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REPORT ON ENLIGHTEN YOURSELF TRAINING

A Day Long Training on Social Research and Project Management

Enlighten Yourself: A Day Long Training on Social Research and Project Management

Venue: Nagorik Uddyog, Lalmatia, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Date: 27th November 2015

Time: 9.00AM-5.00 PM

Rapporteur

Zulfa Kamal

Program Facilitators

1. Md. Juwel Rana
- Lecturer, Department of Social Relations
East West University;
Founder and executive director of SAYRID
Managing Editor, South Asian Journal of Social Sciences

2. Shahriar Khandaker
-Lecturer, Department of Social Relations
East West University;
Associate Editor, South Asian Journal of Social Sciences

3. Reza Shahbaz Hadi
-Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Business and Economics
Daffodil International University

4. Abdullah Hasan
PR & Event Management Specialist, CEO,
Media Mix Communication President,
Children Media Forum Bangladesh;
Director, Youth Club of Bangladesh

Date: 02/12/15

A Day Long Training on Social Research and Project Management

Background information

On 27th November 2015, South Asian Youth Research Initiatives for Development (SAYRID) and Youth Club of Bangladesh (YCB) initiated a training workshop on project management and a research skill which was hosted at Nagorik Uddyog (located in Lalmatia, Dhaka 1207, Bangladesh). This workshop was conducted with the help of its sponsors (Bangladesh Today, Youthbd24.com and Radio Vubon) and facilitators. The purpose of this workshop was to train and educate university students, young entrepreneurs and graduates about project management and its core components i.e. communication and research.

Objectives of the workshop

The objective of this workshop was to shed light on the importance of project management, to teach participants the importance of establishing rational judgements and accurate processes of assessment while developing a project through research and evaluation and also, to guide through the stages of writing a convincing project proposal. Moreover, the workshop aimed to be a medium through which university students and graduates could enrich their communication skills, team work skills, interpersonal skills, time management skills and their ability to present their ideas in front of an audience.

Program Outline

Followed by the national anthem, the inauguration ceremony was led by Arefin Rahman Himel (president, YCB) who amicably welcomed the facilitators and participants. After the inauguration ceremony, the facilitators were asked to begin their training program. The facilitators discussed about project management, social science research, writing a project proposal and the importance of effective communication skills and its impact on an individual's personality.

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Stated below are the names of the facilitators followed by a list of the topics they have covered:

Shahriar Khandaker: His presentation held a lot of importance in this event because he introduced the audience to the concept of project management using a detailed PowerPoint presentation. His lecture was successful at explaining the following features of project management:

- The definition of project and project management
- The primary functions of project management
- The purpose of project management
- What factors of a project does project management deal with
- The process through which a project is evaluated
- The three key players of a project
- The core competencies of a project manager
- Hard skills and soft skills of a project manager
- The importance of satisfying stakeholders and keeping track of opponents
- The different stakeholders
- Risk management and SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats)
- Project Management Plan and its components

Md. Juwel Rana: Mr. Rana complimented Mr. Khandaker's lecture as his presentation dealt with social science research and research methodology. He divided the participants into separate groups and provided them with the task of constructing a project management plan. Other than that, his lecture covered the following points:

- The definition of research
- The definition of science, natural science and social science
- The early thinker of sociology (August Comte)
- The principles of research (objectivity, positivism, empiricism & realism)
- How to write a research proposal
- Why do we write research proposals?

- Primary and secondary data

- Definition of research by purpose and research by method

- Research by method: Quantitative research, qualitative research, grounded theory, phenomenology and narrative (described with examples)

- Research by purpose: (basic, applied, evaluation, action and research & development)

- Definition of combined research

- Inductive and deductive method (qualitative and quantitative research)

- The 7 steps involved in conducting a research

- Variables of research

- Ethics of research

- What is theory?

- Difference between reliability and validity

- Measuring social reality

Reza Shahbaz Hadi: Since Mr Hadi was unable to attend the event for unavoidable reasons, Mr. Himel (president, YCB) took his place and guided students with the features of a well-written project proposal. He focused on the following features of Mr. Hadi's presentation:

- Reasons for creating a project proposal

- How to create an attractive and persuasive project proposal

- The steps involved in writing a project proposal

- The importance of using simple vocabulary to cater to stakeholders from diverse backgrounds

- The format of a project proposal

Abdullah Hasan: Towards the end of the training sessions, Mr. Hasan gave an extempore speech on the importance of effective communication in the context of public relations and building social networks. He narrated some of his life chronicles to provide the participants with a better understanding of how he gradually learned to enhance his personality through effective communication with the people around him. Moreover, he explained how effective

communication can prevent prejudices and eliminate preconceived notions that people develop due to being less inquisitive about their society.

Outcome of this program

After the completion of this training session, majority of the participants were clear about the concept of project management and how it is related to communication and research. Furthermore, they could draw a correlation between a good project manager and his/her ability to conduct an effective research and demonstrate leadership qualities through communication. In addition to these lessons, participants learned to question the importance of emotional quotients and intelligence quotients whilst measuring an individual's aptitude. Moreover, participants were seen enthusiastically using terms such as 'hard skills' and 'soft skills' while explaining what they acquired from this training program. Towards the end of the program, the chief guests, program coordinator and facilitators cordially invited the participants to collect their certificate in recognition of their completion of the training program, which could possibly serve as an incentive for further participation in future workshops.

Recommendations

Though the training provided by the facilitators was helpful, it was overwhelming to digest a substantial amount of information within one day. It would be advantageous for both the coordinators and participants if training program schedules were divided into two or three days as it would provide participants with the time to understand the skills they have newly acquired. Followed by that, time management is a key factor of every successful training workshop which was challenging for this event to follow. The facilitators should have been provided with sufficient time to instruct their programs and delegate tasks that could polish the participant's newly learned skills. Since majority of the participants were newly exposed to the concepts of project management, they might have appreciated the topic a bit more if their facilitators didn't have to rush through the last few minutes of their lecture. Lastly, since it is a training program, it would be advisable for the coordinators to provide facilitators with more scope for providing participants with challenging activities that compel them to 'think outside the box' and apply the skills they have attained through the lectures.

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Conclusion

In conclusion to this report, 'Enlighten Yourself' was an overall success because the facilitator's ability to deliver the lectures with valid descriptions, examples and easy to understand bullet points surpassed the limitations faced by the training program (which could be easily tackled if future training programs are based on a two-day schedule).