

An indication of communication skills vital for recruitment of young engineers in today's dynamic scenario

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Abstract: Effective Communication skills are a prerequisite requirement not only to tackle day to day activities but even to progress in career these days. Engineering has long been accepted as a technical field with graduating people having the necessary expertise and hard-core skills. But gone are those days when mere academic knowledge and technical expertise sufficed to survive and make a mark for oneself in the corporate arena. Given the world of globalization and increasing purview of business activities across globe one has to have fluency in a globally accepted language. Given the importance of the ability to properly communicate not only with peers, authorities and the internal organization but also to maintain good public relations with the outside parties viz the customers the government authorities, the suppliers; the recruiters are giving due weightage to the ability to have a conversant oral and written communication while recruiting engineering graduates. This paper is an attempt to analyze the paradigm change in the skill requirement for engineers from being techno centric to more of a soft skill centric one. An attempt has been made to analyze the importance of having good communication skills to have a professional advancement in career.

Index Terms - Technical skills, soft skills, communication skills, written communication, oral communication.

I. INTRODUCTION

The ability to have an effective communication and pass on the intended information in an accurate, precise, clearly understood and as intended manner is one of the most significant life skills these days. It is the need of the hour not only to have a lasting impact on others in our own personal life but also to help progress in the professional life. Those having good oral and written communication skills are considered to be far superior to the ones who lack the ability to effectively communicate. Irrespective of the industry one belongs to he has to be a good orator and a good listener so as to effectively comprehend the core information being passed on. Given the techno-savvy world one must have a good grip on ways to effectively convey and express information and comprehend the same in person as well as via other medium like telephone, email, and social media. Extraordinary skills of communicating help comprehend people and situations better and build an environment of mutual trust and respect which fosters creativity and effective problem solving. Employee productivity can be significantly enhanced with proper internal communication. Having realised that employees with proper communication skills are the cornerstone for the success of any organisation, recruiters these days are in a constant hunt for engineering talent with extraordinary soft skills. They believe that it is easier to train employees on technical skills than soft skills. But in a constantly evolving and dynamic corporate world, attracting and retaining young engineering talent is quite a big challenge for many companies. The challenging scenario in terms of recruitment is posed due to increasing demand of highly talented engineers on one side and difficulty in reaching out the next generation given the traditional modes of recruitment. The challenge becomes even more when it comes to start-up companies. Be it established organisations or start up ones the common modes of recruiting engineers include university career fairs, pooled campuses or hiring through individual campus recruitment, walk-in interviews etc. Given the short span of time identifying and recruiting the right talent becomes all the more difficult. The campus recruitment procedure usually consists of aptitude testing, technical round followed by an HR round. Evaluating engineers on the basis of their technical expertise has been the selection criterion for companies since ages but due to the increasing challenges posed in retaining, maintaining the talent and ensuring proper coordination amongst them so as to ensure improved productivity, evaluation of the young generation engineers on the basis of their soft skills has become extremely important.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sheth, Tarjani & Tarjani,. (2015) discussed that "Teaching English to engineers is a delicate and demanding matter in terms of content, methods and techniques, and deciding which are appropriate for this particular area of engineering and English. The aim is to develop and master relevant communication and professional skills, using English as a means and a kind of mediator in shaping future engineers. Apart for their acumen in the technical skills, they must be well-versed in communication skills, in which Universities can play a key role to shape the future engineers to cope the growing demand of interacting as well as writing skills. The aim of this paper is to gauge the present scenario of the technical world, role and importance of communication in it, and the need for an engineer to sustain his talent as well as compete with the world holding two weapons-technical skills and communication skills".

Marc J. Riemer, (2007) said that "Communication skills are an essential component in the education of engineering students to facilitate not just students' education but also to prepare them for their future careers. In this article, the author discusses various important communication skills required of modern engineers, such as foreign language skills. Also discussed are various elements of communication skills education, such as oral, listening, written, visual, interdisciplinary and intercultural. The impact of emotional intelligence (EQ) is also presented. Suggestions for communication skills development are made, including the posit that communication skills be integrated across the curriculum, rather than include it as a stand-alone subject in already packed engineering curricula, so as to reinforce student learning. Researcher also discussed Various potential areas for further research."

Peena Thanky, (2014) discussed that "Conventional Engineering curriculum is strongly focused on the development in students of technical knowledge and skills. However, in recent years, employers have increasingly acknowledged that this traditional preparation of engineering students is inadequate, as graduates lack the wide range of written and spoken communication skills

required to engage with the members of other professional groups and with the broader community. This paper focuses on the need to recognize the important role that communicative competence plays in professional success within the engineering industry”

Chetia, B. (2015). reported that “Engineering profession is highly dependent upon communication skills. Engineers must be able to report their ideas and designs clearly and succinctly to their subordinates, coworkers, supervisors, and clients. Effective communication skill is an important life-skill required not only in one’s academic and professional career but also in one’s personal career. Technical communication is a type of communication that has a specific purpose with a well-defined audience. The present paper attempted a study on the importance of technical communication for Indian Engineering Students for better Job prospects”.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- 3.1. Objective: To study the communication skills necessary for recruitment of young engineers in today’s dynamic scenario.
- 3.2. Research type: Descriptive research
- 3.3. Data Collection: Secondary Data which includes research articles, based web sources etc..

IV. DISCUSSION

Engineering is one of the fastest paced and highly fascinating field today as it offers huge earning potential on one side and job satisfaction and significant stability on the other side given the plethora of job roles available for young engineering graduates and the enormous industries offering such job roles. Engineers poses a strong educational background and technical expertise. But despite of this they are required to demonstrate command over interpersonal communication so as to attain career advancement. Basic life skills require relational adaptableness amongst variety of people, their difficulties and conditions. One of such basic life skills is the ability to communicate in a diverse and challenging environment. Ability to communicate effectively complement hard technical skills so that technically-adept engineers do not have to struggle for obtaining promotions once they are employed. Given the importance of soft skills more specifically the communication skills of engineering graduates and its contribution towards enhanced productivity and success of the organization the researcher hereby intends to find out and appraise the various job skills which become a pre requisite requirement for any organization and ways to develop these so as to ensure complete success. The discussion below shows the various job skills as analyzed by the researcher which contribute for organizational success:



Figure: Skills necessary for recruitment of engineers. (Source: Researcher designed)

4.1. Technical Expertise:

Engineers being the originators and developers definitely have to have expertise in variety of technical skills depending upon the complexity of work required to be done ,so they have to possess formal education in fields like Computer Programming Languages, modelling techniques, project management , structural analysis, telecom engineering, Statistical analysis, system analysis and design, civil proficiency etc

4.2. Communication skills:

Technical fields like Engineering are heavily dependent on interactions between peers and outside parties like clients and general public who lack technical expertise. The ability to convey what is intended in highly dependent on listening skills, presentation skills, Emotional quotient, negotiation and leadership skills along with team building.

4.3. Project Management:

Engineering jobs these days are severely project-based, Engineers are vested with the responsibility of managing teams and integrating with auxiliary departments so as to make sure that task is completed within deadlines and in predetermined cost parameters. Keeping in view the above functionality the ability to keep track of oneself, his team and the project as a whole becomes all the more very crucial. One has to properly coordinate, prioritize and plan multiple tasks with multiplicity of resources, people and projects. Frequently engineer encounter issues and problem which need to be addressed within a time frame so as to avoid losses and reduce bottle necks. Efficient project management is an essential pre requisite in any hard core engineering based organisation which requires effective project management skills, Strategic Planning intent, proper scheduling of work, Quality Control, leadership skills and critical thinking acumen.

4.4. Teamwork:

Any organisation does not exist in isolation. Every organisation is comprised of people who work in teams collaborating with each other to work towards the upliftment of the organisation. Working in teams one has to have empathy for others and give respect to the differing viewpoints of everyone and work in tandem so as to make sure that team targets are met on time. Working in teams essentially require an attitude wherein one has to forego their personal egos and stick to what is right rather than promoting ones vested interests.

4.5. Creativity:

Multi-tasking capabilities and efficient problem solving essentially revolves around ones creative abilities. An engineer has to essentially find out new innovative ways from his own existing body of knowledge so as to find solutions in practical life. Engineers thus essentially have to have a creative acumen so as to fins cost effective ways and bring projects to their completion stage.

4.6. Presence of mind and keen attention to details:

Engineers have to handle projects with varying complexities. The more complex a project is the more personalised attention it requires on part of the project managers. Even a small mistake committed by anyone at any stage may jeopardise its progress and may lead to project failure which will essentially result in incurring huge losses. So a keen attention right from project planning, its development and execution is required on part of the engineers.

4.7. Problem-Solving:

All engineering graduates are required to possess excellent problem-solving capabilities. Finding effective solutions to the existing problems becomes all the more important taking into consideration the constantly evolving business environment. Problem solving essentially involves successfully weighing the pros and cons of each solution under consideration and finding ways involving minimum risk.

4.8. Adaptability to the changing environment:

Technology these days is rapidly evolving and engineering is a profession which is heavily technology driven. So as to keep abreast with rapidly advancing technology, meet the changing requirements of clients, agile development techniques and several other factors engineers have to be adaptable and are required to readily accept changes as and when required. Adaptability to changing need is one of the skills highly rated and looked upon by employers. It is rightly said that in this dynamic business environment change is the only thing that is constant and one cannot be adamant on adopting the good old ways..

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Engineering profession is one of the very challenging profession involving dealing with a dynamic environment, multiplicity of projects, people and task to be handled in a limited amount of resources. This has put a lot of pressure on recruiters to tactfully select the professionals who have the capability to handle such complexities given the increasing uncertainties and cut throat competition. Gone are those days when engineers were considered merely as technical people who should have excellent domain knowledge. Engineers these days are required to possess the necessary technical skills and domain knowledge and a plethora of other skills so as to ensure timely project completion and execution. Hiring managers are in constant look out for engineers with excellent communication skills, problem solving capabilities, team handling expertise, negotiation skills, leadership skills and creative capacities which make these specific skills all the more very important in current dynamic environment so as to ensure selection of career advancement post selection. So present day engineers need to focus on development of these skills apart from their technical expertise.

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