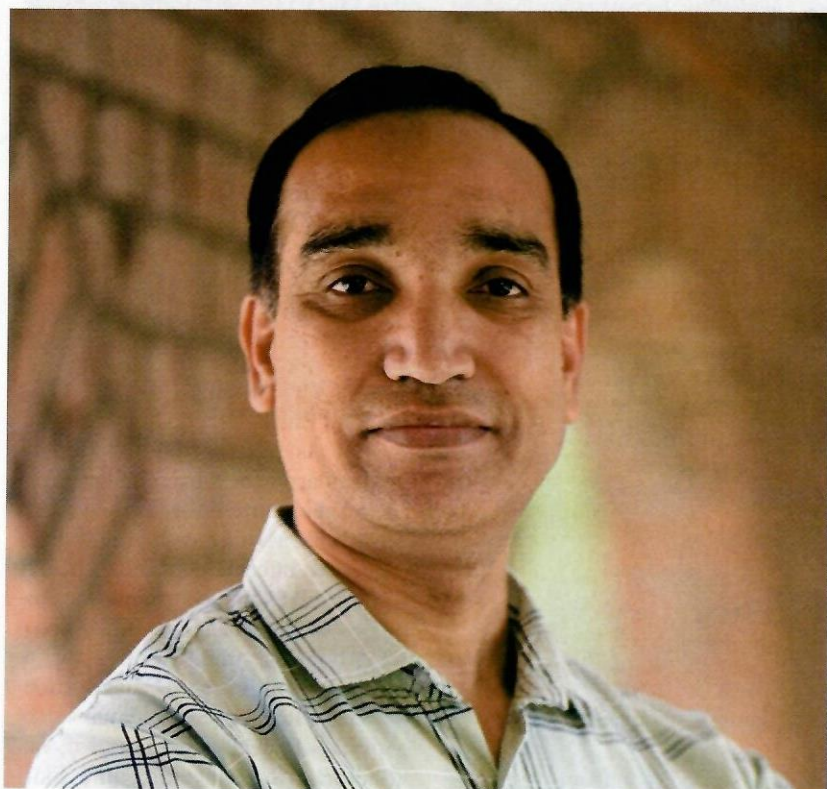




# 'CAN TRANSFORM THE CAREER OF WORKING EXECUTIVES'



by Pritha Roy Choudhury

**Q.** The online PGDM is open only to those with at least three years of work experience. But this criterion doesn't exist for the regular PGDM. Do you feel an online management programme is useful or appropriate for those already employed?

**A.** This programme is primarily designed for managers with work experience. We are finding that the response is higher from candidates with much more experience than three years. Many of these managers have great functional experience and are on the verge of moving into senior management. At this juncture, they feel the urgent need of understanding all aspects of the business. As one gets senior, roles start getting cross-functional and this programme would be ideal for such roles. The programme significantly helps to upskill in analytical and integrative thinking, which is an important skill for higher management levels.

Management Development Institute (MDI) Gurgaon will be launching a two-year online post-graduate diploma in management (PGDM) for working professionals from January 2023.

**Narain Gupta**, professor and lead, online diploma programme, spoke to *Careers360* about who the online MBA is for and how it helps prepare working professionals for senior roles. Edited excerpts below.

**Q.** You promise a cutting-edge curriculum. How is it different from the in-person PGDM?

**A.** The curriculum largely remains the same as in the two-year full-time programme, however, the delivery of content would be tuned for working executives. The quality of discussion in the class takes an entirely different shape due to the experienced participants and the diversity of functional and sectoral experience. The curriculum is constantly reviewed and kept cutting edge.



The online learning methods have now been well tested during Covid. The faculty members have developed innovative pedagogical innovations to make online teaching more effective. One gets almost the same feel as one would if one were in the offline class. Also, learning is supported by the learning management system (LMS). Classes are recorded and they can go back and clarify doubts. In addition to this, the student has access to the e-library resources of the institute. Also, the case discussions would be based on the corporate and industrial experience that the student brings to the classroom.

**Q. Will you offer career guidance? If so, of what sort?**

**A.** Career guidance is a very important part of this design. This has two elements. The first is self-understanding and improvement. The student will analyse their strengths and weaknesses and explore ways to make themselves more effective. The second component will train the student to identify suitable roles, understand the skills required and how to make the career transition they are aspiring for. Experts will help the student to identify this fit and help them achieve their objectives. Apart from this individualised attention, they will also have class sessions on knowledge management, leadership insights from corporate mentors and also sessions on making effective presentations, building an impactful resume, preparing for critical interviews and also building their brand.

There are generally two transition points in the first 15 years of one's career. It happens after around four-five years wherein they move from a functional specialist to a manager, and

**“ The quality of discussion in the class takes an entirely different shape due to the experienced participants and the diversity of functional and sectoral experience**

another when they move from middle to senior management. These are two phases where this programme can help the most. The programme is very useful for aspirants who face challenges such as: cannot afford to forgo two complete years' salary, cannot get two years' study leave from the organisations, find it difficult to be relieved from their present positions for a long duration, cannot travel to campuses for an offline education, have frequent travelling in the job, etc. The programme can help transform the career of working executives.

**Q. Are you expecting applications from students abroad? How do you intend to build a “global cohort”? Are there specific countries where you have partners?**

**A.** Since these sessions will be normally held during evenings and on weekends, certain countries are a natural fit, based on their time zones. We are focusing on participants from these countries. We reach out to them via digital marketing. I feel that in the initial cohort, the majority of participants would be from within India. The programme is expected to have global learning exposure to the participants through international faculty, international case studies, access to global scholarly knowledge from a rich repository of e-journals, etc.


**Q. How many seats do you have? Are**

**they all open or do you have some for sponsorships, foreign students etc.?**

**A.** Since the programme is a full-fledged PGDM, the bar is set high. The student needs to demonstrate good work experience and have the academic acumen to stand the rigour of the programme. All seats that we have are open. We encourage corporate sponsorships. These students will also go through a similar admission process. The quality of the cohort is of great importance. The class size could be around 60.

**Q. What will the campus immersion sessions cover?**

**A.** There are certain aspects of learning where face-to-face interactions are important. The first is networking. The three campus interventions will allow the participants to come together and bond as a class. They will also utilise this opportunity to get to know the institute, its faculty, staff and the vibrant campus. Being located in Gurgaon, we have the advantage of having the best companies near us. Senior leaders are quite happy to come over and spend time with our students. These corporate interactions will open up a lot of new avenues.

The other aspect which will be covered will be personal development and growth. Also, there would be a focus on career guidance. All this would be apart from sessions held on various topics. Students can expect sessions around experiential learning, outbound exercises, simulation games, analytical learning exposure, and corporate leaders' talk. This immersive experience will charge the students and they are ready to go back to their intense academic sessions, with renewed vigour. 

**“ The three campus interventions will allow the participants to come together and bond as a class. They will also utilise this opportunity to get to know the institute, its faculty, staff and the vibrant campus**