

Recruitment priority - academics or extra-curricular?

By Palak Bhatia | Wednesday, May 11, 2011 at 02:00:30 PM

Gone are the days when a score of 90 per cent in the examinations was the highlight of a resume and was enough to tempt a company to snatch you away from its competitors. Now the academic achievements listed in a CV need to be strongly backed by extra-curricular accomplishments. This is both a necessary as well as a logical addition. Success stories are not built by individuals; they are a result of good leadership, effective management, teamwork and hard work. Extracurricular activities are a good source for imbuing these qualities and as a result, they have slowly crept upwards in the priority list of recruiters.

So, what qualities are looked for on applicants' resume while considering them for a position in the company and why? Meghana Kulkarni, Manager HR - admin, DesignTech Systems Ltd., gives an insight, "The involvement of candidates in extra-curricular activities says a lot about their traits, strengths and overall personality. For example, a candidate who has been a sports captain will be a good team player and would possess leadership qualities. Candidates involved in artistic activities would be creative and possess lateral thinking skills while those involved in theatre or writing would possess excellent communication skills. In fact, candidates involved in any activity, irrespective of their exact nature, would generally possess good time management skills (as he/she would be pursuing these activities along with their education or career), dedication, and a sportsman spirit."

Indeed, these qualities are invaluable to the successful functioning of a company. But, a number of challenges are faced while hiring people on the basis of co-curricular triumphs, a major issue being their validation. With corruption on the rise and fake certificates easy to obtain, Shivi Kalia, Director HR, **CSS Corp** tells us how their company verifies the authentication of an applicant's claims:

- For candidates with prior experience, we ask for a copy of the offer letter, pay slips and references from their previous employers. Professional networking sites like LinkedIn are good platforms to check on the candidate.
- For freshers, apart from the convocation certificate, the applicant provides the e-mail IDs of his faculty/HOD for verification.
- For Campus Hires, an NOC in the official letter signed by the Principal and Placement Office with the official seal is sought.
- Also 90% of the fake certificates can be easily identified with a close vigil. If we miss it, it comes to light during the background verification."

A majority of departments in a company are such that knowledge cannot be compromised and any technical glitch can lead to major mishaps. So it is important that the people hired on the basis of activities are suitable there. Renuka Krishna, AVP, Talent Search & Deployment, KPIT Cummins Infosystems Ltd., explains, "When allocating resources to work, we need to ensure the right fit. Round pegs in square holes are a recipe for disaster anywhere. It is the employer's responsibility to be able to identify the right role for the right person based on his/her skills.

Technical work too comes in many flavours so it is the question of aligning an employee's capabilities with the DNA of the company."

Thus, companies today look at many different facets of the applicant and knowledge must go hand in hand with co-curricular skills to achieve an optimum temperament for working in any organisation.

Source: http://bit.ly/timesascent_csscorp