

## EXPECTED SKILLS AND ISSUES IN CORPORATE EMPLOYMENT MARKET FOR ENGINEERING GRADUATES

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### **Abstract**

*Expectations of the corporate world are ever increasing from engineering graduates. In India students' enrolment for engineering course is increasing along with increasing trend of engineering institutes. But various studies have proved that there is a skill gap among the students. Corporate expectation are not fulfilling from the fresh engineering graduates. As a results companies have strengthens their criteria of selection of engineering graduates. Various new criteria like, no gaps in the education, no ATKT, Continues passing and 60 % throughout the qualification are the major eligible criteria which are fixed by domestics as well as multinational companies. These criteria have created obstacles for both the companies and students also. Awareness among the engineering institutes and students about these criteria is very essential. Both institutes and students need to understand the market requirement and they should update themselves. In this context, this article will explore the important criteria of the companies adopted for the selection of the fresh engineering graduates and obstacles faced by students as well as by the companies during the selection procedure.*

**Key words:** *Skills Gaps, Criteria, Engineering Institutes & Graduates, Corporate etc.*

### **Introduction**

Engineering education institutes in India have been increased and consequence of this, there is increased number of enrolment for engineering degree course. It has leads to growth of the engineering fresh graduates in the country. But recent studies have shown that there are only 15 % to 20 % of fresh engineering graduates employable (Belagodu

Venkatesh, 2013). Many studies have revealed that Indian institutions produced lakhs of engineers but industry experts strongly feel that only 15% - 25% of them are employable. Companies who are recruiting the fresh engineering graduates are facing problems. Major reason for this is skill gap among the fresh engineering graduated. Looking to this situation in the market, companies have also change their policies and strategies while recruiting the fresh engineering graduates. Most of the multinational as well as domestic companies have strengthened their recruitment and selection procedures. As a result companies have come up with various criteria. They are currently not recruiting fresh engineering graduates if they have not passed examination continuously without ATKT. Even though, if students have gaps during the course of degree period, they are not eligible for the selection process. Companies also demands engineering graduates with fluency in English languages. Those students who come from rural background or urban area company demanding to get skilful employee. Researcher have explored the criteria set by the companies while recruiting the fresh engineering graduates and also explained obstacles faced by the companies while recruiting the fresh engineering graduates. This paper will be helpful for technical institutes and engineering students to understand focused areas in which improvement is needed.

## **Objectives:**

1. To understand the recent criteria for selection of fresh engineering graduates by the recruiters
2. To assess the problem faced by the corporate while selecting fresh engineering graduates
3. To know the major reasons behind dissatisfaction of recruiters from engineering graduates and suggest remedies to overcome the same.

## **Methodology:**

For getting the insights and collection of the data, personal interview and discussion method were used by researchers. Recruiters those are recruiting fresh engineering

graduates were contacted and information was collected after personally visit to the companies and interviewed the by researchers.

Researcher has selected employers samples from engineering institutes affiliated to Shivaji University. Total number of corporate visited on campus in last three years consistently in engineering institutes affiliated to Shivaji University were considered for study. The total numbers of employer were 98 out of which 79 were selected for the study. To understand the employer expectation, performance from the engineering students, questionnaire was prepared and data was collected for getting the insights. 07 factors were found from the study which was significant for recruiting the fresh engineering graduates. Ranking of these factors/criteria has done to understand the importance given by the employers while recruiting the fresh graduates.

**Table No. 01: Sampling of Employers respondents**

Total Institute	Total No of employers	Samples selected for the study
29	98	79

(Source: Field Work)

Taro Yamane formula for sample size

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n = Sample to be selected    N= Total population =98  
e = Confidence Level/Error =0.05

$$= \frac{98}{1+98(0.05)^2} = 79$$

**Table No. 02: Ranking of Criteria as per significance given by the employers**

Sr. No	Criteria	Percentage (N-79)	Ranking
1	<i>60 Percentage Criteria throughout Qualification</i>	100 %	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Aptitude test	98 %	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3	Proficiency in English language	95%	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4	Ability to learn and willingness	88%	4 <sup>th</sup>
5	Location Factor	87%	5 <sup>th</sup>
6	Continuous passing criteria (No ATKT)	61%	6 <sup>th</sup>
7	Gap Criteria	42%	7 <sup>th</sup>

(Source: Field Work).

Table No. 02 explores the significance given by the employers while recruiting the fresh engineering graduates. It is observed that while recruiting engineers, companies are looking candidates having 60 Percentage Criteria throughout Qualification as an initial round of screening. Secondly they also conduct aptitude test from which further short listing is done for the third round. In the next round (personal interview, Group Discussion) engineers proficiency in English, willingness and learning ability, location preferences for job, continuous passing criteria and gap criteria has been analysed in details. These significant criteria employers use to select the desired candidates. Significance and explanation of each criterion is given below in detail.

### ***60 Percentage Criteria throughout Qualification***

While discussing with the human resource (HR) executives it was found that, employers are expecting engineering candidates with 60% and above students. This percentage they expect from their throughout qualification. It means student if not having passed with 60% in 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> standard or in his bachelor degree or any one of this will not qualified for the interview. This was only because of availability of engineering students in abundance in the market. First selection criteria adopted by the companies are to screen the students' percentage and those are eligible only been given chance for further

process. It was also found from the discussion with the HR executives of the companies, engineering students mostly are disqualified from the first screening round of percentage and it is one of the main obstacles which are faced by them. So many students are participating in the campus interview but only few can attend final rounds of the campus interview. These minimum percentage criteria which are developed by the companies are creating problems in front of engineering students but from these students can get alert and improve their percentage score and try to reduce the gap of expectations to match requirement of employers.

### **Aptitude test**

After fulfilling the basic screening criteria of percentage, Gap in education and continues passing criteria, students need to pass the aptitude test which is conducted by the companies. In this aptitudes test various questions related to analytical thinking, critical thinking, numerical and logical question have been asked. Minimum passing limits are fixed on which students are selected for the further round of the personal or panel interview. But while discussing with the recruiters it was found that engineering students are weak in aptitude test, rate of passing aptitude test is very low. Companies representative were saying students are not fulfil the set criteria which they required from fresh graduates. And one of the important criteria is aptitude test and this test most of the students are not passing. Recruiters said that they are dissatisfied with the rate of passing in aptitude test of the engineering students. There is intense need to train engineering students in aptitude test as it is prerequisite. If students are passing this aptitude test criteria then only this students can give further interview. Aptitude test has become major obstacles for fresh engineering graduates. Engineering institutes need to organised training program on aptitude test and make students more competent in solving aptitude test.

### **Proficiency in English language**

Studies have shown that engineering students are strong at technical skills but they are weak at generic skills. Generic skills like Communication skills, interpersonal skills,

leadership skills, emotional intelligence and business communication skills are the most required skill sets for engineering students. Engineering institutes focused is on giving more technical skills to their students. But these students need to be proficient in generic skills which are highly required in the employment market. Among these generic skills, English language proficiency is necessary to sustain on the job. Hence, it was found that students are good at technical skills but they are weak at English language. If the engineering candidates fulfill all the criteria which is expected by the companies but they are not able to express their knowledge in English language then it is difficult to face the interview. English is a business language and students need to be proficient in it. There is a huge gap in expected skills set by the companies and skills possessed by the fresh engineering graduates. Students, Institutes and even university authority need to understand the importance of this deficiency and certain steps should be taken to overcome these deficiencies in this sector.

### **Ability to learn and willingness**

Learning is a continuous process. Those who are continuously in the learning phase only they can sustain in the market place. While discussion with the employers it was found that the learning ability of fresh engineering graduates are questionable. Willingness of the fresh engineering graduates to work hard, learn and to continue in working place is problematic. Recruiters said that there is a huge scope for those graduates who are able to learn continuously and have willingness to work hard and update themselves. It was explored by the recruiters that students' attitude is most important while selection. Learning ability and willingness to work or to do more the candidate is judged by the recruiters at the time of interview. So it is advised to the fresh engineering graduates to analyse themselves and analyse their ability to learn and willingness to work hard in the companies. Ability to learn and willingness are the two significant factors which are screened by the recruiters in the selection process. It is very important that fresh engineering graduates need to assess themselves and see their ability to learn new things and willingness to extend update to desired level.

**Location Factor**

It has been observed that fresh engineering graduates are not showing their interest to relocate. They are searching the job which is near to their home town. Employers said that students are not able to relocate from their home town to other location. Students are searching jobs which are near to their home location. This is one of the major obstacles faced by both the employers as well as the students. Employers have their factory location in various places and they demand flexible manpower which shifts from one place to another. While students are searching jobs and demanding jobs which are near to their home town. It is need to understand that there is no possibility to proved job to everyone near to their home town. Students need accepts these facts and ready to work in location where they are getting the opportunity. It is the demand of the market for flexible manpower and meets the expectation by the employers. If fresh graduates are becoming choosey then they will themselves suffer from it.

**Continuous passing criteria (No ATKT)**

There are companies which are selecting students as an employee those are passed continuously without ATKTs. In the four years degree course, any year if student get ATKT and he is continuing his education then this students are not eligible for the placements. ATKT students are also not preferred by the companies. It was found that ATKT students are avoided by the recruiters most of the time. These facts need to understand by the engineering students and they should try to pass their degree without ATKT.

**Gap Criteria:**

In western Maharashtra (Sangli, Satara, Kolhapur District) engineering institutes are mushroomed and number of engineers passed out from these institutes are increasing. There are also few engineers in this region those are passing the engineering degree but are passing with gaps. Students do not passed in all subjects during their four year degree course. Unfortunately they used to take gaps in any year; reason could be failing in examination or their family problems. Students in this category are also increasing in

the engineering degree course. Companies are directly rejecting these students who are having educational gaps in their degree program. Most of the multinational and domestic companies are also not giving preference to the students having gap in their education. This is very significant issue which should be understood by students as well as the engineering educational institutes. There is need of awareness among both the engineering students and institutes regarding these gap criteria which is adopted by companies.

### **Conclusion:**

Enrolment numbers for engineering course is increasing but the quality of the output from the engineering institutes is not up to standards. For getting qualitative and knowledgeable manpower companies have need to adopt proper recruitment and selection policies. They strengthen the selection criteria of fresh engineering graduates. Companies adopted criteria like, No Gaps in education, No ATKT, Continuous passing in the examination, 60 % throughout qualification, passing of aptitude test and fluency in English language is very essential. Companies are also looking for the smart manpower which is showing interest in relocating. Students those are not interested to relocate are not entertained by the companies. Engineering Institutes required to understanding the essential criteria of selection and need creating awareness among the student. This will helps students to update themselves for the better career prospects.

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