



Recruiters' Perception of Fresh Graduates in Engineering Colleges

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Recruitment, recruiters' expectations, employers' expectations, Chennai.

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ABSTRACT *It is a highly competitive world today with respect to demand for right talents and getting it at the right time from right organizations. The productions of engineers and management graduates are more in market comparatively than a decade before yet the employers are unable to complete their recruitment process with perfect satisfaction. The researcher has made this attempt to identify the factors expected by the recruiters from the engineering college graduates in the recruitment process. The initiative for this study was to enable the right production of future engineers as per the recruiters' expectations. The study was done in five engineering colleges from their campus recruiters. This gives a preliminary picture of the recruiters' opinion about their previous experiences of recruitment.*

I. Introduction

Skill is the ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carryout complex activities or job functions involving ideas(cognitive skills), things(technical skills) and people(interpersonal skills). The educational institutions play a major role in inculcating these skills in the growing graduates. A report by educational charity Edge states that the 'Employers expect graduates to demonstrate a range of skills and attributes that include team-working, communication, leadership, critical thinking, problem solving and often managerial abilities or potential. Employers are frustrated that higher education courses do not meet their needs'. Quality skilled candidates are limited in spite of enormous number of engineers produced every year. The money spent on recruiting activity is huge every year by the organizations. But the retention of such employees is very less thereby leading to enormous loss of money invested on recruitment activity. However the organizations do not stop fresh recruitments in order to acquire fresh talents. The growth of Indian economy is 8% on average over the past 5 years still, the skill shortage is still one of the major constraints in most industries in India(World Bank, 2009). Based on this opinion the researcher has made an attempt to study the employers' expectations from the graduates.

Different employers need graduates who have different capabilities. All value the analytical and reflective qualities that lie at the heart of a quality learning experience. But there is a growing emphasis by employers on the need for graduates to demonstrate a range of competences which will equip them to work in a global environment, in different countries, in multi-cultural teams, be innovative and enterprising and have strong language skills...Businesses have diverse and multiple needs for higher learning.

II. Review of Literature

Literature review was done on the topic with relevance aggressively and a few important of it has been discussed below.

Gokuldas,V.K. (2010) studied the Employability according to students' success in campus recruitment drives by information technology companies, that is, whether they received an offer of employment. The study used a sample of two cohorts consisting of more than 500 undergraduate engineers in total, drawn from one of the leading engineering colleges in South India. Independent variables consisted of marks scored at the higher education admission stage, grades in engineering at graduation and performance in non-technical education. The last named comprised verbal reasoning, logical reasoning and soft skills. The dependent variable was whether or not they

were offered employment. The results, obtained through correlation and ordinal regression, revealed that the performance of students in non-technical education was a stronger predictor of employability than was grade obtained in technical education. The findings were similar to several other studies but a valuable addition to the Indian literature.

Andrea Blom & Hiroshi Saeki (2011) studied about the employers expectations from the graduates of engineering colleges in India. They found that three major skills were expected from the graduates.

The skills can be classified as follows:

- (i) Core Employability Skills (attitudinal and affective skills, such as reliability and team-work);
- (ii) Communication Skills (English skills, written and verbal communication), and
- (iii) Professional Skills (which generally covers cognitive skills related to the engineering professions, such as ability to apply engineering knowledge; as well as design and conduct experiments and related data analyze and interpretation).

These skill factors are similar to findings from other employer surveys. Core Employability Skills and Communications Skills are often referred to as soft skills. These three skill factors were therefore considered as appropriate to use for further analysis.

Core skills means Integrity, Reliability, Teamwork, Willingness to learn, Entrepreneurship, Self-discipline, Self-motivated, Flexibility, Understand/take, directions and Empathy. Professional skills include the Use of modern tools, Apply Math/Sci/Engg know, Creativity, Problem solving System design to needs, Contemporary issues, and Customer Service. Communication skills include Communication in English, Written Communication, Reading, Technical Skills, Experiments/data analysis, Verbal Communication, Basic computer and advanced computer.

Vijayakumar.M & Ramalingam.S (2012) conducted a study among 75 recruiters and 270 students by testing 16 attributes of which contributes to the quality of a fresh recruit for any chosen organization. Rank analysis was used to identify the highest contributing factor for the candidates' choice in the recruitment activity. The finding was that oral communication skills is the highest preferred factor by the recruiters. The remaining factors include team work, Problem solving, Self motivation, Decision making, Oral communication, Leadership, Human relations, Time management, Personal appearance, Written communication, Work experience, Creativity, Academic performance, Basic computer, Delegation,

and Multilingual. However these factors were not studied under major classifications. The present study is pursued based on the major classifications of skills required unlike the study discussed herein.

Reviews show that major skills influence the recruitment process.

III. Methodology

Based on the skills discussed above a self developed instrument was drafted and circulated among five top corporate companies in Chennai, India. The instrument was tested for reliability and found that the cronbach alpha value was 0.875. Five top companies were the respondents for this study. The total numbers of companies considered were 15 top companies out of which 5 companies were considered for this study. The actual recruiters who do recruitment for the chosen companies through several sources and also through campus interview were the respondents representing their companies. Probability simple random sampling was the methodology adopted for this study.

IV. Analysis and Discussion

A rank analysis was done to find out which skill was preferred the most by the employers from the graduates.

Table 4.1. The preference of skills by the employers

S.no	Type of Skills	Percentage preferred	Rank
1	Core skills	58%	I
2	Professional Skills	27%	II
3	Communication skills	15%	III

Table 4.1 shows that core skills includes the major expectations by the employers' from the graduates. The other skill also however is important and given preference by the employers. Communication skills appear to be less important but it is the main factor considered while selecting a candidate in the interview process. Because a communication skill is the medium through which the other factors are conveyed to the employer. The students are unable to get placed if they lack in communication skills because they are unable to express their other skills. But technical expertise of the candidate if proven efficiently communication skill does not serve as a barrier for the candidate.

Table 4.2. T-Test to find the highest preferred by the employers

S.no	Type of Skills	Mean
1	Core skills	4.47
2	Professional Skills	3.65
3	Communication skills	3.95

Table 4.2. shows that core skills have the highest mean value 4.47, followed by communication skills with a mean value of 3.95 and lastly professional skills with a mean value of 3.65. This shows that core skills acts as the determining factor in choice of graduates in the recruitment process. Core skills consist of team work which is the present demand of the multinational scenario.

V. Conclusion

From the above discussion it can be clear that the employers have certain expectations from the graduates in form of skills that has to be possessed by them in order to be recruited in good companies. Team work is considered as the most important factor that any employee is expected to possess. It is stated that an employee individually cannot contribute much to the organization. So he is under the demand and pressure to the team one belongs to. Next flexibility is expected in terms of mixing with the team members, shifts allocated to the employees, etc also are certain factors that the employers are expecting from the candidates. Willingness to learn is a very important aspect that drives a person to enrich his knowledge level in order to survive and grow in the organization, emotional stability of the candidate is the definite expectation in order to enable the candidate to bear with the work pressure of the growing organizations. Empathy is expected as a simple and a natural quality of any efficient graduate in order to have care and concern for the team members, peers and subordinates in the organization. Similarly it is also considered that if the employees do not possess empathy they are unfit for man management in the organizations.

Professional skills in terms of knowledge level of the employees are the next priority preference by the employers. It mainly concentrates on the working knowledge, experience in operation of technical knowhow etc. This is considered to be the important factor because it is the actual work the candidate will perform in the organization. The rank analysis done by the researcher gave second priority for this factor but the t-test mean value shows that this is the last preferred factor by the employers from the fresh graduates.

Communication skills is the next factor that serves as a backbone for any candidate to be chosen in the recruitment process. It includes oral communication, written communication, body mannerism, reading skills and much more that the graduate is expected to be well equipped with. This factor was given the last priority as per the rank analysis done but t-test shows that this factor is the next important factor followed by the core skills that a graduate is expected to possess in the recruitment activity.

The Institutions should therefore concentrate on producing future graduates as per the industry requirements in terms of skills. The institutions should conduct several training programmes for the graduates before they face the interviews. The student graduates should be communicated about the skill expectations of the employers and consultants before the recruitment process happens in an institution. Communication skills have to be developed for the graduates through several training and communication programmes. This will enable the companies to get desired candidates and the graduates also will be benefitted by the placement provided by the institutions. The goodwill of the educational institutions will increase when the gap is reduced between the employer and the candidate through them.

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