

Enhancement In Soft Skills Through Students Training Intervention

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Abstract

This paper makes a survey of the importance of soft skills in students' lives both at college and after college. It discusses how soft skills complement hard skills, which are the technical requirements of a job the student is trained to do. The paper exhorts educators to take special responsibility regarding soft skills, because during students' university time, educators have major influence on the development of their students' soft skills. Embedding the training of soft skills into hard skills courses is a very effective and efficient method of achieving both an attractive way of teaching a particular content and an enhancement of soft skills. Soft skills fulfill an important role in shaping an individual's personality. It is of high importance for every student to acquire adequate skills beyond academic or technical knowledge. This article discusses human capital development through the eight soft skills elements which comprise communication skills, critical thinking and problem solving skills, team work, lifelong learning and information management skills, entrepreneurship skills, ethics, and professional moral and leadership skills.

Key Words: Soft skills, Institute of Higher Learning, Work Place Competency, Communication and analytical skills, GD, PI, Aptitude, Industry readiness, Can-do attitude, Industry Readiness & Business Awareness and Emotional Regulation Skills & Intelligence.

INTRODUCTION:

Succeeding at the Job is central to the well being of every professional we know recruiters expect "High Performance on the Job"- High Performance means results delivered:

Those who possess the correct mix of competencies suited for the job are more effective in that job role- (i.e. matching of competencies). However there exists a gap between applicant preparation and recruiter expectations. Bridging this gap is the purpose of T&D (at the college or at the work place). The generic competency classifications which make a student/applicant employable & fit in well with the recruiter's expectation are:

Knowledge of the domain & the capability to apply it in real life situations (application capabilities).

Skills: a) Technical/Domain Skills, b) Soft Skills that are further subdivided into communication skills, interpersonal

and behavioral skills & emotional sensitivity. (To people and situations) & regulation.

Attitudes: 1) Presence of winning attitudes (positive) that take one to success, 2) Avoidance of Loosing Attitudes: leading to failure.

Other competencies Specific to the job) e.g. Confidence, Leadership, Objective focus on goals, Discipline, High level of motivation for the job etc.

Soft Skills: are essentially non-technical or non domain skills which are intangible but reflect in the effectiveness of a person at the workplace as personality specific traits & attitudes, social grace & interpersonal behaviour, communication skills & emotional maturity (intelligence) etc. These are essentially communication & people sensitive & situation sensitive behavioural skills. Stated in simple words; training in Soft skills is all about developing a keen understanding of peoples thinking & behaviours as well as one's own & of situations & circumstantial pressures and conflicts encountered in work & professional life and using this understanding in presenting yourself and your ideas and solutions in a way that will have the best impact and outcomes (effectiveness).

Hard Skills: Hard Skills are domain related or technical skills which require psychomotor capabilities and application capabilities or a certain accepted level of expertise. Some examples – driving a car, riding a bicycle; operating a machine, using a computer language etc.

Hard skills make a person technically skilled & expert to perform the job while soft skills increase his people & situational effectiveness-thus both are complementary for a professional to be effective & successful.

In a highly competitive and globalized corporate world even subject matter experts & technology experts have to deal with clients, vendors, suppliers, face to face, work with peers & superiors with differing personality traits as part of the team or organization, communicating & dealing with people & a variety of situations,. which may be pleasurable or challenging & stressful, and thus to be effective soft skills are needed but these do not replace the hard skills but complement them and make the person more effective professionally. Soft skills have to be developed through training; through enculturation; though family, societal or college influences may have shaped it quite a bit besides the persons' own individual personality evolution, yet structured training will further improve it, because skills can always be learned.

For the sake of understanding more clearly; we can categorize “soft skills” into the following nine major subsets (though this is not an exhaustive list)

- (i) **Communication , presentation & language skills**
- (ii) **Department skills – Etiquettes, manners; observing courtesies& protocols, grooming, social grace etc.**
- (iii) **Inter personal & behavioural skills-Including social skills & relationship skills.**
- (iv) **Emotional Regulation Skills & Intelligence**
- (v) **Assertion, Persuasion & Negotiation Skills**
- (vi) **Influencing Skills & Leadership including team playing & group effectiveness skills, solving problems & conflict situations**
- (vii) **Critical Thinking skills**
- (viii) **Self Management Skills e.g. coping with stress, time & relationship Management situational sensitivity (FRESH-T)**

And in addition to the above, personality specific attributes

V A T S - H are the bedrock on which the skills pyramid stands **V A T S - H Stands for Values, Attitudes. Traits; Sensitivities & Habits & Health**
These cannot essentially be called skills but are attributes of a person’s overall personality but predominantly have an impact on a person’s work place behavior & therefore have to be understood & explored by the person to enhance his workplace effectiveness.

All the aforesaid eight categories of skills will naturally be easier to develop and become an integral part of one’s learned behavior only if supported by a wholesome VATS-H

Construct. Based on the academic marks scored and the Aptitude G.D./P.I score of a student we should work out an “Index” of Employability of student which should guide as in short listing the students for various job opportunities rather than depending on academic scores only. This will also encourage & compel students to participate in such activities and become more aware.

STUDENT WORK PLACE COMPETENCY SCORE	LIKELY JOB LEVEL (AT ENTRY-POST TRAINING)
>80	4.0 Lacs PA and above
70-80	3.0 – 4.0 Lacs PA
60-70	2.5 – 3.0 Lacs PA
50-60	2.0 – 2.5 Lacs PA
<50	< 2.0 Lacs PA

Work Place competency

Work Place competency scores reflect the performance of the students on various parameters such as GD, PI, Aptitude, Industry readiness, Can-do attitude etc. Workplace competency scores act as a mirror to the students so that they can make a realistic self-analysis of where they stand as far as performance is concerned and as per the corporate requirements how much they fit in. These WPC scores also guide them in identifying their weak areas so that they can work upon their shortcomings and remove all hassles and bottlenecks in their way to success. It gives them a fair and judicious idea as to how much salary bracket they are worth(on a tentative basis) and can expect to draw upon if they were to get placed presently in the given circumstances. So in this way, WPC Scores are quite useful and significant measure to quantify or out beat their own performance. It also helps in quantifying their growth in terms of various criteria which are the basis of these WPC scores.

Workplace Competency Assessment Chart

recruiters will choose them over others competing for the

Competency	Rating Scale - 1 to 5					Weightage	Net Score
	1	2	3	4	5		
Domain Knowledge (as indicated by academic score all through)	Academic Score <60%	Academic Score 60-65%	Academic Score 65-70%	Academic Score 70-75%	Academic Score > 75 %	X 5	
Aptitude (as indicated by Aptitude Test Score)	Aptitude Score <50%	Aptitude Score 50-55%	Aptitude Score 55-60%	Aptitude Score 60-65%	Aptitude Score >65%	X 4 *	
Group Discussion Score as reflected in GD rating	GD Rating B	GD Rating B+	GD Rating A -	GD Rating A	GD Rating A +	X 2 *	
Industry Readiness & Business Awareness (Industry Knowledge -for which student is aspiring, Skills, Project, Training)	Proficiency B	Proficiency B+	Proficiency A -	Proficiency A	Proficiency A+	X 3	
Winning Attitudes:- (CAN Do Attitude, Initiative & Enterprise, willingness to perform & achieve, dedication to employer's objective, willingness to walk the extra mile)	Proficiency B	Proficiency B+	Proficiency A -	Proficiency A	Proficiency A+	X 2	
Overall Personality & Confidence (Etiquettes, Manners, Body Language, Physical/ Mental Fitness, Interpersonal Skills, Confidence, Goal Focus Leadership Traits)	Proficiency B	Proficiency B+	Proficiency A -	Proficiency A	Proficiency A+	X 2	
Job/Company specific culture fit-Resume Customization-PI Practice Score	Proficiency B	Proficiency B+	Proficiency A -	Proficiency A	Proficiency A+	X 2	
TOTAL SCORE (OUT OF 100)							

* **NOTE-** IN CASE OF Management Students Weightage will be '2' & '4' respectively for 'Aptitude' & G.D. Score, in place of '4' and '2'.

What does it actually mean.... it means that many employers while hiring entry level talent are looking for developed students with "Work Place Competencies"-(Knowledge, Skills, Winning Attitudes & correct enablers e.g. balanced & whole some personality, emotional maturity, confidence, passion for achievements etc.- Skills here mean both the Technical Skills as well as other soft skills that go with the job. Soft Skills in turn have two components, Communication Skills &, Human Relations Skills/ Interpersonal Skills).

One point that will emerge clearly is, that though, undoubtedly "Good Academic Achievement" is the foundation of a successful career and contributes to it substantially, yet, students have to **go beyond it** and develop other workplace competencies also so as to be potentially an effective performer and achiever, and it is only then that

same job.

Let us also therefore acquaint, that we can take an example of Sharda Group of Institution (Hindustan College of science & Technology) which provides all these facility to the students of B.Tech/ MBA for developing these "Workplace Competencies" in its Training & Development Dept, how they can participate in various activities and derive maximum advantage, that is, when you understand very clearly, how at the Sharda Group students can develop these competencies. Remarks and exposition provided hereafter (with each competency discussion) will help the students to clearly understand how to develop the correct Workplace Competency Profile and score and enhance the **Employability Skills**. But remember, all this guidance will be of "USE" and become **MEANINGFUL** only when students **PASSIONATELY AND SERIOUSLY** take up the **SELF IMPROVEMENT** efforts to overcome their identified **WEAKNESSES** with full sense of commitment and zeal and a high level of motivation. In the end, all this hard work and effort have put in will benefit, as it will help student to meet

successfully the expectations of the Corporate Recruiters and launch themselves successfully on their desired career path. Sharda Group can only facilitate the process and provide the opportunities. Each competency discussion here after, also includes tips on what as a student **YOU CAN DO**. All students should read on and move on further on the course of **SELF IMPROVEMENT** paving their way to a successful transition from **Campus to Corporate**.

COMPETENCY DISCUSSIONS

1. DOMAIN KNOWLEDGE

By Domain Knowledge we mean the knowledge of the field we are going to work in, i.e., a Mechanical Engineering student would need a deep knowledge of say CAD software for a career in “Engineering Design” along with an understanding of material properties and selection, theory of machines and machine elements, engineering mechanics and stress calculation, production and manufacturing processes etc.

Similarly a Doctor would need a totally different knowledge- a deep understanding of human anatomy and functioning of systems and subsystems within the human body, and all the supporting knowledge of microbiology and pharmacological drug effects, pathological testing techniques available and other diagnostic aids and the available treatment solutions etc. A professional manager needs to know conceptually about Marketing Operations, Finance, HRM, economic and environmental factors and their effects, business strategy and decision making, use of IT and enabling software’s etc.

Good domain knowledge means clear concepts, mastery on related **Information** and clear visualization of application examples & context.

How can you develop a good knowledge of your domain?

COLLEGE INPUTS

1. Provide you with an updated, well researched, industry relevant (endorsed) course content (curriculum).
2. Provide competent Faculty resources-ensuring efficient classroom teaching/elaboration/practical examples/ numericals.
3. Ensure regular classes and practicals are held on time.
4. Allocate assignments, conduct tutorials, and suggest reading and reference material.
5. Arrange Guest Lectures from subject experts / industry experts / industrial training and projects / industry visits.
6. Ensure fair and continuous evaluation / examinations.
7. Ensure good infrastructural support, good library and learning resources, well equipped labs and workshops; use of teaching aids & technology for more clarity/economy of time.

YOU CAN DO

1. Participate regularly and seriously in all the above academic activities. Ensure 100% attendance (or better than 90% in any case). Revise/Finish your home studies regularly & stay abreast of class proceedings.

2. Develop a good reading habit by regularly going through technical books, magazines, newspapers, and internet and keep yourself updated with the latest information technologies and trends-and develop awareness of practical industry applications/case studies.
3. Solve old papers and question banks, attempt online technical aptitude tests/quizzes.
4. Write your own assignments, conduct your practical and clear your concepts during tutorials.
5. Participate seriously in guest lectures, industry visits, practical training, and projects and earn only genuine marks reflecting your competence level-this happens to be a very neglected area & as a consequence most students have major weaknesses in this area & are lacking on application side/related information base.
6. Do your summer training in meaningful organizations with dedication and commitment.
7. Revise as often as time permits, during holiday breaks/weekends etc. & during preparation leaves.
8. Follow a regular study schedule-so that you don’t have to miss classes for class tests etc.

Remarks:-

(1) A through-out 60% academic track record is what most of the reputed companies insist upon as eligibility criteria for allowing you to appear in their selection process. The criteria may be tougher e.g. 65% throughout or 70% throughout for some companies.

2. APTITUDE

“Aptitude” means your naturally existing current competency level or that due to past exposure and learning for some work or activity. It shows your **Potential** for further development given more learning and training exposures – structured interventions or through the workplace learning. Take for example the **Aptitude** for fast running. Take young boys of 16 years of age and ask them to run a race of 100 meters dash-without any formal training – some would run in about 12 seconds, some in 11.5 seconds and some may run in less than 11 seconds. This last batch of few, if trained & groomed can cut down the run time (to say) 10.20 / 10.30 seconds and become the national champions. If they could run in less than 10 seconds they have a chance to become the world level champion. The others may become state level and district level champion and so on. Same applies for professional careerists. Technical, Engineering and Management students need special aptitude to become effective and successful after induction training. Therefore, almost 100% companies for Technical/ Engineering students and about 20 % companies for management students conduct “Aptitude Tests” designed to gauge the student’s suitability. These tests may take various forms, but some of the common / representative tests are as below:

1. Quantitative Ability (For arithmetical / mathematical ability)
2. Logical & Reasoning aptitude (IQ type tests of intelligence)
3. Analytical Ability (a must for IT students)
4. Verbal & Linguistic Ability
5. Comprehension Ability / Thematic Interpretation Test
6. Statistical & Data interpretation Ability Test

Recruiters may conduct one/ more of such test as well as - **technical / business aptitude tests.**

COLLEGE INPUTS

Aptitude preparation helps to improve scores. Sharda Group provides, through its T&D or outsourced agencies training (of approximately 40 hours) and practice tests. Third party aptitude assessment is also provided. This helps students to become aware of test types & questions & improve his/her score.

YOU CAN DO

Practice on aptitude tests will help you to reach your true potential score. Initial scores improve between 20% - 40% in most cases with practice and in some cases by 60% or more.

1. Thus you should make full use of the guidance provided by the college / university.
2. Solve as many aptitude practice tests as time permits - at least 8 to 10, to stabilize your score.

Remarks:- Aptitude Score of better than 55% (at a level of difficulty at which our aptitude papers are designed) is a good score & then you have a fair chance of meeting the expectations of good companies. About 50% score shows you will clear some company tests & may not clear in some cases. Therefore you have to raise yourself to 50% & above level. Very good students may score even ABOVE 65%.

3. GROUP DISCUSSION

Aptitude Tests are not adequate to test the true potential of the student in many aspects and therefore Situational Tests like GDs are used as **INSTRUMENTS**. A Group Discussion as the name suggests is a thorough discussion, bringing out all the perspectives into focus on any issue, topic or case. It is a simulation of a Corporate Board Room like discussions and brings out abilities of the student like Communication Skills, Social Skills, General Knowledge, thought and Content Capability, Confidence and Discussion Leadership Qualities and such traits and is therefore preferred by Management Recruiters (almost 100% companies conduct GD as an evaluation tool) and also some of the engineering / technical recruiters (about 20%) use it as an assessment tool. It is generally when a student has cleared the G.D. round that the recruiter will permit him to move to the Personal Interview round. To raise your G.D. Proficiency score you have to practice & improve on all of the above listed parameters.

COLLEGE INPUTS

1. Sharda Group, as part of T&D activities through internal training faculty or outsourced specialist agencies, provides mentoring and practice sessions of GD - at least 4 to 6 practical sessions are organized and additionally plenty of seminars and colloquiums are organized to enhance communication skills, presentation skills and confidence, all adding up to better Discussion Capability.

YOU CAN DO

Proficiency in GD is generally a **Major Weakness** of many students, specially those coming from small towns/villages backgrounds and those having difficulty in communicating in English. To add to it very few students read English

newspapers or watch English news channels and are therefore poorly informed about current issues and affairs and therefore fail to muster enough content to speak. A few hours of college practice can only provide you guidance on how to prepare, but by no means can provide enough practice to raise communication skills level. Communication Skills and Confidence need **extensive practice** to develop. Therefore you should-

- a). Participate in as many serious discussions as you can-arranged by Sharda Group or in your own informal groups of 4 to 10 students, who study newspaper and come back and hold discussions on topics and issues they come across. Form such groups and discuss as often whenever opportunity / time gap exists – free periods, lunch time, weekends etc. Make it an interesting pastime & discuss always in English.
- b). Read a lot-read books, internet contents, English newspapers aloud, underline difficult words and memorize meanings from dictionary, make frequent usage of these words in your sentences-words/usages you frequently employ intrinsically become a part of your speech & active vocabulary.
- c). Watch English news CNN, IBN, NDTV, BBC, discovery channel, movies in English – prepare short summary and speak before a group of friends or in-front of a mirror- repeat this as often as you can.-this will help you to set the “fluency” by recalling words & thoughts as you speak.
- d). Get yourself appraised by a competent “Trainer” periodically and watch your **Ratings Grow**-at-least two notches up every semester till you reach A or A+.
- (e) If you can arrange access to Language Lab Software-practice on it in a variety of ways in listening/ Speaking modes as much as possible. Make abundant use of it as a teaching/practicing aid.

4. INDUSTRY READINESS/BUSINESS AWARENESS SKILLS / APPLICATION CAPABILITIES

Some employers may have structured training facilities (like TCS & Infosys) & may hire based on Aptitude & Potential. But the majority looks for industry ready students who can be inducted with minimum training time. Therefore you have to make conscious efforts to understand domain specific job competency expectation & get more & more exposure to industry & trade practices. The classroom can impart you concepts. But professional disciplines like Engineering & Management, & Medical Sciences, Law & Journalism all need application capabilities & generic skills (both soft skills & technical/business skills). This comes with exposure to practical situations & practicing for specific skills & guided training. In addition to curriculum studies you have to take up application capabilities, by getting added industry/trade exposure.

COLLEGE INPUTS

- i) Projects, summer training, industry visits, industry guest lectures, Practicals are all designed for this purpose.
- ii) In addition to the above Special technical skills training sessions (extra) are organized through competent agencies, if students agree to form self support groups.

YOU CAN DO

- i) Participate wholeheartedly in the above mentioned activities.
- ii) Develop skill sets in current demand through industry specific training, through specialized agencies and value adding training beyond the curriculum.
- iii) Read technical literature and magazines, explore on internet.
- iv) Skill development and application capabilities development demand extensive practice and is not possible within academic hours alone as the time may not be sufficient. So additional time and effort has to be invested for additional practice. As an example, CS / IT students should practice on Java, Dot Net as languages, Oracle, 9i, MySQL as database and Linux / Windows as an Operating System to complete one skill set. Similarly Marketing Management students should undertake more and more market related case studies, conduct exercises on sales negotiation, persuasion and assertion skills, develop IT software use capability and their sector specific knowledge and awareness. Similarly students of other branches should find out niche areas of demand & seek training in related domains.

5. WINNING ATTITUDES

Positive and Professional attitude about work (called “CAN DO” in American Parlance) very substantially determine the effectiveness of a person on the work place & hence your success. Attitude is the typical, habitual or characteristic approaches, our mind takes on issues and things, people or situations around us. Winning attitudes means attitudes that are more likely to lead you to positive outcomes & consequently greater success.

Initiative and Enterprise, willingness to do more than paid for (walking the extra mile), dedication to the work responsibility at hand and desire to excel should be some of the approaches that a successful professional mind naturally adopts (Professional & positive attitudes) - therefore all budding professionals should also cultivate & inculcate these attitudes - which should become “**mental habits**” – you will become more effective and employable. Recruiters give a large weightage to **POSITIVE** and **CAN DO** attitude.

COLLEGE INPUTS

- (i) College can provide the necessary exposure through PDP sessions, guest lectures, counseling & mentoring, through internal T&P / Outsourced expert trainers and such other engagements through a variety of activities and role plays bringing out the impact of positive attitude on the outcome – to motivate and mentor you.

YOU CAN DO

- (i) Attitude cultivation is basically a process of Self Exploration-understanding how our thought processes impact

the end out come-then consciously cultivating the improvements in your attitudes-strengthening what is positive & shedding what is negative.

- (ii) Participate in the above mentioned activities organized by the college with full willingness – and cultivate winning attitudes.
- (iii) Read motivational books by authors like Steven Covey, Robin Sharma, Shiv Khera, Virendra Kapoor & others.
- (iv) Competition and workplace exposure in successful and high performing companies shows the difference of Attitude. Talking to and interacting with successful professionals in guest lecture and training sessions or seminars & conferences will greatly influence your own mind and attitudes.
- (v) Set smart goals and work to achieve them and get yourself evaluated frequently from your trainers to keep track of your improvement.

6. PERSONALITY

Personality manifests itself in the contents and expressions of our day to day conduct as we interact with the world around us (situation, people, and things). The internal attributes that we possess- including our grooming, etiquettes and manners, habits, traits, sense of discipline & responsibility, needs & want profile, values & beliefs, family & cultural, social & religious influences, skills & knowledge levels, attitudes & interests, as well as biological & genetic factors influence our personality. Therefore it is a very slow, conscious and strong process of “**influencing**” that can help us to overcome our weaknesses and develop “**Wholesome Personalities**”. Its an all round “ **Influence** “ which is needed, in which the College/University can play a role but major initiative has to come from the individual & family of which he/she is a part. Personality substantially affects Interpersonal skills, motivation & job preference, general presentability & emotional maturity.

COLLEGE INPUTS

- (i) Extensive PDP & Soft Skills sessions/classes are conducted-with variety of case studies, activities, role plays-to give you the correct insights, into your personality, strengths and weaknesses.
- (ii) Abundant opportunity for sports/games/gym/extra curricular activities/cultural activities/hobby clubs help you to develop emotionally and socially and serve as the panacea for stress
- (iii) Special Personality Tests like MBTI, 16PF and other psychometric tests are conducted that helps you to become aware of your personality types, strengths and weaknesses so that you can work on conscious self improvement.

YOU CAN DO

Personality Development (Attitude cultivation is also a part of it) is essentially a process of Self Exploration and Self Improvement; participate in the above stated activities extensively – analyze and understand your strengths and weaknesses – then work consciously to overcome the weaknesses. NOBODY is perfect; you have to continuously and consciously work to “cultivate” your personality like you cultivate a habit. What is important is that you “Strive for Perfection”

7. GOOD RESUME / JOB AND COMPANY CULTURE FIT/PERSONAL INTERVIEW PRACTICE. COLLEGE INPUTS

1. The activities of T&D Soft Skills, Technical Training etc already stated earlier helps you in these regards also.
2. Personal Interview practice & guidance is provided to help you understand the corporate recruiters' expectations & how to prepare for it.
3. Resumes are checked & corrected by T&D staff & improvements suggested.

YOU CAN DO

1. Make conscious efforts to be an active participant in all the activities of T&D.
2. Take a printout of your resume in the standard format provided by T&P and get it checked by your T&D trainers and incorporate the suggested changes.
3. This is your standard resume, based on job description, you can slightly tweak your project and training experience to become more relevant and thus customize your resume.
4. Participate in at least 4 to 5 Personal interview sessions & with T&D help get at least the last two PI sessions recorded on video to get a feel of how to improve on this further.
5. Rehearse on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs); standing before a mirror, loudly, so that you can easily recall the flow of words & thoughts on similar questions & issues-under the stressful situation of a Job Interview-a few well spoken sentences immediately relieve the pressure & you feel more confident & natural flow sets in.

As we have discussed, we are very sure that if a student consciously work on the above suggestions during the stay at his college time and develop a Workplace Competency Score of above 60%, he/she will be definitely employed by the time he leaves the University / College or immediately after passing out. If the score is 80% and above, student will start up much better and higher.

Obviously a young qualified student coming out of a professional college does not possess these workplace competencies quite as adequately, as the prospective employer would wish to have & so the employer feels the student is not employable. However either through structured training programmes or the process of getting experimentally

exposed to the working on the job the students acquire & develop the competencies & skills and succeed. Thus this competency & skills development is the consequence of rigorous experiential exposure. What this, however, shows that skills & work place competencies develop in the experiential learning mode & process, & the majority of professionally qualified “freshers” are able to successfully acquire it. It is also obvious that not all educational institutions are able to ‘simulate’ similar conditions for the students during the process of acquisition of the degree or diploma. This does not, however, mean that all the students are not having the potential to be gainfully employed, as the word “unemployable” has been projected to mean. All it means is that the correct exposure has not been provided, or that the student has not been aware as to how important is such preparation for employability & success on the job and has not cared to undergo the process of development. The students should (and many of them do) possess the correct mix of resources that can be converted into correct work place competency profile after the due process of training, learning & development just as many of the students have become successful down the line, given such thorough hands on learning & working at the place of work. There is a band of about 60% students in the mid segment which are the ones who can be so developed & made “employable” through strong & extensive learning & development exposure and will adequately meet the expectations of mid segment employers, which are all successful & established companies; its only some bottom 20%, who are the non motivated & lacking in both aptitude & self drive or the resource capability within them it too less, who should be classified as “unemployable” & who should settle down for lesser jobs demanding lower competency or skill levels.

This is what hiring for “potential” would mean; select the ones with the correct resource potential and through learning & development interventions develop the potential into capabilities/competencies. It has been the experience of this author, who has been the Head- Training and Placement of a large group of Professional Educational Institutions, that without a “driving motive” in the student and without the “motivated trainer” the development effort does succeed quite as much, and the creation of “industry readiness” remains a wishful dream. The students in the mid segment who need this training the most, are not generally self driven & highly motivated (due to a laid back attitude), so if value adding training programmes are run for them without the minimum commitment of the student, very few of them actually participate seriously & even fewer develop the necessary level of skills & competencies. The “train the trainer” programme is one of the most cost effective & low cost methods of efficient students training & compulsory training for development

CONCLUSION

The aim of this project was to determine, based on employer feedback, the core competences our graduates will need to not only help them transition to, but also to thrive in the workplace. A list competencies were identified, many of which overlap significantly with other independently derived competency lists. The research also noted an important

interplay between competences and organizational values or statements of principles. These were discussed as additional cues a student can use in their organizational research to understand the competences important to that company. The Career Centre is the place where students' academic preparation connects to workplace transition. This paper has attempted to establish a basic theoretical foundation for understanding competency-based assessment and to provide a process model which can be followed in the development of competency. Hopefully this will contribute to a greater understanding of the competency paradigm, particularly its ability to facilitate competitive employment practices and the upliftment and development of the students. Placement being a consequence of student "Employability" is a "Team Work" in which: Faculty has to provide the knowledge & Application capability & Technical Skills component. Through regular training modules and classes of T&D, all faculty & staff have to develop soft skills & positive attitude & reasonable expectations of students & provide the inputs about Work Place & Industry Sectors (Campus to Corporate) besides Aptitude preparation, GD & P.I.-and general grooming so we can maintain corporate relationships-and market the student talent.

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