

## Management Education in India – At the Crossroads

Management education in India has been going through a rough patch for the last one decade thanks to the proliferation of B-Schools in every nook and cranny of the country. Recent estimate puts the number of B-Schools approved by All India Council for Technical Education, New Delhi at more than 3600+. Adding woes to this is around 100 odd B-Schools which are not recognized by AICTE or UGC or the Union Human Resources Development Ministry. Barring IIMs and a few Tier1 institutions, all other institutions are fraught with pressing problems which are getting compounded day by day. The problems include i) Poor vision of the promoters of the Institutions, ii) Poor infrastructure, iii) Dearth of qualified and quality faculty, iv) Lack of research orientation, v) Weak linkage between the industry and academia and iv) Poor placements to add a few. Hence, aspirants of Management education in the country are confronted with information overload and false/tall claims made by the institutions and are confused a lot while choosing a B-School. Here is a piece of advice for the aspirants of Management education before opting for a B-School to pursue their higher education.

**Approval and Affiliation** : Look for the approval from All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi and the affiliation from the University concerned. An approval from AICTE gives a minimum guarantee that the required infrastructure and the faculty are in place. Please make a note that mere approval from AICTE doesn't guarantee a better education.

**Institution's website** : Undoubtedly, this is the best possible source of information to get to know more about a B-School. Since AICTE insists on publishing mandatory disclosure on every website, this mandatory disclosure can be considered to be the most authenticated information about the infrastructure, availability of the faculty and their profile. The authenticity of the rest of the information given in the website is to be scrutinized further.

**Personal visit to the Institution** : If proximity admits, a visit to the institution concerned will give the aspirants a good feel about the institution. An informal interaction with the faculty and the current batch students who pursue their MBA programme right now may keep you well informed. If possible, it would be better to get some alumni contacts and interact with them.

**Accreditation status of the Institution** : All the institutions from which two batch of students have passed out, become eligible to go for the accreditation process from NBA (National Board of Accreditation) of AICTE or NAAC (National Accreditation and Assessment Council) of UGC. Look for the accreditation status of the institution which gives a fair idea about the quality of the education delivered.

**B-Schools Rating** : There is a plethora of magazines which vie for B-Schools rating every year without any scientific research design. It is more prudent to understand the credentials of the

publishers, the research methodology adopted and the entire modus operandi before jumping onto any conclusion. We cannot ignore the fact that many Tier1 Business Schools including a few top rung IIMs do stay away from the B-Schools rating of certain publications. So it is better to take this B-School rating with a pinch of salt and not to get carried away by advertisement blitzkrieg by some of the B-Schools.

**Industry Institution Linkage** : Try to understand the efforts made by the institution to bridge the gap between the industry and institutions. The efforts could be in the form of a) Interaction with corporate executives, b) Interaction with CEOs/MDs/CFOs, c) Interaction with leading/successful entrepreneurs and d) the research output of the faculty

**Availability of Faculty** : Please go through the profile of the faculty in terms of a) Faculty – Students ratio (as per the norms of AICTE, it should be 1:20 for MBA programmes), b) Industry and academic experience of the faculty, c) Qualification of the faculty and d) Number of Core/Adjunct/Visiting faculty in the institution. Since the supply of good faculty is almost static, many B-Schools make a heavy compromise on this critical issue. Dearth of quality faculty is forcing institutions to ignore the AICTE regulation on Ph.D being a must to teach at the post graduation level.

**Placements** : It is an irony to note that all the B-Schools turn out to be Placements/Recruitment agencies rather Learning Centres. Sensing this trend to be ahead in the rat race, many B-Schools resort to make tall/false claims about their placements history, maximum and average pay package offered by the corporates, number of offers made by the corporates and so on. Please avoid getting carried away by the claims made by the institutions. Possibly an informal interaction with the current batch of students and the alumni may throw more light on the facts.

As the economy grows on a scorching pace thanks to the sectors like media & entertainment, management consultancy, organized retailing, telecom and oil and energy, there is a growing demand for MBAs in the market. Cashing in on this opportunity, many fly-by-night/not so serious players are jumping into the fray of Management education. Students should be aware of such a reality and make a better choice for their career.

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