PREPARING 21ST CENTURY JOB ASPIRANTS OF INDIA: A DIRE NEED OF COGNIZANCE BEYOND HARD AND SOFT SKILLS

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“There is no scarcity of opportunity to make a living at what you love; there's only scarcity of resolve to make it happen.”
– Wayne Dyer, author and motivational speaker.

ABSTRACT

Most people focus on Soft and Technical skills apart from sound academic credentials to make professional students (i.e. Engineering, Management, etc) employable. A lot has been spoken and written about the lack of Soft Skills as the primary reason for only 20 percent of the professional graduates (fresher) to be employable. And lakhs of rupees is being spent in attempting to rectify the situation. But, there are few more factors that are as vital if not more as Soft Skills in securing a job. What is it that really makes a candidate stand out when it comes to the interview? In general when an aspirant applies for a job, employers are looking for the ideal candidate(s) who possesses certain fundamental characteristics. In this paper I would like to present the factors that are as important as Hard and Soft Skills in order to make professional graduates coming out with flying colors in a corporate job interview.

INTRODUCTION

To many of the professional students and parents placements have become primary base to join in a professional college / institution (i.e. engineering, management etc). It is said that the present corporate industry of India is at its revival stage after the world Recession. At this juncture industry demands sound skill set apart from the academic credentials and technical expertise from the present aspirants. To meet these expectations several educational bodies as well as students are putting their best efforts in making industry oriented curriculum, providing training in latest Technologies and so called soft skills. Undoubtedly few of them are able to succeed in their efforts to
achieve their objective. But unfortunately most of the colleges don’t understand the importance of cognizance on certain elements i.e. Knowledge about the Industry, Understand the nature of the Job and its core responsibilities, understanding of interview process and purpose, etc. that is vital beyond Hard and Soft Skills in order to make fresh aspirants industry fit. Added to this the basic infrastructure in several Professional Colleges in India is abysmal.

Self Analysis (SWOT): This analysis is very important especially for fresh graduates to analyze their strengths and improvement areas (weakness) because it is through this analysis one can identify ones’ potential opportunities and try to focus on ones improvement areas.

Clarity on passionate Profession
As a fresh graduate(s) (Engineering) most of them may not have clarity on their profession that they need to carry on. Added to this most of the colleges don’t have career counseling centers. Even majority of the colleges (except city based) neither provides Training classes nor addressing sessions (talks) by the industry experts to educate (at least final year) students on different types of opportunities available in the industry on their respective domain, is the need of the hour.
Career building path: Many of the Indian professional students have mere knowledge on career building process. They simply want a job in hand to survive for time being. When they take up a job with this intention their curiosity towards learning becomes stagnated. This leads to wastage of their precious time. The lack of career building process may also lead for professional stagnation and definitely this has got its own consequences on one’s professional and personal life.

Understand the nature of the Job and its core responsibilities: Professional students are yet to be enlightened in number of II tier and III tier cities of India regarding this aspect. Lack of this acquaintanceship fresh aspirants are unable to respond the way interviewers expect at the time of interview.

Knowledge about the Industry: Understanding the industry starts with knowing the value chain of the particular sector and the different players/organizations involved. In the IT vertical what does it sector do? Who are the main clients of that particular company? What are the different domains? What types of services do they offer? What is the market demand of that particular company service/products? Etc…

Understanding process and purpose of interview: In fact majority of the fresh graduates might have the awareness and clarity on this element. Because of several reasons i.e. lack of guidance in colleges, rural background education, insufficient exposure etc. This creates fear in them and consequently it results in demonstration of their knowledge skills at the time of Interview(s).

Presenting and Demonstrating

Presenting information in Resume and demonstrating the skills at the time of interview is an art that needs proper guidance and practice. Many of the students lack this art. If the aspirant knows what information to be presented in Resume and how to demonstrate the same, that creates a great scope to get selected.

What to say and how to say/ respond: As an aspirant what one has to say to the potential employer(s) is as important as how it is said. Though one has great soft skills but do not know the relevant information which is to be conveyed one ends up looking ignorant. The information and knowledge expected by recruiters if different from what the so called syllabus includes.
Culture of the organization

Generally one starts to get nervous about one’s new responsibilities, the new corporate culture, and the new people with whom they'll be working rather to think how to navigate it.

Cultural understanding is an important aspect in the corporate word. Experiencing other cultures develops a better understanding and appreciation of the relationship between languages and other cultures, as well as the aspirant's native culture. Employees become better able to understand other people's point of view, ways of life, and contributions to the world.

Commitment to make a difference

Resilient people are committed to their lives and their goals, and they have a compelling reason to get out of bed in the morning. Commitment isn't just restricted to their work - they commit to their relationships, their friendships, the causes they care about, and their religious or spiritual beliefs.

Once an aspirant has got good understanding of these areas, he/she can tailor their resume and approach to suit the requirements of the particular position that they’re applying for. This increases their chances of being shortlisted for interview.
KEY POINTS

It is worth enough taking time to explore on self analysis, career opportunities search, industry awareness and focus on skill development right from the beginning (i.e. for B.Tech guys from II year onwards). By doing this, one can discover opportunities that are perfectly matched to one’s interests or skills, and identify ways of expanding their knowledge and skills that makes one to be fit for the industry needs (Employable).

In order to spot career opportunities, one can follow these steps:

• Have the right mindset.
• Seek opportunities.
• Identify your strengths and weaknesses.
• Identify other factors that are important.
• Narrow your choices.
• Prepare, and take action.

One should keep in mind that finding huge opportunities is an ongoing process, not a destination. Let us keep our eyes and mind open, and be prepared for the drives. We (freshers) never know what doors will open for us when we start attending interviews.

CONCLUSION

Indeed, Hard and Soft Skills has their own role to play in order to come out with flying colors in Interviews. But Cognizance on few of the needy areas i.e. Understanding the market, the nature of the Job and its core responsibilities, Understanding of interview process and purpose, etc. is the most important not only in moulding fresh graduates to be fit (employable) for the corporate expectations but also to inculcate entrepreneurial abilities which is also one of the dire need qualities for 21st Century learners. I believe, at least now if professional educational bodies are vociferous or fail to realize the need of providing awareness on changing trends and keep continuing their conventional teaching and training methodologies and approaches demographic disaster is imminent to India.

REFERENCES

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