



## **GENERAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**

**Programme Director: Prof. Archana Shukla**  
**February 1-12, 2010 Venue: Lucknow**

**OBJECTIVES:** The programme is intended to: • Orient participants about the emerging Indian and international business environment • Provide a basic understanding of the managerial systems and processes • Provide basic functional inputs – accounting and finance, decision sciences, organizational behavior, human resources management, communication skills, marketing, strategy, information technology, and business environment • Familiarize participants with requisite analytical tools and techniques.

## **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION FOR MANAGERIAL SUCCESS**

**Programme Director: Prof. Neerja Pande**  
**February 2-4, 2010 Venue: Noida**

**OBJECTIVES:** Upon completion of this course, participants should be able to: • Demonstrate improved interpersonal and group communication skills • Design and communicate effective formal and informal messages • Make an effective business presentation with appropriate media support • Demonstrate improved persuasion and influencing skills for better negotiations • Develop sensitivity to Cross Cultural Communication.

## **EMPLOYEE SELECTION AND ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES**

**Programme Directors: Prof. Ajay Singh & Prof. Punam Sahgal**  
**February 3-5, 2010 Venue: Noida**

**OBJECTIVES:** • To familiarize participants with the relevant tools and techniques of employee selection and assessment, and their suitable applicability. • To understand the process of assessing job requirements and matching it with candidates' competencies. • To develop required skills for conducting effective selection procedures.

## **HEDGING WITH DERIVATIVES FOR CORPORATE MANAGERS**

**Programme Director: Prof. A Vinay Kumar**  
**February 8-10, 2010 Venue: Lucknow**

**OBJECTIVES:** The programme intends to provide a basic understanding of derivative instruments in various markets such as equities, currencies and interest rate markets. It aims to provide an understanding of the pricing methods of these instruments and would provide the insights on application of the derivatives instruments to solve hedging problems.

## **ADVANCED DATA ANALYSIS FOR MARKETING DECISIONS**

**Programme Director: Prof. Satyabhusan Dash**  
**February 8-12, 2010 Venue: Lucknow**

**OBJECTIVES:** To provide marketing managers and other users of marketing research from various industries the tools to understand commonly used qualitative and quantitative marketing research techniques, and help them to gain a better understanding of appropriate techniques that would aid marketing decisions.

## **PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**Programme Directors: Prof. K N Singh & Prof. Sushil Kumar**  
**February 8-12, 2010 Venue: Lucknow**

**OBJECTIVES:** Project management involves understanding the cause-effect relationships and interactions among the socio-technical dimensions of projects. Participants are expected to have improved competencies in these dimensions upon completion of this programme, which will enhance their competitive edge. The programme would provide complete and thorough instructions in the basic principles and the current methods of project management along with the exposure to the project management software.

For detailed brochure please contact: Programme Manager

## **INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT**

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# MANAGEMENT RESOURCE SITES LOG ON TO EXPANSION

*The growing number of internet-friendly users and marginal investments are attracting IIT-IIM graduates to enter the business*

ARCHANA M. PRASANNA  
Bangalore

"I pressed the end button by mistake and my test ended! Does this mean my one year's preparation for CAT went for a toss? Please help me!" went a desperate plea of a candidate on the forum of an MBA resource website. Within minutes, she got a dozen replies from those who faced the same problem and others who assured that she would get a chance to reappear.

This candidate is among thousands of young people who are increasingly joining MBA resource websites to connect with peers and get regular updates to the academic programmes and careers they are interested in. On their part, the websites have seen the opportunities that lie in tapping the growing market of internet-friendly users and are making plans to expand their product offerings.

Take for instance, PaGaLGuY.com, a website started by Allwyn Agnel, a young MBA aspirant in 2002. Agnel started the website to fulfill his need to interact with like-minded people on academics. Today, the website has close to 360,000 registered users and over 500,000 unique visitors per month. From being a forum-centric website, PaGaLGuY has now diversified to various features like B-school ranking, PaGaLGuY Apply — which is a single-point application system to apply to over 70 Indian B-schools, an on-line store for B-school forms, test preparation material, SMS alerts, test paper prep and e-books. With the popularity of its brand, the website has also started selling its own merchandise like t-shirts.

Apurv Pandit, chief editor of PaGaLGuY says the website functions on a simple revenue model. "We have an advertisement-driven revenue model. Our main advertisers are B-schools and IT companies who are regulars on our website. We offer options like banners, newsletters, direct mail adver-



Most of these websites function on self-generating revenues. The focus is on marketing the brand through social tools which are available either at zero or very low cost. BS FILE PHOTO

torials, quizzes and contests." Some B-schools sell their entrance forms through the website. PaGaLGuY cites SP Jain Dubai, XLRI Singapore, IMS Learning Resources, Career Launcher, Symbiosis, Apple and Hewlett Packard as its clients.

For those starting MBA focused websites, the most attractive factor is that very little investment is required initially. Satwinder Singh Saimbi, co-founder, MBAUniverse.com says his portal was set up with an initial investment of Rs 2 crore. The website includes news, views and developments from campuses across India and abroad.

MBAUniverse has a registered base of 400,000 sub-

scribers. Some of these are registered for free while others are paid. The website generates its revenues offline as well. It comes out with a bi-annual book for MBA aspirants and organises educational seminars, fairs and facilitates form sales for B-schools.

"Under the new development of computer-based testing for the test prep domain, MBAUniverse.com will introduce some interesting concepts for the test prep companies and the MBA aspirants," said Saimbi.

Since most of these websites function on self-generating revenues, there is care to see that the brand is marketed through various social tools which are available either for zero or very

low cost. MBAUniverse, for instance, markets itself through promotions on the internet and tie-ups and alliances with leading media companies to promote joint initiatives. The website has had associations with leading institutes like IIMs, IITs, XLRI, FMS, IIFT, and institutions like CII, FICCI, AIMA, ATMA, TiE.

Initially started as a forum to interact with peers, some of these websites have gone on to branch into test preparation, which has grown very fast, due to increasing number of students vying for a seat at the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs). According to latest estimates, the test prep industry for MBA, medical and en-

gineering is nearly Rs 7,500 crore of which a significant part is contributed by the preparation for MBA entrance exams like CAT, FMS, XAT, JMET, NMAT, MAT among others.

TestFunda.com, started in July 2008, is one among few websites whose core business model is focused on helping aspirants prepare for entrance tests like CAT, XAT, FMS, SNAP, among others. The website has over 130,000 registered users and has tie ups with various coaching institutes to provide its study material to students.

To retain students, the website creates personalised study guides to revise weak topics, creates personalised post assessment tests to strengthen concepts and organises videos and contact seminars that provide guidance on how to face the group discussion and personal interview stage.

"Education has been a high growth area for a while now. More importantly, we firmly believe that internet will have an increasing impact on how education is delivered and on how people learn. The online medium provides great opportunity for interactivity, immediate feedback, and user-guided contextual learning," said a spokesperson for TestFunda.

Typically, these websites are headed by holders of management degrees from reputed institutes who are able to empathise better with the needs of the MBA student community. Allwyn Agnel of PaGaLGuY is an MBA from Wharton, while TestFunda has a management team of five IIT-IIM graduates.

Most of these websites are in the process of expanding their portfolio and expect internal accruals to be sufficient for their financial needs at present. However, at a later stage, they do not rule out private equity or angel funding. "We have been in talks with Vice Chairman's for quite sometime now but to attract funding on needs to reach a certain level to justify the business model. We are in the process of doing that," says Pandit.

# 'CAT could have been handled professionally'

## Q&A

### Debashis Chatterjee

Director, Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode

*Admission process for the Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) usually begins in January. However, post the computer-based CAT fiasco, IIMs are worried that it could get delayed. In an interview with Pradipta Mukherjee, IIM-K's director DEBASHIS CHATTERJEE clears the air on fears of CAT fiasco impacting the admission criteria. Edited excerpts:*

#### **Will admissions for the 2010 academic year be delayed due to the CAT fiasco?**

Its too premature to say that the admissions will be delayed. We made CAT computer-based for the first time this year and any transition from one format to the other for the first time always has a few glitches. Although I feel the test could have been handled more professionally and perhaps sanitisation of the system could have been ensured to avoid the mishap. However, what matters now is whether the test was



fair without diluting the standards.

#### **Could this impact the admission criteria?**

The CAT fiasco would not affect the admissions as we depend on fair scores. Also, our group discussions and personal interview processes are rigorous enough to ensure deserving candidates do not suffer. Our admissions as always, will be merit-based. If some candidate says it is unfair and moves the court, we would have to wait for the court's verdict. We increased the intake in our flagship PGP programme to 300 students from the academic session 2009.

#### **You are in an expansion mode. Are you looking at**

#### **having a campus abroad?**

We are acquiring more land for expanding our existing campus. There is water shortage here and therefore we are looking at cultivating water on the new grounds to pare the shortage. We are building a 200-room facility for executives so that they can avail residential programmes in our campus. This would also help us run two to three executive programmes simultaneously. We are not looking at an international campus immediately but to have overseas collaborations for knowledge sharing in executive education.

#### **Which destinations are you targeting?**

We are looking at Singapore, Dubai, North America and Europe for collaborations in executive education space. We are also looking at international accreditations and the first one should happen within the next one year. Our target is to set up centres of excellence, in areas like leadership development, corporate governance, among others. We currently have a centre of excellence which mentors and develops underprivileged students, who are engineers, in a way so that they get absorbed in IIMs or get job with corporates.

# [STUDENT'S CORNER]

**Last week, we asked: Will it make sense if online CAT is scrapped this year, and taken as a pencil-and-paper test? Can the IIMs justify it?**

## **NO BEST RESPONSE THIS WEEK**

■ When you purchase a branded product, you expect a value return and if you are not satisfied you are offered a replacement, same way IIMs hold a brand and there is anguish and frustration among students those who had toiled hard for past 1-2 years. The number of students affected by computer glitches has risen to 20,000. If the IIMs could conduct a re-test in 2003 when

the CAT paper leaked, why can't it be done this time? The brand value will not get diluted if IIMs go for paper pencil test this year again, but it will if doesn't conduct retest.

- Mayur Parvani,  
Institute of Technology and  
Management, Chennai

■ IIMs hurried their way to make the CAT exams computer-based. Just tying up with Prometric doesn't guarantee success. IIMs must have taken the ground realities including the robustness of infrastructure into consideration. CAT 2009 was a fiasco, but this does not end the future prospects of online CAT exam. IIM's would have to

look into every possible detail for future success of online CAT.

- Poorna Sridharan,  
Institute of Technology and  
Management, Chennai

■ It makes all sense for IIMs to re conduct CAT in paper and pencil format. The concerns are the lack of uniformity in questions sets with questions getting repeated on subsequent days and variation in time that each student got to solve the paper due to technical faults. The students who gave CAT during the last days of the 10 day window had an edge over those who gave it on first or second day as they had a better idea of expected pattern

and cutoffs and thereby, attempted the paper in a better way.

- Manav Gupta,  
National Institute of Technology,  
Allahabad

**Dear Students,**  
Your responses should reach us by Friday evening every week. Please avoid attachments and email us your full name, institute's name, year, batch, and complete mailing address for your entries to be accepted. The student who gives the 'Best Response' will be awarded Rs 500.

**NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION:**  
Has the banking and financial sector lost its status as an employer of choice?