

There are questions I dread. One of them is 'Which organization should I join?' Students [doing MBA] often ask me that question when the placements begin.

Their problem is real. The students want to have some rationale for making a choice. It is a different matter that very often the placement committee does not give you any choice at all; particularly if you have got a PPO – Pre-placement Offer. They get uncomfortable that the rules for making choice are not clear to them. They study for fifteen years that everything is 'cause and effect'; when it comes to making the most important [and the first career decision] in life, they are unable to consider relevant factors that would guarantee a good job and career. I have always felt that our academic system teaches planning but not enough emphasis is placed on 'exploring'. Ambiguity makes all uncomfortable, but more so to the young.

Girls often reconcile to the fact that their parents will ask them not to take up a job elsewhere except the city of their residence; and I think that is somewhat unfair to them, and unfortunate. But that settles the rule for her – 'I will take up a job that requires me to work in Mumbai' she says and automatically limits the choice. In a not-so-happy way the selection is to be made by her among few organisations.

There are in my opinion, two aspects that students must appreciate. Firstly, every employee experiences the organisation in a different way. Perhaps because they get different boss or relate differently to him/ her even if common. And secondly, growth and not money should be the criterion for freshers to select their employer. Working in a good organisation we tend to grow as a professional and as a person too. There are certain organisations where a person experiences growth, unlike others. This is akin to plants growing well in their natural habitat. A Christmas tree survives in Mumbai but blossoms in Himalayas. A coconut tree would not give highest yield in Himalayas but in Mumbai. So our search must be for our 'natural habitat'.

There is, therefore, no alternative to exploring. We can find out how ex-employees have experienced an organisation and that could be a good thumb rule to go by.

But all said and done, we must appreciate that, like [arranged] marriages, the employee has to make his stint with an organisation rewarding and successful, it usually does not 'happen' automatically. For students, for whom everything is decided by their institutes, that is quite a change and first demand for being proactive.

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