ATTAINING THE EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS DURING THE COURSE OF ONE'S GRADUATION

S. BASHEER AHMED[1] & P. KOUSARU BASHA[2]

[1]Assistant Professor of English, Basic Sciences & Humanities, Santhiram

Engineering College, Nnandyal, Kurnool (DT) Andhra Pradesh, India

[2]Assistant Professor of English, Department of Humanities RGMCET, Nandya, India

ABSTRACT

Most Indian students obtain their engineering course for the sake of a certificate rather than acquiring knowledge that can be implemented practically in their profession. That's the main cause for India having a lot of resourceful manpower but it is not employed properly. The young generation in India has adequate technical qualification nevertheless insufficient employability skill sets, it is because their focus on technical knowledge much more than soft skills during their graduation level. During the course of their study they never concentrate acquiring the key qualities like effective communication, leadership qualities, time management skills, self motivation, problem solving skills, creative thinking, Computer proficiency, decision making skills etc., but they realize the need of these key employable skills only after a number of failures they face increases during the placement trails after graduation. This paper focuses on the planning of the soft skills acquisition aspects during the course of engineering study without disturbing the preparation of the knowledge in core subjects.

KEYWORDS: Employability, Graduation

INTRODUCTION

The companies always demand the Multi-talented technocrats. Though we have the worldly recognized scientists, economists, management graduates and engineers we have been flunking in bringing the sustainable economic growth because of the disparity between the industrial requirements and skills output. The literacy percentage and job opportunities are more in India when compare to other small countries. But still Indian young generation is facing unemployment problem because they lack basic functional skills. The number of engineering graduates coming out of Indian universities every year is very high, but a very few in number are able to get through in this cut throat competition. Most of the engineering graduates are combating for their survival due to lack of proper training in their respective fields and deficiency of required skills. So, there is an urgency to cast a light upon developing educational standards and designing specific syllabus for engineering graduates to enhance their employability skills during their graduation level.

Preamble

Engineering graduates obviously need to have a certain skills to help them apply and practice their knowledge effectively in the workplace. One of the major challenges in engineering education among the Indian universities is to enhance the employability skills of engineering graduates and make them industry ready. Recruiters of MNCs are demanding for multi-personal skills and knowledge in emerging areas, along with hard or technical skills. But according to

the surveys only 25% of engineering graduates are employable. According to Kalani Jones cited in Nieragden "We look for people who can lead a team, someone who can get a small team of four to six people motivated and a person who can quickly learn which people are best at doing what. It's hard enough to find a good engineer; finding one who can lead a team and speak well in front of customers is really hard to find." Research reveals that **'hard skills'** bring only 15% of one's success and remaining 85% is made by **'soft skills'.** The erstwhile assumption of getting job with only technical skills is merely an illusion of engineering graduates. One of the biggest challenges that the MNC's are facing is skills gap. In the present scenario, the concept of employability has become abstract and vague. In today's paced world, recruiters are demanding for the candidates who are highly productive from day one. They always find mismatch between their requirements and availability of skilled graduates. Indian corporate industries say that the current generation is unemployable only because of the lack of required skills. Every organization treats its employees as tangible assets, who play a vital role in the progress of any organization.

The current competitive world has changed the scenario, as the competition in the global market is increasing day to day recruiters looking for the engineering graduates who have sound communication skills, creativity, technical skills, Managerial skills, problem solving skills. So the graduates should realize the significance of these essential skills and sharp them.

Developing Employability Skills during the Graduation

One can develop one's employability skills like communication, leadership qualities, problem solving skills, stress management skills, time management skills, creative thinking skills and computer proficiency etc during one's graduation tenure without disturbing one's subject acquisition schedule. Since the start of the graduation a student must take an oath to grip these skills in term wise. During his first year level he should make at least two hours to get grip over his communication skills, aptitude and reasoning as well as creative thinking. During his second year of graduation he should accomplish the acquisition of problem solving skills, time management, and stress management etc., during the third and fourth year of graduation the continuous implementation of the skills acquired during his previous years. Here you may have a doubt that saying is much easier than practicing, yes but if the stated process is followed with a strict and firm mind then the planned acquisition is achievable without doubt. Let us peep on how to improve our employable skills during the graduation time.

Improving the key Skills during B.Tech

Soft skills revolve around personal relationships, character, and attitude. By developing these skills, you can increase your work performance, build stronger relationships, and work toward earning a promotion. If you are finding that some of these soft skills do not come naturally to you, you need to learn how to improve soft skills so they'll become a natural reflex for you in dealing with people every day.

Building up Communication Skills

Your goal should be to communicate clearly through written, oral, and nonverbal communication. Start simply by being aware of how others feel when they are around you or talking to you. During the graduation a student gets many such situations and chances to observe and learn communication skills. When a teacher is teaching something in class most teachers lecture or present their subject in English but unfortunately no student entertain taking a running notes of the

lecture. Writing running notes by following the teacher's explanation has many advantages: it can make you familiar with the language; it can make you get a deeper and analytical knowledge of the subject, it also provides you think faster and jot down faster; if you want to make it more fruitful just correct the spelling mistakes you made during the lecture and prepare an accurate info of the subject later. On the other hand a student gets a number of opportunities to speak before people but most of them try to escape from it or may dare not to attempt so. They get a chance to speak in public during the parties, functions and symposiums etc. Let me tell you a secrete here most people feel that speaking for at least five to ten minutes only be considered speech if you think so you are wrong a big WRONG, you can simply ascend the stage say good morning to all the people by their cadre and say thanks for giving the opportunity that's it. You made it! Yes going to the stage standing in front of a huge crowd, greeting the people and thanking them this is your first step of the ladder call success in acquiring communication; When a teacher asks "Do you have any questions?", "am I clear?", "Any doubt?" etc please don't miss the chance to ask your query here even if it is a silly one.

What to Build in your Communication?

- Make eye contact. Acknowledge someone else's presence by looking them in the eye, especially if they just walked into the room or you pass them in a hallway. Look at them when they are talking to you. Do not let your eyes wander around the room

- Make eye contact. Acknowledge someone else's presence by looking them in the eye, especially if they just walked into the room or you pass them in a hallway. Look at them when they are talking to you. Do not let your eyes wander around the room.

- Monitor your body language. Show interest by sitting up and leaning forward. Resist the urge to tap your fingers or foot. Mimic the posture of the person with whom you are talking to create a comfortable environment.

- Practice speaking. This includes both public speaking and conversational speaking. Be conscious of your pace and volume when speaking. If you are uneasy in personal relationships, practice with a close friend or family member. If you are nervous about speaking in public, volunteer to give presentations within a smaller group and work your way up to a larger one.

- Develop your writing skills. Proofread your emails, letters, and notes. Learn correct spelling and word usage. Vary your sentence structures; be concise instead of elaborating them.

Make Relationships

Interpersonal skills are important in the workplace, especially since so many organizations are designed around teams and departments. Seek to build friendships with peers, supervisors, clients, and business partners

Develop interpersonal skills during the study: Developing relationships also leads you to improve your leadership qualities, professional etiquette, knowing different kinds of behaviors, Decision making skills, team work, and the intrapersonal skills of the students should be achieved.

While studying your course you get a number of opportunities to develop your interpersonal skills. Make friends study their minds and behaviors whenever you get a chance to work in team don't miss it and contribute your maximum support and efforts to it; participate in NSS, Sports activities actively. Be the initiator, best contributor, and active

participant during the project preparation or any symposia participation – be team player and active member encourage other students to do so, help others in stake condition, work an hour extra than planned to work.

How to Make!!

- Befriend colleagues. Greet them when they get to college. Invite them to lunch or coffee. Talk for a few minutes in the break room as you are getting a drink. Participate in work events like softball clubs, staff lunches, and training days. Stay away from gossip. It only destroys relationships.

- Learn to manage conflict in a healthy way. Address issues with the individual(s) involved in a private manner. Approach the discussion in a nonjudgmental, but assertive manner. Ask questions and try to understand their side of the story. Work together to find a solution.

- Network with people inside and outside your organization. Ask people about their jobs. Share a bit about what you do. Note connections and ways you could potentially help each other. Exchange contact information and be sure to follow up with them.

Leadership Qualities

Leadership is an integration and cluster of different skills. In an engineering context, leadership integrates number of abilities which are crucial and critical at work place. According to the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) "These capabilities include the ability to assess risk and take initiative, the willingness to make decisions in the face of uncertainty, a sense of urgency and the will to deliver on time in the face of constraints or obstacles, resourcefulness and flexibility, trust and loyalty in a team setting, and the ability to relate to others." So leadership skills are very important for engineering graduates to foster their personal and professional life.

Practice leading. Leadership is simply influencing other people. As such, leadership skills can be used by any employee at any level in the organization.

Attaining Leadership Skills

- Observe your own supervisor and note how that individual leads your team. Find positive things that person does and emulate them in your own work.

- Read biographies of great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Barack Obama to know leadership in real life.

- Become a student of self-improvement. It will take you a lifetime to become your best self and be a worthy example to others.

- The best leaders are teachers. Know something worthwhile. Tell others.

- Effective leaders are effective communicators. Even bad people can be good leaders because of the incredible power of persuasive speech.

- Start small. Lead children. Lead friends. Lead groups. Practice leading in small group discussions by asking your teammates questions and bringing quieter members into the conversation.

- Much has been written on the subject of Leadership. Read books on the topic. You cannot improve leadership

skills if you don't know which ones are essential.

Problem-Solving Skills

Engineering graduates who own very good problem solving skills will be more prioritized at work places. Problem solving requires proper understanding, creative thinking and effective application of ideas. The process of problem solving includes a great deal of effective co-ordination among people and processes. These skills should be imbibed by every engineering graduate to build up his professional career.

Sharpen your Problem Solving Skills

- Do tasks without being asked by someone else. Look around, see what needs to be done, and do it. If a coworker has a large project and you have some time on your hands, volunteer to help.

- Seek more challenging work. Strive to develop your technical skills. Learn more about your organization. Ask a coworker about their department. Take a class, read a blog, or subscribe to a magazine in your field of work.

- Set the example for others by displaying a positive attitude in difficult situations. Remain calm in moments of crisis. Talk about concerns one-on-one with your supervisor instead of in front of the entire team.

- Practice brain teasers, logical puzzles, share ideas, analyze issues try to give then suitable solutions to satisfy yourself, study complex situations etc.,

Decision Making Skills

Sometimes successful people also experience bitter failures in their lives due to wrong decisions. Employees in the organizations will be assigned many roles and responsibilities. According to the assigned work employees have to take proper decision to bring the expected output. Being in such a crucial position, if any employee makes blunder that leads to a great damage. Engineering graduates need to have good decision making skills to be successful in their personal and professional life.

Making Decisions

- Think thrice before you act on any issue or situation

- Have good amount of research on every project or every challenge you come upon to act in

- Have as many discussions as you can before dealing with a challenge

- Collect end number of opinions or views on each challenge before you act or react to

- Research on the decisions taken by different kind of people to the situation that you presently facing

IT and Computer Skills

One of the basic skills that are required now a day for every engineering graduate is basic computer and technical literacy. Almost all the companies, industries and even small organizations are expecting basic computer literacy from their employees. But many job seekers lack these skills, because they think it's implied. Advanced skills in this area give competitive advantage and earn credit to the resume.

Adopting Technology

- Browse internet whenever you have time during your graduation look for the info related to your English communication, technical knowledge, subject related issues etc.,

- Have in touch with the updated versions of computers, smart phones and other techno gadgets.

- Write mails, reviews, articles, and share ideas through internet.

Time Management

Managing time effectively is a great skill that everyone should add to their life skills. As there is a saying 'Time and tide stop for none', intelligent person is one who utilizes the time effectively and gets benefited more than others. It is mandatory for every employee to discharge the services within the target time. It is a great ability to utilize the opportunities, time, personal experience and skills to accomplish the responsibilities at work place.

Manage at College

- Keep all your record work, note taking, note making work up to date regularly

- Avoid postponing things. Right things can be done in right time always conscious of the statement NEVER POSTPONE

- Plan your day's activities clearly and act according to them; evaluate at the end of the day- to make yourself time conscious prepare a time table of a day/ a month / a year. A replica is given

Table 1

S.No	Planned Activity	Time Require Approximate	Time Took to Complete	Remarks
1 Day's Planned Activities				
1	Completing the record work	3 hours	6 hours	Completed
2	Reading A news paper	1 hour	Nil	**Pending**
3	Solving the yesterday's problems given by the teacher	1 hour	Nil	**Pending**

Table 2

S.No	Planned Activity	Time Require Approximate	Time Took to Complete	Remarks
A Year's Planned Activities				
1	Enhance your communication skills	3 months	**Incomplete**	**Pending**
2	Learn aptitude & reasoning	1 hour every day	**Incomplete**	**Pending**
3	Prepare a technical paper to present in National level symposia	1 week	1 month	-
4	Study an old project of the seniors & clarify the doubts in it	1 month	**Incomplete**	-
5	Etc			

Note: In the above Table the way how Most of the Students Usually Manage their Time is Clearly given. If any Student Fallows this Kind of his Own Assessment and Analysis of his Own Time he/she can Definitely Lean Managing Time in Long Run

Creativity

Creative skills help to do things differently. This skill helps an individual to crate their identity at work places. Especially the recruiters trace out creative skills during interviews. Creative thinking makes the students actuate 'sideways' to try different concepts in different perceptions, to think in a different point of view on the problem and bring proper solution to it.

Enhance Creativity

Always try to think out of the box during your preparation presentation as well as participation in various activities during the graduation

- Spare some time to give creative ideas to the events, situations, issues or any kind of problems which appear before you now and then

- Browse the net for creative ideas and creative endings of different types of situations or contexts

- Take every opportunity that come before you which require to be solved creatively

CONCLUSIONS

The modern world has been permuting for many years through different stages   of pupa to larva and larva to a beautiful butterfly. The maturation of this modern world is shaped by technological and scientific interventions. The younger generations are the sculptures of the 21st century modern world. As the world is perpetually marching towards the future, the need of creative, innovative and highly skilled graduates are required. So it has become mandatory to produce creative and skilled minds to reach the requirements of the world. Most of the Indian engineering graduates are unemployable due to lack of these skills. Dr A.P.J Abdul Kalam has correctly said that India does not have problem of unemployment but unemployibility. Some of these skills come by learning and some by practicing. Swami Vivekananda says that "Education is the manifestation of perfection already in men", "We are all powerful, and we can do everything". One should take this quote as inspiration to upgrade oneself perpetually through solving real life problems and applying learned and adopted knowledge. So Indian universities need to examine the engineering curriculum time to time and make sure that the education received by graduates is relevant and up to date. However, it is also required to implement new teaching methods specialized training programs and workshops to help students further improve their soft skills. So it's the responsibility of universities, colleges, teachers including students to collaborate and work together to overcome the hurdles and attain the employability skills during the graduation level.

REFERENCES

1. Catelly, Y.-M. 2011. "Developing Engineering Students' Soft Skills – Poster Design and Presentation", *Limba, Cultura, Civilizatie, Orizonturi Deschise*, a V-a Conferinta cu Participare Internationala, Bucuresti: Editura Politehnica Press.

2. Natarajan R., 2012, *Employability of engineering graduates*, working paper, IIT Madras.

3. Urs, D. S. and Y.-M. Catelly. 2010. "Raising Stakeholders' Awareness of the Need for Soft Skills in the Tertiary Engineering Education Curriculum", *Synergy* 6 (1), Bucuresti: Editura ASE.

4. Sharatkumar, V. "The Need for Soft Skills in Global Engineering Services", Nascom Engineering Services Forum. Online http://nasscom.in/

5. Martin carole (2008) "How to stand out from a crowd of candidates". www.career_intellegence.com

6. Wats, M., & Wats, R.K. (2009). Developing soft skills in students. *The International Journal of Learning,* 15(12), 1-10.