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Siddhant Bhansali, Startup Mentor and Advisor, 91Springboard.

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## 5 INSIGHTS TO KICK START YOUR EDTECH STARTUP

“Tech gives the quietest student a voice,” says Jerry Blumengarten. Binding the education sector with technology, Educational entrepreneurs (Edupreneurs) are filling the gap government had left in this system. The journey of one education startup will probably differ from another in some ways, but their goals remain same. We met top investors at our sixth edition of Startup Kickoff, where they brewed up coffee and tossed a perfect game plan to revolutionize the EdTech sector with their guidance.

By Samiksha Jain

**1. Research Well:** If you are planning to cater to the educational sector, then you should research well. As an edupreneur, you can find many products that you can build. But, before stepping in, do find answers to these questions - who are your end customers, how is the market evolving and what need you are addressing. “You are not talking about the community that is aware; you are talking about the kids. People become little touchy when it gets to kids because getting into this domain will vastly affect them. People are very choosy when they pick start-ups, adopting technology or a new system of learning. Therefore, edupreneurs should be well aware about the existing norms in schools, what they are good or bad at, and then make their pitches to investors so that investor feels that the idea is well thought of, well explained and they have done their due diligence in researching the market before they are entering into it,” said Gary Dalal, CTO, Aptology.

**2. Don't Build Just 'Me too' products:** At early stage, entrepreneurs usually end up building a 'Me too' product. Always remember that you are catering the niche sector where people are very particular when it comes to their child's education. So don't just create a product, create a remarkable product which has a tendency to create an impact in the market.

**3. Prove your Product:** If you are planning to seek investor attention, it is important to keep this point in mind. Talking to an investor about why your product will work is redundant; they want to see it work.

Ritu Marya, Editor-in-Chief, Entrepreneur Media presenting memento to Vivek Goel, Director, My School Depot.



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**4. Should Have a Kick-Ass Team:** A good and strong team acts as a growth driver for any startup. And yes, if you venture out to seek funds, investors look for this first. An edupreneur needs to build a strong team by putting them together and by filling all the gaps between them. “We bet too much on teams. I think complementing team with proved MVP are pre-requisites when you actually reaching out to the investor,” said Ashish Mittal, Angel Investor, Turning Ideas Ventures.

**5. Disruption in Edtech Sector:** Yes, this is what investors are looking at. Edtech is an interesting and growing space in India. And investors want to back those startups that are bringing change in the sector with the help of the technology.

“The phenomena stand point we are looking at is disruption in the Edtech space. While there have been many test prep and assessment based start-ups, we are looking for disruption in the learning space and teaching space, disruption in leveraging technology to scale and disrupting with learning itself. So these are three areas which we primarily look for when it comes to fund Edtech startup,” explained Mittal.

THE CHOSEN ONE

# THIS STARTUP STEALS THE SHOW

It is said that a lot can happen over coffee and that exactly happened during the sixth edition of Startup Kickoff, where investors gave their thumbs-up to some good ideas. There were startups that were solving the tuition problems, whereas others were providing solutions to math problems. But above all, Ashutosh Kumar Burnwal’s Buddy4study won the hearts of investors.

“I conducted primary research where around 3000 students were surveyed. The results were an eye opener as participants were aware of only 3-5 scholarships out of the thousands available. With years of research into scholarship domain, we evolved from a simple scholarship listing website to a complete scholarship ecosystem. With right advisors on board and good team members on execution side, we are continuously focused on building new innovative scholarship products to solve awareness, application issues of students,” said Ashutosh Kumar Burnwal, Founder & CEO, Buddy4study.

Scholarship is a wonderful tool to curtail dropouts and promote merit/talent. Buddy4study is creating a transparent reliable ecosystem to enable anyone to join in their vision.

It is a unique startup for organizations who want to run scholarship programs

Ashutosh Kumar Burnwal, Founder & CEO: Buddy4study.



as their CSR, social or branding initiative. They are providing end to end solution as per their requirement in transparent and in a cost effective manner.

“With scholarship as an alternative way of funding education to needy and deserving students, I am seeing a big market coming out in this space. The shift has started. Corporate CSR fund and individuals too are creating new scholarships to fund education to students.

We are in process of simplifying complete education funding with the involvement of CSR fund, individuals, institutions and banks. In next 3 -4 years, we are focusing on increasing the supply side of scholarships and on boarding lakhs of students on other side,” informed Burnwal.

“Buddy4Study.com wins my attention entirely. I think it’s a great concept; it’s something that was not heard of. He struck the market right when there was something missing in it. He is going to get lot of attention from folks who want CSR initiative, kids, etc. He has pictured it well and I think it is typically a great startup to work with,” said Dalal.