

EXPERT TALK



HIRING THE RIGHT CANDIDATES

What type of Management Graduates Corporate Organisations look for? What qualities in a Management Graduate makes him/her a perfect choice for the recruiter? What preparations should one make before a campus recruitment? These and similar such questions are often asked by the students, placement in-charges and even teachers in B schools and other campuses.

It is obvious that there is nothing static about the type of candidates that the corporate organisations are seeking to recruit year on year. The choice is dependent on the changing business context. And we all know that the business environment is highly volatile and dynamic. In general, to-day's organisations have to be highly agile, nimble footed, quick to learn, innovative, service oriented and competitive. People hired to shape or support these characteristics have to possess similar traits much of which do not form part of the syllabi not at least in the way they are applied at work places.

I am tempted to quote from "The World is Flat", an international bestsellers of Thomas Friedeman, one of the most respected and widely travelled journalists with The New York Times. Friedman writes, "There will be plenty of good jobs out there in the flat world for people with the right knowledge, skills, ideas, and self motivation to seize them." He goes on to advise the young Americans that grabbing those jobs "requires not only a new level of technical skills but also a certain

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mental flexibility, self-motivation, and psychological mobility." Friedman aptly uses the metaphor of "untouchability" in Indian caste system, to point out that "the key to thriving as an individual, in a flat world is figuring out how to make yourself *untouchable*". "Untouchables," in his lexicon, are people whose jobs cannot be outsourced, digitized or automated. The thrust, therefore, is on remaining "wanted" and "highly employable" in the job market. What applies to young Americans is relevant to our youngsters.

While recruiters at the campus may be looking for specific qualities in candidates to suit their unique needs, the following seven, in my view, cut across most organisations represented at the campuses.

ADAPTIVE TO CHANGE:

Transition from Campus to Corporate is a big change. Life in campus is very different from the corporate life. You come into a world which is far more formal, heterogeneous and demanding. You are faced with multifarious situations and often there may not be a pattern. Your routine may undergo a complete change. You may be called upon to re-locate yourself at short notice, travel to unfamiliar places, meet different kinds of people. For many, working in rotating shifts where the operations are continuous poses a big challenge. There may be occasions where you have to work long hours at the cost of your personal conveniences. It is not just the ability but the willingness that you exhibit to adapt to change that makes a difference.

ENERGY:

If you are energetic and if it shows in your body language, you are the "go-to" person and more likely to be trusted with new assignments and greater responsibility. Energy is a function of your personal discipline in terms of your physical, mental and emotional being as well as what lies ahead for you. So check it out if you are recognised as an energetic person and display that energy appropriately.

CREATIVITY:

The most important trigger for hiring a fresh graduate from the campus is to inject fresh blood in the organisation. The youngsters are expected to question status quo, think creatively and offer innovative solutions to problems or come up with altogether new ideas. You may get hired by an organisation where the culture itself supports creativity and innovation. There may be others where there is a gap between the top management's vision and middle management's execution. No matter who hires you and who supervises you, it will always be rewarding to stay creative and not allow yourself to be conditioned on the pretext of "adapting" or "compromising."

SELF-DRIVEN:

Are you the type who would run to the boss every time you get into a jam? Or would you try, sweat and find solutions? Are you proactive or wait for things to happen so that you get up and start working? Organisations prefer people who are self-driven and initiate things on their own without having to be instructed for every little thing. People who not only initiate but relentlessly pursue accomplishment of a task.

RELATIONSHIPS:

Yes, you are expected to be a go-getter, tirelessly driving results, questioning

traditional ways and shaking up inertia. But nothing at the expense of relationship with those below you, your peers and, of course, your superiors. You are not expected to create a problem for someone else to solve. Organisations bring together people of diverse socio-economic background. Further, people are not only different in terms of their age, gender, and academic credentials but also the way they think, feel and act. So how you get along with every individual and groups of people, so diverse in nature, and accomplish your tasks is a big challenge.

LEARNING AND UPDATING:

You may have done with your text books, class notes and project reports but not with the need to keep learning and updating. Learning not only to keep enriching your domain knowledge but about every other relevant function that drives the business. It is the 7th Habit of Stephen Covey's highly acclaimed book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. Habit 7 is taking time to sharpen the saw. Sharpening the saw is about renewing four dimensions of our nature, - physical, spiritual, mental and social/emotional.

STICKING TO THE ORGANISATION:

You may have very good reasons to leave a job. Organisations are burdened with the problem of attrition; try not to add to it. Make a careful choice about what you are seeking to do. If it is career, learn to pace the career progression instead of switching from one job to another. Young graduates opt for a job and keep preparing for higher studies until they exhaust their chances. That does not help your recruiter. Once your interest in higher studies is discovered, they stop giving you responsibility and you start feeling left out. It is a vicious cycle.

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