

A low score in board exams is no reason to be discouraged. Accept it gracefully, learn from the mistakes and move on by choosing courses and careers where your skills, personality and non-academic strengths are major determinants of success rather than your board exam marks

# Score a Point

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*"Everybody is a genius. But, if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it'll spend its whole life believing that it is stupid."*  
— Albert Einstein

IT'S that time of the year again. The board exams are over — and that was the easy part. The really scary monster now rears its head — the monster that goes by the name 'What-will-you-do-after-Class XII'. This monster is known to attack all school-leaving 18-year olds. It especially causes sleepless nights, heart-stopping, stomach churning fright and panic among those who are academically weak. The 'mob' (relatives, neighbours, friends) that accompanies this monster, utter the same soul crushing refrain — 'no 90 per cent, no hope...'

But like in the movies there always is an antidote/cure for even the most wicked villain. Let's take a look. But before that a quick, much needed pep-talk. Board results are not always a true mirror of a student's abilities. These can be very unpredictable at times. Your school-leaving marks are certainly NOT a measure of future success. Marks do not measure your ability, and are certainly not a measure of you as a person. Your marks gauge (narrowly) your ability to learn, assimilate and reproduce, in a very specific manner, the prescribed syllabus.

While succeeding in school or college is often about getting good marks, success in life is all about life skills, how you react in tough situations, your gumption, drive and a little nudge from lady luck.

History is replete with instances of those who refused to get cowed down by temporary setbacks or failure, including the greats like Einstein or Edison who failed several hundred times before succeeding finally. Remember what Edmund Hillary said after climbing Mt. Everest: "It's not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves". So put your heartbreak behind you, learn from the situation and move ahead. There are many more mountains to conquer.

The good news is that there are literally hundreds of careers and opportunities you can target across sectors even with your not-so-great marks. This is not to suggest that there is no studying involved in them. There is.

## A DATE WITH DESIGN

Choosing a career in art and design no longer means living a life of aesthetic poverty. If you are aesthetically blessed and you can summon your creative juices at will then attractive careers are to be found whether in Graphic Designing (or visual communication as some of the fancier institutes prefer to call it), Fashion & Textile Designing, Footwear & Leather Designing, Accessory,



Jewellery and Product Designing areas are some of the other areas that are seeing a lot of enthusiasm from students and industry. Also on offer are viable career options in photography, animation, multimedia, and web designing. The list isn't only limited to the above mentioned few. A number of other areas such as Retailing, Beauty Care, Hairstyling and Make-up, Real Estate present wonderful opportunities to youngsters who are willing to seize an opportunity in areas a little different from the mainstream. It does involve a leap of faith and takes guts and self-confidence to commit yourself. But given your options in mainstream courses and career, you really don't have much to lose.

This is also not to suggest that your board marks aren't considered during admissions. They will be, but these are not the sole criterion.

This is also not to suggest that these are "easy" careers. They are not (in fact be prepared to have to compensate for your academic performance by your on-job performance).

Here's a list of courses and careers where your skills, personality, non-academic strengths are the major determinants of success.

### Smiles and service

This industry is not looking for academic whiz-kids. It wants well-rounded individuals with a pleasing personality and an ability to work well in teams. A strong-work ethic and being stickler for routines and order is a must.

Admission to Hotel Management courses is usually based on an entrance exam, group discussion and interview. Also, look at innovative programmes such as STEP (Oberoi Centre for Learning and Development) and the Welcomgroup Programme (Welcomgroup Management Institute).

Opportunities in the Travel and Tourism sector aren't limited to cabin crews, ticketing agents and tour guides. Requirements for ground staff, flight operation managers, and airport management personnel are already starting to see an uptick as travel volumes increase. Tourism Boards of various states are looking to market themselves better. Discerning travellers are increasingly looking towards Travel Consultants to customise their travel and holiday experience to their specific requirements.

### Happy sailing

Sail the high seas and travel the world — all while playing a role in how 90 per cent of international world trade is transported: by ship. Those from the science stream (PCM) with a minimum 60 per cent (55 per cent in case of Diploma in Nautical Science) are eligible to enrol for a BSc Nautical Science course and embark on a career in the Navigation branch where you will start out as a deck cadet.

### Organise and rise

The MICE sector — Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions — is growing by leaps and bounds. Add to this the demand generated by weddings, sporting events

(think IPL, and IPL inspired leagues for hockey, badminton, football, boxing), concerts, awards functions, media con-claves, etc. The industry size is pegged around ₹3000 crore and clocking a robust 25 per cent year-on-year growth.

### Ingredients for success:

Good teamwork and people skills, organisational ability, willingness to roll up your sleeves and put in hard work and long, odd-hours. Getting into this field is more about experience than education. Start out by volunteering for event management companies during big events and by the time you finish college (preferably by distance mode) you'll have three

years of experience and job offers in hand!

### Action packed

TV production incorporates multiple tasks — from managing the entire production process to ensuring that the programme is made within the stipulated budget and time. The work includes co-ordinating with other departments to select the cast, clear scripts and co-ordinate the use of production facilities such as studios, cameras, lighting etc. It also includes supervising the production staff and the editing department to ensure quality of production and guest coordination.

**Requirements to succeed:** High energy levels, good



LOW MARKS CAN MAKE YOU THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT CAREER CHOICE

people skills, creativity, technical knowledge.

### Right strategy

Before enrolling in a course, do, however, make sure that you have an overriding interest in the field coupled with the aptitude for it. Before throwing yourself into it headlong, find out as much as you can about its scope, returns, etc. Browse the Internet and speak to people who are pursuing those careers to get an actual first-hand low-down on what it entails and what to expect.

Another approach could be to pursue a bachelor's degree via correspondence or distance mode and alongside pursue job-oriented, skill developing courses from polytechnics or certifications from professional bodies. These are available for everything from technical areas to courses in computers, designing, accounting, ani-

mation, hospitality, etc.

If you have a particular course in mind that you wish to pursue, stick to that plan, even if you have to change cities. Finally, remember that it is your performance that will be considered and not the institute from which you come. Real-life stories of professionals and entrepreneurs often reveal that their success has no link to a specific academic institution but, rather, to their overall performance and ability to make the most of every opportunity. The truth is that an institution per se has almost no influence on parameters like future happiness, job satisfaction or even income and first salaries.

Further, it is important to realise that the first degree is not the end of the road, but just the beginning of a long journey.

— The writer is Career Counsellor, Career Guidance India

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