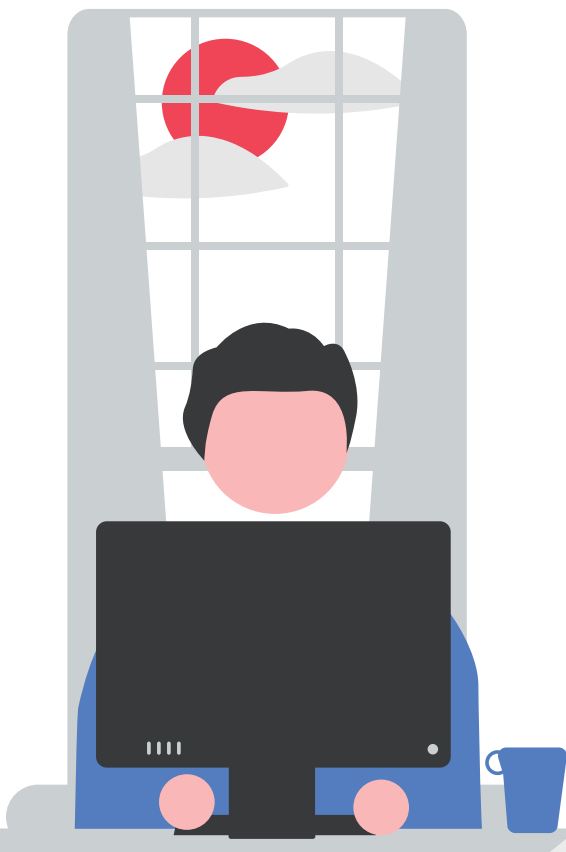
RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2

Understand from employers what they think helps young people become entrepreneurial and work/life ready- i.e. build the competencies they think are needed.

As the above data was gathered and analysed, it became evident that being involved in activities beyond academics (such as sports, internships, volunteer work, student organisations, and more) assists young people in developing the competencies that employers believe are necessary for young people to be prepared for work and life. Research Objective 3 was devised based on the data that emerged from the first two objectives.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 3

Used the Enterprise India Fellowship as a Case Study to study the learning journeys of young people who have been involved beyond academics, and the competencies they built through the duration of their involvement.



Chapter Seven

METHODS

DESIGN

We used the Flowerdew and Martin (2005) model iteratively to give a base structure to our research design.

Table 2 outlines the main phases for our research design. In the subsequent section (methods) each method within outlined phases illustrated in the table is discussed.

 PHASES (AIM)	 MEANS (METHOD)	 INTENDED OUTCOMES
A. Preparation & Secondary Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big Problem Analysis • Literature Review 	Research Questions & Objectives
B. Primary Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop questions using 5LM • Semi-structured interviews • Enterprise Fellow Learning journey data consolidation 	Gathered qualitative data from interviews and learning journey materials
C. Analysis & Result Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysing coded interview transcripts and deriving themes • Enterprise Fellow Learning journey data analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysed and comprehended data leading into results using the KSA model • Derived key takeaways for students, parents, employers and educators
D. Report Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Design • Report Writing • Report Illustration • Conclusion 	Final document

Table 2

METHODS

Phase A:

The secondary research involved a literature review of articles and journals in the education and employment ecosystems, as well as articles and content published by organisations and practitioners in the space. We used it to scope the questions we wanted to ask the interviewees.

Phase B:

The primary research involved semi-structured interviews and learning journey document analysis with:

01

Employers (business leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals from corporations, NGOs and MSMEs from different sectors).

a.

We conducted 17 interviews with employers from 17 organisations and 15 industries. The 17 interviewees included six entrepreneurs and eleven business leaders and professionals (as outlined in Table 4). The duration of each semi-structured interview took between 45 minutes to 1 hour 30 minutes.

b.

They were suitable respondents for our semi-structured interviews because of their extensive knowledge and experiences with leading aspects of their work and working closely with young people. They were selected for the interviews based on the presumption that they provide grooming and mentorship and hire and supervise the freshers in their organisations.

02

Youth (Fellows of the Enterprise India Fellowship Program)

a.

We studied 18 interviews with Fellows from 16 industries (as outlined in Table 3). The duration of each semi-structured interview took between 45 minutes to 1 hour 30 minutes.

b.

They were suitable participants to study because they had each spent and documented 380-400 hours during their fellowship journey being involved in projects beyond academics, and we had access to detailed data about their learning journeys including:

- ▶ Documented data of the number of hours they spent working on projects per month

- ▶ The recording of a semi-structured interview about their growth and development conducted right before they graduated from the program.

- ▶ Reflective blogs and podcasts they have created while reflecting on and expressing their learnings, story and body of work in conversations and writing with the help of reflective facilitated processes

- ▶ Their competency self-assessments for before and after the fellowship experience i.e. ability to derive the delta.

- ▶ Their pre and post fellowship forms.
- ▶ Context from 9 individual coaching calls with each of them.

Phase C:

Analysis & Result Generation: Involved analysis of coded transcripts of the interviews and the learning journey documents to generate qualitative results that will help the reader get a feel of the employer needs, and student competencies. We used the

KSA model devised by the US Federal Government to categorise the competencies into knowledge, skills and attitudes (Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes, 2020).

Phase D:

Report Writing: The final phase of the research design involved structuring and formatting into a final document. The IMRAD (Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion) format was adopted, which is a standard for papers. It also involved working with our partner Ideosphere on the illustrations.



Chapter Eight

RESULTS

What skills, attitudes and knowledge do entrepreneurs, professionals & business leaders think are essential for a young person to be entrepreneurial and work/life ready?



RESULTS FOR RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1



Fig. 3

Fig. 3 maps the competencies mentioned during the interviews, and the quotes below serve as a window to some of the themes that emerged in the interviews. The employers were not asked to rate different competencies from an exhaustive list, they were asked to share the competencies that they felt were important for young people to have based on their experiences of working with young people in their organisations.

KNOWLEDGE



Finance

Building basic knowledge of managing personal finances (How to manage your funds? How to grow your funds? How to invest your money? How to raise capital?), and finance from an organizational perspective (How is capital allocated? How is gross margin calculated? How to make financial projections?)



The other hard skills, of course, you need to have financial acumen it's a given today in today's world, you can't pretend to be saying that I don't understand money. And I don't understand how it is used in business, or what is the objective of money in the business. So money understanding money is important, whether it is your own money, your company's money, it is very important how to look through that.

- ANONYMOUS EMPLOYER 2



Ability to use Tech to keep upgrading

The need to be tech-savvy, to be able to use technology to find information, design graphics, edit videos, and use different digital and social platforms.



Due to the internet exposure, quite often I find that kids have clarity on what they want to do very early on in their kind of career, but not everyone in their early 20s take advantage of it.

- ARUN KALLURAYA
Director, Vitalife Health Services



Design Thinking

Understanding the fundamentals of design thinking like empathy can bring tremendous value to any organization one works for.

“

The need to have financial acumen is a given today in today's world, you can't be saying that I don't understand money, and I don't understand how it is used in business. Understanding money is important, whether it is your own money, your company's money.

- **ARUN KALLURAYA**
Director, Vitalife Health Services



Business Context

Understanding basics of how a business, and the industry it operates in, works.

“

What are the building blocks of any organization? How do operations in a company get managed? How do you manage people? How is capital allocated? What are the kinds of margins that are good? How should one plan out?

- **ARUN KALLURAYA**
Director, Vitalife Health Services

SKILLS



Communication

The ability to open up, be outspoken and be able to go up and stand in front of people or have a call with a client and communicate an idea succinctly can make all the difference.

“

Often students who lack technical skills get selected over students with very sound technical skills. Here the ability of a student to present himself or herself makes the difference.

- **BINDU NAIR**
Head Urban initiatives, Ishanya Foundation



Writing

Being able to write emails and document work so that the people one is working with understand what needs to be communicated.

“

At least 60-70% of the time we are either writing, speaking, or conveying our thoughts.

- **RAMAN NANDA**
 Founder and CEO, STEP Transformations

collaborations and being reach out to new people via a cold call, cold email or a LinkedIn Invitation.

“

One should not be shy in reaching out to people, be it cold calling someone or be it adding someone on LinkedIn, or sometimes, you don't reach out to people just to ask something, you just reach out to them. Because in the future, you may have to give something, or you may have to gain something from that.

- **MOHAMMED QURESHI**
 Director of Partnerships, BSD Education



Working with People

It's important to learn how to collaborate, work with a certain degree of professionalism (preparing for meetings and following up after them), give and receive feedback and learn how to be authentic, yet diplomatic.

“

I think the most important skill has been, is and will be working with people.

- **RAMAN NANDA**
 Founder and CEO, STEP Transformations



Reflectiveness

The ability to reflect on one's strengths, growth areas, overall story and potential decisions, and being able to question if what oneself is doing is correct. Also, being able to navigate the information overload and the abundance of choices.



Networking and Reaching Out

Being able to utilize your existing network and reach out to them for mentorship or

“

It's really about stepping back. I mean, it's more than what meets the eye, right. So, it's a little bit of stepping back and seeing the whole picture.

- SONALI MITRA
Strategy and Operations Manager, IKEA Group



Curiosity

The enthusiasm and hunger to learn, the ability to be well informed, the ability to ask good questions and the intent to listen.

“

My piece of advice to all young people who want to join the workforce or become entrepreneurs is that you have to be lifelong learners.

- MANISHA SHAIKH
Proprietor and Coach, Catalyst Consultants

STORY OF TRANSFORMATION



| Yukti Gupta

When Yukti Gupta, an enthusiastic and optimistic 20-year old BBA student at SP Jain Institute of Management, had to drop everything in the middle of her semester in France and return to India, she didn't for a second let the pandemic take better of her, unlike most of us. She took the reins of her fate in her own hands and used this diversion to unlock multiple growth opportunities by working on 7 projects and building connections with people who can help her achieve her goals.

She didn't just stop at doing college online, she took it a step further and



joined the Enterprise India Fellowship. She wanted to take on projects and learn what all efforts and skills it would take for a project to be successful. And she did!

In less than 12 months, she augmented her skills, talent and abilities by working on outreach for the Bizchamp Premier League and supporting the SMILE Wellness Foundation with their fundraising pitch deck. She also co-designed an e-book with Dr. Alifia Cementwala to spread awareness on osteoporosis, and created a series of team-building games with innovator Rajiv Tulpule. Now that's what you call a leap of faith in oneself!

It just gets better as now this 20-year old is all set to give back to the society having decided to work with NGOs post her graduation.

When life gives you lemons, don't just stick to plain-old lemonade, take it a step further and create your own fresh blend of everything-that's-you!



Read the full story here



Adaptability

Building personal resilience to be able to deal with uncertainty.



How do you manage sort of chaos and uncertainty - when things are not seemingly stable, and they're not static? Like, how do you still maintain your sanity? How do you still maintain your balance within?

- **MOHAMMED QURESHI**
Director of Partnerships, BSD Education



Managing multiple priorities at once

Being able to manage different tasks, timelines and projects together at once.



How do you manage your time, you kind of make sure that your meeting starts on time, ends on time?

- **MANISHA SHAIKH**
Proprietor and Coach, Catalyst Consultants



Emotional Quotient

Recognising and managing own and others feelings mindfully.



Super important to learn to recognize and accept emotions that come up for you and others and be able to hold space to deal with it, and then get moving.

- KAYOMARZ ANKLESVARIA
Subject Matter Expert, Cyber Security Corporation



I think a growth mindset is the most important thing, which we all need to have for the entirety of our life. The most important picture which should be in front of us is that we need to keep on learning, unlearning, and relearning till the end of our life.

- ANUPAM KULKARNI
CEO, iairo Systems Pvt Ltd

ATTITUDES



Growth Mindset

Being open to learning new things, to taking risks, to receiving feedback to improve, and being willing to learn, unlearn and relearn.



Building a Body of Work

Expose yourself to a broad range of experiences - whether it is a side job, sports, internships, apprenticeships, and/or travel, and use these experiences to build a story and different skills, but most importantly, do justice to them and work on building consistency.



If I were to use a cricket analogy, try playing more like Dravid, than Sehwag.

- HITENDRA SINGH
Sr Director, Emcure



Willingness to make things work

To persevere and have a problem-solving mindset and not stopping every time you get stuck with little things.



The youngsters should be more able to solve the problems on their own instead of directly asking your senior you how it should be done or (Googling) it.

- KAYOMARZ ANKLESVARIA
Subject Matter Expert, Cyber Security Corporation



Authenticity

Being honest about stories, achievements, failures and setbacks in conversations, interviews, and on CVs, LinkedIn and personal websites is a plus point.



When you put something in your CV, I expect you to have a reason for it, not a silly narrative. Personally, I like it when people say, you know what, I made a terrible mistake. And this is the reason why I made the mistake. This is what I've learned from it, and I'm ready to move ahead in life.

- ANUPAM KULKARNI
CEO, iauro Systems Pvt Ltd



EMPLOYER COMPETENCY MAP

The following table maps the knowledge, skills and attitudes that the interviewed employers shared are some of the most important for young people to build (according to them) to be entrepreneurial and work/life ready.

EMPLOYER NAME & ORG	Raman Nanda Step Transformations	Manisha Shaikh Catalyst Consultants	Hitendra Singh Emcure	Mohammed Qureshi Build Something Different	Dr Pallavi Tak CIEE.CO	Jinal Thakkar Infinity Labs	Arun Kalluraya Vitalife Health Services	Ishaan Kanoi Cummins Inc.	Sharang Shah Chase India	Mohit Khandelwal TCS	Anupam Kulkarni iauro Systems Pvt Ltd	Sonali Mitra IKEA	Kayomarz Anlesvaria Cyber Security Corporation	Hansika Singh Forum for the Future	Bindu Nair Ishanya Foundation	Anonymous Employer 1 Transportation Industry	Anonymous Employer 2 Retail Industry
Finance		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓							✓
Design Thinking			✓								✓				✓		
Tech-Savviness			✓	✓	✓		✓			✓					✓		✓
Business Context		✓								✓							
Communication	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Writing													✓				
Working with People	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓					
Networking and Reaching Out				✓	✓	✓				✓							✓
Reflectiveness				✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Curiosity			✓									✓		✓			
Adaptability	✓	✓		✓				✓			✓						
Managing Multiple Priorities			✓						✓				✓				
Emotional Quotient								✓				✓					
Growth Mindset	✓		✓			✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Building a Body of Work		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓					✓		
Willingness to Make Things Work	✓	✓					✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	
Authenticity			✓														✓

COMPETENCIES

Table 3

RESULTS FOR RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2

After the employers shared the competencies, they shared about what helped the entrepreneurial young people who they have worked with build different competencies, and based on that what all do they think could help young people at large build the kinds of competencies needed to be work/life ready. Some of the things that they mentioned are:



Curriculum

Find Programs with Practical, Skill learning based Curriculum. Developing any skill is a gradual process and one has to start from the basics and cannot learn it overnight. Having it integrated in the curriculum would give students time to develop and incentive to prioritize.



Development of these soft-skills need to be included in the curriculum. Things such as how to explore, how to multitask, how to be ready to face any challenges must be included in the syllabus.

- BINDU NAIR
Ishanya Foundation



Mentors/Coaching Oriented Supervisor

Whether it is an internship, a sports team, or a student organization, it is important to make sure there is someone to groom, mentor and coach youngsters.



It's important for new employees to try to connect and work with a boss who has the inclination, aptitude and ability to teach and coach to ensure that there is good learning for the new employee.

- RAMAN NANDA
Founder and CEO, STEP Transformations



Exposure to new ideas, concepts & people

Explore different avenues to learn about different opportunities, gain knowledge and build skills.



You can learn by calling in experts or doing online courses, peer-to-peer learning, and constantly keeping yourself updated with new things. I think a lot of visual content consumption has gone up.

- MANISHA SHAIKH

Proprietor and Coach, Catalyst Consultantsv



Internships

The activities that students take on beyond their academics. They include sports, volunteering work, student organizations, startups, internships and more. Co-curriculars help young people learn working with people, build adaptability, reflectiveness, strategic thinking, communication and networking skills.



Co-curriculars

The activities that students take on beyond their academics. They include sports, volunteering work, student organizations, startups, internships and more. Co-curriculars help young people learn working with people, build adaptability, reflectiveness, strategic thinking, communication and networking skills.



I think you have to go through the process of elimination. So don't just target one internship but try to go for as many internships or experiences as you can. Internships should last at least three months, because it takes time to understand the company, the processes, and then actually getting onto delivering something.

- MOHAMMED QURESHI

Director of Partnerships, BSD Education



Life throws a lot of curveballs. You should explore between 15-25 years of age as the cost of failure is low and as you pass 25, the cost of failure increases.

- ARUN KALLURAYA

Director, Vitalife Health Services

RESULTS FOR RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 3

“Building a Body of Work” emerged as a competency- an attitude young people should have (in Results from Research Objective 1), and Building a Body of Work (getting involved with co-curriculars, internships and more) emerged as the approach to build other competencies (in Results from Research Objective 2).

The Case Study of Enterprise India Fellowship helps validate the findings of the Results of Research Objective 2, as the fellowship program is designed in a way that encourages the Fellows to build a body of work by working on 4-5 live projects, and document the work using the in-house credit system that measures the work done.

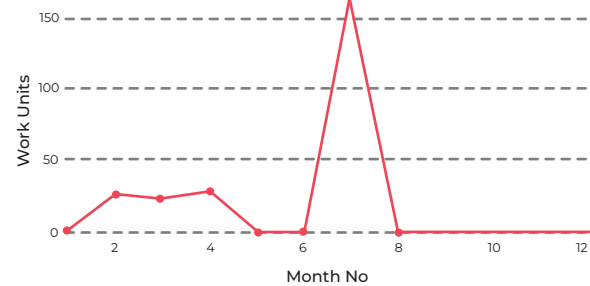
The Fellowship is customizable, allowing students to work at their own pace on projects. In the graphs below, the number of hours a Fellow spent and documented as working on projects (Y axis) are plotted against the number of months it took them to complete it (X axis).

On an average, Fellows work on

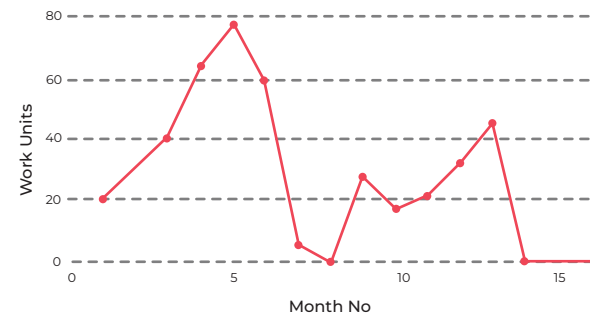
400+ HOURS

worth of projects in 14 months.

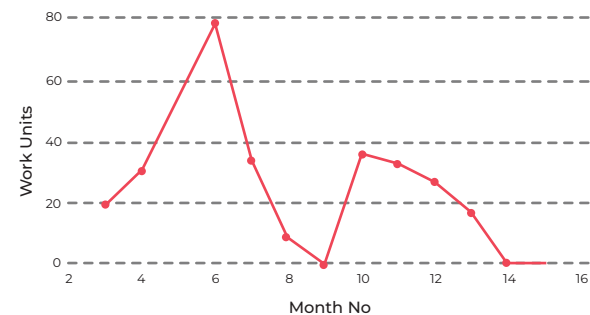
Documented Working Hours – Fellow 01



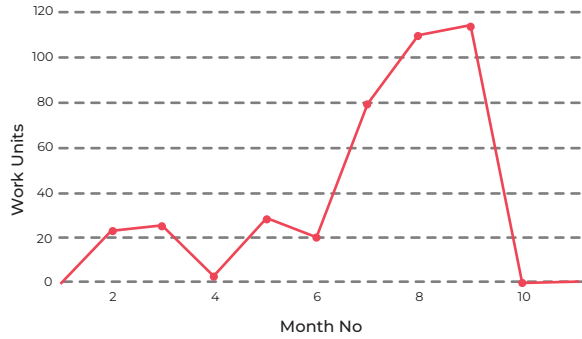
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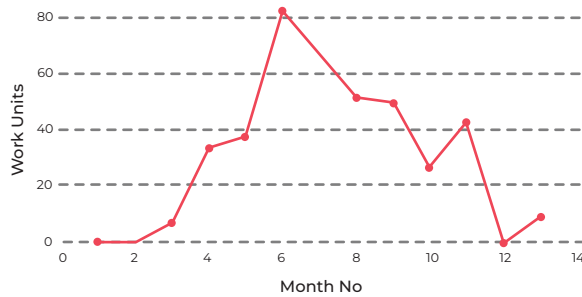
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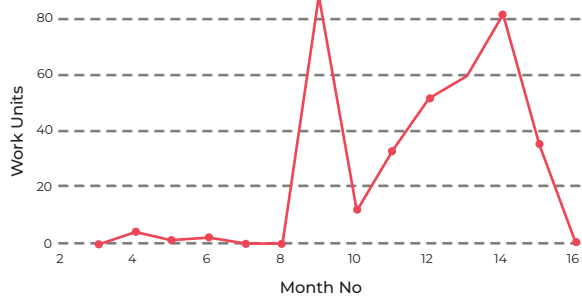
Documented Working Hours – Fellow 04



Documented Working Hours – Fellow 05



Documented Working Hours – Fellow 06



STORY OF
TRANSFORMATION



Mrunmayee Padmagariwar

We live in a generation so ahead of itself that it's not surprising that today's youngsters are experiencing more mental health issues than ever. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), around 10-20% of children and adolescents worldwide experience mental health disorders, and Mrunmayee Padmagariwar was no different.

An artist at heart from Nagpur, Mrunmayee was stuck in Pune by herself when she went to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Media and



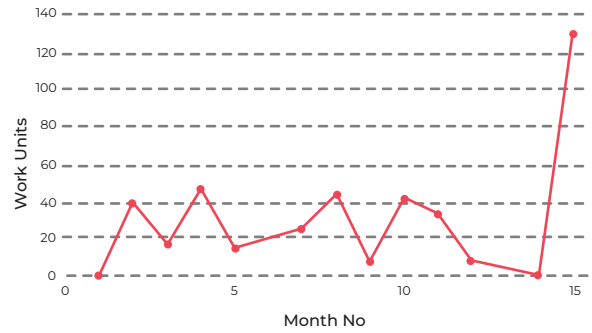
Communication from Symbiosis Centre of Media and Communication, away from her family and had a challenging time with her mental health when the Covid crisis hit India. As the restrictions eased, she went back to her home in Nagpur, took a break from work and decided to seek professional help for her mental health. She opted to continue her studies in psychology during her hiatus after becoming aware of her desire to be an advocate for mental health through some introspection and meditation. She then decided to attend the Enterprise India Fellowship in order to develop these abilities by working on actual projects since she realized that having entrepreneurial skills will help her magnify her work as a mental health expert.

From working on a client project called Jeevan Gaane with Nidhi Jain, the Director of Pride Group to create (conceptualize, compile and edit) an e-book of Marathi poems, to channeling her creativity, ideas and talent in whatever she does, Mrunmayee has carved a niche for herself through sheer willpower, perseverance and faith.

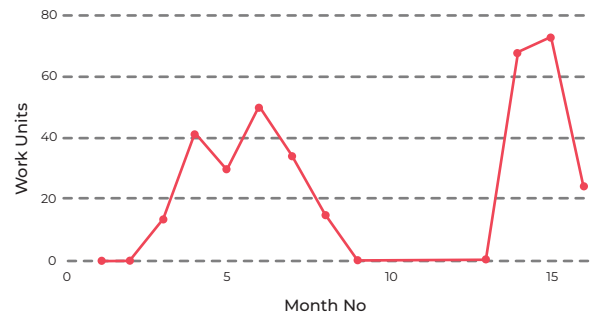


Read the full story here

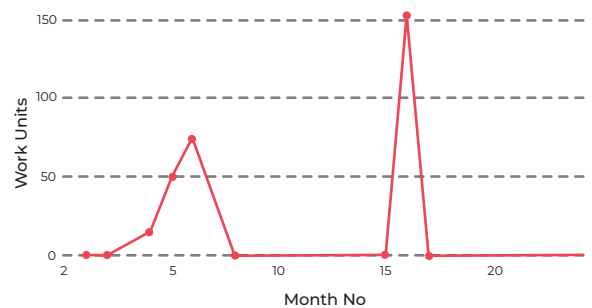
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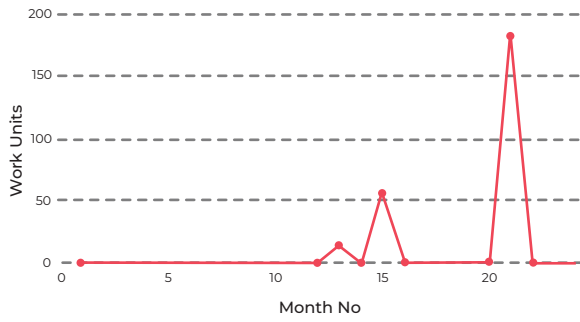
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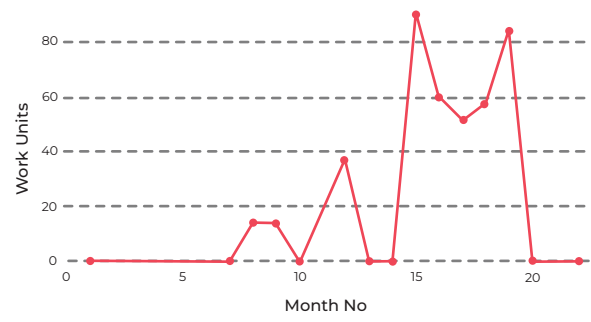
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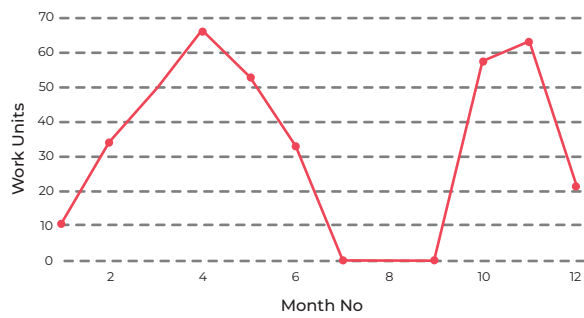
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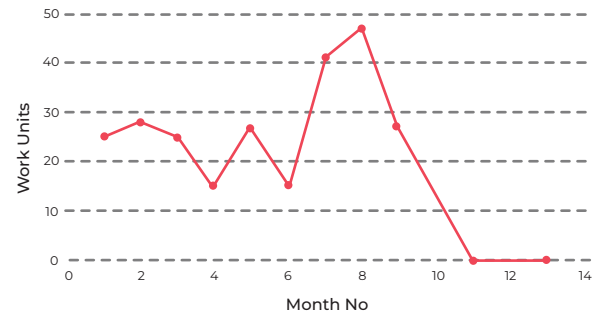
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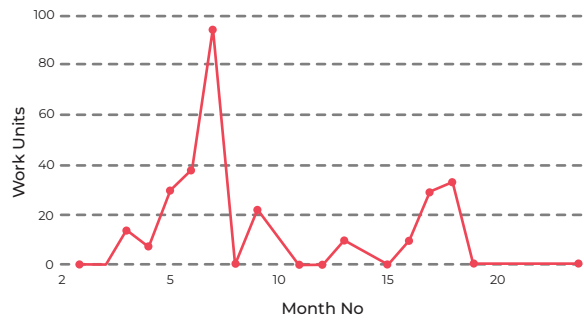
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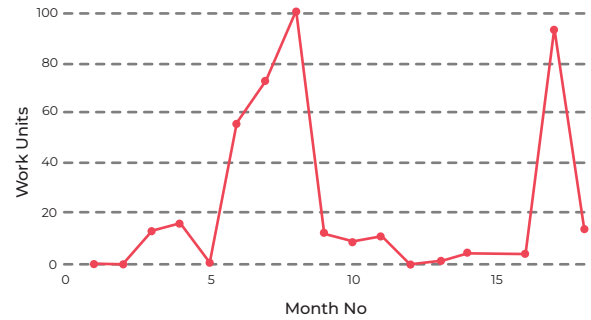
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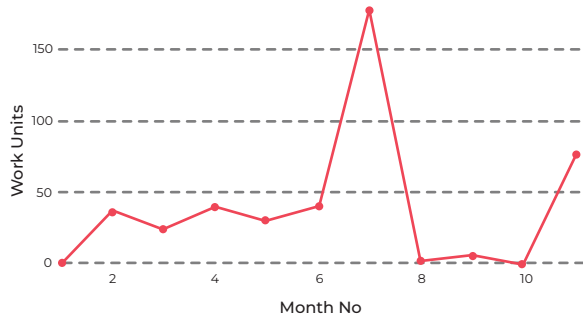
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Documented Working Hours – Fellow 15



Documented Working Hours – Fellow 16



Documented Working Hours – Fellow 17

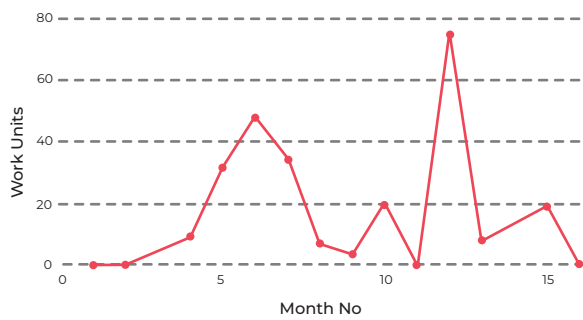


Table 4 maps the competencies mentioned during the interviews, derived from the reflective blogs and podcasts as well as if there was an increase in the competency score for the self-assessment done post-fellowship from the one pre- fellowship. It essentially maps the competencies Fellows have built after “Building a Body of Work” by spending approximately 400 hours working on 4-5 projects.

Below are blurbs from the reflective blogs written by the students that serve as a window into their self-awareness about the different competencies they were building.

STORY OF TRANSFORMATION



| Swaran Singh Matharu

When 24 year old college dropout from Pune, Swaran Singh Matharu, realized he was not learning anything substantial in his chosen field of study, he set out to look for opportunities that would help him experience more ‘hands-on’ learning.

He started learning the art of capoeira while participating in gymnastics, eventually perfecting it and passing it on to young students. Within a month of attending one of a community meeting, he also made the choice to apply for the Enterprise India Fellowship with the



aim of being involved in various initiatives and experiencing the college life that he was missing.

During his time at Enterprise, Swaran worked on more than six projects, including three Enterprise projects like #karo, a website team page, and two client projects for YellowSkye (a drone technology pioneer) and Pratha (a handcrafted jewelry studio in Pune).

You'd think he would stop at that, but no, he challenged himself further and worked on a personal project where he investigated the world of graphic harvesting under the guidance of Stephanie Heckman, a graphic facilitator from Ireland.

Going forward, Swaran wants to continue teaching capoeira, and let life take its own course. As he now knows, no matter what he decides to do or where he chooses to go, he'll always come out victorious.



[Read the full story here](#)

“ Writing

Through this blog, I am overcoming the fear of expressing myself, not waiting for the perfect content for my blog but just moving ahead with what seems right and doing this with a purpose of doing something productive rather than thinking how is this going to be useful for me in the future! This was an attempt in relating real life with Scalars and Vectors. Writing this blog is like being scalar, just putting in work with no definite goal and direction, but I believe that one day this would start taking shape in some form and point me in a direction that would transform me and help me achieve that I've always wanted for myself.

(Shah, "It Always Makes Sense In The End," pars.21-22)

“ Reflectiveness

Green room, a story-sharing evening that happens once every month at The Enterprise India Fellowship took the majority of my time in the lockdown. I co-hosted this space for 4 months and while answering one of the questions, I mentioned how co-hosting is not just a task for me rather it's about understanding my skills, getting to know about my flaws, getting feedback on what I could improve on. The word self-reflection has been the "go-to" for a year now but its seeds were sown long before.

(Mendiratta, "I Just Want to Run Away," Said My Avoider.", par.17)

“ Working with people

According to us, leadership, above all else, is about taking responsibility for the people we work with. It's about being prepared to deal with outcomes you hadn't thought of, leveraging serendipitous opportunities that come your way, and most importantly – being able to roll with the punches.

(Rayate, “Leadership Is Not a Position but a Mindset”, pars.11-12)

“ Communication

If we really care about the person who is speaking, we will genuinely listen and put our point across tactfully. Rather than finding faults in others, we need to put aside our biases and actually listen. This shows that we care about them and what they say matters to us.

(Rathod, “What You're Missing When You're Not Listening”, pars. 16-21)

“ Adaptability/ Resilience

I may not even have a ‘pla-’ yet, but I'd rather work on being more comfortable with not knowing what to do than agonize over the uncertainty that plagues me, much like it does every other twenty-something.

(Gupta, “I Don't Even Have a Pla-”, pars.11-15)

“ Body of Work

Recently, I came across a theory, that in life, you are the stories you tell yourself – positive and motivating or negative and downgrading. I found this extremely powerful! I scanned a couple of chapters from my life and checked. Every time I was successful or victorious, I had pumped myself up with uplifting thoughts and stories. When I was in Egypt, I kept telling myself, I will get home – soon, safe & sound, and with a bagful of memories. I reminded myself of why I was there and the result was very beautiful. Similarly, all my successful consistent efforts had similar stories backing them up. I had a motive or a reason behind what I was doing. On the contrary, every time, I failed to be consistent with something, the stories I told myself to keep going weren't strong or real or with a purpose!

(J. Jethwani, “My Relationship with vConsistency”, pars.10)

“ Willingness to make things work

I took up every single project that came my way, every single opportunity. Without thinking twice. It didn't matter what kind of project it was, I took it. I wanted to explore. But more than that, I was okay with any kind of project. I just wanted to work.

(Rathod, 2022, paras. 17–18)

“ Managing Multiple Priorities at Once

I don't do it to prove someone wrong anymore. I do it for myself, I do it because I love it. I still have a lot of things to do in a day and I am still figuring out how to focus on myself. But I love how I'm able to give myself some more time in the shower and I have also resumed my hot oil massage. I can hang out with my friends, I can read more pages, I can play more, I can travel more.

(Bhaldar, “Slow down and Embrace Yourself”, pars5-7)

“ Growth Mindset/ Openness

At Enterprise, each task is thought out and deliberately made in such a way that it pushes you out of my comfort zone. For example, making sales calls to unknown people, going out and doing a project with a street vendor, presenting my work to a client etc., I would never have done any of these on my own. I have encountered a transformation from me being in my comfort zone to me looking for opportunities which can help me get out of my comfort zone. I believe now that for progress, I should get comfortable being uncomfortable and that's how I am creating myself.

(Rayate, “My Pleasant Encounters with Change”, par. 4)

STORY OF TRANSFORMATION



| Dnyanesh Chandewar

So when Dnyanesh Chandewar, a young techie from Nagpur, decided he did not want his growth to be limited by just what was offered during the time he did Computer Engineering from the D Y Patil Institute of Engineering Management and Research, in Pune, he took the lead and started participating in options beyond college to explore different things and prioritized the kind of opportunities he wanted.

Saying ‘yes’ to everything changed his life!

From joining various tech-learning



groups to a meditation group, and from practicing public speaking to winning a couple of hackathons, Dnyanesh saw a ‘winning chance’ in everything that he did; a chance to amplify his skills.

Building anything from scratch was Dnyanesh's first real entrepreneurial challenge, and with a little help from Enterprise coaches and direction from Professor David Gould of the University of Iowa, he and two other Enterprise Partners co-created a community story-sharing platform called the Green Room.

Having successfully launched the Green Room, with over 200 people joining the platform; Dnyanesh then set out to find CyberCore, an IT consultancy firm in order to assist small businesses, entrepreneurs, and non-profits in developing their brands through the use of websites, Google Business Optimization, automations, digital marketing, and other tools. Now that’s what we call seizing the day!

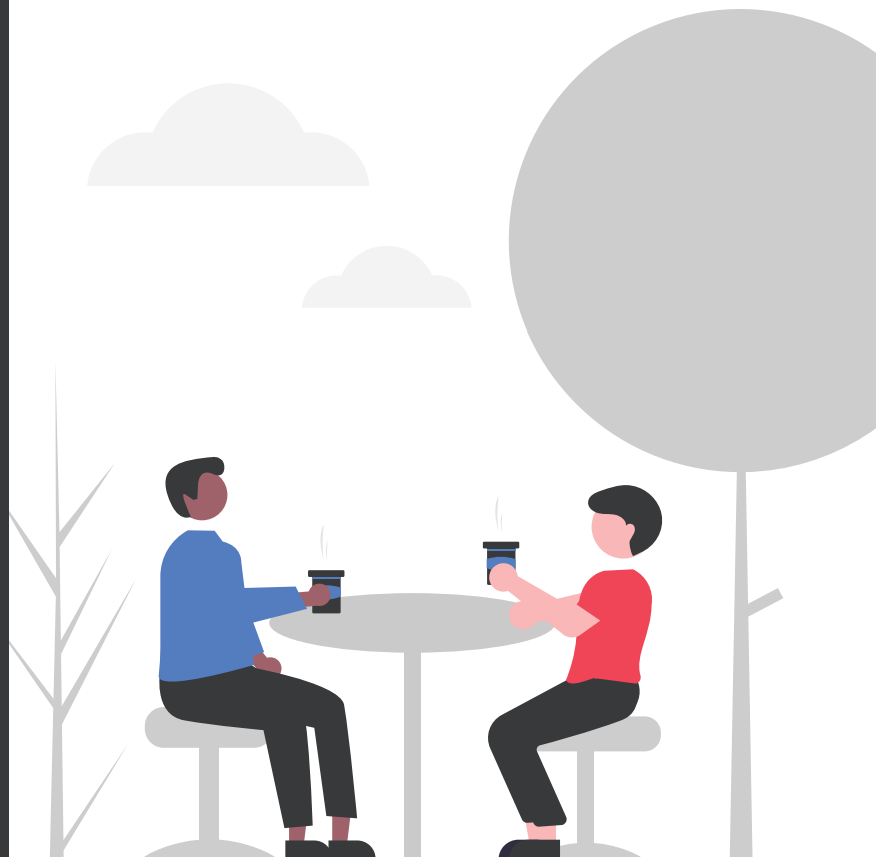


[Read the full story here](#)

“ Emotional Quotient

I had started to realize patterns where I couldn’t make my friendships stronger, relationships deeper because whatever we discussed and whatever we did was very much on a basic level. There was hesitancy in being vulnerable. I then realized that 1) For people to know who I am on the inside, 2) To connect with them more on a personal level and share a good bond, I had to be vulnerable, shed off whatever doubts, fear of judgment, fear of losing people and I did so.

(Shah, “The Change Which Is FELT and Not SEEN,” pars. 3–5)



FELLOW COMPETENCY MAP

The following table maps the knowledge, skills and attitudes that the Enterprise Fellows developed (according to interviews, a self assessment + an in-depth analysis of their reflective blogs and podcasts) by being involved beyond academics.

YOUTH NAME >	Fellow 1 Finance	Fellow 2 Construction	Fellow 3 Coffee	Fellow 4 Education	Fellow 5 Advertising	Fellow 6 Content Creation	Fellow 7 Consulting	Fellow 8 Education	Fellow 9 IT	Fellow 10 Manufacturing	Fellow 11 Recycling	Fellow 12 Finance	Fellow 13 Engineering Management	Fellow 14 Mental Health	Fellow 15 Marketing	Fellow 16 Real Estate	Fellow 17 Consulting	Fellow 18 Jewellery
Finance	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Design Thinking	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tech Saviness & Excel/ppt	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Business Context		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Communication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Writing	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Working with People	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Networking and Reaching Out	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reflectiveness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Curiosity		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adaptability		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Being Organized & Managing Priorities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Emotional Quotient												✓	✓					
Growth Mindset	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Building a Body of Work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Willingness to Make Things Work		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Authenticity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

COMPETENCIES

Table 4

Chapter Nine

DISCUSSION

CURRENT STANDARD STUDENT DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORS

Based on social structures & mindset

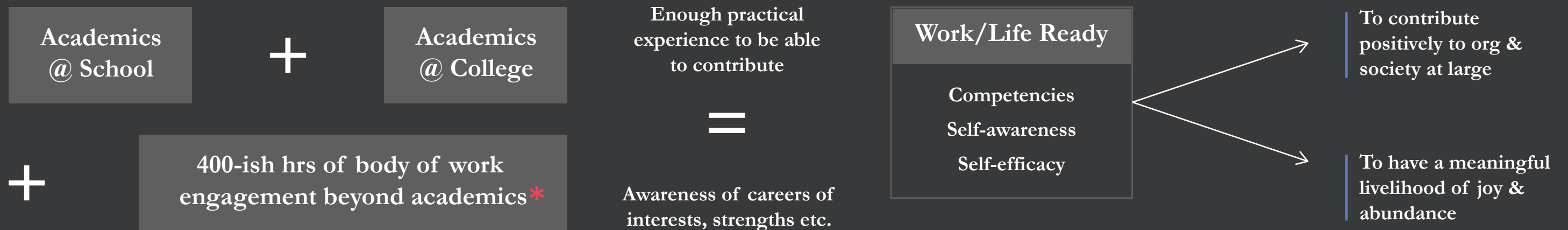
Which isn't working for students & industry



RECOMMENDED STUDENT DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORS

Based on employer interviews & case study learning journey analysis

Take an entr mindset of building a body of work



*Body of work could include organized sports, volunteering, student orgs, startup projects, internships, part-time work, travel, workshops and so on.

“Building a Body of Work” emerged as a competency-attitude young people should have (in Results from Research Objective 1), and Building a Body of Work (getting involved with co-curriculars, internships and more) emerged as the approach that employers we interviewed felt helped some of their young entrepreneurial colleagues in building different competencies that they felt are essential (in Results from Research Objective 2).

The case study of the learning journeys of students of the Enterprise India Fellowship helps showcase that by building a body of work by working on approximately 400 hours of projects beyond academics, one can build the baseline competencies that are needed.

We need to work on shifting the mental model of definition of success from just valuing academic performance to valuing academic as well as non-academic performance, as while academic curricula may help build expertise or specific hard skills, the non-academic experiences are what can contribute to building the baseline competencies needed across the industry. This shift in mental models is crucial while systemic innovations and cutting edge learning experiences highlighted in some of the reports scale and are adapted as curriculum or pedagogy across the system.

If young people take an entrepreneurial approach to building their body of work by taking on non-academic opportunities, they should be able to build the competencies that entrepreneurs, professionals and business leaders feel are important for them to be able

to contribute positively to organisations and the society at large.

The best part is that opportunities to be involved with non-academic experiences are abundant and decentralised, and do not necessarily need specific infrastructure. If young people are encouraged to activate their entrepreneurial mindset to build a body of work and build self-efficacy, a 30 min walk across any part of India should present them with countless opportunities to engage with different activities- from volunteering for a social or environmental cause to joining a sports team to creating a startup project to address a problem and more. There is literally so much to do!

In case some starting points may be useful, below are two activity-competency maps. Fig 5 highlights the different components of the Enterprise India Fellowship that we think helped our students develop the different competencies that the Employers have mentioned.

Based on our learnings from our program components, Fig 6 highlights the different activities that we think can help any young person build the different competencies that the Employers have mentioned.

THE ACTIVITY MAP

Components of the EIF that contribute to young people building these competencies

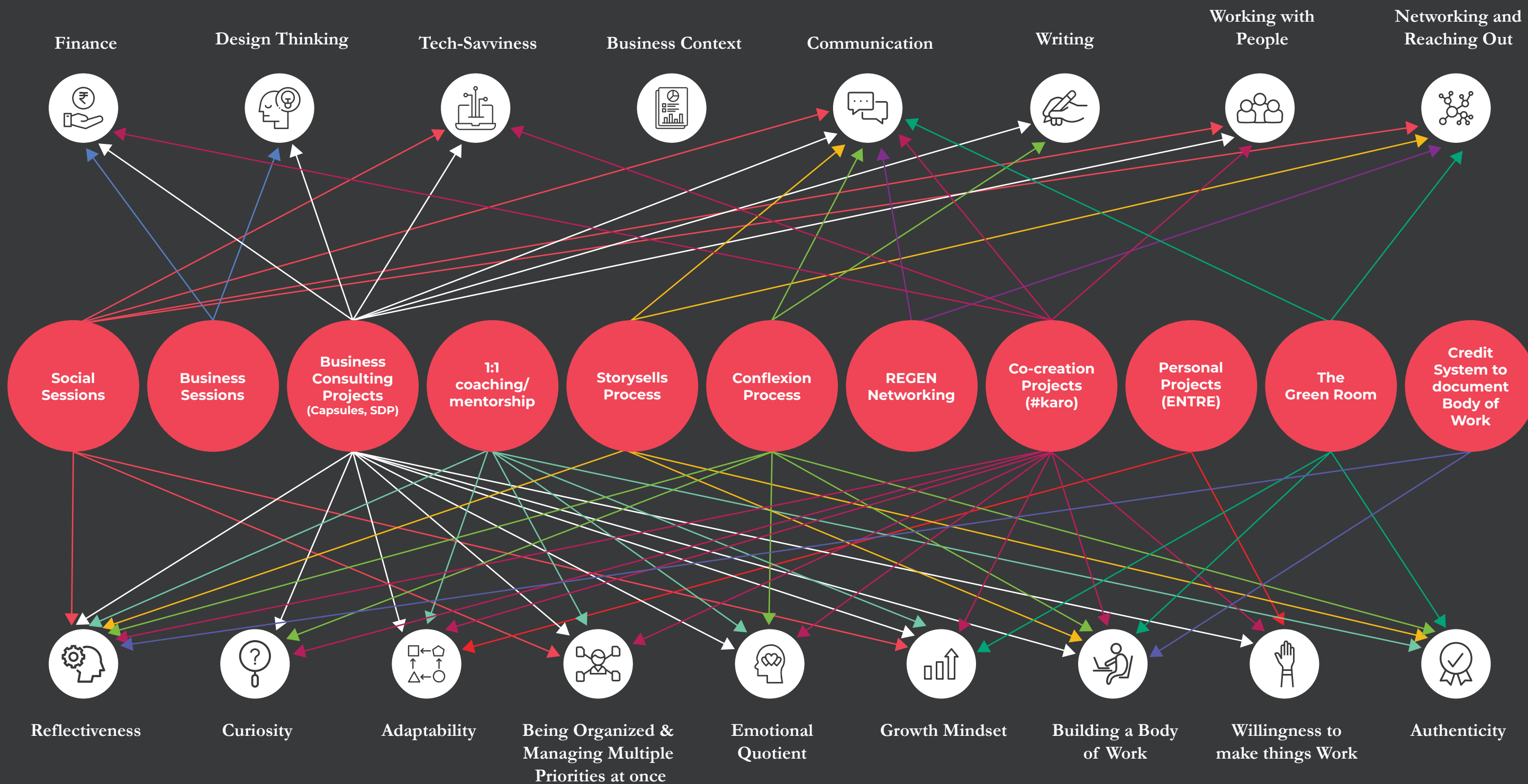


Fig. 5

THE ACTIVITY MAP

Specific activities that can help young people build these competencies

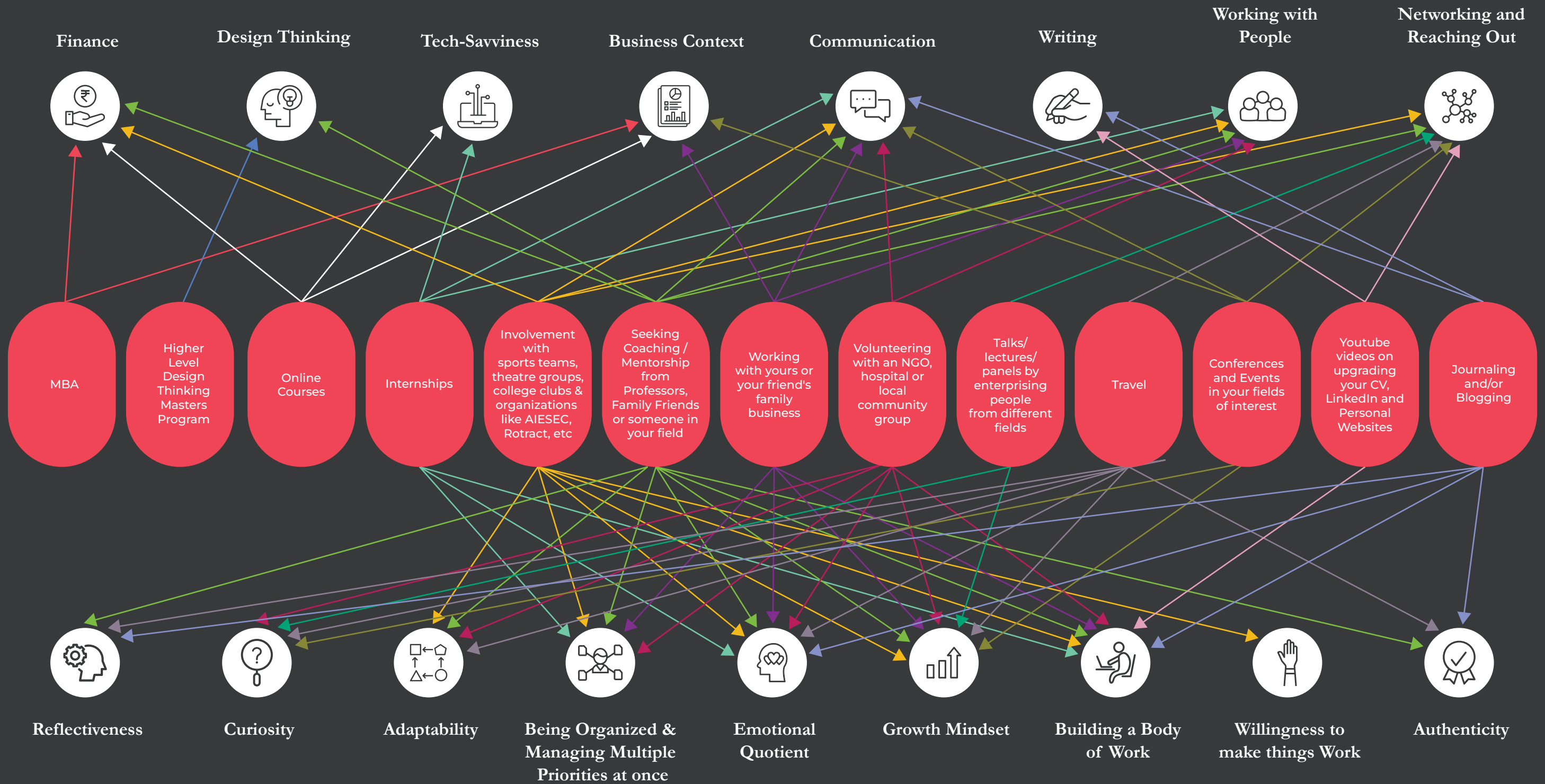


Fig. 6

Chapter Nine

CONCLUSION



While addressing the gap between academics and the industry through the cutting-edge, tried and tested

curricula and pedagogy seems more promising than ever, the diffusion of these innovations is happening at a slow pace.

As we explore how to accelerate that, we can encourage young people to activate their entrepreneurial mindset and build a body of work by taking on projects and opportunities beyond academics, which according to Employers we interviewed and learning journeys we studied will help them build the essential baseline competencies needed to be work/life ready. And not just work/ready, the self-awareness would also help the professionals create meaningful livelihoods of joy and abundance for themselves and others, and the self-efficacy would be a guiding star for how they could positively contribute to their organisations and society at large.

Here are specific messages that we would like to share with different stakeholders based on this preliminary study:

Employers

To find entrepreneurial young talent who are work/life ready, you can:

- ▶ Actively communicate that a certain amount of non-academic engagement is preferred in applicants.
-
- ▶ Ask applicants to articulate in their cover letters how some of their academic and non-academic engagements have prepared them to be able to contribute to your organisation and the role they are applying for.
-
- ▶ Take time during job interviews to ask reflective questions about their engagements beyond academics- sports, volunteering, internships, and so on- even 2-3 really good questions can help you sense how deeply they were engaged and how evolved their competencies are.
-

Educators

Encourage your students to be engaged in activities beyond the classroom. As you can see from the responses of Employers as well as references from multiple reports linked above, there is a huge gap between what the students are acquiring through the academic education and what the industry is requiring from young professionals.

Parents

Encouraging your children to go beyond the definition of success being “academic performance” and actively engaging with activities beyond academics, will also increase the prospects of their financial wellbeing as they will enter the workforce with competencies that the Employers said they are looking for in young professionals.

Students

To create a meaningful livelihood and career trajectory for yourself, do spend time working on a variety of non-academic endeavours, to:

- ▶ Build specific competencies
- ▶ Develop self-awareness about your interests and strengths
- ▶ Develop self-efficacy to be able to see the potential impact your work can have

Others

Researchers, media, educators, social innovators, governments and social sector organisations in this space need to innovate to see if this non-academic progress can be measured in some way and parallelly explore how to shift influence the mental models of educators, parents, students and employers to value, encourage and prioritise non-academic progress.



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