‘No Pressure, No Diamonds’

Thomas Carlyle
IBA Offers 18 Month Full Time MBA Program

IBA is recognized for its quality academic programs in the field of Business Administration and Computer Sciences. Based on market feedback, IBA has revised its admission policy for the MBA Morning Program from Fall 2012. For candidates with a BBA degree from any HEC recognized institute, the duration of full time MBA program has been reduced to 18 months instead of the 24 months specified for Non-BBAs.

BBA graduates from IBA, with the CGPA of 2.5 or above, and two years work experience will no longer be required to appear for the IBA written entry test under the revised rules. They can now directly qualify for the interview and panel discussion rounds.

The essence of the revised policy is to enhance the Employability, Competitiveness and Orientation for the “Leaders of Tomorrow”. BBA students who have 2 years post qualification work experience get further polished by this program. As they work through the challenges of IBA’s well designed MBA program, their chances of induction at the middle level positions will increase.

This new full time MBA program gives an opportunity to organizations who are keen to invest in their young talented employees to groom them for higher positions as well as to professionals who are seeking a career boost. It can further replace training and development programs of organizations, creating a cadre of highly qualified, loyal manpower as well as resulting in reduction of training budgets with big margins.

“The funniest characteristic of human beings is ‘contradictoriness’. We are in such a hurry to grow up and then we long for our lost childhood. We make ourselves ill earning money and then spend all our money on getting well again. We think so much about the future that we neglect the present and thus experience neither the present nor the future. We live as if we were never going to die and die as if we have never lived.”

From Paulo Coelho’s Like the Flowing River
Dr. Ishrat Husain's Message

A healthy, well functioning and friendly work environment is something all of us aspire for during the execution of our jobs. This is the minimum requirement that we look for. If such an environment exists, life becomes easy and our productivity improves. But if proper office space is not available, computing facilities are inadequate or dysfunctional, office equipment breaks down frequently, we are put under terrible pressure and stress. We cannot then meet the deadlines assigned to us and that too due to circumstances beyond our control.

IBA is therefore investing in physical infrastructure, servers and software, furniture and office equipment so that our staff members are at least relieved from the stress caused by an unhealthy work environment. These changes, when completed, will hopefully bring about a change in the morale and moods of our staff. Other pressures such as practices, attitudes and habits of supervisors would still remain valid. For this, we are devoting resources in training of soft skills such as team building, communication skills, interpersonal skills and performance management system. We envision that the completion of physical hardware and soft skills development would minimize the pressures on our daily work life and pave the way for a more conducive environment for everyone at IBA.

Symptoms of Purpose

The ‘road less travelled’ is often full of difficulties, challenges and surprises. Comfortable with that which is familiar, most of us, when faced with a choice, opt to take the well worn path. Whichever way we choose to go, everyone faces and has to deal with life’s challenges… big or small. When IBA launched its 5 year strategy in 2009, the gears shifted suddenly and today, half way down the road, every member of the team can vouch for the fact that it’s been an adrenaline filled journey.

Our successes to date have only highlighted the areas that need improvement. While students, alumni, staff and faculty vouch for the forward movement of the last 4 years, the world outside has yet to recognize the changes that have taken place at IBA.

Building human resource capacity is a long-term process and can only be accomplished if each and every team member is fully on board, take their roles seriously and believe in their contribution to the overall mission of the Institute. All categories of employees at IBA, be they teachers, managers, or support staff, feel the change in pace and have increased their own speed in alignment with IBA’s inspiring ambition of being ranked amongst the Top 100 Business Schools of the world. Management support, in the shape of new and improved systems, technologies, procedures and environment is constantly being developed and improved upon.

“The Secret to Success is Constancy to Purpose” Benjamin Disraeli

However, even as we adapt ourselves to the changes in the workplace, life happens. The bills have to be paid, illnesses and accidents do occur, happy and sad occasions have to be arranged and paid for and demands and responsibilities on all of us keep on increasing. As we juggle with all of this, it is important to remember that the stress created by these demands is actually helping us perform at our peak. A certain level of stress is actually “functional” and makes us more productive. We all know that after a certain critical point, any additional stress can quickly become dysfunctional and start affecting us negatively. It is helpful to take a close look at our habits, attitudes and excuses and try to reflect upon our own role in creating or maintaining our stress levels. The trick to managing excessive stress is the simple realization that we are in control of our lives, not the other way around! While we all have our own ways of coping with life’s challenges, we also know that fundamentally we have just two options: We can either change the Situation or change our Reaction.

The wiser the choice, the easier it becomes for us to deal with the complexities and demands of our myriad responsibilities, without which life’s joy would certainly be diminished.
A Peek Behind the Scenes

Things may look perfect at all the events held at the IBA Karachi but it is a keen eye that tries to peek behind the curtain and marvel at the efforts of the backstage crew of Admin and Maintenance staff. They have labored day in and day out to allocate, coordinate and field limited resources that contribute in the timely execution and success of any IBA event.

Capt. Zaheer identified the ‘Can do, Will do’ attitude of his staff as the secret of harmonious management. This inculcates a feeling of commitment and ownership amongst the team and contributes towards empowering members in the lower echelon of the staff allowing decentralization and standardization. The Registrar’s Office heads four major pillars of IBA administration; including student admissions, award of need based scholarships, general administration, maintenance and security of the two campuses including the Boys’ and Girls’ hostels and the residences in the staff colony. The job is compounded by the need for proper takeover of the newly completed building.

Continuing on event management the Registrar highlighted that there has been an enormous increase in students’ events from the year 2008 to 2011, as can be seen in chart 1. This has directly increased the responsibilities of the administration team that believes in not saying no to anyone.

Delivery of work with a smile is an accomplishment, especially when a diverse group of people are to be dealt with. Shabana Amirali, Mushtaque Ahmed, Ather Rana, Syed Muhammad Rizwan, Syed Fahimuddin, Abdul Karim Modi and Aayatullah comprise of the trustworthy and energetic team that supports Capt. Ahmed Zaheer, to execute duties entrusted upon the Registrar’s Office and to meet the high expectations of their peers. Since the nature of this department is purely service-oriented, a demeanor that exudes confidence under pressure is imperative.

Last minute assignments play a major role, requiring creative juggling. Measurement, timing, compartmentalizing, detailed planning and division of work are essential competencies. They surely know how to work and deliver under pressure and have a shining record of successful events to prove it.

"The Administration Department has evolved to become the nucleus of all activities during the last three years. It is due to the fact that we are the department whose activities span the complete spectrum of IBA’s agenda of providing quality education and training for leadership in business and public sector management.

The pressures we cater to are the expectations of our community and the urge to do better - every time we are appreciated for a job well executed."

Capt. (Retd.) Ahmed Zaheer, Registrar, IBA Karachi

The last three years have witnessed a 100 percent improvement in all events arranged at IBA. This is one reason for the appreciation that top management has for this department’s performance under the committed leadership of Zaheer Sahib - Director HR.
Shake it off and Step Up!

Once a farmer owned an old mule and it fell into a well. After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. So, he called his neighbors together, told them what had happened, and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of misery.

Initially the old mule was hysterical! But as the farmer and his neighbors continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back, a thought struck him. It suddenly dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back, HE WOULD SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP!

This he did, blow after blow. "Shake it off and step up… shake it off and step up… shake it off and step up!" He repeated to encourage himself. No matter how painful the blows or how distressing the situation seemed, the old mule fought panic and just kept right on SHAKING IT OFF AND STEPPING UP!

It wasn't long before the old mule, battered and exhausted, stepped triumphantly over the wall of the well! What seemed like it would bury him actually helped him … all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity.

That's life! If we face our problems and respond to them positively we can make them help us rise to the top and not indulge in panic, bitterness or self-pity under pressure.

2012 - The Year to Show Results

When educational institutions make the commitment to provide quality education, their accreditation status becomes an important factor. The Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi hosted the 7th Council Meeting and Seminar of Deans/Directors (Sindh Region) of National Business Education Accreditation Council (NBEAC) on January 19, 2012.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Hasan Sohaib Murad, Chairman shared that NBEAC strived hard to bring the standards of Pakistan's business schools at par with international standards during the last four years with the support of the Management of these institutions. He termed 2012 the ‘Year to Show Results’ setting an ambitious target of accrediting 30 institutions before Fall 2012.

Dr. Ishrat Husain, Dean and Director of IBA, Karachi was the guest of honor at the seminar. While welcoming the participants he said that accreditation is an important and positive step taken by HEC to uplift and facilitate quality of education in business schools by promoting self regulation and peer-review. He announced that besides international accreditation, IBA would also be applying for accreditation on a national level with NBEAC.
IBA Brand Manual

IBA has earned an image and respect due to its hard work and consistency in providing quality education. It’s an established name for more than five decades now. To ensure that all published material produced by IBA presents a similar look and feel to the outside world, the Communications Department launched IBA's first Brand Identity Manual in February 2012.

This comprehensive document, developed with the help of Argus Advertising, will help streamline all signage, presentations, visiting cards, publications, logos, etc. in a standardized fashion.

This step was very important to ensure that no confusion occurs in our customers’ minds regarding IBA’s brand. This manual is a guide that keeps the institute’s visual identity intact. It includes details of color palettes, best representing IBA and further guides on how to ensure that each piece of collateral looks standardized.

IBA Collaborates with Leading National Universities for Entrepreneurial Education

An MoU Signing Ceremony was held at the City Campus of the Institute of Business Administration (Karachi) on Tuesday, March 6, 2012 to promote entrepreneurial collaboration among reputable universities nationwide.

Zafar Siddiqui, Director, Center for Entrepreneurship (IBA, CED) welcomed the esteemed guests and highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship in Pakistan. He elaborated on the current initiative of the institution in developing the CED at IBA with the support of Babson College.

Dr. Ishrat Husain, Dean and Director, IBA presided over the ceremony and emphasized the importance of this venture. He said, “CED is entering into an agreement with 8 universities to form a consortium which will undertake joint programs with the CED in promoting a culture of entrepreneurship among all stakeholders”. He added, “In Pakistan, the normal tendency is to build barriers and turfs but we at IBA believe in sharing knowledge and resources widely for the larger benefit of the country.”

IBA will be collaborating with these universities for dynamic activities including setting up of incubation centers, industry academia linkage, faculty coordination, sharing of educational material, training and technical support, to name a few.

Partner institutions for this initiative included:

- NED University
- Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture
- Balochistan University of Information Technology Engineering and Management Sciences, Quetta
- GIFT Gujranwala
- Institute of Management Sciences (IMS), Peshawar
- IBA Sukkur
- NUST Business School Islamabad
- UET Lahore

For feedback and suggestions, write to us at thecurrent@iba.edu.pk
New Year Thought for Extra Curricular

The groundbreaking ceremony of UBL Sports Arena was held at the Main Campus on January 3, 2012 to provide IBA students better sports facilities.

The Arena will have first rate facilities for cricket, football, hockey, tennis, volleyball and other games and is expected to be ready within the next 18 months.

“Never test the depth of river with both the feet” [Warren Buffet]

The Man Behind the Wheel

Taking a left from the clear glass door you see a calm face peeking out from a mound of books and paperwork. A man, exuding composure, with a curious facial expression tries to read your face to see if you have any query that needs to be answered.

Putting a hand on the phone’s mouthpiece, Mr. Rashid asks evenly “Is there anything I can do for you?” Such is the first impression of the Transport Incharge of IBA Karachi. Having joined in 1985, Rashid Ali Khan celebrated 27 years of work experience with IBA in February 2012. His major responsibility is to manage the transport system at IBA. From scheduling to the drivers’ concerns; from maintenance of records to the appraisals; he makes sure that every request for transport is attended on time. This is indeed an uphill task which he can’t accomplish without the support of his assistant, popularly known as Rafiq D. The last minute transport requests and time crunches are their spice of life at work.

The job also includes a human touch apart from the technical details. Anger, frustration and often needs of the drivers are to be addressed by this department. Like he rightly mentioned, “giving respect to the drivers is of utmost importance! Once you take care of them, they will be ready to work for you at odd times” and this has been proved true in many instances as IBA can proudly claim that it is the ONLY transport system where drivers come on time despite strikes in the country. Even if the students don’t turn up, the points are still running. It is a huge accomplishment showing the discipline that suits a well-renowned institution like IBA. As Mr. Rashid summarized, “good scheduling and having backups is the key to our success”.

“Good scheduling and having backups is the key to success”
EMBA Department Makes a Move

Executive MBA Program
Since its launch in 2009, the executive MBA program is gaining pace with each passing day. Starting with a modest number, its enrolment surpassed the 370 mark by December 2011. EMBA has arranged exclusive events during the last 3 months. Let’s take a look at its activities:

Mr. Muhammad Siddiq Memon, Secretary of Education, Sindh visits IBA
In the industry, in general and especially in the public sector organizations, there are professionals who are not comfortable with their mathematical skills or language proficiency and therefore shy away from IBA tests.

Most of these executives, having been out of touch with academics are reluctant to sit for entry tests as they consider failure at these tests as a serious reputational risk that will affect their standing among their peers. To overcome this problem and upgrade their competency level, IBA EMBA Department is offering free of charge Refresher Courses in English language and Mathematical skills for the officials of Education Department, Government of Sindh and executives of National Bank of Pakistan. Around 103 officials from the Sindh Government and 50 executives of NBP are currently availing this facility.

To honor this effort, Muhammad Siddiq Memon, Secretary of Education, Sindh graced IBA with his presence at the opening ceremony of this endeavor on January 15, 2012.

“Don’t be discouraged. It’s often the last key in the bunch that opens the lock.”
Anonymous

Book Launch Ceremony at IBA, Karachi
Business students being future leaders need to understand the financial market better to be able to formulate fiscal and economic policies to help the future of Pakistan. Dr. Shakil Faruqi of the Lahore School of Economics has recently written a comprehensive book on this very subject.

To honor his efforts, a Book Launch Ceremony was held at the Institute of Business Administration (Karachi) Main Campus for Volume II of “Financial System and Economic Development -Pakistan”.

While reviewing the book, Mr. Tariq Hussain, former Head of Learning Center, World Bank said, “this book is unique as it tries to create links between academics and field”. He especially identified the chapter about Islamic Finance which covered the topic in a comprehensive and neutral manner.

Dr. Ishrat Husain recommended that these two volumes should be incorporated as text books in the IBA curriculum.
Work Life Pressure at IBA

A survey
To deliver quality and that too on time is a daily pressure of work life. How to deal with it effectively is the challenge. Many people face burnouts while others are not bothered. To see which factors are seen as causes of stress at IBA and how the employees deal with them, the Current team conducted a survey.

Staff and faculty were questioned in 3 major areas:

- **Factors that Cause Pressure at Work** - Expectations scored highest compared to bosses putting pressure, reflecting the conscientiousness of the IBA fraternity.

- **Key component required to keep a balance between life and work** - According to the graph, most employees believe that a two day weekend is very important to them to be able to balance family and work. Hence, majority voted for a Saturday off and although this is a small sample size, it does send a loud and clear message to the decision makers.

- **What helps IBA Employees deal with Work Pressure** - Most employees believe taking a break from work helps them release some stress, however a lesser majority think music is their best friend in times of stress.

Random Sampling: 30 IBA employees  ●  Age: 95% between 28-50 years  ●  Gender: 55% Females 45% Male

IBA Career Fair 2012

Like every year, the IBA Placement Society and the CDC (Career Development Center) organized the ‘IBA Career Fair 2012’. Held on February 22, 2012, the Fair housed stalls of various organizations like Parco, Engro, TRG, Burj Bank, Meezan Bank, Shell, etc. set up by the company representatives to impart information about prospective career opportunities. It gave IBA students a chance to interact with the corporate world and submit their resumes for internship and employment programs or give on spot interviews.

The representatives gave a positive feedback regarding the event and students of IBA. Indus Motors, who conducted on spot interviews, were very satisfied. Khalid Anam Khan, from HR Department of Meezan Bank stated, “IBA students exhibit very good presentation and communication skills but they need to work more on their technological skills.”

The Career Fair yet again, served as a useful platform for the students to make informed career choices.
Considering the fact that our alumni are the strength of the IBA brand, another initiative is taken to allow them to contribute towards the expansion of their alma-mater. The concept of ‘IBA Donor Wall’ was recently introduced by Alumni Affairs and Resource Mobilization Department to engage its alumni as well as to generate funds for the ‘Alumni Student Center’ to be constructed at the Main Campus. The Center would provide an indoor and outdoor sports facility and much more for relaxation and enjoyment of the students.

The distinctive features of the Center are as follows:
- Amphitheatre
- Dining Hall for 90 persons
- Common Area/Lounge
- Indoor Play Area
- Badminton Court
- Gymnasium
- Green Room

By purchasing a brick at the Donor Wall, IBA Alumni would not only be ensuring that their name remains forever on the stately walls of their beloved campus but they would also be showing their commitment to the educational excellence of their University.
A significant number of diverse workshops were held from January to March 2012 at the IBA Center for Executive Education (CEE) such as the workshop on Written Communication, Building Strong Pharma Brands, Finance & Accounting for HR Executives and Transformational Leadership Program (TLP) to name a few.

As part of its Client Specific Program, CEE also worked for State Bank of Pakistan during this phase. National Institute of Banking and Finance (NIBAF), a premier institution of capacity building and a subsidiary of State Bank of Pakistan joined hands with IBA-CEE to offer a 5 day workshop on Verbal and Written Communication Skills for 600 employees of the State Bank of Pakistan. IBA Faculty trained the employees and received feedback from CEE and NIBAF for the refinement of this course. These ongoing trainings will continue for around six months.

Collaboration with the industry is an important aspect of CEE. This year, IBA has entered into an agreement with Pakistan Institute of Corporate Governance (PICG) for conducting a Corporate Governance Leadership Skills (CGLS) Program. Primarily a Directors’ Education Program, the CGLS is a modular series of interactive workshops addressing Chairmen, CEOs, Directors and senior management. The objective is to help the participants understand corporate governance and the value that good governance practices add to an organization. Given this, they can act as ‘agents of change’.

Other activities of CEE include an Indian School of Business delegation visit from January 17 to 19, 2012. H. Ramanathan, Head - Client Relations/Center for Executive Education and Geetha Krishnan, Director, Centre for Executive Education from Indian School of Business visited IBA and exchanged views with IBA staff and faculty for collaboration between the institutions of India and Pakistan.

Besides, Demo Session of a Balanced Scorecard was held on January 28. It was a one-day demonstration which provided understanding of the basic concepts of the balanced scorecard; a planning and management system extensively used by businesses and industries, both locally and internationally, to align business activities to the vision and strategy of the organization. Organizations were invited to nominate one employee for this demo session. Around 30 participants attended the session from different industries.

IBA Center for Executive Education has been diligently contributing to improve quality of manpower through need-based workshops and client specific trainings considering business and professional work requirements in the country.
Institute of Business Administration Karachi

Leadership and Ideas for Tomorrow

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