Transcript of Podcast featuring Aditya Singh

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Vish Gopalakrishnan:

I'm Vish Gopalakrishnan and this is the Manageable Podcast, where we have in-depth conversations with students, faculty, staff, and alumni to give you a comprehensive picture into the life at University at Buffalo's School of Management.

In today's episode, we speak with Aditya Singh, a student in UB's MS in Business Analytics program from Mumbai, India. In our conversation, we talk about his passion for content creation, data analytics, and how the UB MSBA program has fueled his love for the field of data science. Aditya, welcome to the show.

Aditya Singh:

Hey, Vish, thanks for having me.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

I'm sure this is going to be an exciting conversation, so I'm looking forward to it. We learned something interesting about you in our research for this podcast. You come from a naval family and have spent a majority of your life on or near naval military bases?

Aditya Singh:

Correct. Yes.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Tell us, how has growing up in a military environment shaped you as a person? Starting with the heavy hitters?

Aditya Singh:

Yeah, that's a tough one, actually. Being from Naval background has impacted my life a lot, but seeing the things that I actually count on every day is the discipline, I guess, because I remember this part where I came last year in August to UB, and there was this time where I used to wake up at 5:30 AM for

no reason whatsoever. There were no classes in the morning. There was nothing to do, but I just woke up and there was no alarm to wake me up. It's just the biological clock in my head just keeps waking me up at that time, and I just, I'm awake. I look around my room. I have nothing to do. I just lie on the bed. That was something that I took forward in my life, that discipline of waking up at time and keeping your environments tidy, keeping yourself neat, clean, sharp. It stuck with me throughout my life. So yeah, keeping yourself tidy and being disciplined, being on time, never being late, two major things that I kept with myself forever.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Yeah, I think most people underestimate the importance of living a regimented and structured life. I know I've definitely struggled with keeping a routine and managing my time, especially as you. So what advice do you have for people on becoming better at managing yourself and managing your time?

Aditya Singh:

Ooh, one thing I would say is a lot of this doesn't come from within. I have changed my life to adapt some tools into my life that actually help me maintain this. I use Google Calendar. I schedule everything in my week in that calendar, and I keep it like that, and I feel like it's a very underrated quality of a person. If you schedule everything on your calendar, not just when you're working, even when you're in school, because when you work, everything is on a calendar, all your calls and meetings and everything.

But then right now, even your small task, you want to go out with someone, you want to watch a movie, you want to maybe do grocery shopping, put everything down on a calendar, and it just helps you plan through it. Get the most efficient day out of your week, week in, week out. Every day will be very nice. And yeah, that's it. Just make your calendar. It'll change your life, honestly. It'll make you very disciplined. You'll not forget to do things because you'll start setting up reminders on that same calendar. So it just helps you. And when you rarely forget something that you have to do, I don't know, it just gets better.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

I think calendarizing things definitely helped, especially as a student when you have so many different deliverables and so many different classes that you have to take care of. I'm sure discipline helps when it comes to the student life. You did your undergrad in computer science. Let's talk about that a little bit here. Tell me, how did you discover your love for computers? Why computer science?

Aditya Singh:

It's a very good question, honestly, because computer science wasn't just a random throw of a dice for me. It was expected out of me from everyone, my parents, my friends, my... Everybody in my life. They knew that this kid is going to take computer science and why? That is the question. So I'll just share a personal story from my life, how it goes back, and it just brings me to choosing computer science. I think I remember getting a computer myself when I was in second grade or something, and that was not meant for me because I was too young. I have a sister who is seven years elder to me, and she was the one who was supposed to learn and work through it and everything. But the thing is she wasn't so much interested as me. I was like, the forbidden fruit is mine.

So that computer, I just put my hands on it whenever I got the chance, and while I did that, I broke the computer many times. My dad had to call a technician to get it repaired, and I never left the room when they were repairing the room. So they repair the computer. When that things, those events unfolded, my love for computer, breaking it down, the hardware, the chip set, the hard desk, every component, and then the software part. It just grew. And it grew on me. I started doing it for myself. Then I remember by the time I was in sixth grade, my relatives and my family friend used to call me and they were like, we need Aditya to help us repair this thing on my computer.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

So you become the tech support for the family.

Aditya Singh:

Yeah. The unofficial tech support, and also when later in life I became the tech guru, the gadget guru, gadget guy who suggests gadgets to every friend. They'll ask me, "What laptop should I buy under one lakh? What phone should I buy under 50,000 and which headphones should I buy?" I'm crazy freak of headphones. I have a lot of headphones. I have 12 headphones in my room right now. More than 12, honestly. All kinds of headphones. That is the part of my life, which I just grew on and on, and eventually I ended up playing computer science and in my engineering, and it was no coincidence. It just happened. It was a part of my life, and it became a choice later on. So yeah, I think that's what I took.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Right. It's interesting that the passion was almost always there, and it started with just a laptop and then it has grown into something so much bigger. But you didn't just stop at computer science. You actively participated in a number of workshops and hackathons during your undergraduate that focused on coding and development, and eventually made the switch to data science. For those of us who don't know much about this field, what is data science in general, and more specifically, how is it different than computer science?

Aditya Singh:

I think this question needs to be answered for people who are choosing their masters while they're applying for US. So if you'd understand very well what the actual difference between computer science and data science is, I think that's a much better way to choose your master instead of not knowing what data science is. So I would describe data science, what I'm currently doing in business analytics as a field, which involves data. As simple as that, extraction of data, analysis of data, interpretation of data. We use large data sets and lots of techniques to make sense out of it. We have stat, statistics, machine learning, and data visualization. We take those data sets and make something meaningful out of it.

So majority of data science field involves just this, and we uncover patterns, insights from data, and a business analyst, which we are trying to become out of this degree, is someone who reads all of that and helps the stakeholders make a decision. So you see how different it is from computer science, which is a broader field, which has everything like game development, web development. You are probably a software development engineer and you're building computer applications. And then, yeah, that's a broader term of the computers and data science is a very focused towards the data part of it. So yeah, that's a difference, and there is some overlap, but then there is a huge difference as well. That's why there are multiple degrees to pursue and choose from.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

So it's interesting to see that, you described data sciences in such simple terms. It's essentially just the gathering of data, interpretation of data so that stakeholders can make decisions. It sounds so much easier, but what we know that it's not that easy. It's easier said than... So we know about your passion for computer sets and how that originated. How did you discover your interest in the field of data science, but when did you decide to make the pivot or what was it that triggered that, okay, data science is the niche field that I want to make the next moves in my professional career.

Aditya Singh:

When I heard your previous question, I actually wanted to answer this one because that was a part of the previous question where you asked me how I made the pivot for the switch. Yes, as you already mentioned that I did my undergrad on computer science and then I went on to become an SDE. I was not a data guy when I started my career.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

For those of us who don't understand, what's an SDE?

Aditya Singh:

It's a software development engineer. It's a term for people who involve themselves with a lot of development. It could be anything. I was a web developer, so I just explained to you computer science. So if a computer science person goes out to become a software development engineer, he or she could be doing many, many, many things. So yeah, that's a very broad way to describe it. But I was an SDE. I was chosen for my website development skills, and I did exactly that for the start of my career, beginning of my career. I was not a data guy at all. I was far from it. I didn't see data. I didn't see a commercial data set. So the pivot happened like this. I started my career as a SDE, and in that SDE, I was an automation engineer after, just after the web development part. In the beginning, for the first three months I think I worked on web development, a full stack web developer where I built an entire web portal to facilitate MWM.

It is maintenance window management for a client, and it got deployed. So it took a lot of time for getting approvals and everything, but after a year and a half, it did get deployed, which was my first project in my company. And then right after, I was picked in a automation team where I worked on Python partial shell scripting and everything. So I used to write scripts to automate infrastructure for clients, and I used to use UI path as well within our PI tool. So this went pretty well for a year and a half. And then I remember that we didn't have a lot of tasks one week, and I was the kind of person who was like, "Give me work. Give me work." I want something to do. I didn't want to come to work and do nothing, just to just sit around or something.

I used to keep myself occupied anyways, but then I felt like this time was precious and I went to my manager and I said that, "Is there anywhere else that I could work? Can you help me out? Because for the last two weeks I haven't been seeing much work and whatever work comes, it just gets done very

quickly." So what my manager did was he talked to another manager and they sent me to a Tableau team. So it was like a database, data analytics team. I joined that team, so data analytics team, and they said that, "We have to build 64 dashboards. You are going to be part of us and you're going to deliver these dashboards." I'm like, "Yep.". It's an ad hoc task for me because I didn't leave my previous team, but I did join this team for unloading that task and I quickly had to learn Tableau like snap, snap, snap. Learn Tableau, go, go, go, go, go.

So this is really quick, and that's how my turn from being an SD to data analyst happened. From that point onwards, I started using Confluence. I used Amazon Redshift for data warehousing. I used Tableau to quickly make dashboards and load the data. So yeah, that's the switch. That's the pivot. That's the moment. I just went to my manager and I asked him, "Can I get some work?" He said, "Yes", eventually, and he let me go to some other team. He knew that I was not comfortable with not working and not having tasks in my hand. A lot of people might be in this situation, they'll be like, they'll be enjoying, they'll be going to their families, going to get some personal stuff done. But I was like fresher, a young, hot-blooded, fresher who really wanted stuff to do. So I got into the team like that, and that's the quirky story of how I made the pivot to data science, and since then it's just been on and on and on. It just keeps growing. I worked for four years and then I'm here. Our time is here.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Great. That's such an interesting way to find your professional path, asking to get more work outside of your expertise in that sense, and then just kind of discovering that, oh, this new thing, dashboards, data is something that I'm interested in. I'm sure a lot of people discover their passion that way and a lot of our listeners can relate to. Let's move on to UB and how you ended up in Buffalo. So you are working, right? You're doing Tableau, you're making database, you're doing all of that work?

Aditya Singh:

Yup. Everything. Yes.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

When you were looking at graduate programs, how did you decide that an MS in Business Analytics was the way forward and why make the move from data science to business analytics? Are they different? Are they same? Walk us through that decision process a little bit.

Aditya Singh:

Yeah. When you ask this question, I think you are referring to the part where a student makes a decision that I want to do MS in a foreign country, I want to pursue my master's degree, right?

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Yeah. That would be the first step. Yeah.

Aditya Singh:

Yeah, that's the first step. You think of a country, you think of a degree type at the same time, the most common one is CS, which everyone knows that everyone can do, but then why business analytics, right? There are so many options, data science, CS, MIS, so many options. Then why business analytics? Yeah. I have asked myself many times the same question, "Did I make the right decision? Was this the right for my decision for my career? Is this the right degree?" And I'm going to say yes. I'll tell you why I made the decision because I was already into data analytics, as I told you during my work, and I needed a little bit of a background that solidifies myself as a analyst or a data guy, data person. So choosing business analytics was the way to go because as you see, my entire profile is pure technical like CS undergrad and then STE, and then data analyst. Pure technical, pure technic...

If I ever were to apply for a business, like a managerial position, they would take my credibility. I don't have any acumen, business acumen or a managerial acumen, nothing. No, nada. Nothing on my resume, nothing. So instead of choosing data science, which would've been the obvious way to grow myself on the path that I had already set on, I chose business analytics so I can maybe get a few managerial subjects where you are doing the same thing as me. We share a class as well at the moment. We share digital marketing analytics, right?

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Right.

Aditya Singh:

So yeah, you are in an MBA course. You have such courses, which give you the credibility to probably apply for a lead role or management role, like a junior manager or something, right? If I wanted to join those things, do you think I had anything before MSBA at UB to say that? No, I did not. So I wanted to do

MSBA instead of data science, just so I could get those few subjects on my resume to make my myself look credible.

I have the background, I need this, this is the next step for me. This is the part where I grow; the leadership, the managerial skills. On top of that, also, I would say MSBA, DS, they just are mixed. I would just say that MBA and data analytics or DS come together to form MSBA. So I thought a mix would've been a better option for me. Even MIS would've been a good degree because I'll be honest, when you ask me this question, the answer to this is that half of my admits are MIS, and half of my admits are MSBA. So I really wanted that managerial background to maybe go, at some point of my life, maybe go higher and maybe like VP then-

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Right. Go beyond the data analyst role and get into the decision making aspect of things. That's a great point that you bring in that MSBA is like a combination of an MBA wherein it brings in the managerial aspect, the negotiation aspect, the leadership aspect, managing teams and people, and marries that with the technical, which is the MS MIS aspect of... Or the data science aspect of number... To put it very, very simply in number crunching. So you've decided that you want to do MSBA, right? And you are looking at programs internationally. So United States, obviously for a lot of students, especially students from India becomes an automatic choice. But graduate school is a big commitment and students often have a very long list of considerations and requirements of what they're looking for in the ideal program. You've already mentioned one, which is that it needed to have enough technical, but also needed to have enough managerial things in it, right, in order to be a good degree. What were some other criteria that you used when choosing a graduate program with a focus in business analytics?

Aditya Singh:

When I wanted to make a list of colleges that I wanted to apply to, university that I wanted to go to, my target list, we have this thing, I don't know, I think everyone has this where you apply for two dream schools, three average schools, and safe schools. So we all do that, right?

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Yeah. Plan A, plan B, plan C.

Aditya Singh:

Yes, sir. Absolutely. So when you are in that phase, you have to decide what schools you think you want to go to, and I was lucky enough to get all admits. I applied to nine universities and I got all admits, not a single reject, which is a itch in my mind, but then it is what it is. I am past that. I've already taken my next step and I'm here sitting in front of you.

So yeah, I'm past that. But choosing UB among all my other admits is mainly because of the curriculum that I saw. Because when I chose UB as a place where I could be, as I told you that I had this 50-50 chance of going for an MIS degree or an MSBA degree, I came, I look at the curriculum for both degrees and personally. For my growth, I felt like MSBA was the right option because of the... There's this thing we have, it's called Flexco... No, Flexco is the other one. It's like industry experience courses. It's like finance courses and then supply chain course, and then we have healthcare, we have people analytics. We have a lot of courses that give you an insight into that industry. And I personally working for so many clients back home when I used to have a job, I used to feel like I lacked that.

So this was a very major point for me to choose UB where I could pick such courses which tell me about the field. So I can make a resume that says that I am a financial analyst. I am a supply chain analyst. I am a marketing analyst. So yeah, the class we share, if I take that class, the information that we get from Chuck isn't something that I can get outside without experience and not from technical subjects. That's far from it.

So you see, those are the kind of courses that make me choose UB, MSB at UB, and yeah, that was the first, that basically is curriculum. The point is curriculum. Then also, the ranking is pretty good. We are a school of management is a pretty well ranked school, and you might notice that our duration is very unique. We only have a learn month program. For a person who's already in the field and who just wants to upgrade their themselves and their careers, I feel like this is the right way. This is how you do it.

You don't want to stay the degree for two and a half years because I I have an admit from Northeastern MIS, which takes two and a half years to get out of. And 11 months, two and a half year. Big difference, right? Big difference. You don't want to be stuck into loans, into debts and not working for so long. I just felt like duration was a very important thing. We have good industry connections and alumni network, which is very nice. Also, the faculty here are amazing, which I did a lot of research on on my [inaudible 00:21:14] before choosing UB. So these are a few things that I used, I looked into when it comes to choosing my university. I did the same research for other universities as well, and while making a decision, this seemed perfect for me. So I'm here.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

That's a very well-thought-out plan of action. And I liked what you said about the duration of the program being just the ideal one, especially for someone with work experience. Because you're right. As someone who has 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 years of work experience, you don't want to take a break for a very long time and obviously eat into your earning years, where you could be making money and just so that you could get a degree. So that's definitely a great positive. Now since we're talking about the course and the structure of the course and the course load, the MS in business analytics program at UB is known for its intense course load, right?

Aditya Singh:

It is. Absolutely.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

And focused outputs. Would you mind walking us through what happens during the duration of the program? So you've decided to come here, you arrive at the university. Walk us through what happens in the program over the course of the two semesters.

Aditya Singh:

Oh you are taking me back to August. That's when we started. Yeah. So yeah, the day I walked into, we had orientation, and then right after orientation, we had this huge rush to choose courses, pick courses, and that was one of the most stressful part of your semesters, when you have to pick your courses, pick your path because it's not as simple as it seems because there's a lot of complications involved when you're choosing courses; the number of seats, the timings, the clashes, and then your interest obviously. So the program structure for an average student, for a general theory for a student is this way. So you have to take elective subjects, which are one of them is that, I don't know the name, I forgot what the name is, but it's related to field. You have to either choose digital marketing, supply chain, finance, healthcare. One of them has to be there on your transcript. It has to be there. So that is one thing.

And the second thing is Flexco analytics, which I know perfectly, I remember perfectly off the top of my head because I am going through it right now. It's one of the most rigorous things that I've been through. And those three subjects are, the courses are model managerial process, predictive analytics, and prescriptive analytics. So any student who shows up at UB for MSBA has to go two of those three subjects and a domain based coursework. So they could pick their field as a supply chain analytics. They could pick their field as a finance modeling. There are many courses in that healthcare and then digital

marketing analytics. And there are a lot of courses. So one of that is compulsory. You have to choose. So make your mind, see where you're interested. If not, come here, talk to the faculty and professors will help you out for sure.

And the other two are coming from model managerial, predictive and prescriptive analytics. So this is the most common thing that everyone has to go through. Apart from that, you have a lot of courses, which are three core courses we have in the fall semester, which is [inaudible 00:24:24], DBMS, and spreadsheets programming. So these are the three common courses, which means this is something that any student who's listening to this podcast will go through for sure. And this is how it looks like. The first semester for me was the three core subject that I just mentioned. Then I had quantitative methods in finance, which was also a mandatory field-based course. One of them. And then fifth one also was mandatory because I took predictive analytics, which is out of those three things that I mentioned.

Well yeah, this is how our coursework looks like. We had five courses, it's not going to be the same next year. I think I did an interview with Dominic and it's all on the YouTube and the structure is changing. It's going to be two plus four plus four, we had five plus five. They're going to have it differently, which is amazing. We all are loving it. Batch that is coming next will be so lucky to go through two plus four plus four because is this going to be the best experience ever? Because we did five and five courses in both the semesters and it was kind of hectic, but still doable because as you see, I am sitting in front of you and somehow I've made through and there are only... There's not much time left for the course. Yeah. There are much time left for the course to go by.

So there I'm doing it, but then it's just way better because when the load reduces, you get more time to personally evaluate yourself and improve yourself as a person, as a professional, so I feel like that is critical. And the batch that is going to come after our batch is very lucky. They are going to enjoy this course and the question started with the workload and the rigorousness of our MSBA, I think that's going to reduce. It's still a pretty hectic course, which is going to make the best version of you possible if you go through it with all your heart. But it's going to get better. For sure. For sure. You're going to love it. Yeah.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

It's important to note that the MSBA program is evolving and it is evolving because the industry requirements keep changing and what the industry wants from professionals who are graduating is... The demand is high and the program is being evaluated constantly. I know Professor Dominic spends a lot of time talking with other professors and industry professionals and trying to figure out where is the

gap that the university can address through coursework. So that's wonderful. Now, since we're talking so much about coursework and classes, you've done one semester, you're almost done with your last semester in the program, graduating soon. I'm sure you have a favorite class and a favorite professor and many of them. But if I asked you to choose your absolute favorite experience in the program, what would it be and why?

Aditya Singh:

Oh, Vish. You had to go there. Huh? Picking favorites. I just remembered this, referencing the same interview that I had with Dominic, I asked him to pick favorite between I think the World Cup final match. And he was like, "I'm a faculty at School of Management. I can't pick favorites. I'm going alienate half a few if I do that." So he can't do that, but I can, so I'm going to choose something. So I would say I enjoyed my DBMS class with Professor Arman. That was a good class. And the most rigorous coursework that I have ever done in my life is model managerial process, which I'm going through right now. Even though it takes my sleeps away, I have no weekends. I have no weekend. I give my Sunday dedicated to the assignment. The entire day. But I just feel like once you are through that, you'll be unstoppable in the workforce. If you are through that, if you work hard in that course, you'll be unstoppable.

The course is about data modeling and it's from Excel. You might take it lightly because it's Excel, but the first assignment completely stumped all of us. We were all lost. What is this? What do we have to do? And it is very rigorous, but I feel like this is the part where you learn. I need these kind of courses in my life. Not all of them, but one of them is fine for a semester. And this is where I'm learning. I love it. I love it. Through Excel, I'm making data models and every time I complete an assignment, every time I work through something, I just feel like I have improved as a data professional. So they are two things that I like and every interaction that I have with my MS practicum mentor, Dominic, I enjoyed. These are few things that I really liked about my program, and those are my just personal choices.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Those are great choices. Having taken model managerial processes or as most students call it, database modeling class, yeah, I agree. That is one of the most intense courses, but it's also one of the most rewarding in the sense that you spend six hours on an assignment, but once you're done with it and you've achieved something, you get a decent score on it, you feel like you've achieved something great. So completely understand what you mean by that. But it's an intense course. There's tons of heavy classes.

A lot of students do things outside of class, so they would participate in clubs or take leadership positions in organizations. But some students have the added challenge of working while in school, which adds 10 hours or 20 hours of workload outside of coursework. You have had multiple on-campus jobs while in the MSBA program. Tell us how you balanced work, school, and life outside of classes. How does one do that?

Aditya Singh:

So yeah, I do have multiple on-campus jobs. I've been very lucky to say that on this podcast, to have one on-campus job is not like, you can't just sit around and get that job automatically. Even to get a job like CDS, you have to be minimally aware of what's happening around you and also be proactive. When you see an opportunity, you must take action right away. So on-campus jobs, if you have it, anybody in my batch who's studying at UB right now, if they have it, kudos, you've done very well. You've landed a job and it helps with your rent and your other expenses. It's a good thing. But then to manage this with your studies, it's a different ballgame. Because to study and work together is actually pretty much more intense than you might think because... You remember back in few minutes ago, 10, 15 minutes, I just talked about my organizational skill with the calendar app and everything? That's where my shifts are. That's where my classes are. That's where my reminders are.

And without that tool, I might have walked in late into my shift, maybe forgotten about my shift because of how intensive it gets through the course. And to manage both of them, I'll just talk about the first job that I've had for the longest time. I've had this job since September till today. So it is the CDS campus dining job. I think it's the number one, the most popular on-campus job that everybody seeks and gets. So it is very flexible. They have been employing students for quite a while and they know how to deal with our curriculums, our exams, and everything. So if you do end up getting an on-campus job with CDS, your manager will understand when you have extra classes, when you have projects to take care of, and you might have to drop a shift where you might show up late, maybe just your timings.

They are very flexible with students. That's like one of the biggest points of working with CDS. You need an on-campus job experience like CDS to be able to work your MSBA and your on-campus job together. Now, when it comes to international students working an on-campus job, you might know that we have a limit of 20 hours and you can't go beyond that. Legally, you can't. You shouldn't do that anyways. Don't even think about it. But the thing that we need to talk about is how many hours do you think I

finished on an average. I've been doing it for a while now. I must have some idea with the MSBA course, how many hours can I put into work? And spoiler alert, it's not 20. I have never had 20 hours. It's not that I have enough time to just give myself to work or pick up as many shifts as possible and just keep working. Does not happen.

I think personally, I would say an average of 12 hours is a very fair figure how much I worked. Sometimes since it's flexible, you can pick up shifts and make your hours longer. If you feel like this week you don't have enough, you don't have a lot of things to work on, you can just pick an extra shift of four hours and just get some extra hours in and a little bit of extra money that that'll help you again, with your rent or your groceries and your lifestyle. But to balances is what I'm talking about. So you get the point that you are the one deciding whether you want to go into a shift, whether you want to drop it, whether you want to transfer it to a student, so that all coming together helps you take care of your studies and your work at the same time.

Some students have an exam, some students don't, so they'll happily pick your shift when you have an exam. That's how you maintain your on-campus job and study balanced. And yeah, if you do CDS, that's good. And then my second job is I have an assistantship under Professor Arman Falahati, who's also a clinical assistant professor at School of Management and he teaches DBMS, cybersecurity, and digital forensic. So he has three sections right now. I work with him as well. I think I get an average of 5 to 10 hours of work every week in my assistantship, and I've been managing that with my work. But the thing is, the flexibility comes from the professor because Arman is super chill and super nice. He will understand everything even before you say it. I have an exam, he knows. He knows that I might not be able to come, might not be able to contribute this week, which just happened a couple of weeks ago because I had my midterms and I was supposed to go and invigilate an examination for cybersecurity.

He understood. He knows that I have an exam, might not be able to come. I might want to give my hours to my preparation for my midterms. And apart from that, every piece of work that I get, my professor makes sure that it's remote. I can do it remotely. I don't have to stick around at the university, I can just do it at my own terms. I can do it at 2:00 AM, 4:00 AM, whenever I'm awake, whenever I have free time, I can work on it. So that amount of flexibility is something that helps me take care of these two jobs at the same time with my rigorous studying right at the MSBA.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Yeah. So what I'm hearing is the professors and the jobs that are available on campus, your managers would understand that you are students first and you will have exams and assignments and things like

that. So there's a in-built flexibility into the job component, but it is absolutely up to the student if you are deciding to have an on-campus job, especially if you're international, make sure you don't go beyond the 20 hours limit. But more than that, also manage yourself and manage your time well, use a calendar tool if necessary. But work in school aren't the only things that you've been busy with. And you've mentioned this in this podcast a few times, you've had conversations with Dominic, for example. You have a passion for content creation, especially educational content. Tell us a bit more about your plans as a content creator. I know you have a YouTube channel and I've seen some of the videos that you've put out before. What are your plans as a content creator?

Aditya Singh:

I would say, when I came from my home country to UB, I really wanted to shoot videos like a day in the life of a UB student or Walmart experience. What kind of products to bring from India, back home. So this is the kind of content that I really want to focus on. It's just that I haven't had the time to shoot and edit those videos. You might already know that editing is such a pain. You might be able to get that content on your camera, but then going through the editing process, the creative part of that, is... If you are... That's one thing to edit a video, that the level of the patience that you need to get through that. But if you are a procrastinator and a perfectionist at the same time, that's like a dangerous mix. You just take forever to put out a video.

So that's hampering my current content output, I would say, for my channel. But then I really wanted to help students who are planning to come to US for their studies and help them make decisions and answer questions in a very transparent way. I want to make content that every minute of that content is useful to the students out there. If you watch any of my videos, whatever I'm going to create in future, whatever I've created before, it should help. It should give you the knowledge to either hold a conversation or maybe even use it in your own life. If you have a visa interview... One of the videos that I posted was on my Visa interview experience. Not only did I talk about my experience, which helps you with reducing your anxiety if you have upcoming visa interview, but also I shared tips.

This is what I saw, this is what I did, this is what you shouldn't do. So I made that video. I think 17,000 views is standing at right now. I just checked. I don't check it very often, but I check it recently and it's nice that people are seeing you. People are appreciating such content and this is what I want to continue doing. On my channel, there will be videos about careers, tech, and lifestyle, studying, everything, education. So to add value to someone's life is what I want to do. And yeah, that's what I'm doing with myself.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

I think that's such a wonderful way to look at it, that content that you create has to be something that every minute of it has to be helpful to students, especially those who are looking to coming to the United States. Conversations like these also help a lot. Our podcast does reach a lot of students, especially those who are interested in UB obviously. So let's talk about that. If you had to select and recommend three must-do activities or experiences for students considering UB for an MS in business analytics program, what would you suggest?

Aditya Singh:

Three activities must-do for students. Are you talking about activities that when they come here and they should do it?

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Right. I think let's focus on once a student comes here and they want to get the maximum out of their business analytics degree, what are some of the things that they could do? It doesn't have to be three, but what are some of the things that you think students should definitely do to enhance their experience here?

Aditya Singh:

Yeah, so let me just rephrase your question in a way that I want to answer it. It's like when a student shows up at UB, now this is their path, they have to go through it. What are my recommendations from my experience that they should be doing? They should add to their path. It'll just make their experience way better when they come to UB. I think that's your question, right?

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Right. Perfect. I couldn't have put it better myself.

Aditya Singh:

So yeah, I get it. I get it. This is a very experience heavy question which I have to add on to for people. So we discussed about on-campus jobs, you remember? So I think getting an on-campus job, it changes you. It is very nice to have studies and work together and managing both of them. Don't think of this experience like of a getaway or something. Just think of it this one year, I don't know how long it's your course is going to be, as something that will transform you and you have to add elements to your experience that add on to that transformation. So if I had just studied my entire semester, from the day I came until today, I would say it wouldn't be the same without the jobs that I'm holding right now. Because managing them, working through those jobs, working at the same time, it is something that I think is very beneficial for me as a person.

It has enhanced my personal growth and the sense of professionalism that comes while working into such industry like campus dining is a job where you work into stations where you deal with a lot of customers. It's a client facing situation where you have to deal with a lot of customers that come, they talk to you, and you have to provide services of certain kinds. And if I had not taken that job, I have done front desk for three months nonstop, I think I wouldn't be at the same level of... A lot of my skills have improved. I can guarantee you. Personally, I have felt the growth working into my jobs. So first step, get an on-campus job, be aware, be proactive, talk to your alumnus, which is one of them will be me, and find many people. Get more information on what you can do.

And then first thing is obviously getting an on-campus job. You might or might not need the extra money, but still take it for the experience. That's my suggestion. Do see if you can handle it, take it, good for you. Then the second thing would be, I would say the second thing could be revolving around your courses. Choose your courses properly, have this feel of everything before you come. Try to see, because see our curriculum is posted on our websites. You can access it any time and it's not something that suddenly it's upside down. It doesn't change very, very easily. So when you go through that curriculum, see what subjects you need to choose. So get into that headset where you are chiseling your brain to get the most out of this curriculum because you should know what your interests are. You should not end up picking a subject that you're like, "Ah, I shouldn't have taken this. Oh, did not work out."

The 'I'm just doing this for formality'. Don't do that. Make every choice count. You're paying a lot of money to come to study two years. Not just UB, any university. It takes a lot of money to come here. So why not just give your best while choosing courses so you make the most out of it. So that's my second thing. Choose your curriculum. Choose your path. Choose your courses according to what your interests

are. These are two things and I don't know, go out. Go have fun when you do get time. Third, the third thing is it's not all about just making yourself the best [inaudible 00:44:00]. It is there. It is a part of your journey here. But then the times you get, which are the weekends and sometimes weekdays too, you never know what days are free for you. Do go out, enjoy with your friends, go see the Niagara Falls. Obviously, Vish you must have seen how beautiful it is and-

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Oh yeah.

Aditya Singh:

It is majestic. I went there. Go out travel, meet, experience new things, explore, explore, explore, explore. Please go check out all the facilities that your university has to offer. There is so much to do there. Have you seen Level Up? How crazy it is. The rig, the gaming rigs over there, the PlayStation, Xbox. That's a very good stress busting activity. Grab some of your friends. Just go, enjoy. You have a lot of activities on campus that you can look into. So my third tip would be to look everything on campus.

Check out all the libraries, Silverman, Lockwood, everything. And there facilities that they provide and also, student union. Be very like... Yeah, this is the best thing that I can tell, because always be close to student union, student association, student union. Because you never know what's going to happen. Especially, I remember when I came as a new student, like everyone else is going to come. I came on August 29th, that was my orientation first day at the university. And then throughout September, which was my first month at this university, every day there is something interesting happening at SU. You might agree with me, Vish. You have been to SU many times yourself, right? There is something going on. Every day there is something new going on.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Like there's-

Aditya Singh:

Please make it a habit. Yeah,

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

There's almost always a dance party or a club activity that's taking place. There's always some kind of activation happening. University puts a lot of things... There's a few big events that the university puts every semester. I think at the end of winter they have something, I'm forgetting the name now, it's called... It's essentially volleyball tournament where everybody comes together. It's mud volleyball. So they have this huge crowd that is just filled with water and mud and everybody just gets in and their teams and everybody can compete in mud volleyball. So that's a interesting thing that happens at the end of spring semester.

Fall semester, you're right. In September there's concerts. There's usually local artists, but there's also some bands that come and play and there's DJ night. So yeah, have a well-rounded experience is essentially what I'm getting from your answer. Now you've made a concerted effort to have a well well-rounded experience here at UB but all journeys come to an end. As someone who is in the midst of applying for full-time positions, what resources does UB offer to you to equip you with the tools you need for a successful job search?

Aditya Singh:

Oh, I was hoping you didn't ask me this question. I hate talking about this experience coming to an end. Please, please don't talk about it. I love being at UB. This is such a nice experience. Hey, I understand going into the real world and getting a job and making money for yourself and getting a life, but then this is so nice. I love academia and I wish I could stay forever. I don't know. Witnessing my love for academia, my professor, program director, Dominic, he suggested me, your PhDs, do PhD, stay for four more years. Have a good time at UB. So you tell the... I hope it shows you that I'm having a very good time here at UB and I enjoy every bit of it. My well-rounded experience is it is something that I look forward to every day when I wake up and get out of my bed and it is coming to and end, you are not wrong.

It is coming to an end. It's not too far out that I'll be out of here and working as a professional once again. But while that transition happens, there are a few things that really help a student get there, which is I think the CRC, Career Resource Center, that is just amazing. We have a lot of individuals

working towards your success. They are doing everything. You can set up an appointment with them. You can get your resume review, like they will do it for you. They will do it along with you. You can get an appointment, you can talk about your resume, you can talk about your job strategies, you can talk about negotiations, job negotiation. You can talk about it like if you have an emergency, just walk in, talk, whatever it is. You might not even have to get a appointment if it's an emergency.

So yeah, the CRC is the one stop solution for all your career transition needs. And I've heard a lot about CRC. They do god's work over there. They help students get into their careers and get their job offers and they essentially help you put your best foot forward with the resume, with the workshops. They have something called Focus Fridays where we discussed some topics where we discussed something that's going to help you in your job search. And then there is another part of it where alumnis come over a video call and they answer questions from students and they share their own experience, which helps us make that experience. So the CRC coming together is a very good thing. Also talking about MSBA, we have this thing called MS Practicum, which is a culmination of all the learning that you have had throughout the course.

You build a project, you deliver that project, and you get out of here. So that is 1.5 credits and you work on a project that helps you convey your skills to the recruiter. So that is another thing that you should be looking forward to, MS Practicum. Whatever you learned in this degree, everything's going to culminate and come in the form of your hard work and your learnings come down to a project. So that is your MS practicum that's going to help you show the recruiter your skills, what you've learned in this degree. And yeah, CRC, MS Practicum, your professors. Professors are amazing.

Vish, how many of our professors are coming from corporate background? They have experience in the field and then they come to teach. So I would suggest just go and talk to professors, find your field that you're interested in. If I wanted to be a digital marketing analyst, I'll go and talk to Chuck all the time. "Help me out with my resume, help me out with the skills. Give me a mock interview." And they are there to support you. If they have the time, they will find a block for you and they'll help you out with anything. It's not just the studies that they're trying to help you with. They want you to succeed. Everybody at School of Management wants you to succeed. So there are plenty of resources that just come together and give you all the edge that you need to get ahead of the competition. So yeah.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

I think the thing that you said about professors and leveraging the connections that they have, a lot of them have industry experience. A lot of them actually still consult industry on a number of important

subjects. So definitely picking their brains just in terms of what the landscape looks like and what type of companies are looking for the skill sets that you bring to the table is definitely an important conversation. Now we could continue to talk for hours just about your experience alone. I'm sure there's a lot of wonderful advice and insights that you've shared with us and with our listeners. So let me just jump to the final question that I have for this podcast. What advice would you give to our listeners who are thinking about applying to UB's MSBA program, who haven't yet made that decision, who are just thinking about applying to the program? What's the advice that you would have for them?

Aditya Singh:

My advice would be to take the leap, take the job. This is a very good place. This is a nurturing place. This is a place where you can grow. And if you're on the fence about choosing UB with your other admits, I also was in your position at one point where I had nine admits and I had to choose from them and I chose UB, for good reason. And it's like before making a decision, you never know if you're making the right decision, right? Because you have not been through that decision. You're not been through that scenario. So if you go through the scenario which I have now, and then ask myself, did I make the right choice? The answer is yes. I feel like I made the perfect decision among all my admits, then my choice, and then me coming here and then making the most of my experience.

I wouldn't ever know what other admits and what other opportunities I could have had, but then what I have here is as close to ideal as possible, personally for me. So I've done pretty well and if I can do it, you can do it for sure. You can do it. I never came here with a expectation that everything has to go right because just because I'm here, Obviously, I was always nervous about my decision, nervous about my on-campus experience, nervous about my courses. But at the end of it all, I feel like everything has gone my way. Either it has gone my way, either I've overcome it with the help of all my friends and faculties and everything around me. So yeah.

If anything else, just let me know. I don't know when you are going to be listening to this podcast, but then there will be ways to reach out to me which we'll make that happen for sure. Vish is going to provide links to my channel, my LinkedIn, whatever you need. Reach out to me if you have doubts, if you are thinking, if you're on the fence, as I said, if you have any other questions apart from whatever we have talked about me and Vish today, just reach out. I am a soon to be alumni. I am going to help you in any way as I expected from my alumni. So yeah, reach out to me and yeah, all the best.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Aditya, thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us and sharing your experience.

Aditya Singh:

Of course.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

If our listeners do want to follow your journey professionally or get in touch with you for your content, where can they find you? Would you mind sharing your coordinates?

Aditya Singh:

LinkedIn is where you can reach me. I will share my email as well. You can reach out to me on email, which is not the fastest way to reach out to me. But then yeah, it is a way. And if you want to see what I've going through, what I've shared already, the interviewer, Dominic, that answers a lot of questions that students generally have. That's what I did in those three videos. Third video is about to drop any time. So in those videos, I've answered a lot of questions. There are a few more videos that I talked about and I'm going to make few more videos in the future. If you go through all of that, there's anything left out, you can comment on the videos, you can reach out to me on LinkedIn, DM on... And you can drop me a mail. There are many ways to reach out and just feel free to do so. I'll help you out the best way possible.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Yeah, and what would that email be?

Aditya Singh:

My email, I think you'll just share it in via comments or whatever. I'll be there anyway, but the email would be adi.deo.singh@gmail.com and also you can reach out to me on UB mail. I prefer it for professional activities, but this is not like very that as well. It's not very informal communication, so

singh25@buffalo.edu is also a mail that you can reach out to. Apart from that, all the links will be there for you to see and reach out to me. Yeah. Wonderful.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

Aditya, thank you so much for taking the time. This has been great.

Aditya Singh:

Thanks. Yeah, thanks Vish. Thanks for you. You were an amazing interviewer. I enjoyed this. Thanks for asking all the right questions.

Vish Gopalakrishnan:

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