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**◆ Low Employability Skills among Engineering Students ◆**

**Damning revelation from study conducted by PurpleLeap**

- ◆ PurpleLeap study on the 'Employability Skill index' of Engineering students finds most students 'un-employable'.
- ◆ Study conducted across the country in 95 colleges (15 colleges in Andhra Pradesh) and among 9000 students (600 in AP)
  - ◆ 36% of the students fail on all major skill counts - communication, problem solving and technical skills
  - ◆ Only 7% found employable when all factors are considered

**Hyderabad | India | February '2009:** It is understood that Communication Skills is a problem area especially when it comes to students in Tier 2 & Tier 3 cities. Therefore it did not come as too much of a surprise to find that as far as Communication Skills of Engineering Students in AP are considered, 80% of them do not meet the qualifying criteria.. However, it is quite ironical that most of out of the 20% who are fine as far as communication skills are concerned, do not actually end up getting hired because of either lack of problem solving skills or technical skills. Proficiency in communication skills is considered more of a 'qualifying criteria' than selection criteria for technical roles in the industry. The study also showed that if communication skills are not considered for qualification / selection, the percentage of employable students will raise from 7 to 13%.

In a major surprise, more than 80% of the students do not meet the requirements on the problem solving skills. Despite the popular myth that engineering students are naturally good at problem solving, it was found that the biggest skill gap in engineering students in Andhra Pradesh is in the area of problem solving. The study revealed that the average score of students was less than 25% against national average of 35%. There are more than 50% of the students who have scored less than 25% in problem solving, making them fall in the 'hard-to-train' segment. Lack of adequate problem solving skills is one of the biggest gaps leading to students not getting enough technical jobs in the industry and in many cases having to settle for 'non-technical' roles, after an engineering education. It was found that just by raising Problem Solving Skills, it was possible to more than double the employable pool; from 7 to 16%.

More than 60% of the students do not meet the employability criteria on technical skills for the IT industry. The study also revealed that 11% of the students are employable when organizations do not consider technical skills as a criterion. Even the (30+%) students who do meet the Technical Skills criteria are still not 'ready-to-deploy' as far as employers are concerned. After recruiting these students also, most organizations usually have to spend 3 to 4 months on technical training to make these students workplace ready.

Commenting on the findings of the study, Mr. Amit Bansal, CEO, PurpleLeap said, 'The times right now are very challenging. The global economic crisis is expected to lead to a dramatic increase in the number of people joining the ranks of the unemployed. The task becomes more daunting for entry-level professionals especially if they are found lacking in the basic skills necessary for employability. Companies today want candidates who not only possess the three critical skills but are ready to start work from day one, because nobody wants to spend time and money on training. All of this means that students will need to do all that they can work on their skills and be industry ready.. Just going to college and finishing their studies is evidently not enough'.

The survey also revealed that about 25% of the student population, which currently fall in the 30-40% performance band, can be trained to upgrade their skills to employable levels. However, these students will need focussed intervention across communication skills, problem solving and technical skills so that they may be brought to the employable pool. And in the most depressing finding, 36% of all surveyed had no chance of an 'Engineering Job' because of not being able to meet the qualifying criteria in all three skills. These students will be 'hard to train' and can at best be trained for roles that are a grade lower than engineering roles.

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