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DURING your undergraduate years, in addition to getting involved in various activities and projects, what makes a key difference in your experience is documenting your accomplishments. This will serve you well when you are done with university and entering the job market.

Profiling your achievements is imperative to keep track of all your accolades so that you don't miss out on any while preparing your resume when it is time to look for your dream job.

Documenting your achievements will help you:

1 Keep track of what you have done.

During the three to four years of your undergraduate degree, you would have been part of different types of activities ranging from being a member of the student union to participating in a drama competition.

These activities can be a great testimony to your admirable personal qualities such as being a good leader or being a team player. Keeping a systematic collection of your achievements is a good way to be remember your achievements if your memory fails you.

2 Be prepared to talk about your accomplishments during an interview.

DOCUMENT YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS



Be more specific about what you have achieved and be able to show examples of what you have done rather than simply describe them.

Your interviewer will be more impressed if you can point out relevant skills that you have gathered that will add value to the job you are applying for.

3 Identify your skills and interests.

By documenting your activities and achievements, you will (re)discover projects that were significant to you and remind you of your journey. As the famous saying by Ralph Waldo Emerson goes, "life is a journey, not a destination."

4 Save time and effort when you are applying for jobs and scholarships.

Application processes can be overwhelming. Having proper documentation of your previous achievements will assist your application process and keep stress at bay.

Documenting your accomplishments might seem tough with heavy workloads and assignments while in school. However, nothing is impossible and there are relevant steps which can be taken to ease the process.

1 Start an artefacts box.

One way to simplify the task is to find a good-sized box and add "artefacts" to it.

Artefacts are things like photographs, position descriptions from internships and jobs, programmes, flyers, newspaper articles, thank you notes (print or email) you received for a job well done and screenshots of web pages you have designed.

2 Start a portfolio.

You may also create your own portfolio. Portfolios are not restricted to artists and consultants that use portfolios to showcase their work.

You can create a portfolio to support the claims you make in your resumes.

Your portfolio should include details about your important



accomplishments and demonstrate your skills and personal qualities.

For example, you can include your formal or informal education training such as copies of certificates and licences.

Besides that, through your portfolio you can demonstrate evidence of your skills and abilities to an employer.

For example, in demonstrating your written communication skills, you can impress your interviewer by

providing actual samples that demonstrate your writing.

You can create your portfolio by organising everything in a three ring binder with plastic sheet protectors and index tabs that will help separate each year or each activity.

You may also add a short reflection of the experience and details of the activity that was meaningful to you.

All in all, documenting your achievements is one of the many ways you can make your undergraduate years more meaningful and this small step will definitely help you become a more worthy candidate for job applications.

Besides, this will help you develop an attitude of action and reflection which is crucial for effective leadership.

Datuk Seri Idris Jala in the book *Barefoot Leadership* is mentioned as a man of action and reflection where he spends time in reflection before taking actions.

It is essential for us to spend time to clear our minds and reflect on events that occurred in our lives and ask ourselves what we have learnt from them and how can we progress further with the experience.

I wish you good luck in your pursuit in documenting your achievements and in developing an attitude of action and reflection!

■ *Tarcayani Prebagaran is a university scholar who believes in making the most out of her student years!*