

Career Counsellor's Newsletter



Is the Middle East 'The New Study Abroad' Destination?



<https://shorturl.at/O6PPI>

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The Indian community has been woven into the fabric of the Middle East for centuries. Trade routes between the Arabian Peninsula and India date back to ancient times, when spices, textiles, and pearls moved freely across the Arabian Sea. Over the 20th century, large numbers of Indians migrated to the Gulf as oil economies boomed, contributing to construction, healthcare, education, and commerce. Today, nearly 9 million Indians live in the region, forming the largest expatriate population. Their presence is not only demographic but also cultural—festivals, food, and businesses reflect a deep-rooted Indian influence that continues to shape Middle Eastern society.

The Rise of Dubai's Golden Visas: A major policy shift in recent years has been the introduction of the “Golden Visa” in Dubai and other emirates. These long-term residency permits are designed to attract investors, entrepreneurs, professionals, and even top-performing students. For Indians, this has opened doors to stability and opportunity in the UAE like never before. Instead of temporary work visas tied to employers, families can now plan for the long term—owning property, enrolling children in schools and universities, and setting up businesses. The Golden Visa has effectively positioned Dubai as a magnet for global talent, making it not only a financial hub but also an academic and cultural center.

The Economy: Thinking Beyond Oil & Gas The Middle East economy is diversifying rapidly beyond oil. Vision 2030 in Saudi Arabia, investments in green energy, and the rise of logistics, aviation, and technology sectors are creating new demand for skilled professionals. Indians, with their strong presence in engineering, IT, medicine, and finance, are finding pathways into these emerging industries. The region is also experiencing a boom in start-ups, supported by government incubators and venture capital. For young graduates and mid-career professionals alike, the Middle East now offers career trajectories that once required moving to the West.

Global Universities Enter the Region: A notable trend is the arrival of international universities establishing campuses across the Middle East. Institutions from the U.S., U.K., Australia, and France have opened branches in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha, and beyond. These campuses give students access to globally recognized degrees while staying closer to home, often at lower cost. For Indian families, this presents a practical alternative: world-class higher education without the challenges of long-distance relocation. As more universities join this wave, the Middle East is positioning itself as an emerging education hub that complements its growing economic influence.

Leading Western Universities In The Region:

● **The German University of Technology in Oman (GUtech)**, established in 2007 in Halban near Muscat, is affiliated with Germany's RWTH Aachen University. It delivers programs in engineering, geosciences, architecture, business, and computer science, all taught in English with German as a second language. Its annual intake is a few hundred students, forming a total student body of about 2,000.

● **The American University of Sharjah (AUS)**, founded in 1997, is located in Sharjah, UAE, and modeled on the American liberal arts system. Known for its strong business, architecture, and engineering programs, it attracts students from across the Gulf. It enrolls over 5,000 students annually, making it one of the largest private universities in the region.

● **The American University in Dubai (AUD)**, opened in 1995, is based in Dubai Media City. It offers accredited U.S.-style education with popular majors in business administration, communication, and engineering. With a total student population of about 1,800, its class sizes are relatively small and personal.

● **New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD)** was launched in 2010 on Saadiyat Island as a flagship branch of NYU's global network. It is highly selective, admitting only about 500 students per year from a pool of tens of thousands of applicants. Students benefit from a liberal arts core, advanced research, and opportunities for global mobility within NYU's network.

● **Northwestern University in Qatar**, established in 2008 in Doha's Education City, focuses on journalism, media, and communication, drawing from Northwestern's strength in these fields. It offers a small, close-knit learning environment with access to the wider Education City ecosystem. Class sizes are intimate, typically in the dozens rather than hundreds.

● **Texas A&M University at Qatar**, set up in 2003 in Education City, Doha, brings Texas A&M's world-renowned engineering programs to the Gulf. It specializes in chemical, petroleum, electrical, and mechanical engineering. Its annual enrollment is a few hundred students, keeping the focus on rigorous technical training.

Murdoch University Dubai, located in Dubai International Academic City, is an Australian branch campus that opened in the mid-2000s. It offers degrees in business, IT, media, psychology, and cybersecurity, mirroring Murdoch's Perth programs. It has a modest but growing international student population.

The University of Wollongong in Dubai (UOWD), established in 1993, is one of the UAE's earliest international branch campuses. Located in Knowledge Park, Dubai, it provides Australian degrees in business, IT, engineering, and media. Thousands of alumni have graduated, and its incoming classes remain among the largest in Dubai's private sector.

● **The University of New Haven in Riyadh** is a recent extension of the U.S. institution into Saudi Arabia. It offers American-style education with programs in business and STEM aligned to Vision 2030 workforce needs. Still in its early stages, it has a modest intake as it grows its reputation.

● **The American University of the Middle East (AUM)**, founded in 2006 in Egaila, Kuwait, is one of the country's largest private universities. It offers engineering, business, and design programs tailored to the Kuwaiti and Gulf job markets. AUM enrolls thousands of students, with each incoming batch numbering in the high hundreds.

● **Middlesex University Dubai**, established in 2005, is the first overseas campus of Middlesex University London. Located in Dubai Knowledge Park, it offers a wide range of UK-accredited programs, especially in business, law, media, and computing. The campus hosts over 4,000 students, one of the largest in Dubai.

● **The University of Birmingham Dubai** opened in 2018 in Dubai International Academic City as a branch of the UK's Russell Group institution. It offers programs in business, computer science, education, and international relations. Though relatively new, its cohorts are steadily growing, with annual intakes in the hundreds.

● **Heriot-Watt University Dubai**, established in 2005, is part of the historic Scottish university known for engineering, business, and design. Located in Dubai Knowledge Park, it offers undergraduate and postgraduate UK degrees. Enrollment is a few thousand, with balanced intakes across engineering, business, and computing.

Types of Graphic Design



Design Careers

<https://shorturl.at/nfcrC>

Graphic design is a diverse, creative field that uses visuals to communicate ideas and solve problems. Since it tackles a wide variety of challenges, graphic design can be loosely divided into eight different, but often overlapping fields. At Berkeley College, you will be exposed to each of these fields as you build the skills to become a successful and impactful designer.

1. Web Design

In our modern world, web design is quickly becoming one of the most valuable skills for creative professionals. This field of graphic design blends technology and the traditional principles of composition and form to create digital media. At Berkeley College, you will have access to the latest technology used by experts as you learn the practical skills of this important field.

2. UI and Interactive Design

Like web design, UI (user interface) and interactive design have become increasingly valuable skills. This field focuses on bridging the gap between complex computing and the user experience through visually pleasing forms and layouts.

3. Advertising and Marketing Design

Most every organization in the world relies on visual advertising and marketing, whether it's used to form an internal brand identity or attract customers. At Berkeley College, you will learn to develop successful ad designs while gaining the creative problem-solving skills that will benefit you throughout your career.

4. Motion Graphics and Animation

By studying motion graphics, you'll focus on animating visual media. This includes everything from typography to imagery, and everything in between. As a relatively new field in graphic design, motion graphics and animation present exciting opportunities to balance technical and creative skills.

5. Packaging Design

Product packaging is everywhere, from the food we eat to the devices we buy. A career in packaging design lets you employ the creativity and branding strategies of ad design, along with the technical aspects of manufacturing, 3D mockups, and printing.

6. Game Design

Like UI and motion graphics, game design works at the forefront of technology and creativity. Studying game design at Berkeley College gives you the opportunity to work one-on-one with experts as you navigate complex tech and exciting creative endeavors.

7. Illustration

Drawing is the foundation of most artistic practices, especially illustration. As a graphic illustrator, you will have the chance to create visual identities, cover art and more, all while using the fundamental principles of form, color, and composition.

8. Publication and Typographic Design

In this field, designers focus on the development, organization, and management of visual media that is often mass-produced. This includes books, magazines and more. By developing skills in printing, editorial layout design coordination and typesetting communication, publication and typographic designers create cohesive visual media.

The Importance of Design Thinking in Education: Sparking Creativity in Children



<https://shorturl.at/eSQ7E>

The Creativity Crisis

Every generation has fond memories of how much better it was when they were kids. Just 40 short years ago, children didn't come home from playing until the street lights came on. They drank from the water hose, and an advertisement at 10:00 pm reminded parents to make sure their children were home. Kids played make-believe with friends in the sandbox, built forts, and creatively figured out how to not be bored, all while trying not to get into too much trouble.

Today's youth are very different. Raised in a world of on-demand video, cell phones, and non-stop digital entertainment, kids have little opportunity to be bored. Without boredom, creativity is diminished.

Today's youth are very different. Raised in a world of on-demand video, cell phones, and non-stop digital entertainment, kids have little opportunity to be bored. Without boredom, creativity is diminished. However, in today's rapidly evolving world, creativity is no longer just a desirable skill; it is essential. Many educators and parents are increasingly concerned that children are not developing their creative potential either in school or during play.

This deficiency can be attributed to an overly structured educational system and the pervasive influence of instant gratification culture.

Recent research indicates a worrying decline in children's creativity. A study by Kyung Hee Kim found that while IQ scores have been rising, creativity scores have been decreasing since the 1990s. This phenomenon, known as the "creativity crisis," can be partly attributed to the structured nature of modern education systems, which often prioritize standardized testing over creative exploration.

Children today spend less time in unstructured play, which is crucial for developing creativity. Instead, they are often engaged with digital devices that provide constant stimulation and limit opportunities for imaginative thinking. To address this issue, integrating design thinking into education can be a powerful solution.

Design thinking is a problem-solving approach that involves empathizing with users, defining problems, ideating, prototyping, and testing. This process, originally developed for the design and business sectors, has been increasingly recognized for its potential in education. Encouraging students to think like designers fosters creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration.

How Design Thinking Can Help with the Creativity Crisis

- **Fostering Empathy and Understanding:** The first stage in design thinking is empathy. Children learn to understand the needs and perspectives of others, which enhances their emotional intelligence and creativity. By empathizing with end-users, they can develop more innovative and relative solutions to problems.
- **Encouraging Problem Definition and Exploration:** Design thinking teaches children to define problems clearly. This process involves exploring various aspects of a problem and asking critical questions. The define stage helps children develop a deeper understanding of issues and encourages them to think critically.
- **Promoting Ideation and Brainstorming:** In the ideation stage, children are encouraged to brainstorm multiple solutions without the fear of failure. This stage is vital for creativity as it allows children to explore a wide range of ideas and approaches without fear of criticism or reproach.
- **Hands-On Prototyping and Experimentation:** The prototyping stage involves creating tangible representations of ideas. This hands-on approach helps

children learn by doing, which is essential for developing creative problem-solving skills. Experimentation and iteration are key components, teaching children that failure is part of the learning process.

- **Iterative Testing and Feedback:** Testing is the final stage in design thinking. This stage involves testing prototypes and gathering feedback from multiple stakeholders and potential end users. This iterative process helps children refine their ideas and learn from their mistakes, fostering resilience and adaptability.

Evidence of Effectiveness

Several studies highlight the benefits of design thinking in education. For instance, a 2010 study by Carroll et al. found that incorporating design thinking into the curriculum improved students' engagement, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. Another study, this one by Henriksen et al., demonstrated that design thinking projects enhanced students' creative confidence and ability to innovate. Additionally, research by Rauth et al. showed that students who participated in design thinking workshops exhibited greater creativity and critical thinking abilities compared to those who did not participate. These findings underscore the potential of design thinking to reinvigorate creativity in children.

Practical Implementation

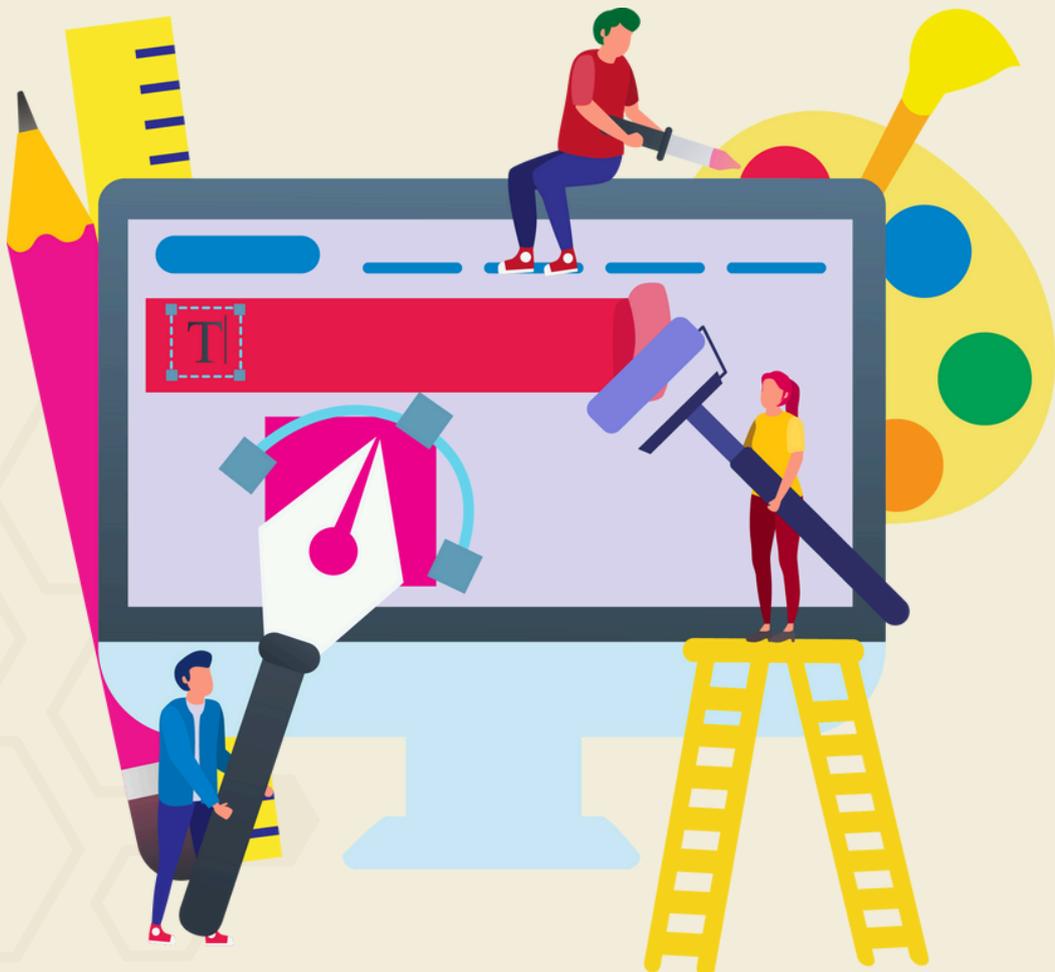
To effectively integrate design thinking into education, schools and educators can:

- **Encourage Interdisciplinary Projects:** Design thinking works best when applied to real-world problems that require knowledge from various disciplines. Interdisciplinary projects help students see the connections between different subjects and develop a more holistic understanding of issues.
- **Provide Time for Unstructured Play:** Allowing children time for unstructured play is crucial for fostering creativity. Schools can create maker spaces or innovation labs where students can experiment with materials and ideas without the confines of a traditional classroom setting.
- **Train Teachers in Design Thinking:** Educators need to be trained in design thinking principles and practices. Professional development programs can equip teachers with the skills and knowledge to effectively implement design thinking in their classrooms. Design thinking is not just for STEM or elective courses. It can be integrated into lessons in core content areas, and is a great tool for encouraging students to develop relevant and meaningful connections to content beyond test preparation.

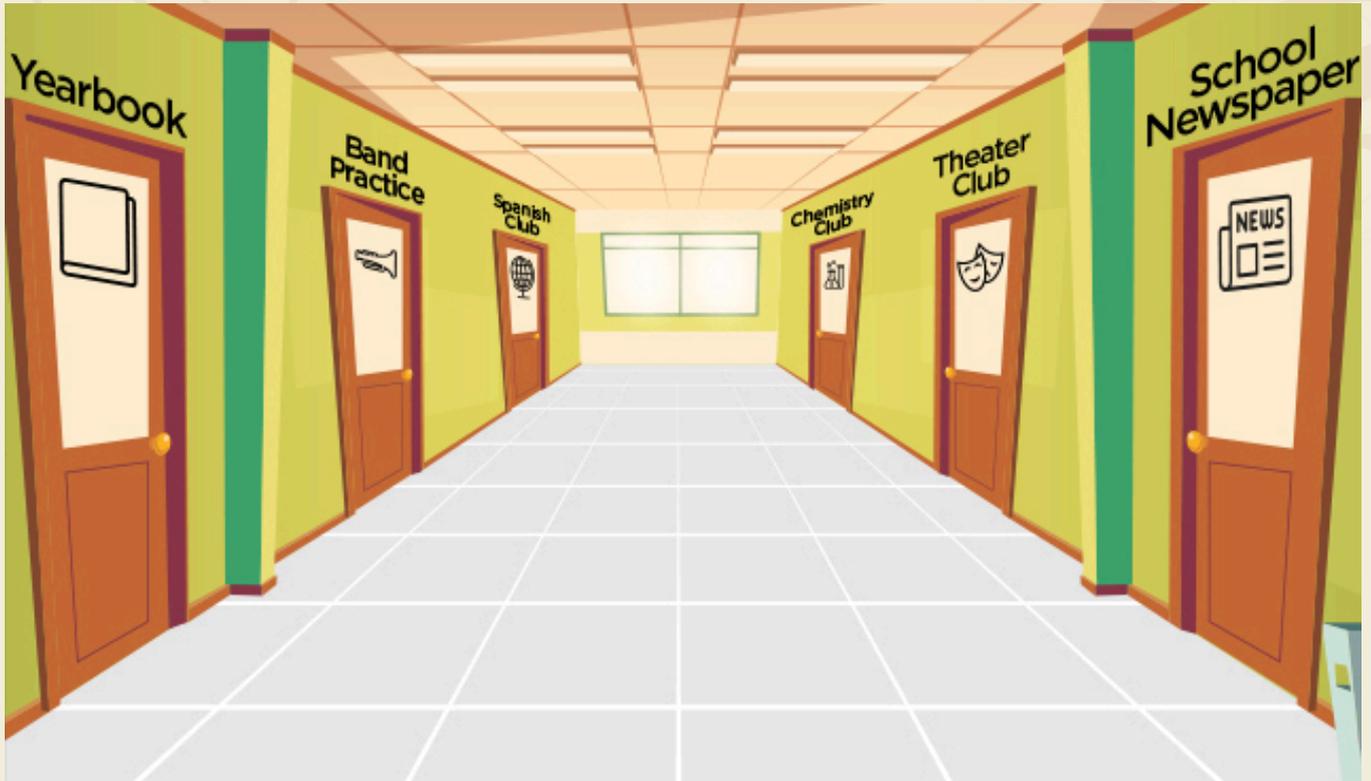
- **Incorporate Technology Mindfully:** While technology can be a powerful tool for learning, it should be used with educated intentionality to enhance creativity. Educators should look for digital tools that support design thinking, such as 3D modeling software or collaborative platforms.

Creating a Culture of Creativity, Together

In a world where creative problem-solving is increasingly important, design thinking offers a valuable approach to reinvigorating children's creative potential. By fostering empathy, critical thinking, and hands-on experimentation, design thinking can help address the creativity crisis in education. It encourages children to explore, innovate, and develop the skills needed to thrive in the 21st century. As educators and parents, it is our responsibility to provide opportunities for children to unleash their creativity and become the problem-solvers of tomorrow.



How Important Are High School Clubs?



<https://ultrashort.info/vbjdXi>

It's no secret that high school is stressful.

If you are gearing up for college, you may feel as though the demands on your time are endless. For starters, you are probably focused on completing challenging courses and test prep. It can seem like you never have any time outside of school—but it is important to de-stress and focus on something besides academics. Joining high school clubs is a great way to achieve that goal!

Even better, having a well-rounded portfolio can improve your competitiveness as a future college applicant.

Your participation in clubs can hone your communication skills, foster creative thinking, and teach you how to work effectively with other people. Your extracurricular involvement is one of the few ways that colleges can gain insights into your personality. Because extracurriculars can take a lot of time—and because your time in high school is precious—you'll want to be strategic about which clubs to join.

How important are high school clubs? They can prove very consequential. If you take on increasing responsibility and achieve success, your extracurricular involvement will not only help you get into college—it could even help you pay for college! Ultimately, high school clubs are as important as you make them. Here are eleven tips for choosing the right clubs and using your time outside of school wisely.

Tip #1: Know your options: There is a huge range of clubs and extracurriculars offered at most high schools. You have the option of joining sports teams, community service clubs, public speaking organizations, math or science leagues, social or political organizations, or interest-focused groups like anime or waffle clubs (yes, there are actual waffle clubs!). Usually, at the beginning of the school year, you will get some introduction to all of the available clubs (via a school assembly, email, or other communication). Make a list of the ones that intrigue you and attend their first meetings. Based on your initial impressions, you can narrow down your list to a few clubs you want to join for the school year.

Tip #2: Choose quality over quantity: While it's a good idea to participate in different types of extracurricular activities, keep in mind that quality is better than quantity. You should not join every single club your school offers. This will lead you to feel overwhelmed and may prevent you from enjoying your extracurricular experiences. Instead, attend your school's club fair at the beginning of the year, choose two to three clubs that you truly enjoy, and focus on those. You don't want to be a dilettante who does a little bit of a lot of things. Instead, think about what really piques your interest, and pursue just a few things.

Tip #3: Understand that colleges know you can't be everywhere all the time: It may not always feel that way, but colleges do understand that some extracurricular activities are much more time-intensive than others. Varsity sports, for instance, may preclude you from participating in any other activities. But if you become increasingly accomplished in your activity (more on this in Tip #4), then you don't necessarily need to be a member of multiple clubs. Likewise, if you have a part-time job, colleges will "count" that out-of-school activity in their assessment of your candidacy.

(And if you need to work significant hours to support yourself and your family, colleges will keep that in mind when considering your extracurricular activities overall.) Colleges will consider both the time commitment you invest in an activity as well as what you accomplish.

Tip #4: Deepen your engagement over time: As you gain more experience in your extracurricular activities, you can take on increasing amounts of responsibility and assume leadership positions. Becoming a club president, team captain, or other leader provides a great way to stand out on college applications—and, more importantly, taking on additional responsibility helps you cultivate your “soft” skills.

Tip #5: Try to gain professional experience: Finding an internship or job that aids in professional development during high school is tough. (There are still opportunities, however. For instance, if you’re thinking of being a pre-med, try shadowing a doctor.) If you can only get limited hands-on work experience—or if you can’t get any at all—clubs can provide valuable professional development opportunities. For example, if you are interested in international relations, joining Model United Nations can provide you with great (simulated) experience. Similarly, if you are interested in science and engineering, try joining a robotics club or Science Olympiad to strengthen key career skills. If you are interested in the arts, try drama club or join the dance team.

Tip #6: Don’t try to game the college admissions process: A stint in Model Congress—especially if you gained recognition for your performance—will likely be looked upon more favorably than, say, time spent in a pinball club. That said, you shouldn’t try to game the college admissions process by joining only clubs you think colleges want you to participate in. That would be doing things backwards—colleges use extracurriculars as a way to understand what you like (not to understand what you think they like), so you should pursue your own interests and passions. Just understand that one hour a week spent in a pizza club won’t be viewed the same as ten hours a week devoted to the debate team. Passion always shows, however—so be guided by your strengths and ideals. If you’re dedicated and talented enough, colleges may even give you a scholarship to attend their schools to continue pursuing your passion!

Tip #7: Consider giving back to your community: Community service clubs such as BuildOn or Key Club are very popular because they offer you a chance to give back. Not only do some honors societies require community service, but many students also find it incredibly valuable and fulfilling. If you decide you want to volunteer for a community service club or organization, think about the issues that matter most to you, and get involved. Take on leadership roles if you can, too. Also remember that many community service organizations offer college scholarships.

Tip #8: Strengthen your time-management skills: Focusing on activities outside of school will allow you to hone your time-management skills. You will have to plan in advance when to complete homework, fulfill your extracurricular responsibilities, study for tests, have a social life, and, occasionally, sleep. Participating in extracurriculars during high school will help you cultivate the time-management skills that you'll need to succeed in college.

Tip #9: If you can't find clubs you want to join, start your own: If you don't see any clubs that spark your interest, don't worry—you can start your own! Not only will this allow you to create something tailored to your interests, but it will also enable you to cultivate a community of students who share your interests. Starting a club, while time-consuming, will demonstrate your leadership skills and willingness to take initiative.

Tip #10: Build relationships with teachers and advisors: Keep in mind that school clubs typically need a faculty advisor. You may ultimately develop a bond with the teacher who serves as your club's advisor—and he or she may end up writing you a letter of recommendation in the future.

Tip #11: As with most things, you get out what you put in: No matter which clubs you join—or launch—you will have the opportunity to develop important skills and stand out on your college applications. The more you make use of your opportunities to pursue new experiences and develop new skills, the more likely your extracurricular involvement is to have an impact on your college prospects. In the process, you're very likely to add value to your high school experience and create amazing memories!

Podcast Suggestion: "Do it for the 'Gram: The Age of Attention" by Azeez Lakhani



[Do it for the 'Gram: The Age of Attention | Azeez Lakhani | TEDxValparaisoUniversity](#)

"Do it for the 'Gram: The Age of Attention" by Azeez Lakhani is the ultimate wake-up call for students caught up in the world of social media! This TEDx talk takes an in-depth look at how our addiction to likes, followers, and attention on social media is shaping our behavior and affecting our mental health. With its engaging delivery and insightful message, "Do it for the 'Gram" is a must-see for students who want to regain control of their digital habits and find a healthier balance in their online lives. So, if you're tired of scrolling and want to learn how to use social media more mindfully, don't miss this talk! Check out this blog to learn the importance of mental health and the challenges that GEN-Z faces regularly.

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