

BRINGING THE EXPERIENTIAL & THE UNUSUAL

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EDITORIAL

Into the Unknown

Zohair Ashir

Outlier is a journey begun on 1st November 2021. As often with many journeys of discovery, while the course may be charted, its end may be an unexpected destination. We hope, this journey with your collaboration (the readers) will be a new and exciting voyage.

One of the joys of freedom (and running your own business) is that you can take liberties to experiment and take flights of imagination into the unknown. We are also free to undertake some challenges "Because it's there" without assigning some deep meaning or rationale for it. This freedom to explore and be creative may lead to a joyful discovery or an unknown 'find'. So in keeping with the spirit of George Leigh Mallory, the mountaineer who originally coined this phrase, we are also embarking on a journey partly because it's there and we can do it.

The Outlier also speaks to our desire to embark on a new course, with as yet untold stories about the country and the world we live in. While there is no shortage of material or "things to say" in this age of information overload, we aim to look for material which is off the beaten path, even quirky and not just the endless "breaking news". We invite our readers to also participate in helping us grow this platform with their contributions and insights.

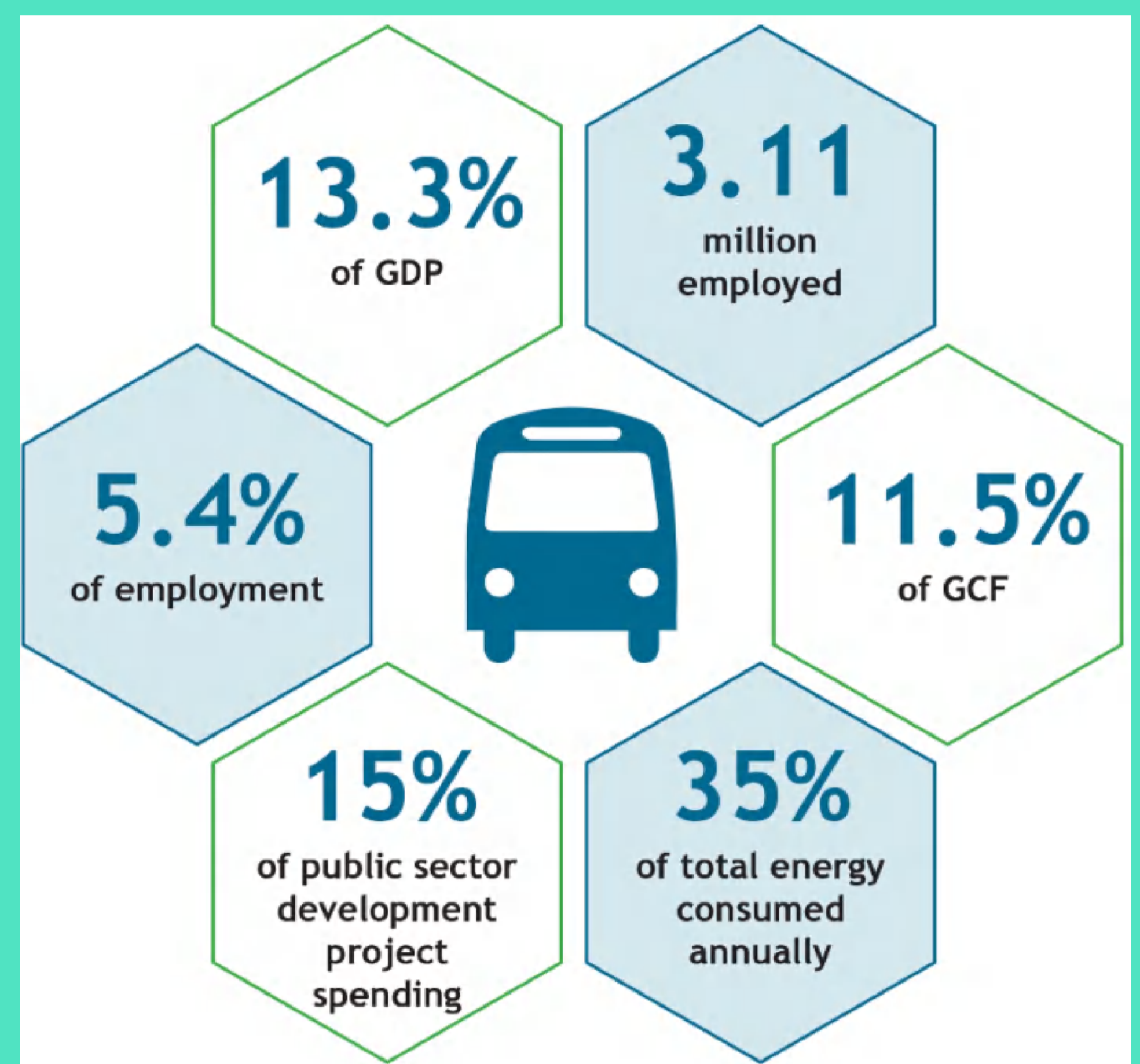
We also aim to bring what fits into the abnormal, interesting, informative but peculiar and we invite our readers to participate in this digital journalism platform. We plan to be a source of new and valuable stories not often found in mainstream media. These stories and ideas will draw from our work and experiences, and in time yours as well. We want this newsletter to reach professionals in a variety of fields on a regular basis, though many other people may also find some curiosity in our renderings.

We look forward to growing together as time goes on, creating engaging content for all our readers. A journey with a beginning but the destination to be crafted by us together. Come join us in this voyage into the unknown.



NUMBERS TELL A STORY

The Emerging Potential of Pakistan's Transport Sector



A major chunk of Pakistan's current GDP comes from the Transport sector and it is expected to leapfrog due to the projects under CPEC (13% of investment in road and highway construction). There is immense opportunity for existing players in this sector as well as new entrepreneurs who can see their investment grow as Central Asia gets connected to Pakistan. If State Bank of Pakistan, commercial banks and regulators play smart, we can expect huge employment and business opportunities in the near future in the Transport sector.

Source: Bankability of Transport Sector, 2018, Karandaaz Pakistan by AASA Consulting

WIT'S END

Zain Ashir



"Internet's down again...."

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READERS TALK BACK

Please reach out and share your thoughts & feedback with us on info@aasaconsulting.com. We are also looking for content writers who can contribute articles for which you will be paid if the article is selected for publication. All content must be 250 words, preferably accompanied with graphics and visuals. We look forward to featuring your words and growing from your unique insights in the coming issues!

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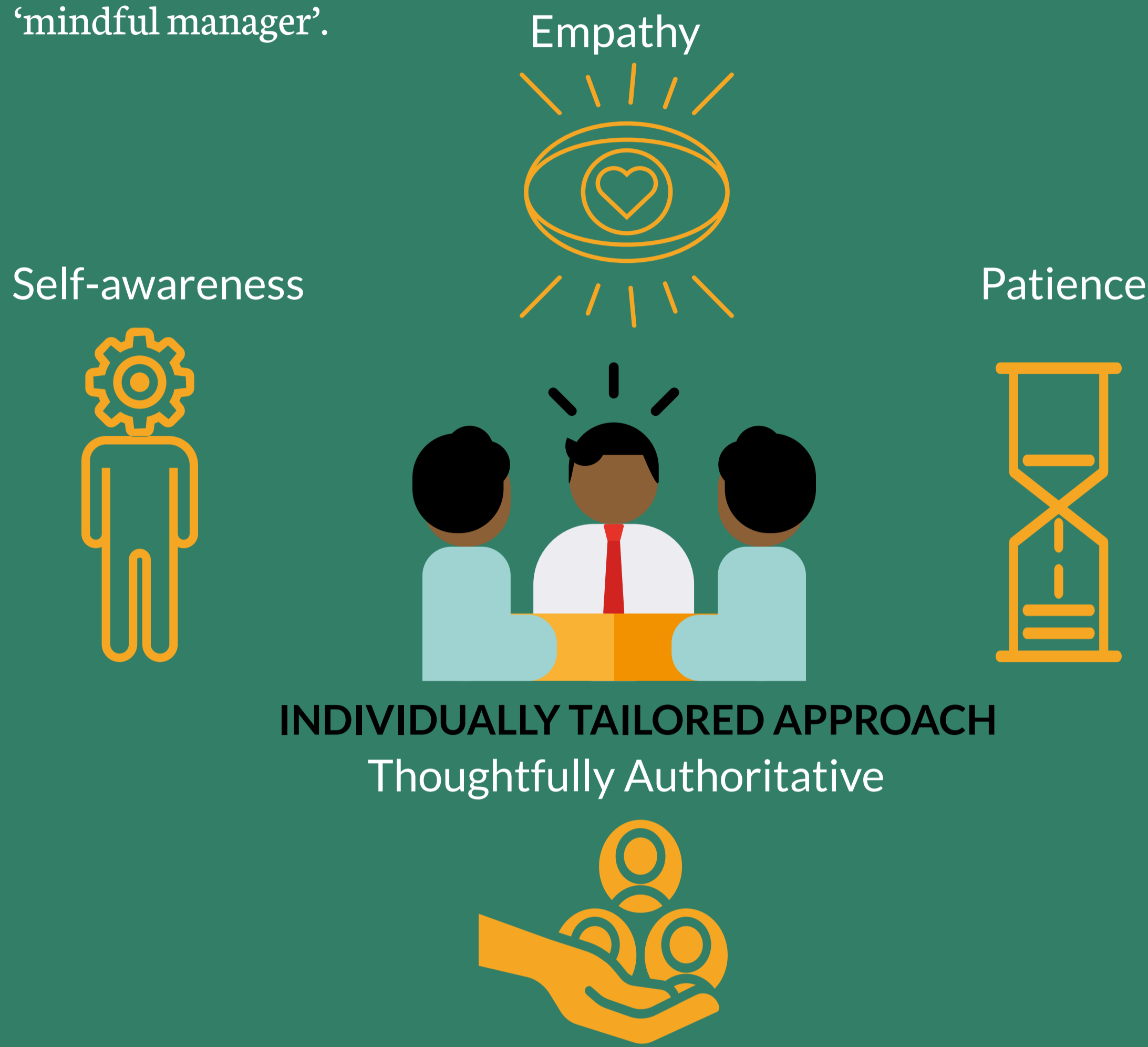
LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Serenity Now: Mindfulness in the Workplace

Ayesha Tarek

When I first became a manager, I was consumed by the task list. Even though I believed in building the team and motivating them to work, this did not reflect in my management style. It was not until a member of my team told me that my behavior was adversely impacting his motivation and productivity, that I understood the gravity of the situation. It was a wake-up call. This made me re-evaluate the type of manager I wanted to be.

In that moment, I pictured who 'I' would like to work under. I realized that the best manager would have a calmer, more reflective approach. She would be more thoughtfully attuned to my needs as an employee, and treat me more like a person than a number. She would aid in building my skills, knowledge and expertise on the job and motivate me to do better. What I now consider to be foundational attributes of a 'mindful manager'.



Being in the present moment also helps me better appreciate my experiences in life. So, whenever I am working, I 'want' to do my best rather than being forced to do so. This makes work feel less stressful and like a chore but rather something new to learn from each day, via each task. Challenges become possibilities, and routine tasks become a way to build perseverance. There is always a more mindful approach to looking at a situation. I am often baffled by people who spend hours at work but say they didn't learn anything. With every experience, no matter how small, there is learning. But only a few possess this knowledge. So, as a request, dear reader, let me know if mindfulness works, or doesn't work for you and write back to me to share your experience. Namaste.

SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

Entering the Development Sector

Syed Maroof Ali

Can passion alone be sufficient to reach your career goal(s)? Maybe. But it definitely helps! As an ambitious young graduate who was pushed into the professional world in the backdrop of Covid-19, I was partially scared and completely confused. Between then and now, the following two skills/ habits/ actions allowed me to capture the much-needed moments of serendipity that facilitated my entry to the development space of Pakistan.

• **Networking:** Hello LinkedIn! I became super active on this platform a semester before my graduation (Spring of 2020). It was a tremendous help because I was able to connect and follow individuals who were working in places or living the life that I aspired to achieve. Of course, I wasn't clear on the direction to take, the pivots to choose, and roles to apply for. Here's where LinkedIn helped!



• **Experience:** Ever heard that joke about how entry level jobs require 10+ years of experience with dozens of technical skills while giving a market competitive salary? Yeah, crazy world. But really though, there is a trick to at least get the intimidating HR Department to notice you. Highlight relevant experiences? This is necessary but vague. Let's expand it:



Remember: As a fresh graduate, you need to convince the organization about how you are not just passionate about this role, but also passionately pursuing activities that might be relevant to that role. Since I am still growing in my current role and trying to navigate through the many subtleties and activities that are part and parcel of the development sector in general, and the education space in particular, the aforementioned pointers are continuously helping me to make my ongoing professional experience exciting and fulfilling!

FEATURE STORY

From One Village to Another

A story based on our work - related experiences

Sabeen Rizvi

Raheem had a typical childhood for a young person in his village. He had parents who worked hard to take care of him and his younger brother, he studied at the local school for children and learned about farming from his father. However, it was not an ideal childhood. Raheem's brother was often sick with diarrhea and not a very healthy baby. Raheem was told that he, too, had struggled with illness as a child. His family ate largely grains for most of their meals, and hardly any fruits or vegetables. This made him grow more slowly than is expected for healthy children his age, although this was quite common for the ones in his village. Despite these struggles, Raheem continued working hard on his schooling and chores, aiming to become a farmer like his father. By the time he was ready, the work of a farmer was becoming increasingly difficult. The weather became more and more unpredictable every year. Sometimes it would rain too much, other times it would barely rain even during monsoon season. Added to this, water supply was becoming scarcer and scarcer as time went on. This unpredictability and growing scarcity reduced the amount of crop that could be grown and affected the farmers' livelihoods. Raheem worked hard and made the best of his circumstances, but he would sometimes wonder if life could be different...

Shazia lived in the same village as Raheem. During her childhood, a new program was being implemented for people in her district. The results of this program made her life very different from Raheem's. Her mother went to events where experts taught several groups about the importance of a varied diet, as well as how to provide one for her family within



her budget. Local foods had the nutrients she and other growing children needed, so her mother was able to find them close to home. Now, Shazia was given meals that helped her become healthy and strong. Added to this, there was soap and water in her house, which was used regularly, before meals and especially after using the bathroom. Her father and his fellow farmers

were trained and therefore prepared for the unreliable rain and seasonal patterns, so the harvest was more abundant. They used methods like drip irrigation and tunnel farming to protect their crops from changes in weather and water scarcity. There were also development projects undertaken to make tube wells and improve overall sanitation for the village. With all these valuable changes in her community's life, Shazia was able to have a healthy childhood and excelled in school. With her education, she was able to become a teacher herself and help the children in her village achieve their dreams. Her own children were also much healthier and happier as a result, improving the community as a whole.

Shazia is Raheem's daughter. In one generation, a great change was made, purely by changing a few key factors in their lifestyles through simple interventions and building awareness. The introduction of these protocols can change not only one life but the future of an entire village. With the value that children like Shazia add to the country, these decisions can not only change their communities, but all of Pakistan.

Source: Baseline Survey - Final Report, Nutrition- Sensitive Component - PINS ER3, 2019, RSPN by AASA Consulting