

Campus Interviews – Gateway to Future

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“Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family”

- Kofi Annan (1938-2018)

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Abstract

Education paves way to sustain human life. Its chief focus is to teach the human values, develop intellect, emotions, empathy, extricate opportunities to rise to the occasion and contribute to the overall growth of the society. Ultimately this should provide an individual, an all-round development to observe, understand and to be a part of the larger community. This education is obtained formally, non-formally and informally. Informal learning occurs in a variety of places, such as at home, work and through daily interactions and shared relationships among members of society. For many learners, this includes language acquisition, cultural medians and manners. Formal learning is commonly divided into different stages such as Pre-School, Elementary School, High School, Higher Secondary School and then College/University or Apprenticeship through various industries. The School Education system in India has 4 distinct levels such as Lower Primary (ages 6-10) Upper Primary (age 11 & 12) High (13 – 15) and Higher Secondary (17 & 18). Then we have the Tertiary Education which is the threshold to employment. This Tertiary level includes 3 years of Under Graduation and 2 years of Post-Graduation and then Research Activities which are optional.

All these lay foundation to one’s career for sustenance or “Survival of the Fittest” as told by the English Naturalist Charles Darwin (1809-1882) in his Origin of Species Theory. The college-level focused education in due course determines the career prospects of the young graduates.

After 1990s there is a paradigmatic shift in the employment in India, that instead of the candidates running helter-skelter for employment, the employers knock at the door of Higher Institutions. Campus Interviews bridge the gap between the Employers and the prospective Employees. In our context, the final year UG/PG students are the Prospective Employees who are eligible for Campus Interviews. Campus Interviews offer final year UG/PG students a great opportunity to get a suitable job during the course of their academic pursuits and provide them a secure future before the completion of their course itself. This process includes the various stages such as: Pre-Placement Talk, Aptitude Test, Technical Test, Group Discussion, HR Interview and Personal Interviews.

This paper purports the role of various Employing Agencies who consistently contact the colleges/ Universities through Campus Interviews to select their prospective employees. Also it brings to limelight the various top notch companies in Chennai which absorb the creamy layer among the eligible students.

Keywords: Campus Interviews, Language Acquisition, Career for Sustenance, Pre-Placement Talk, ‘entrevue’, Recruitment Process, Topnotch MNCs, Continuum, etc.,

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Introduction

“The purpose of education is to make good human beings with skill and expertise...Enlightened human beings can be created by teachers” -A.P.J.AbdulKalam (1931-2015). The purpose of education is to bring up the children by using their knowledge, talents and gained skills to withstand themselves and help others by taking the society forward in the regions of equality, equity, impartiality, peace and harmony.

- Proper education helps us to differentiate between what is right and wrong, what is immoral and moral, what is good and bad and what is justice and injustice and the like.
- Education provides wider exposure to our surroundings.
- Education teaches us how to systematically process information.
- Education gives a person confidence and courage to solve any problem that is faced on and off.
- Education gives us the power to rise to the occasion if something goes wrong.
- Education helps us to regulate our day to day activities and motivates how to be positive throughout our life.
- Education motivates us to explore further through R&D.
- Education in a systematic way eliminates our superstitious beliefs.
- Education shows us a way to make a living out of it.
- Education once acquired can never be stolen. It becomes an asset to the one who acquired it.
- Education civilizes humanity.
- Education provides an equal opportunity to all.
- Education empowers everyone with employability.

Education system in Tamilnadu

According to Swami Vivekananda “Education should be man-making, life giving and character-building and also an assimilation of noble ideas” as quoted by Somnath Gupta in his article(1). In India especially in Tamilnadu, the formal education is provided by Government Schools (Central or State Board) ICSE Board, Kendriya Vidyalayas, Navodayas and Private Schools (Matriculation). Primary Education begins at the age of 6 and ends at the age of 14 with Middle/Upper Primary School. The regional language is the medium of instruction for most of the primary schools, which have classes I to V, Elementary Education is from classes VI to VIII, High School Education is from IX and X and Higher Secondary from Plus One and Plus Two. After the completion of Secondary Education students enter into the Tertiary Education at the age of 17. Indian Higher Education system constantly goes through

massive changes since its commencement in 1947. Educational policies of India keep on developing and enriching as the origin of it is from British system of education. University education is monitored by the University Grants Commission (UGC), which is responsible for the improvement of Higher Education, allotting funds, and recognition of institutions in India. The All-India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) was also established to administer the quality control of technical education and control establishment of new private professional colleges.

Tertiary institutions in India are varied in number, namely Universities (Central, State and Open), Universities of National Importance and Deemed Universities. Admission to Under Graduation courses generally requires completion of the Class XII of schooling and entry to University depends entirely upon the performance of the students during the examination. Under Graduation degrees in the fields of Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Commerce are almost especially three year programs. The course duration of Diploma Programs from Polytechnic Colleges range from 1 – 3 years in a specialized Engineering or Technological field, and ending in an Advanced or Post Diploma. Professional Bachelor’s Degrees, namely Medicine, Engineering, Architecture, Law, etc., differ from 4 – 5.5 years depending upon the discipline. Admission to Post Graduation Degree depends upon the completion of a Bachelor’s Degree (3 or 4 years, depending upon the subject). Research Degrees require a minimum of one in the case of M.Phil., and three to six years for Ph.D. This hierarchical learning becomes imperative, for better employment. At this juncture, Interviews gain momentum in Placement.

Interviews – Gateway to Employment

The word “interview” is derived from the Middle French word ‘entrevue’ means “to see each other”. Generally, an interview is a formal conversation between two people (the interviewer and the interviewee) where questions are asked by the interviewer to get information, qualities, attitudes, qualities etc., from the interviewee.

Oxford’s Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines Interview as “a formal meeting at which someone is asked questions to see if they are suitable for a

particular job, or for a course of study at a college, university, etc.” Cambridge English Dictionary defines Job Interview as “a formal meeting at which a person who is interested in getting a job or other position is asked questions to learn how well the person would be able to do it.”

Companies conduct different kinds of Interviews in their recruitment process. Some of them are:

- Telephone Interview
- Face-to-Face Interview
- Panel Interview
- Group Interview
- Video Interview
- HR Interview

After the advent of Campus Interviews in 1990’s the recruitment process of employees has become quite easy. The creamy layers of candidates are absorbed in their course of study itself. Also they were not much to be paid as they are the beginners. This paper aims at exploring the role of Campus Interviews in Colleges located in Chennai City.

Campus Interview Process

“It isn’t what you have, or what you are, or where you are, or what you are doing that makes you happy or unhappy. It is what you think about it.”

-Dale Carnegie (1888-1955)

The term Campus Interview refers to the process where a number of companies look forward for eligible candidates (here the students of final year UG or PG) for various vacant positions from numerous college campuses. These Campus Interviews are conducted by most colleges through their Placement Cells. Generally, the public and private sector companies organize Campus Interviews for recruiting various positions required for their upward mobility. Campus Interviews provide an ample space for the young graduates to get job opportunities before the completion of their course duration itself. In general all Campus Interviews include the following steps in their recruitment process:

- Pre-Placement Talk
- Aptitude Test
- Group Discussion
- Technical Test
- HR Interview
- Personal Interviews

Pre- Placement Talk is generally in the form of a presentation of prospective companies which come for Campus Interviews. This includes the recruiting company’s profile, selection procedure, company’s expectation, ethics of employees, organizational achievements, company’s vision and mission. This also includes the progress and development of the candidate within the company and other available resources and benefits, if selected. Aptitude Test is normally a written test which comprises questions from Maths, English, General Knowledge & Reasoning. Technical questions related to the subjects are also asked. Group Discussion is conducted by the companies as an elimination round as an easier way to shortlist the number of students enrolled for the Interview. In this process, a simple topic will be given for a discussion. Here in this round, the panel will observe the participants communication skills, basic manners, fluency in language, listening capability, voice clarity, patience to wait for one’s turn, presentation of ideas, leadership qualities common etiquette, depth of knowledge, courage and confidence. After the elimination in Group Discussion, the Technical Interview will be conducted by the companies. Here the technical aspects regarding the subject concerned will be checked by the employers. Then the candidates will move to meet the HR people for the selection process. The depth of the updated subject as well as general knowledge of the candidate will be tested here. Personal Interview is the final selection procedure where the company executive will brief the candidate about the joining process and also about the general rules and regulations of the company. Then the offer letter will be issued to the candidate. These are the basic criteria followed by the reputed companies who go for Campus Recruitment for their existing vacancies. This present state of job seekers (here the final year UG/PG students) has become as simple as everyone’s cup of tea now a days after the introduction of Campus Interviews.

Required Skill Sets

In the present scenario, students pursuing their Higher Education expect their College/University to provide a suitable platform to acquire an adequate learning with required skill sets. They

include expertise, interpersonal relations, team co-operation, self-confidence, effective communication, leadership qualities, personality development and interview skills. This all inclusive training will ultimately lead them to face the challenges of the future with more courage and competence. Also the parents like to see their children to be well placed at the end of the Campus Interview which occurs before the completion of their course. It has become a status symbol for the parents to say that their son/daughter is placed in some topnotch Multi National Companies (MNCs). So their expectation from College/University is naturally high.

“Water, water, everywhere,
 And all the boards did shrink;
 Water, water, everywhere,
 Nor any drop to drink.”

- Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

Like the above lines, opportunities are available in plenty for the young and vibrant graduates. If they are positively motivated and trained in a much proper way definitely they will remain self-reliant all through.

A Glimpse of the Job Providers

Both Public and Private Sectors and MNCs regularly visit the renowned Colleges/Universities for their existing vacancies. Based on their requirements they will recruit their future employees. In their recruitment process, the prospective employers expect that they should absorb quality, target-oriented, well focused, authoritative and also very much skilled individuals from the Campus Interviews. They will be more focused on the candidate's approach on his/her soft skills, effective communication, attitude, inter personal and problem solving skills.

The following is the list of few reputed MNCs who come for Campus Interviews to colleges in Chennai.

- Sutherland
- Wipro
- Tata Consultancy Services
- Cognizant
- HCL
- Aircel Harvard Self Development Program

- Tech Mahindra
- India Institute of Shipping & Logistics
- HP Computers
- Allsec Technologies
- Eureka Forbes
- Anthem Bioscience
- 2 Adpro (Viscom)

The first five in the above list are supplemented with their organizational details:

Sutherland Global Services was established in 1986. It is one of the leading MNCs in Chennai. It conducts Campus Interviews in most of the reputed colleges. It is one of the major global providers of business process, upliftment and technology management services. Being one of the largest independent BPOs in the world, it offers career opportunities from analytics to driven back-office for the aspiring young graduates. Their expectation from the employees is to be integrated and target oriented towards the associated company.

Wipro Ltd was established in 1945, in Mumbai by Mohamed Hasham Premji. The Headquarters is located at Bengaluru, Karnataka, India. The acronym “Wipro” has been derived from Western India Vegetables Products Limited. This company was initially started for manufacturing vegetable oils, ghee, vanaspati and refined oils using the brand names of Kisan, Sunflower and Camel. Now it is an Indian Multinational Corporation which provides information about science and technology, IT solutions, consulting and business process services.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) was established in 1968. Its Headquarters is situated at Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. This is also an Indian based Multinational Information Technology service providing and consulting company. TCS is considered to be the World's second largest IT services provider.

Cognizant which is also one of the competent MNCs was established in 1994. The Headquarters is located at Teaneck, New Jersey, United States. This American based Multinational Company provides IT solutions, consulting and services for its customers. They are also regularly visiting the young candidates on campus for their annual recruitment.

HCL Global Systems is one of the best IT consulting firms specialized in Application development, Quality Testing, IT Courses Training, staffing and recruitment services. They provide expertise consultation to improve business domains by using their vast experience in the field of IT.

Like the above, many companies hunt forth their eligible candidates through the Campus Interviews. So the students with their youthful exuberance, energy, innocence, academic excellence and added skills like killer instinct and urge to succeed are the fertile scope for the employees.

Conclusion

Like how Nature balances itself with its Strengths and Weaknesses, human nature also balances itself with the changing trends, especially with regard to employment needs. Colleges/Universities are the reservoirs of potential human resources. They prepare their student in all positive ways to obtain suitable employment. Campus Interviews are really a boon today. They bridge the gap between the employers and their prospective employees.

Therefore everyone entering the portals of Higher Education has to be aware of the various career openings based on their Major/Core subject. Campus Interviews provide a platform for the aspirants to showcase their potential. They also help them understand their capabilities as well as pitfalls. The responsibility of the teacher is pivotal. Mere teaching

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of the subject is to be appended with ways and means to get suitable placement in Public, Private sector or MNCs. Life is a continuum. Education leading to proper placement completes the process.

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