

"Until I personally step out in the field and understand which areas require more effort, what are the loopholes, I will not be able to guide my team. So, at least three to four days in a week, I spend time out in the field"

This is the dedication displayed by Ankita Mohite, senior assistant manager at Udaan. A candidate selected from campus interviews, Ankita joined KEF in 2012, after completing her MSW from SNTD college. She started off as a management trainee in Udaan which was a fledgling unit then, with only four-five staff members, all in their learning phase. Today that number has grown to Forty! Then, Ankita was the only MSW graduate, and did not hesitate to comply with her job requirements, ranging from drawer cleaning, to home visits, to making presentations. Currently, she works with the eleventh and twelfth class students, which entails, preventing them from dropping out of academics, making them and their parents aware of their own potential, developing strategies by updating herself on newer technologies, and implementing those learnings through her team in the field.

Ankita's personal transformation since joining KEF is summarised in her own words, "when I joined KEF in 2012, I was less confident and more shy. I was conscious of other people's reactions. But as time went by, all these got left behind. Today, I am a confident person, my decision-making ability has improved. I could never have imagined myself as a workaholic, which I have become now"

Ankita fondly recalls how then, the Udaan, research and KISE teams would all sit together in one cubicle. Talent shows would be conducted in Jupiter. Today, even the hall is insufficient. Then, Udaan dealt with class 8-10 students, preventing them from dropping out. With time, Udaan got more involved and spread its activities to students in classes 11 and 12 too. To do so efficiently, Udaan evolved new methods, increased the types of home visits, readied the staff to handle career guidance for the students. A new approach was adopted as per the changing needs of the students.

Between November, 2015 and September, 2016, Ankita was faced with health issues. She even had to undergo a surgery. It was a difficult phase, but her team and Mrs Bayjool supported her hugely.

In the next few lines, Ankita shares the things she appreciates about her seniors.

Bayjool Desai: "She has a thorough knowledge of every aspect required to understand the community's needs. Her observation skills are excellent."

Family: Ankita lives with her husband.

Hobbies: Travel and Dance

Ideal vacation: A place that offers peace, bountiful nature and adventure activities.

Person you admire: "My older sister, ambitious even as a child, she would encourage me to partake in competitions. Thanks to



Time management and optimum utilisation of available resources are skills I hope to imbibe from her. Ma'am has thoroughly trained every member of Udaan to be able to handle any situation. When I joined KEF, my English vocabulary was very poor. But not once did she say so. On the contrary, she always encouraged me."

Bhairavi Kabre: "From her, I learnt how to apply learnings from past experiences to present situations. One quality I admire most in her is her non-hesitance to even report to me, her junior!"

Aditi Gulati: "Her knack of understanding different personality traits and then dealing with each positively, her ability to convert a weakness into a strength, amaze me."

Ankita makes an interesting observation here. Says she, "Aditi ma'am offers moral support verbally while Bayjool ma'am's support is more action-based"

Having spoken about her mentors, she adds, "I am grateful to this platform ('from the heart' series) that allows me to express my appreciation and admiration towards all.

her, I moved to Mumbai to further my studies. She has supported me a lot"

Changes you wish to see: "Eradication of corruption and reservation policy, because capable people lose out on opportunities"

In closing, Ankita shares a message for all the youngsters at KEF:

"Be open to go beyond your job description if the situation demands. Be loyal and dedicated towards your job. Take responsibility for every assignment right up to the very end - whatever be the outcome!"

Project Head and Mentor Observation

Bayjool Desai

Ankita and Udaan started their KEF journey together and continue to shape each other. Turn the spotlight on any aspect of Udaan and Ankita will passionately weave in interesting nuggets and highlight the underlying spirit. Dedicated and compassionate, Ankita easily connects with the students, parents and team members and draws them into any activity of Udaan or KEF. She has mesmerized audiences with her dancing, impressed school leaders with her presentation skills and lead the team to participate/win at all the staff meetings. Ankita's transformation from a fresh Management trainee into a strong and capable lead is a journey to be proud of.

Aditi Gulati

Ankita shares excellent rapport with Udaan students as well as the team. She is very sensitive to issues which affect the students and their families. She is equally at ease with office work or doing field work in the community. A skilled orator and agile dancer makes it a pleasure to watch her perform on stage. Her multi faceted personality makes her an asset to our team. Wishing you all the best.