

B-SCHOOLS

Five Steps a B-school Can Take to Prepare Freshers for Today's Tough Job Market

Assocham study mentions that only 20% of the graduates passing out land up with a job, what is aggravating the problem further is the average package going down



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With thousands of B-school mushrooming across India the biggest challenge both the students and the school face is “Jobs”. Assocham study mentions that only 20% of the graduates passing out land up with a job, what is aggravating the problem further is the average package going down. The biggest culprit being demand and supply, the other issue could be how relevant the corporate feel is what the students are learning to make them job ready.

B-Schools should ensure that they are more of a finishing school so that corporates feel it is imperative for them to be a part of the Placement process to fulfill their hiring needs. To counter the vicious cycle of the demand and supply, differentiation is the key.

The key differentiators for a B-School could be:

- **Learning Vs Hiring-** Schools should work towards making the student's industry ready by checking at what level of the Bloom's Taxonomy hierarchy the students are, it's always easy for an individual to remember or understand what is being taught. What should be assessed is how they can apply what they learn to solve live business problems and this can be done only if they are adept at analyzing and evaluating. The last 2 qualities lying higher on the Bloom's Taxonomy hierarchy, the pinnacle being Create which will have the highest utility for the Corporates because if students can create with the knowledge they gain then that could be the real differentiator.
- **Attitude-** Winston Churchill's quote "Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference" aptly summarizes the importance of this. Corporates when they do their hiring also mention that they hire for attitude. An Individual having less natural aptitude but having the attitude to work hard can attain the essential skills just by their resolve and efforts. The widespread belief is that skills can be taught attitude can't, but we can ascertain what the crucial abilities of a positive attitude are and then each of these can be imparted and developed as positive habits.
- **Teamwork-** Teaching the punch line "WE" is the new "I". Corporates expect that their employees can work in group both small and large, quite a few times the problems or job in hand is complex and the same can't be handled by just one or a bunch of individuals working in silos, other than a handful of jobs rest all expect high level of teamwork and coordination among teams across diverse functions. Group assignments, case study analysis, sector analysis could be some of the ways to make the students work in a group. Students could be divided into groups with each student handling different functions, they could then work on the areas of Product development, Production, Sales, Finance, Marketing, CRM, funding and may be even how to sell the company. This will make the student not only competent in their area of specialization but also will make them understand and appreciate the problems faced by other functions of the organization.
- **Curriculum-** If students learnability is important, then what is paramount is what they are learning at the school. The course content needs to be relevant, futuristic and directed towards problem-solving skills. The curriculum should be designed to ensure that the student has depth when it comes to his or her area of specialization not width. The Industry interface is the key differentiator here regarding the curriculum or could be the differentiator among the B-Schools. To keep the curriculum relevant with the times it could be advisable to have Industry

mentors not just in the Governing Council or the academic councils but also in every area of specialization. Faculties are the key when it comes to developing the course and imparting the knowledge to the student. To make the faculty more relevant with the times we can encourage the Corporates to have “Faculty Internships” where they work on live problems and work with the corporate teams.

- **Ethics-** Teaching ethics often is termed as being cliché or it is limited to refrain from corruption, but when it comes to the corporate is much beyond that. Integrity, discipline, honesty, making the right choices, behavior towards others, responsibility, are all important parts of being ethical in life. We are expecting B-School graduates to be leaders and the above mentioned behavioural habits will play an important role in shaping an individual as an effective and ethical leader. Case studies on CSR, guest speakers who made a difference in their organizations with respect to these areas, simulations and Integration of business ethics in the B-School program are some ways which can help develop this as an important learning parameter for the student.

The article can be read online [here](#).