

Skills should be in sync with the industry's needs

EDUCATION MAIL lines up some of the country's top hiring executives and finds out what they look for while selecting a candidate for a corporate role

■ **Talent spotters now regard potential as one of the key employee attributes for hiring. How do you spot potential and passion during a job interview?**

Spotting potential takes years of practice and is an acquired skill, sharpened with experience and close monitoring. The reason is because often potential is seen in a single dimension of the candidates many abilities and not matched with the company requirements. This can lead to dissatisfaction on both sides.

■ **What are some of the other essential attributes?**

The most important attributes will be learning agility and cultural fitment followed by strong functional knowledge as well as pragmatic thinking. I cannot emphasise the cultural element enough — the organisations ecosystem and the candidate's personal values and comfort have to work in tandem for a successful partnership.

■ **What common issues do you confront in graduates while hiring?**

Some of the common challenges which can come with fresh graduates are — mismatch in role expectations viz current level of skills, geographical mobility discomfort and unrealistic compensation expectations. They also get bored quickly and need constant engagement.

■ **How crucial is a candidate's domain knowledge when it comes to hiring and what is your experience on this front from campuses?**

Campuses which have a robust internship programme and active industry interaction prepare their students better for corporate life. Domain knowledge while hiring freshers have limited benefit as they will be trained extensively for their role requirements on joining. It's their interpersonal skills, command over language and ability to work in a team which will help them score better.

■ **What is the transitional change which a candidate has to be prepared for when he/she enters the job market from the campus?**

The key change is the ability to work in teams and aligning to the company's value system. Students moving out of homes for jobs, grapple with managing homes and budgets; as our cur-

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rent generation has been brought up more indulgently by parents and will benefit if they brush up life skills before starting their careers.

■ **What is the role of social media in hiring?**

Today social media is an integral part of our life where we voice our opinions, likes and dislikes and also share our life events, hence very relevant in the hiring process for both the company and the candidate.

■ **How can a candidate make himself/herself valuable in their line of work?**

The willingness to go into an uncharted territory can give you an edge. Continuously upgrading your skills, aligning your functional priorities with those of the company and a quest for optimal solutions can help you stand out.

■ **How severe can the cost of making mistakes be on a professional level, as opposed to academics, where it can end with a little red circle?**

Today mistakes are celebrated — it suggests you are willing to try something new and are not scared to fail. However this can't be generally applied, especially to repeat mistakes or those resulting from careless attitude.

■ **How should women strike a balance exploring different interests with focusing on career goals?**

Striking a balance comes organically to women. They already have an inherent talent which they keep getting better at with time and more responsibilities.