AN OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS REQUIRED FOR ENGINEERING COLLEGE LEAVERS
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ABSTRACT
This paper highlights about the skill set expected from an Engineering graduate by the Campus hiring Companies. Generally Engineering students belong to different disciplines and they come from different background & culture. So a common platform is necessary to make them skillful and competent enough to face the real challenges of today’s corporate world. Generally personality traits, social grace, facility with languages, personal habits, friendliness, and optimistic approach are some of the soft skills that are expected from an individual because these skills provide more opportunities for competing with the tough corporate world. The companies who visit for campus interview filter the students who lack in these skills easily. Employability skills are very essential in the current global job market. The above mentioned soft skills are given striking importance during campus interview. Therefore incorporation of these soft skills in the syllabus will surely be a productive measure for the students who feel difficult to face the interview. This will surely make the student to develop their employability skill and feel confident in executing the assigned work efficiently that is proposed by the company after the selection process. This paper encloses the package of skills that are expected by the corporate from the students, because these skills are badly needed for any student to get employed in reputed companies and to perform their work skillfully.

KEY WORDS: Employability, Campus hiring, Personality traits, Optimism, Handling criticism
1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this global corporate world new and fresh engineering graduates are expected to confront with more challenges and competitions in getting employed compared to previous graduates. Even the candidates who have excellence in his academic degrees are inadequate. As employers are required potential engineers for competencies and capabilities in soft skills since globalization demands the companies to be more competitive in management system. In order to have highly talented Human Resource to survive in the global market, employers began new approach to recruit new engineers. Many companies expect from freshers with skills and abilities to produce result immediately. As a outcome from the recruitment process, the number of unemployed graduates increased. It is advisable for the engineering graduates to possess the employability skills to be updated with the knowledge and technical skills effectively. In metro cities like Chennai engineering graduates have good basic engineering knowledge and they are not lack with technical competency. With this base information the education system are recommended to enhance employability skills by emphasizing on improvements in the non-technical skills aspects amongst undergraduates.

One of the biggest challenges that emerging companies are facing today, preparing the fresher’s towards industry ready professionals from the present educational system. This research paper aims of producing information to the corporate and colleges about the training methodology needed and the expectations of employers from the freshers, and find out mutually fit or not.

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Definition of Employability skills: There are various definitions of employability the one adopted here is that of Yorke (2006)
“a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.”

Three Components of Employability:
✓ Knowledge: This will define what people know, what they will do with what they know and how will they do it. When students plan to start their career. Employer relevant knowledge, skills and attributes is not enough .one must be capable to exploit your assets, to market them and sell them.
✓ Abilities: Knowing what work opportunities exist and their entry requirement, to develop a strategy of getting from where you are to where you want to be, managing your life and career all these aspects define your ability
✓ Presentation: ones an individual have identified their level of knowledge and the abilities, it is important to make it available to employers in a presentable manner. One needs to be presentable to become employable.
Pre-job Training and Employability skills:
All Engineering colleges have to take initiate step in introducing the training programme for ready campus placement, failing which students face difficulties in facing interviews. It is necessary to have Aptitude training, technical, communication and HR Training to the final year students. It is advisable to have training programme from the first year onwards.
Training can be focused from the first year by conducting Orientation programme which enable us to assess the existing ability of the students. Personality programme can be conducted in the second year and soft skills in the third year, in the final year we can have corporate personality development. This type of step by step training process will help the students to get ready for the campus placement.

COMPANY EXPECTATIONS FROM FRESHERS
The main significant reason for a successful company employee is being result oriented. A talented employee is one who can accommodate himself to the circumstances, produce the results at any complex situation. The standardization by corporate includes.

1. **Professionalism:** It is essential that one has to possess unique and up-to-date knowledge, and having the ability to apply their knowledge to his real life.

2. **Initiative:** To be active and participative in new projects and optimize the project function, and also to contribute to improve their performance.

3. **Responsibility:** Candidate must be result oriented and able to complete the task within the set timeframe. He must be responsible for any failure, at the same time to be effectively balance personal objectives. Responsibility to be focused on the identification of solution for the problems. Mainly to be internal entrepreneurs of the company by creating new solutions by utilization of new combination of traditional approaches and processes or their non-standard application

4. **Loyalty:** Corporate expects involvement in the activities of the company, and use company assets only for improvement and development.

5. **Focus on Co-operation with fellow employees:** Fresher’s have to be readiness to participate in cross-functional teams and projects, readiness to share information.

Employability development has three aspects:
- The development of employability attributes
- The development of self-promotional and career management skills
- A willing to learn and reflect on learning

There are eight top employability skills. Self management, Team working, Problem solving, Communication, Business awareness, Customer care, Application of numeracy, Stress management.

From the Article Sources:
Information Technology: The IT sector has been India’s sunshine sector for quite some time now. The industry has contributed considerably to changing India’s image from a slow developing economy to a global player in providing world class technology solutions. According to the IBEF (India Brand Equity Foundation) figures, the Indian IT industry is set to touch $225 billion by 2020. Industry experts and nasscom say the Indian
IT workforce will touch 30 million by 2020, becoming the highest sector employer. This will be coupled with steady increase in pay in a sector already offering a high base. The Outsourcing industry to is looking towards India and is expected to be a $2.5 billion industry in the next 24 months.

3.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To determine the employers views on the nature and relative importance of different employability skills.
- To identify the Training Deliverance for the engineering graduates.
- To compile skills inventory (based on the needs of employer) and incorporate into employability skills profile for distribution to engineering students

4.0 METHODOLOGY

Questionnaires were delivered to 50 placement officers in Chennai engineering colleges and 30 employers at various IT and core industries in Chennai. However the sample is limited to IT & core industries in a limited geographical area of Chennai. All 50 IT and core companies are campus recruiting companies.

The survey sought to study the expectation of employers and identification of the important skills which they expect from the students, the employability skills comprise Communication skills, Team working skills, problem solving skills, literacy skills, numeracy skills, general IT skills, time keeping, business awareness, customer care skills, personal presentation, enthusiasm/commitment, enterprising, vocational job specific skills, advanced vocational job specific skills. From the other part of questionnaire it concentrates on Placement officers’ response on their training deliverance to the engineering students.

The collected data was analyzed quantitatively using percentage analysis. The results are derived in this paper, the employability skills is mean by the nontechnical skills and abilities.

5.0 KEY FINDINGS

Views of Placement Officers: From the survey it explores the opinions of employers and the information regarding the training deliverance in engineering colleges. 50 Engineering colleges have been taken as sample for survey from the result it is found that about 54% of the engineering colleges conducts training programme, and the campus hiring companies visits their college for recruiting freshers. Simultaneously when we look after whether they conducts every year or in a particular year, from the survey it is found that 34% of the engineering colleges conducts placement training in the final year only and 20% of the engineering colleges conducts training every year (i.e.) they concentrate on orientation programme in the first year and personality programme in the second year and soft skills training programme in the third year and for the final years it is focused on the corporate personality development.
The entire placement officer insists that placement training should be included in the academic syllabus.

**VIEWS OF CORPORATE**

Under the viewpoints of corporate the survey explores the employability skills required for the freshers. How every college leavers to be employable, which skills is most important, which are the least important. This survey focus on 13 skills which is shown in the chart.

Some of the Campus recruiting companies namely Wipro, Infosys, HCL, Accenture, CSC, Virtusa, Mahindra satyam, Mphasis, Capegemine, TCS, CTS, Mindtree, Temenos, AonHewit, Enzyen etc.,

From the survey it explores the expectations of employers from the college leavers, they have been asked to respond the priority, and the highest respondents for the employability skills will have the first priority.

**The chart shows the employability skills priority that is most important and the least important. Highest the score is greater the priority**

It is found that 90% of the employers feels numeracy skills being the first priority and next 80% of the employers feels that communication skills being the second priority to have more concentration for preparing campus placement, and equal weitage with Team-working skills, and enthusiasm and commitment comes the next important skills which score about 80%, and the same weitage for general IT skills, 70% of the employers feels the fresher’s need problem solving skills, 60% with literacy skills and another 60% with personal presentation, 54% with business awareness, 50% with time keeping and same 50% for customer care skills, the least importance of employability skills requirement is job-specific skills.

**The chart showing the Training Deliverance to the Engineering Students:**

From the chart it shows that 46% of the engineering colleges have placement training programme in final year only, and 38% of the engineering colleges found to be having training programme every year from 1st year to final Year. And about 16% of the engineering colleges does not have such placement training programme.
6.0 RECOMMENDATION

Campus to corporate being a challenging one for the freshers. Training programme for college students is the main need for the college leavers. Engineering colleges can impart training programme every year starting from the first year to the final year, to be ready for the campus placement, the following suggestion will help the college leavers to develop their ability. The researcher would like to recommend employability skills to be imparted in the academic syllabus of Bachelor engineering. As per the current academic syllabus of Anna University only communication ability is practiced, which is not enough for the enhancement of individual ability.

7.0 CONCLUSION

Employability is being an important survival need for all the individuals. It is very essential that the freshers seek/create jobs which are based on the input which we give in the college. Apart from imparting technological knowledge, the engineering colleges will have to focus on nurturing the employability skills so that they can empower the talent pools. Since the industries are looking for the young and talented professional to strengthen their presence in the highly competitive corporate world, we have to bring in necessary changes in the curriculum and teaching methodology. The study derives that the well reputed companies are expecting industry ready candidates. Placement officers have to exploit this opportunity to get placed their students in any one of the MNCs. The placement officers feel that soft skills should be integrated with the existing curriculum. During the first year itself the college can start with training programme (ie) in the first year with Orientation program, in the second year with personality programme, in the third year with soft skills training program, and in the final year we can have corporate personality programme. This method can help the students to guide them to have better career.

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