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How does a B-school make students industry-ready?


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Master in Business Administration is an internationally recognised degree which provides a broad study of all main aspects of business and management. An MBA opens doors to knowledge and skills in areas relevant to their personal career goals and ambitions.

Nilanjan Banik, professor, School of Management, Bennett University explains the key highlights of an MBA programme at Bennette.



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How has the educational landscape, especially for management institutions, changed in the past couple of years?

Every year, around 12 million Indians enter the workforce while less than five million jobs are created. Why is around half the population not able to find jobs? The answer lies in the curriculum because machines are taking over jobs in this age of 3D printers and robotics. However, what majority of academics teach are rote learning, taking a leaf from what the standard guidelines suggest. For management institutions to survive and excel, there is a need for changing curriculum that is industry-friendly and stresses importance on developing cognitive skills. There is a need for organizing live workshops and go beyond classroom teaching. This will make our students employable. There is a paradigm shift happening with more corporate-backed universities coming up and trying to fulfill this requirement.

What steps has your institute taken to adapt to the changing dynamics of today's business environment?

It's extremely heartening to note that Bennett University's School of Management follows an outcome-based curriculum. Hard

outcomes, in that. SOM follows a 4-layered CASE approach – with Core Courses, Attitudinal Building, Service Orientation and Experiential Learning - to have pronounced outcomes that can complement companies' requirements. Several experiential learning initiatives – driven through PEACE (Personal Effectiveness Alignment for Career Enhancement) and CLASS (Career and Leadership Alignment for Students' Success), for instance, have been designed to equip the students with the requisite skills. If curriculums are not designed for hard outcomes, what else are they for? Coupled with the experiential learning, the students at SOM are trained on cutting-edge databases, data mining tools and data visualization architecture platforms. We are also going in for faculty immersion programs, wherein our faculties spend time in the industry. In this fashion, we intend to bring industry experience in our classroom teaching.

How can the skillset gap between the workforce and industry requirements be plugged?

There is a need to move away from textbook learning. Taking help of new age technology may help. For instance, I post videos and news items related to the course that I teach in my twitter handle. Likewise, exposing students to TED lectures is important. To make students industry ready, we are training them to use software such as R which is required for new- age jobs. Foreign collaboration is also needed. However, one must be careful about the kind of association a university has. Instead of merely touring the partner campus, students should be able to earn credits for courses taken at partner institutes.

What challenges and opportunities do you see for the Indian B Schools in the current environment?

The challenges, I guess, will come if the universities only go in for the numbers rather than putting emphasis on quality. This is true for both students and faculty intake. Unfortunately, most private universities around us are for short-term gain rather than how to transform them into quality institutes of repute for the future. As India continues to grow there is a great demand for quality education. Most of the widely acclaimed universities in the world, for instance, Stanford and Harvard, are private. We should take their learning experience and try to build the Institute of repute that we can all take pride in.

