



Beyond the two EEs

Tentative moves have begun for executive education

“Come check in my Jeep, you will find plenty of books and notes. When I find time I read and prepare for the MBA class. My professors will otherwise get angry with me,” says Shanmugha Priya, an executive MBA student of PSG Institute of Management, Coimbatore. The surprising thing is that Priya is also an assistant commissioner of police.

She’s not the only unconventional MBA student. Giving her company are P. Krishna, a medical doctor, Nagarajan, an elderly government official and Coir Board region head with three decades of experience, and navy Commander Sachin Y. Jog.

Narayan Alwar, head of IT at Hutch in Hyderabad, says, “I just landed from my long tour and I hardly have time to change before going to the Reliance webworld where the XIM B executive MBA online contact class is about to start at 7 pm.”

“Managing my small son and trying to find time for my part time MBA studies at IMT is a Herculean task but I’m sure I’m managing”, beams Mini Koneru, Delhi based senior software executive with the US company ST inc.

Be it a cop, a medical surgeon, a software engineer, or a service engineer, the MBA bug has bitten just about everyone. “It’s not about money but it has to do about the challenge of the job and the necessity to have a professional management degree in these competitive times for growth,” explains Lekshmi Mahadevan, a senior executive with a ITC Group company in Delhi.

“I am sure none of the students in my class, where the average experience is nine years are looking for alluring pay packets through the MBA route,”

comments Ashok Kapoor, professor of communication and the architect behind the relaunching of the executive MBA programme at MDI Gurgaon.

At a time when the best B-schools are slowly moving away from choosing fresh graduates to opting for experienced candidates, the profile in the executive MBA room is also changing. A larger number of candidates in the mid thirties are looking at a MBA degree for career growth.

The B-schools are also realising the shift in the demand for their offerings and are quick to fill the emerging demand for executive MBAs. This is evident from the growing number of schools that have started executive MBA programmes. Among the 175 B-schools that we looked at as part of our annual survey, as many as 21 of them reported having executive MBA programmes, of which eight started such programmes only last year.

“Executive MBA is a global trend which we cannot ignore here. There are a huge number of young executives who would do a MBA if they could find an opportunity,” comments D. Raja head HR of Quatro Group a leading ITES player. There can differing levels of quality offered, based on the school, the city and the quality of the students being admitted to the courses, feel industry observers. “There are basically two approaches to executive MBA. One, through a regular MBA programme, another based on a sharply focused management development programme,” explains Pavan Agarwal, executive coach and a visiting faculty at MDI.

“The time for executive MBA is here and you will find more schools offering part time programmes than ever before”, predicts A.K. Sengupta who, besides running a regular executive MBA programme, also runs a series of short programmes with Reliance. It is not just the market savvy autonomous schools that are looking at executive MBA but even the IIMs are highly active in this area with all the six IIMs having begun part time executive MBA programmes in recent years. The lead was given by IIM Bangalore in 1998 when it started the post graduate programme in software engineering management (PGSEM) with corporate tie up. The programme has since been extended to Chennai.

“It has not been a priority with the Indian B-schools as there has historically been pressure to cater to the young crowd straight out of college.” “But experience at the Noida campus has been overwhelming and there is a massive demand for seats which is only increasing year on year”, explains Jitendra Das, Dean in charge of IIM Lucknow executive MBA institute at Noida.

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