BLOGS

Should you pursue MBA after law? In Conversation with Ishani Patankar- Advocate, MBA and an amazing Career Counsellor

Ruchika Mohapatra · 26 Jun 2023

Ishani Patankar is vivacious, brilliant at her job, and a lawyer who excelled not only at law but also at following her passion. She made a decision to pursue MBA after law and today, she makes ample use of both her degrees to provide career counselling to those in need!



Tell us a bit about yourself.

Hi! I'm Ishani Patankar. I've completed my B.A.L.L.B. from G.H Raisoni, Nagpur. I then pursued LLM from Amity Law School, Mumbai in the year 2020. Currently, I'm also pursuing MBA.

I'm a very enthusiastic learner. My hobbies include dancing, acting and I've taken my hobby to the next level by directing songs in plays as well. I've also indulged in acting as a side hustle.

What motivated you to pursue law as a career?

My grandfather was a law graduate but he never pursued litigation. As a child I used to spend a lot of time staring at a picture of his where he was holding his law degree. I do think that was the earliest motivation of sorts I found within me to pursue law as a career although I daresay back then it was more about the fancy robe he was wearing in the picture more than anything else.

As I grew up, I started realizing the need for a just society and the power to usher in a just society using the domain of law. Of course, you can do the same thing without a degree. But a degree means that not only do you have the knowledge, but also the power to use law for the benefit of the public at large.

I think a huge reason behind me pursuing law was also the way I could enforce my and my family's rights because of knowledge of the law. Besides, the power to speak out my mind, the power to put my thoughts on the table and argue for what's right have always been my strength and I wanted to study the law to be able to use it for others as well.

I have always been someone who takes a stand for others without fearing the consequences and I believed that pursuing law would allow me to do so even better. If you have a good skill, make sure it counts for something.

But, had it not been for my grandfather, I would have never been introduced to this magnificent field and would have, perhaps, been restricted to the most common fields that people of my generation opted for.

Tell us a bit about your experience at law school. Were you always sure about your end goal?

In my college days, I was fairly good at academics but most of my time was spent in participating in various competitions. Be it debate, drama, acting or even dancing, I was pretty much actively participating in every opportunity that the college had to offer.

While I did not have an end goal in mind, I was pretty sure that I would have to give up my idea of pursuing litigation. I was a first-generation lawyer I was aware of the challenges faced by first-generation lawyers trying to pursue litigation.

By 2nd year I'd decided where I didn't want to go and made up my mind to pursue the corporate side of things. As a student, I had a very wholesome experience wherein I not only excelled at my academics but also did fairly well in pursuing my hobbies.

How was your experience as an undergraduate in a law school different to that of a student pursuing MBA?

I think despite being good at academics, I was very insecure about my job prospects. I didn't know for sure whether or not I'd land a job at the end of my term at law school. I'd heard a lot about there being bias in terms of employment opportunities provided to students from NLUs versus other colleges.

I also believe in the statement that one should either learn or earn and since I wasn't sure about my job situation, I decided to study further. This time around, I made the most of my opportunity and worked extremely hard to obtain a gold medal in Corporate Law.

The degree added a lot of value to my resume and it made me more confident in my abilities. When I found out that I'd been awarded with a gold medal, I was ecstatic and not two minutes later I got a call from a company looking to interview me.

In the next three days, I had landed a job! While working, I received many compliments on my inter-personal and soft skills and that led me to think that I could work on these skills further to improve my profile.

The thought of improving led me to my old statement of 'You either learn or you earn' and this time, I had the joy of learning while earning! I felt a sense of security and confidence since I did my due research before pursuing MBA and found out that there was a lot of scope and demand for the role that I wanted to study for!

Today, I am a sales manager and career counsellor at Lawctopus where I get to use all parts of my education to improve the lives of students.

You've had a diverse career trajectory. Tell us a bit about your journey as a Career Counselor and Sales Manager.

My career trajectory has been diverse and I consider that to be a huge strength! Currently, I'm working as a Sales Manager and Career Counsellor and my knowledge of law has come in extremely handy when it comes to staying updated about various laws and thus, helping me counsel people better.

It is extremely easy for me to connect with students from a legal background and advise them about the courses that they should opt for in order to get the most benefits. I can guide them better to make long term decisions with regards to their careers and that gives me a lot of satisfaction at the end of the day.

My actions might have small consequences but they have some positive impact on some student somewhere and that, to me, it is all that matters. I wish I had a career counsellor when I was in college so that I'd have had even better options and opportunities in terms of my career.

It is extremely important for students today to have the right knowledge, skills and understanding so as to excel despite extreme competition and my background both as a law student and as a MBA student gives me an advantage so as to be able to guide students better.

Currently, I come in contact with many people every day and not only do I get to help them but also get a chance to learn from them about new and in-demand things in the market and I use that knowledge to help my company develop new courses to bridge the knowledge gap.

What would you say sets apart your story from others?

My educational background, my philosophy towards life have all been things that set my story apart. I have always believed in either earning or learning and I have adhered to it strictly all my life.

I didn't even take a break while pursuing MBA because I believe in following your passion and working continuously towards a goal. I worked hard to make optimum use of my skills and made

sure that I was either learning or earning or both!

Any advice you'd like to pass on to law school aspirants?

My advice can be summed up easily in one statement- 'These are the golden years of your life!'. The time we spend in college is arguably the best time of our lives in terms of opportunities and experiences.

While first generation lawyers do face more challenges in comparison to their peers, there is always the option to upskill and enhance your profile by learning more and more above and beyond your curriculum.

If you wish to follow your hobby, do it! Go and get certified. The idea is to follow your heart while earning certificates so that you make the most out of your time spent on all the activities.

Do plenty of internships so as to improve your chances of landing a job. Internships teach you the skills you need to do a job, the personal traits you need to develop as well as look very good on your resume. Internships also make you stand out in the crowd.

I would also suggest you to attend seminars, webinars and classes that enable you to broaden your knowledge base while adding immense value to your CV. You can think of learn and earn here as well, wherein you're learning and earning certificates.

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