

Best Practice I

Title of Practice: Certificate and soft skill programs for students.

Goal:

- To provide technical knowledge to students apart from the regular curriculum.
- To provide new employment opportunities for students.
- To provide students with an opportunity to train and develop a specialized skillset.

The context

With the theoretical knowledge technical knowledge through the certificate programs is very much essential for student's technical growth. It helps them to showcase their practical skills. Students can be able to compete with industry requirements. During placement interviews, students have to perform well not only in technical interviews but also in personal interviews. Apart from technical knowledge acquired through the regular curriculum, students should also exhibit the soft skills during campus interview and also during their career. Soft skills programs and certificates programs are conducted regularly for students of Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, CSE and civil Engineering. Soft skill programs will enhance the personal development through the students. It is in practice to provide such opportunities not only to final year students but also to all the students including newly admitted.

Many of the students cannot afford the paid certification programs so based on the same syllabus & contents similar programs are conducted at institute level without any cost. After completion of programs course completion certificates are provided to students so that it can strengthen their resumes while applying for job opportunities.

The Practice

Various certificate programs and soft skill programs are regularly conducted as per the following.

- For Civil and Mechanical Engineering students Certificate program on CAD-CAM
- For Electrical Engineering students certificate programs on Matlab, PLC-Scada.
- For Computer Science & Engineering students certificate programs on Java, Networking, Python, Android programing etc. are conducted.
- For all students including first year soft skill programs like English for general purpose, preparation of general aptitude, general ability are conducted to developed the presentation and communication skills.

Evidence of Success:

- Certificates are awarded to the students after the successful completion of the certificate program. 204 students successfully completed the certificate programs and 47 students completed the soft skill programs.

Problems encountered and resources required

Certificate programs and soft skill programs are offered to students in addition to the regular curriculum prescribed in the syllabus. As these programs are offered to students without any cost we need to utilize the institute faculties by adjusting their own internal academic work and teaching load.

Best Practice II

Title of Practice: Mentoring System

Goal

- To provide the parents of the student a single window source of information about their children and enrich the interaction which is essential for the academic ambience embellished with a human touch.
- To enable the student to look to his mentor as a patriarchal/ matriarchal figure, guide and philosopher.
- To bring in a sense of accountability of the student.
- To provide the fresher a sense of Security, bonhomie, elderly guidance, mentoring and in the process remove the feeling of distance from Home.
- To closely monitor the student's progress in terms of his attendance, punctuality, performance and learning capabilities -as part of the curricular requirements.
- To help identify, outside the curricular requirements, the student's habitual deviations, attitudinal aberrations, utilization of facilities and associative growth of personal attributes.

The context

The institution implements a mentoring system under which each faculty is assigned the responsibility of 20 students. Academic and personal counseling for the students are effectively carried out by the mentor in regular intervals. The parents are also being taken into confidence and are being informed regarding the continuous improvement of their wards. The mentoring system is a proven and a successful system meant for personal counseling of the students. It is basically a system that takes care of the well-being of the student with respect to both academic and non-academic issues. In short, mentoring system is a mutually beneficial relationship that offers support, guidance, assistance and contributes to the development of capable individuals. The mentoring system is relatively new in general to a student entering the institute.

The students do take some time to familiarize and feel more comfortable with their mentors and most importantly develop confidence in them. The students meet their mentors to consult with them regarding the courses to take and to guide them through the registration process. The students then meet their mentors before every internal assessment to update them on their progress in every course; the students also see their mentors after the internal assessments to discuss about their performance and about the scope for improvement next time and the steps to be taken to achieve the same. The students might also choose to meet their mentors more regularly for advice regarding matters which may be extra- or co-curricular or otherwise. In addition, the mentor might also choose to see any student with more regularity when their academic performance concerns the mentor.

The practice

A mentor is a personal mentor and counsellor for a student during the duration of stay at the institute. A mentor represents a parent away from home for a student, and is the first point of reference for the activities of a student during the complete course of study at the institute. As

soon as a student enters into the institute, a faculty member is assigned to take over the role of a mentor for the student. The mentor not only guides the student in academic matters but also any matter of concern for the student. The student seeks the advice of the mentor at every step of their course of study beginning from the registration for courses at the start of every semester. The students meet their mentors regularly. However, depending on the need the mentor conducts more meetings with their students and their parents. The mentor educates the student about the various course requirements, such as the mandated minimum and maximum course load every semester, and how to choose electives.

The mentor helps the student channel their interests and energies effectively during the complete course of study at the institute. The students meet their mentors for various reasons; some students would like extra help with the material in a course and are shy to approach a new instructor assigned to the course; few might be facing problems adjusting to the new environment may be in the hostel or at other places around the institute; some others would like to know about their options of availing various resources at the institute and participating in various extra-curricular activities like group students would like to know about their options for going through internships during the break or even the benefits of the same; few might want to do some minor project work or participate in various competitions in addition to their courses; some other might want to know their options after graduation and how to figure out where they would fit in better. At times the students might just need someone who can give them personal time and attention by listening to their struggles in transitioning from high school to a higher education environment and finally in becoming a constructive member of society. Engineering education is in English language and since most of the students from rural areas either speaks their native language or Hindi, but not English. This result in lack of their interest in study so special attention is provided towards these students through mentoring system. Most of the students are from rural areas and are economically poor. The parents who cannot afford the total tuition fees at a time or within prescribed period. In such cases the students are allowed to pay the fees in installment as per their convenience.

Evidence of Success:

- Improvement in mentees discipline, interaction and communication skills.
- Improvement in students' attendance.
- Establishment of a vibrant relationship between teachers and students which has provided a congenial atmosphere in the class room as well as in the campus.

Problems encountered and resources required

Some students have required a great deal of time and effort from their mentors but have shined after. However, the depression that a small percentage of students went through was too critical for us to handle. We are planning to establish a center with professional counselors. Adjusting academic schedule to accommodate this activity. Despite our best efforts in the effective implementation of the mentoring system, there are still a small percentage of students who discontinue their course of study at the institute.