

COVER STORY

Hit the ground

Jobs are plenty but remember, employers are choosy. **THE WEEK-IMRB Survey** on Hot Jobs 2011 identifies the latest trends in hiring

By Charul Bajaj and Sharmista Chaudhury



VENI BAJAJ, 24, MANAGEMENT TRAINEE, DELOITTE, DELHI

Trial and error

I was clueless after my graduation. All I had heard was that finance was 'in'. I was advising high networth individuals and corporates on how to manage their wealth. A few months into it, I knew this wasn't for me. Consultancy excited me, but recession kicked in and I had to settle for a job in supply-chain management, but was dissatisfied. Now, eight months into handling risk advisory, I feel as if I have hit the jackpot. I am more certain about my future and plan to do an MBA soon and make a comeback in the industry at a higher position.

running



Parul Srivastava, 25, has an interesting story behind her job. She was in college when Japanese automaker Nissan launched a competition across B-schools in India as part of its brand activation programme. “We had to organise different activities and there was constant evaluation by the company. We were selected based on the work done by us,” she says. Parul not only won the competition but also landed a job at Nissan. A year of her college was spent doing field work for the company.

What Nissan did was, it transformed a college student into a manager, tailor-made for it. The method also demonstrates the current



SOUMAJIT DEY, 25, ASSOCIATE RESEARCH MANAGER, IMRB INTERNATIONAL, MUMBAI

Just my cuppa

A summer internship during my MBA helped me figure that market research is the thing for me. Having worked in an advertising firm for a year before MBA, I chose to intern out of curiosity. During the internship I realised the potential of this job. It pays well, and the job profile is interesting. I handle quantitative research for FMCG and health care. More than a year into this job and industry, I know my decision was right and it feels good.

employment scenario—handpick the right person for the job rather than rolling out a hundred offers all of a sudden.

Hiring these days is about building an asset for the company, and human resource managers are coming up with innovative methods of finding the right person. It is no longer about painstakingly analysing the credentials of a candidate but assessing their personal qualities. Companies want not just employees or yes men; they want change makers and entrepreneurs.

While employers are going the extra mile to find the right fit, candidates, too, are getting smarter and they weigh their options before picking a job. Even freshers these days often have multiple offers and they compare all aspects before taking the final plunge.

The job market has evolved after the financial meltdown in 2008. A permanent job is no longer neces-

sarily permanent. And while the employees serve a company the company is expected to serve them, too. This understanding also comes from the observation that hiring managers across verticals and industries do not hire out of the notice period to fight attrition. A new trend on this front is an increase in the hiring of 'temps'.

Being on a contract is no more a taboo, as neither the companies nor the employees are sure if they want to be stuck with each other after a while. "The solution here is hiring that is flexible, where employees are also leveraging the benefits," says Aditya Narayan Mishra, president (staffing), Ma Foi Randstand, an HR services provider. The trend is catching up also in the high-level jobs. So the candidate joins a company, gets experience working with a good brand and moves on. "These may be 'temp'

jobs, but they are decently paying and secure. Also, the kind of learning, processing and systems that a person is exposed to make the experience phenomenal," says Mishra.

The criteria of hiring are also changing. Says Rituparna Chakraborty, co-founder of Team Lease, a supply chain and HR services company: "People look at a candidate's internet presence and how well-travelled he is. It is a way to gauge his personality and ability to adapt to changes."

So, how does a job seeker keep himself in demand? "People need to treat themselves as brands, not a commodity," says Rajkamal Vempati, head (HR), ICICI Lombard. "Which means that all your actions need to be aligned with long-term perspective." They have to prove that they are leaders in their own right. Says Pradeep Vaishnav, senior director (human resources), Sanofi-Aventis:

THE WEEK-IMRB survey

Are students hopeful about employment opportunities?

Figures in %

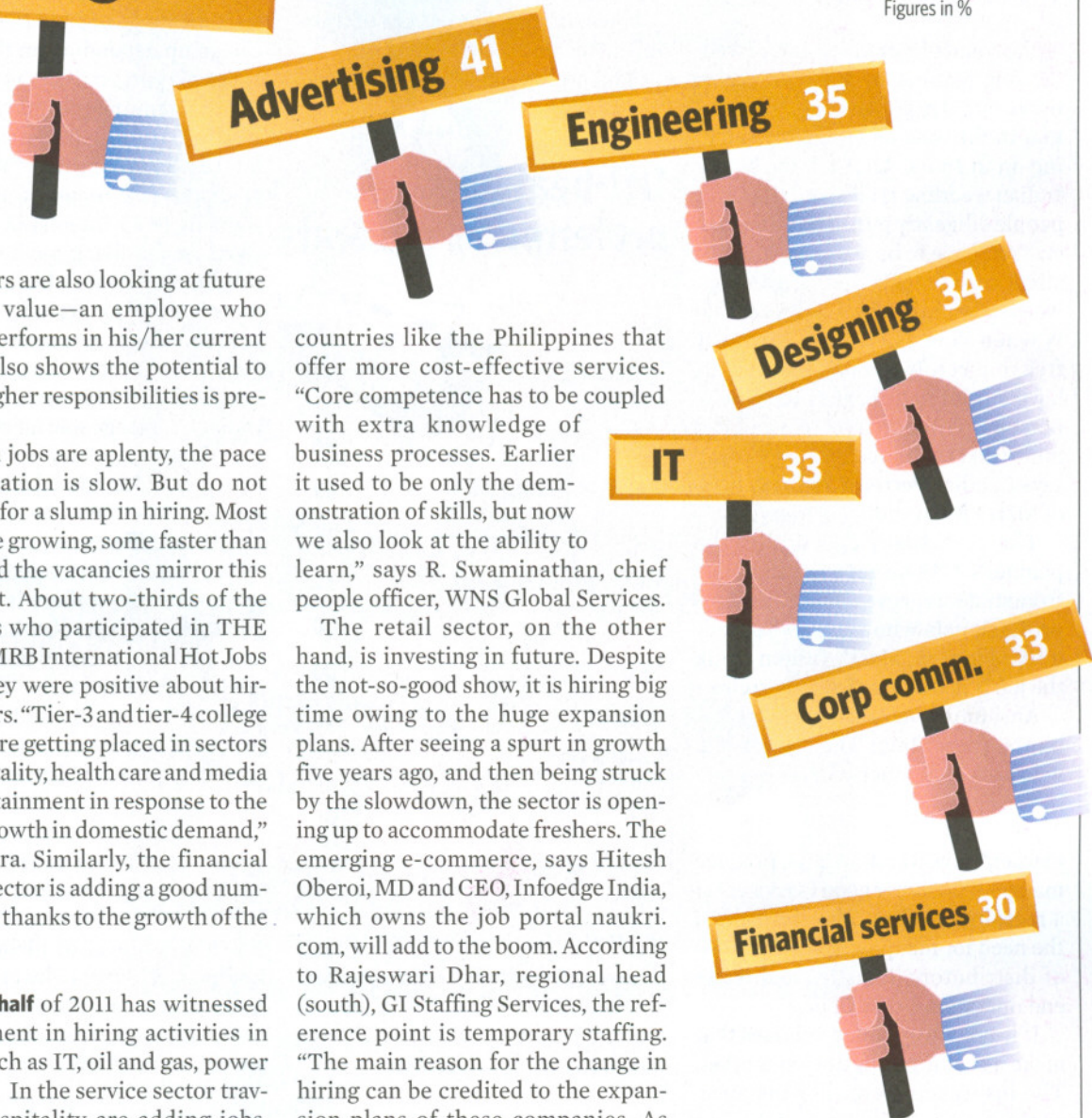


Base: all students

Banking 62

Sectors freshers prefer to work in

Figures in %



“Employers are also looking at future employee value—an employee who not only performs in his/her current role, but also shows the potential to take on higher responsibilities is preferred.”

Though jobs are aplenty, the pace of job creation is slow. But do not mistake it for a slump in hiring. Most sectors are growing, some faster than others, and the vacancies mirror this movement. About two-thirds of the employers who participated in THE WEEK-IMRB International Hot Jobs 2011 Survey were positive about hiring freshers. “Tier-3 and tier-4 college students are getting placed in sectors like hospitality, health care and media and entertainment in response to the general growth in domestic demand,” says Mishra. Similarly, the financial services sector is adding a good number of jobs thanks to the growth of the economy.

“The first half of 2011 has witnessed improvement in hiring activities in sectors such as IT, oil and gas, power and retail. In the service sector travel and hospitality are adding jobs. Health care also has seen good hiring because of new hospital projects in the private sector,” says Sudhakar Balakrishnan, CEO and MD, Adecco India, an HR solutions provider.

It is the change in their business models that helps IT companies keep hiring. “It is not at the levels of 2005 and 2006, but is better than 2007,” says Mishra. With the change in the global competitive scenario, some of the low-level positions, such as customer care and telemarketing, are going to

countries like the Philippines that offer more cost-effective services. “Core competence has to be coupled with extra knowledge of business processes. Earlier it used to be only the demonstration of skills, but now we also look at the ability to learn,” says R. Swaminathan, chief people officer, WNS Global Services.

The retail sector, on the other hand, is investing in future. Despite the not-so-good show, it is hiring big time owing to the huge expansion plans. After seeing a spurt in growth five years ago, and then being struck by the slowdown, the sector is opening up to accommodate freshers. The emerging e-commerce, says Hitesh Oberoi, MD and CEO, Infoedge India, which owns the job portal naukri.com, will add to the boom. According to Rajeswari Dhar, regional head (south), GI Staffing Services, the reference point is temporary staffing. “The main reason for the change in hiring can be credited to the expansion plans of these companies. As tier-1 cities are saturated, companies are exploring new territories in tier-3 cities,” she says. However, according to Sandeep Dubey, practice manager (retail services) at the recruitment firm Elixir Consulting, after the initial boom real growth in the sector is yet to be seen.

The boom in the retail sector can be read together with the action in the FMCG sector. “Hiring has been increased because of new product introduction and launches in the

ANIMATION	30
HRM	27
CINEMA	23
JOURNALISM	21
TELECOM	21
EXPORT & IMPORT	21
EVENTS	21

Offbeat is in

By Sharmista Chaudhury

The trend of commissioning a wedding planner to make that most important day perfect has been popular in the west and is slowly catching on in India. After all, the big fat Indian wedding is all about a team of people diligently putting it all together. "You have to be available for your client at all times including evenings, weekends and public holidays as that is when your clients are generally free to meet. If you love organising, have a calm nature, excellent interpersonal skills, are creative and can multitask, then it could be for you," says Candice Perreira, creative head of Marry Me wedding planners.

The pay usually depends on the planner's. "We do get a few inquiries from students or event [management] professionals who want to be wedding planners. Most of them think the job is glamorous," says Perreira.

Anshuman Deb's career choice lets him be a beach bum. The 34-year-old, who was a member of Professional

Association of Diving Instructors, is a scuba diving instructor on the Andaman islands and loves the job. It takes six months to a year of training to become a scuba diver.

The profession is for people who

love the sea, sun and sand. And it does not pay badly either. "The starting salary of a scuba instructor could be in the range of \$800 to \$1,000, and can go up depending on the number of people you certify," says Deb.

Not many people have taken to scuba diving as a profession but the interest is increasing. "With higher disposable incomes and people showing more interest in adventure sports, scuba diving, too, has become a sought-after sport, which means that there is scope for growth," says Deb.

Many offbeat careers are becoming quite popular, according to Sudhakar Balakrishnan, MD and CEO, Adecco India. "Language specialists are gaining higher importance due to deals between multinational and multicultural organisations," he says.

Fitness experts, too, are in demand. "With more and more people visiting gyms these days, there is a need for good fitness experts, who can train and motivate them to achieve their goals," says Balakrishnan. "Fitness trainers have specialised formal and practical education available from certified fitness institutes."

Off-beat jobs preferred by students



Figures in %

ACTING	46
GAMES PROGRAMMING	43
BEAUTY STYLING	35
FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY	34
CHOREOGRAPHY	30
NGO	30
AVIATION	27

Base: all students

market," says Kanika Ahuja, practice manager (consumer goods services) at a recruitment firm. This has fuelled the need for manpower for functions of distributors, logistics and back-end operations, says Oberoi.

It is not always huge volumes that make a sector hot in the job market. The insurance sector, for instance, might not be adding many jobs, but it offers diverse profiles. A sector that has always been perceived to be sales oriented, it offers opportunities in sales, underwriting, risk inspection, finance, IT and administration. Vempati says she looks beyond education and experience while hiring people. "Passion, orientation, agility, entrepreneurial skills, resilience and the ability to change with the environment are some of the areas we look at," she says.

Retaining manpower is also

becoming important for employers, especially in sectors like banking and financial services where competition is intense. ICICI Lombard has an unusual way to deal with attrition. It follows internal churning: after 18 months an employee can switch from one department to another.

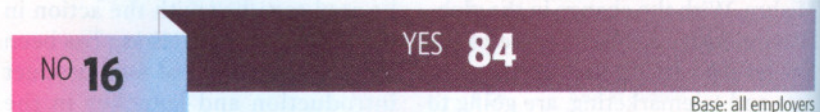
Banking is the most preferred sector among freshers, says THE WEEK-IMRB survey. The sector saw a good level of hiring activity last quarter. Surbhi Shweta of Mirae Asset Global, an asset management company, says sales and marketing are the areas where more people are

Will you hire freshers this year?

Figures in %



Will you hire experienced people this year?



Base: all employers

BHANU PRAKASH CHANDRA



ABHISHEK MOHTA, 26,
TAGGLE.COM, BANGALORE

Small place, tall job

After mechanical engineering, I was working with a multinational bank for two years. Then I decided to join taggle.com, a start-up. I have always had an entrepreneurial streak in me. I realised that in a multinational the work you do would probably contribute to 2 per cent of the company's growth, but in a start-up, you are probably contributing more than 10 per cent. Although I took a salary cut, I realised that working with a small team would give me an insight into handling all the aspects of a company.

being recruited. Recruiters, however, have to keep matching high salaries, as even after final negotiations candidates back out for better deals.

High salary demands are no con-

straint on hiring in sectors where only a limited talent pool is available. Take the pharmaceutical sector, which witnessed a lot of action last year in the form of mergers

and acquisitions and expansions. Though there has not been a sudden spike in hiring, it has not been easy for the recruiters. "With more and more companies entering this sector, there is fierce competition to attract the best from the limited talent pool," says Vaishnav of Sanofi-Aventis.

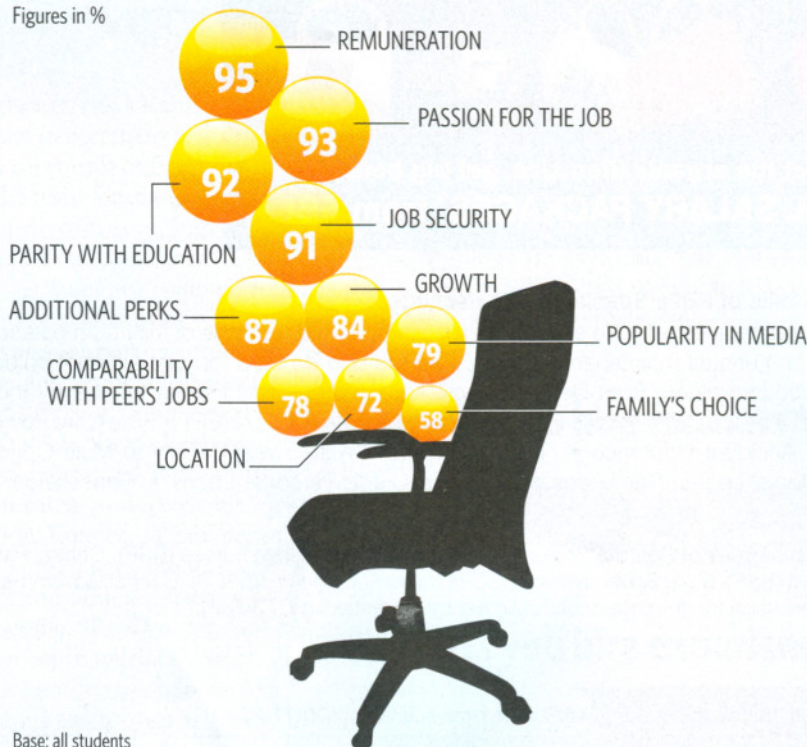
According to Prof. Victor Manickam, Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research, Mumbai, in the pharma sector the biggest talent crunch is in the domain of field executives. "I think training in the pharma industry would be the next big vertical as the industry will need to train or hire trained talent," he says.

Interestingly, the hiring scenario in a sector does not necessarily reflect the sector's state of affairs. For instance, the telecom sector, which is mired in controversies and suffers from low margins, is expected to continue with the hiringspree. Says Devendra Singh, vice-president (human resources) of BS TransComm, a telecom infrastructure provider: "Although margins in voice services have become thin, it will not make much difference in hiring of new talents."

Similarly, the automobile sector, which had been growing in double digits but suffered a blow in the form of interest rate hike in the last quarter, is expected to hire big time. "The

What parameters do students consider in a right job?

Figures in %



Base: all students

Experienced candidates consider leadership roles, remuneration and job security

demand for good quality personnel is particularly high in the areas of sales and marketing, after-sales, R&D and vendor development because of the market explosion, change in customer behaviour and pressure on cost optimisation," says Suhas Kadlaskar, director (corporate affairs and HR), Mercedes-Benz India.

Talent crunch is a problem that all high-growth sectors share. Health care sector, for instance, which has been growing at a fast pace owing to the increasing private sector participation, is facing high attrition. Says Dr Niraj Sequiera, Hinduja Hospital, Mumbai: "We have seen high attrition levels in the industry as most people's career aspirations are very high and they will spend only a certain period at one place before moving on to the next level."

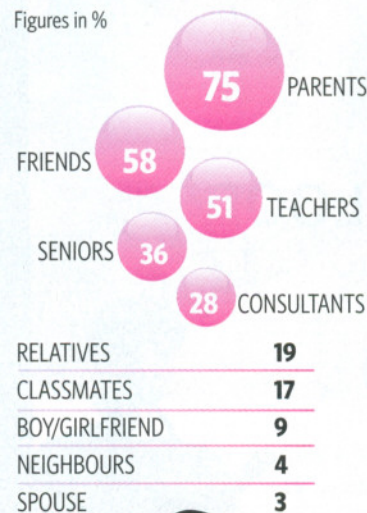
At the other end, the diagnostics industry is also seeing a recruitment boom. Since the talent pool is still developing, hiring is not structured in this sector. "In tier-2 cities these professionals make a lot more money and we have to match those," says Russel Rosario, head (HR), Metropolis Healthcare.

The right skills and inclination, rather than the educational qualifications, are what employers these days look for while recruiting. More so when it comes to hiring for a job like research and analysis. "The job requires critical analytical and problem solving skills," says Sridevi Rao, vice-president, IMRB International. Such people are in demand across sectors, but market researchers are the most sought-after. FMCG, finance, retail and telecom sectors depend heavily on market research.

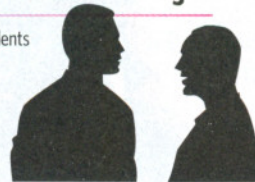
Another service which has a clientele across sectors is advertisement and marketing communication.

Who do students discuss with while selecting a job?

Figures in %



Base: all students



"Since these professionals cater to a clientele across industries, they learn a lot from established organisations in various segments. They apply this learning to service their clients better," says Bhamini Painter, director (HR), Madison World, a communication services provider. "Generally what we look out for are people who can think out of the box."

Some sectors that were hiring big time in the past are not very keen this time around thanks to the slow business and high operational costs. For instance, the aviation sector recruits only to fill key vacancies. In the sector, hiring fluctuates even with fuel price, says Mahima Jain, practice manager (automotive services),

Is working from home an appealing option?

Figures in %



Base: all students



AMEY MANSABDAR

LOVEENA CHANDY, 28, BUSINESS MODEL INNOVATION MANAGER, MEDTECH, DELHI

Switching to learn

My decision to switch from marketing for a beauty and skin care company into Medtronic as a business model innovation manager would surprise many. The biggest myth about marketing in medical devices is that you need to have a science background. I do not have one. You just need to know your product well, and that you can learn on the job. Health care is a growing industry in Asia and India is becoming a major health care hub. I realised this was where growth lay and the role offered would help me understand the market a lot better.

Elixir Consulting.

On the whole the job market is set to maintain the tempo, with multiple growth engines contributing to the cause. What job seekers are expected to do is to make themselves equipped to meet the changing requirements and be prepared to hit the ground running. ■

Hiring potentials, firing products

By Rituparna Chakraborty



Employers these days are looking for potential rather than finished products. The abstracts have become as important and critical as the definitive skill sets while hiring a candidate, and most companies seem to be following the 'Hire for Attitude, Train for Skill' mantra.

EXECUTORS' TRAITS

Innovation: This is a near non-negotiable expectation for those in mid-managerial and leadership position. Keeps the organisation ahead of competition and keeps teams within excited and motivated.

Business Awareness: It is an ability to view situations from a commercial or a business perspective. It is one's understanding of what makes any business successful and the factors that influence success.

Cross-cultural orientation: The world is becoming more global than local and hence it is important to have candidates who are adaptable to various cultures and styles of work. This makes it easier for them to interact

with others who come from diverse background.

Value Proposition: Is this candidate bringing value, be it in terms of achieving revenue targets, grooming people, resource building? The value one brings to the table largely drives one's final decision making.

TACKLING UNCERTAINTY

Ability to handle stress and change: In today's fast changing world, this quality creates the unassailable difference between two equally performing candidates. One who can deal with stress and change takes one ahead in the growth path.

Trouble-shooting: An absolute necessity for those whose roles and responsibilities are largely dependent on external forces. A quality which enables them to think on their feet, be resourceful and take quick decisions without the slightest bit of hesitation.

Ability to overcome ambiguity: Most Indians have this exceptional trait, which has contributed to Indian success globally. Indians have the ability to make sense out of very little details, and comprehend when little

has been said or documented.

CUTTING EDGE

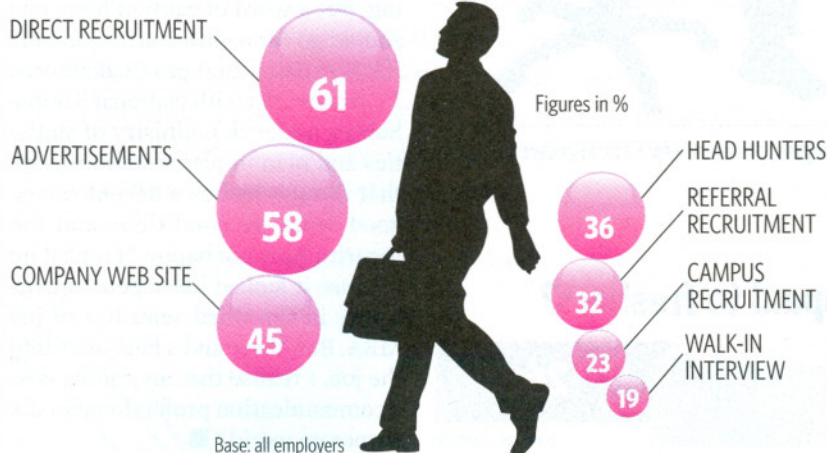
Entrepreneurship: Increasingly, employers are eager to assess the job-seeker's ability to be an entrepreneur. At all levels this quality helps build an end-to-end accountability, combines one's ability to take risks and be responsible for consequences. It also brings in faster decision-making and an ability to excel with limited resources.

Well-constructed aspiration: This indicates a candidate's level of ambition and how far or how little one can stretch oneself to achieve aggressive goals.

Being tech-savvy: Candidates who are not geeky are in for a tough time in most progressive organisations that have technology enablers to improve efficiency of work at every step. One need not be a Mark Zuckerberg, but one should know the difference between Google and Google Apps.

Being socially networked: Having presence in social networking is no more deemed time-wasted. It is actually an interesting way to showcase one's softer skills. It is not surprising that Facebook and LinkedIn have become effective hiring platforms as hard skills are not the only thing hot anymore.

Methods of recruitment



OUTDATED?

Loyalty: While loyalty is expected, not many employers dislike those who have some ship-jumping record (when it is not too short). More tenure actually means more exposure and diversity. As a matter of fact, many organisations believe that beyond four or five years, it is good for employees to move on to induct fresh blood into the system.

Multiple degrees: Matter very little except probably for entry level positions. ■

Flavour of the season

New-age **government jobs** are a hit among students

By Charul Bajaj

The charm of a government job is nothing new. But when 42 per cent of the students who participated in THE WEEK-IMRB Survey on Hot Jobs 2011 selected a Central government job as the preferred option, it came as a surprise. Only 21 per cent selected a job in a private sector company as the preferred option.

This could be attributed to the kind of government jobs offered these days.

The economy's growth has seen many government projects, such as Delhi Metro and UID, adding new employment opportunities. "A good number of commissioning is coming from the areas of infrastructure, urbanisation, power, energy and highways," says Rajeswari Dhar, regional head (south), GI Staffing Services.

The increasing public-private partnership also feeds the trend. "More and more government bod-

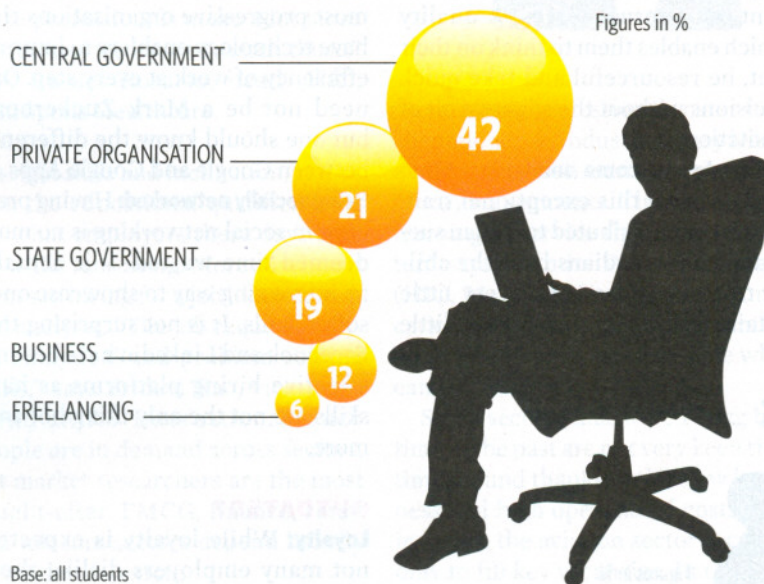
ies are operating as joint ventures with private bodies. People working under such projects are exposed to great learning," says Aditya Narayan Mishra, president (staffing), Ma Foi Randstand, an HR services provider. Apart from these, positions under various ministries and public sector companies continue to be attractive.

Mishra points also at the trend of senior level executives from private sector companies joining government committees as advisers. This is exactly what Varun Santhosh, 24, has in mind. An engineer, he started his career with HSBC as a business analyst, but soon shifted to an NGO looking at the impact of tourism policies on environment and society. Now he is working as a consultant with a state government on a project advising it on policies concerning environment and social sectors. The salary, he says, is decent and at higher positions these jobs pay much better.

After the implementation of the Sixth Pay Commission recommendations, the salaries are better. "Some jobs pay a lot higher at the entry level than in the corporate sector," says Hitesh Oberoi, managing director, Infoedge India. Public sector undertakings also, he says, often pay better than corporate jobs for similar positions. According to him, three sectors that will see employment opportunities grow rapidly in the government sphere are education, health care and infrastructure.

The acceptability of candidates from the government sector and PSUs in the corporate sector is also increasing. But a word of caution here: one should go for a government job only if it is exciting. Sudipto Chakraborty, 27, who works with National Sample Survey under the ministry of statistics and plan implementations, says that though he has a decent salary, good working conditions and job security, he is not happy. "I took it up because it looked like a good opportunity in the third semester of my MBA. But, three and a half years into the job, I realise that my calling is as a communication professional in the corporate world." ■

What types of jobs are preferred by entry level candidates?



Base: all students

Guwahati (92%) and Kolkata (83%) have the highest preference for Central government jobs

Does a temporary job appeal to freshers?

Figures in %

NO 74

YES 26

Base: all students

A fairer world

The workplace is slowly becoming **friendly to women**

By Charul Bajaj

Sweta Paharia, 26, is better off than many other female employees. Four and a half years ago she was in a small-time company where a woman getting married was looked down upon. "They would assume that if a female employee is getting married, she will take a break or will not be able to perform well," says Paharia.

Today she is working in an MNC, where her job will be secure even if she takes six months' maternity leave. "I know of a friend in another organisation strictly being told to limit her maternity leave to three months. A day more would take away the security of her job," she says.

In contrast, Paharia can even work from home in case of an emergency or because of personal obligations. She has the freedom not to work on a project that requires late nights in office without hampering her professional growth. "Not many organisations offer you this," she says. She knows she will be able to maintain work-life balance here even after marriage and wants to stick to the organisation.

While some corporates have chosen to adjust to women's needs, others still use a safety net when hiring them. Some of them completely ignore the importance of gender-diversity. Says Unison International MD Udit Mittal: "In the Indian context, diversity is usually implemented by MNCs. Indian groups are not much into it." Preferring female employees over male does not really ensure apt person for the right job and is usually done for the sake of abiding by policies, he says.

Poonam Barua, founder and

What concerns do women students think will rise with a job?



Figures in %

LESS SAFETY AT NIGHT	92
HANDLING HOME & OFFICE	84
FAMILY WON'T UNDERSTAND	83
OUTSTATION TRIPS	82
LESS ATTENTION TO FAMILY	81
DISLIKE FROM MALE COLLEAGUES	78
SEXUAL HARASSMENT	77
GENDER DISCRIMINATION	71
LESS RESPECT	67

Base: all women students

chairman of 'Forum for Women in Leadership', insists that it is not the correct approach. "The Indian system does not let women occupy positions of leadership," she says. Less than 10 per cent of working women are in the top management. The corresponding figures in the US and the UK are 30-40 per cent and 20-25 per cent, respectively.

While some recruiters argue that the skewed ratio at top levels is due to marriage and family-related issues, Barua says the ecosystem should be made conducive to the needs of female workforce and should help

Going to town

By Sharmista Chaudhury

India's cities are often described as bustling and towns as sleepy. People aspire to leave the sleepy town to make it big in the bustling city, to grab opportunities that they would not have found back home.

That image, however, is changing. The sleepy towns are transforming and many people these days prefer them to the over-populated, polluted metros. Take the case of Shashikant Bhandary, 30, a software developer in Mangalore. He is comfortable in his job and, with a good pay package, he has little to worry about the future. "I might consider shifting to another city only if I get a great opportunity. Otherwise I am quite happy here," he says.

A study by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India on placement pattern says in 2010-11, as many as 2,53,702 jobs were created in tier-2 cities, a growth of 38.8 per cent over last year. And about two lakh people were employed in these cities last year. The numbers for tier-3 cities also look promising—they showed a growth of 23 per cent and created 1,50,391 jobs.

This growth is across the sectors, though IT remains the main growth driver. Says Meghana Kulkarni, assistant manager (human resources), DesignTech Systems, a design solutions provider: "Tier-2 and

Popular jobs

Banking

Assistant relationship manager
Assistant business analyst
Credit analyst

Advertising

Trainee copy writer
Trainee media executive
Trainee account executive



BANGALORE



DELHI



MUMBAI



CHENNAI



HYDERABAD

Preferred job destinations

Figures in %

PUNE	30
KOLKATA	28
AHMEDABAD	25
GOA	23
CHANDIGARH	20

Mumbai, Bangalore, Delhi and Hyderabad are the most preferred job destinations of candidates with some experience

Base: all students

tier-3 cities are attracting large investments by manufacturing companies, IT services companies and infrastructure development companies, and this is creating large job opportunities. IT companies are going to Vizag, Hubli, Kolhapur and Chandigarh. So are auto suppliers."

In addition to the usual suspects, the financial sector also is hiring in tier-2 cities. "Financial companies see scope for expansion in places like Kochi and Chandigarh as the markets in tier-1 cities have saturated," says Surbhi Shweta of Mirae Asset Global Investments, an asset management company. Sales and marketing rule the roost when it comes to hiring in smaller towns and the pay packages are reasonable.

Rituparna Chakraborty, co-

founder of Team Lease, a supply chain and HR services provider, says most companies are trying to reach masses and look beyond educational qualifications. "What they look for is someone who knows the local language well and has good communication skills," she says.

There is no dearth of talent in these towns. "We have seen doctors and people with degrees in agriculture applying for jobs with us," says Rajkamal Vempati, head (HR), ICICI Lombard. The criteria are tweaked though. Says Amar Sinhji, head (HR), Tata Capital: "While choosing candidates for tier-2 cities, one thing we are cautious about is conducting a reference check. While good background makes a difference what matters most is the reference score."

Engineering

Maintenance engineering
Mechanical engineering
Civil engineering

HR management

recruitment executive
training & development executive
staffing manager

IT

Database administrator
ERP consultant
Quality assurance manager

Corporate communication

Corporate events executive
Media relations executive
Corporate communications executive

Financial services

Mutual fund analyst
Portfolio manager
Equity research analyst

Telecom

Telecom administrator
Telecom analyst
Project coordinator

It takes a leader to run a nation.



India's Most Preferred* Lubricant

From Automotive Oils to Industrial Oils, from Marine Oils to Agricultural Spray Oils and from Speciality Oils to Greases, **SERVO** from IndianOil continues to power virtually every walk of life, making it the No.1* lubricant brand in the country by choice*.



Automotive Oils | Industrial Oils | Marine Oils
Greases | Speciality Oils

* No.1 by sales volume.