



EXCLUSIVE REPORT

The Major Mistakes Overseas Students & Migrants Make

By Rohith Amaratunga
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Prologue:

We live in interesting times.

There is unprecedented economic prosperity in the world, yet the journey we all take in starting and developing our careers is still doubt filled and uncertain.

I have been an aeronautical engineer for 9 years. When I was 17 years old I was sent from Sri Lanka to Australia to study Aeronautical Engineering at Sydney University. Like all overseas students I had challenges and ultimately made decisions that affected my career both positively and negatively.

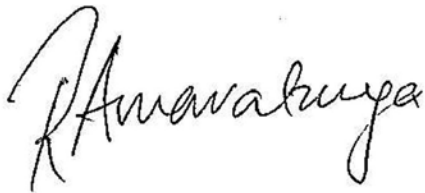


Over the years, my key observations of my international peers are that most still have language limitations which contributes in part to a lower self-esteem or self-confidence. Additionally, most are unwilling to mix with other nationalities and do not embrace the culture we live in. The results of which are obvious. The vast majority of overseas students end up with limited careers unaware or ignorant of the fact that they contributed to where they are at in life. Many lead lives of quiet desperation blaming discrimination and external factors. This is ridiculous as in all cases it is a case of false beliefs.

My personal frustration with this situation has led me to work closely with Joe Corrigan's BenchmarkEdu, to advise on their unique **mentorship program** designed specifically for overseas students and graduates.

I strongly encourage you to find out more by accessing their free trial or contacting one of their accredited associates so they can help evaluate your needs. You only have one chance in life to make a success of it and it is far better to start as early as possible to develop the skill base that you need to ensure success in your endeavors.

Sincerely Yours



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Mistake #1: Ignoring the Problem

When you actually sit down with an overseas student or graduate, the overwhelming majority will acknowledge that improved self-confidence, communication skills, etc would benefit their careers and their lives significantly.



So why is it that so few do anything about it?

To understand this phenomenon, it's useful to examine similar illogical behavior.

- Think of people that are over weight, don't like being overweight but still over eat the wrong types of foods.
- Think of people that know they are dangerously close to a health problem such as a stroke, heart attack or cancer, yet still smoke, eat badly and don't exercise.

Bizarre isn't it?!

When we experience discomfort we try and ignore the solution thinking the problem will go away if we pretend that it isn't there. We don't like facing the truth due to the perceived pain. We then let the '*busyness of daily life*' distract us from what is important.

If you are an overseas student or graduate that is not deliberately addressing the gap between your academic education and what the market place actually values, it is 100% predictable that your career potential will be limited unless you do something about it. Your ability to get a higher paying job, be promoted faster, and receive respect and financial rewards will be limited by as much as you choose to ignore reality and stick your head in the sand.

Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance

- Will Duran

Mistake #2: Poor Communication Skills

Everyone has heard 'first impressions count' or 'perceptions are everything'. This is very true. It doesn't matter how smart you are, its how you are perceived. If you are not understood clearly, people judge remarkably quickly. It is based on what people think about you. Whilst this can be unfair, it is what it is.

Based on my experience, there are 2 main aspects to a good first impression; **how you communicate** and the way you dress / your personal grooming.

In many cases the second aspect is easy to achieve – appropriate clothing and good personal grooming can sort it out. The other aspect is something that takes time to develop and even then needs to be worked on constantly to ensure that the skills are maintained at the highest level. I strongly encourage you to invest professional study in this area throughout your career.

This does not mean that you need to be able to speak with a strong Australian accent and wipe out all traces of your country of origin. Quite the contrary, although I have been in Australia for sometime, I still have a slight Sri Lankan accent which many people pick up on. It is when people cannot understand you that the accent presents a problem and where life becomes very hard. This causes the candidate to shut down. The more often this happens and lower the self esteem goes and the result is a totally unconfident person who finds a menial job simply to earn a living as opposed to building a career and a life.

"1 in 3 overseas students granted permanent residency after graduating from an Australian university **do not** have good enough **English skills** to handle a **professional job...**"

The Age Newspaper

Communication is not simply limited to the words that you speak, body language, tonality, pace, tempo, etc plays a large part in the whole communication process. I have read a lot of material in this area and applied it successfully in my work, which has had a huge impact to my success.

You need to be clear about the messages you are sending and the perceptions you are creating in others. Are these perceptions consistent with the impressions you want to make?

Mistake #3: Ignoring the Power of Association

When I came to study in Australia, I was initially boarded in a college where there were 250 guys! Of the 250, 247 were Australians, 2 were Malaysians, and 1 was Sri Lankan (me). This was the first big turning point in my life as I had 3 options the way I saw it; spend time with the Australians and get to know them, spend time with the Malaysians, or spend time with both groups. I decided on the latter.



For a variety of reasons, the vast majority of overseas students stick together like glue (or sheep)! This is a natural reaction as people want to feel accepted and will tend towards people they perceive to have commonalities with. This is a big mistake.

As I mentioned earlier, I had a number of options when it came to socialising. Coming as an overseas student my first thought was to stay with the Malaysian students, however as I thought about it I realised that I would end up with the short end of the stick. The net result is that I made friends with both parties and learnt a lot from each of them. Whilst I am not entirely sure what caused me to make this decision it turned out to have a very significant impact on my life.

Most overseas students believe that they will be heading back to their home country when they complete their course, until half way through when they decide that they will look for permanent residency instead at the completion of their course. However the biggest problem is, they do not change their habits. Their network of contacts comes from within their small overseas group, which in many cases cannot help them in the long run.

As a result when they finally start going for job interviews, they do not have the confidence, eloquence, or a good grasp of the language to present their case, even though in many cases they potentially could do a far superior job than the person who was employed.

You need to remember 2 fundamentals about this.

1) Your network is your personal support system

I strongly encourage you to learn more about the critical value of networking. It is what will lead to more career and personal advancements than just about anything I know.

2) The power of peer group expectation

You may have heard of the saying that **you become the average of the people you spend the most time with**. This is rock solid. It relates to more than money, it's true for your hobbies, interests, relationships, attitude, communication style, etc... So choose well!

The other major mistakes & what you can do about it

There are number of additional mistakes overseas students and graduates make which set them up for disappointments in their career. Some of them are very specific practical mistakes and others are higher level 'way of thinking' mistakes.



The best way of avoiding mistakes is to learn from a mentor(s) that has already gone through them and achieved success. This is what I did after a plateau in my career. (In hindsight I wish I had done this back when I was still in university!)

The other key thing I recommend is continuing personal and professional education. I know of people that attend a seminar once or twice a year. Whilst they are of value, nothing beats ongoing input, association and improvement.

Finally, the value of anything can be measured by assessing the potential consequences of doing it or not doing it. Something that is important has significant consequences to your life and your career. Something that is unimportant has few or no consequences of significance to your life or career. The mark of the superior thinker is your ability to consider possible consequences before you begin.

About the Author:

Rohith Amaratunga is a successful aeronautical engineer. He is a husband and father of two children. He currently resides in Brisbane, Queensland. He is a graduate of Sydney University and RMIT and is originally from Sri Lanka. You can visit his professional profile on LinkedIn.com:

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/rohithamaratunga>

Rohith has been mentored by Joe Corrigan, the creator of BenchmarkEdu over the last 2 years. He has seen his salary increase by 78% in the last 12 months putting him on the fast track in his industry in the global market.

Special Offer: BenchmarkEdu are offering free trials of its unique program for a limited time. You can access valuable information that will help you overcome the mistakes outlined in this report, receive career development tips and updates.

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