

B-school placements: 8 'Ps' can get you that great job

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A B-school student during placements needs to be disciplined to develop the right skills to impress hirers.

When a management grad is talking numbers, calculating ROIs and comparing costs of living - one can be assured it's the time for placements in B-schools. Clearly the race for a job is not an easy one - given the stiff competition that students have to face!

Differentiating oneself is the USP that a grad can take to the table – yet it is not something one can do in an instant. A candidate requires discipline to develop the right skills to impress hirers, so here are a few tips that should help you along the way.

1. Place - Remember, this is your first milestone - Not the last of your career. Take up the challenge, you have age on your side. It's the time when you are free (socially, personally and financially) to experiment with travel and transfers. Startups, semi-established companies, Platinum firms – it does not matter. What matters is that it's time for you to demonstrate your potential and your ability to multitask

2. Price -Research says that close to 93% of the MBA graduates are unemployable for various reasons – the key reason is their dissatisfaction with the pay packet. Needless to say, with the loss to time and increased spans of waiting and unemployment, the chances that your pay packet might get heavier has a diminishing probability. Stay optimistic about your abilities to earn better. For the moment, be wise not to wait too long and regret missing out on an opportunity.

3. Promotion - There is only one person who knows you best - and that is you! You are the brand and you are your best salesperson. Promote yourself well. Align your personality and competencies to the job description that is given to you. While you are leaving the interview table, make sure the panel there is pleased to have found you.

4. Product - MBA is about knowing. Know your business. Know the business of the product you are going to work with. Your passion for the

product must be illuminating. From an intangible concept to a tangible product – Know it! If you must be a part of an organisation or a firm, then you must know everything about its products, its growth and life. Read about it. Your knowledge will help steer you up a few steps in the firm.

5. People - One of the key factors for your performance in the organisation is the people, both internal and external. Do a thorough study of the culture of the organisation where you are planning to work. Find out if it matches your persona, your views, vision and opinions. Study the external people or the customers of your organisation and try to gauge if you have it in you to convince them about what you are selling.

6. Physical evidence - Look at the organisation in which you will work, not at the building, workstation, cafeteria or other frills. It's finally all about how much you can learn from your first job. As long as you are learning and there is a constant value addition to your abilities it's immaterial whether you are sharing the cabin with four others or having that individual workstation.

7. Process - There should be a process to your preparation for placements. List abilities which you want to showcase, the answers to your questions should not be limited to the organisation where you have applied. Study that complete sector, look at competitors, assess how, if one change is made by one competitor, it would impact others, study how that particular sector could be impacted by growth or fall in other sectors.

I would add a personality factor to the 7 P's of placements

8. Proactive: The curriculum designed in an MBA programme is to accentuate your pro-activeness. In the two years or one year of your programme you have met people of different cultures, worked with teams of varying personalities, studied and read about business cases and stories and gathered a good understanding of the markets and its progress. Be it the decision to take up a job or the enthusiasm to start your own venture, proactive thinking is the mantra.

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