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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) SECTOR AS A CAREER OPTION...

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In today's tech savy world, IT is a word difficult to do away with. IT sector in India therefore offers numerous opportunities for young inquisitive minds. This write up aims to provide quick insights, clarify certain misconceptions so as to ease certain IF's and BUT'sthat may arise in the minds of young aspirants before they decide to take up a career with this industry.

IT in most cases employs engineering graduates irrespective of their discipline of study. However, in India we cannot deny the fact that there is a significant gap between our curriculum design and industry expectations. This stands true not only for IT, but any Industry for that matter. However a positive sign is that, there are significant efforts by both institutes and the industries to bridge this gap.

If you are a student from a non-computer background and still doubting your capabilities to cope with and survive in an IT job, you can let go your fears and understand the fact that a computer science graduate is going to find things exactly as new as you do and has to go through the same process of unlearning and learning things from the scratch.

So all that IT expects of you is a proper attitude towards learning and a progressive mindset. This is something that I have learnt as an eye opener over these years. Over the last 2-3 years a lot of avenues for self learning have opened up. There are platforms like 'udemy' which provide online courses in almost any technology you name. Students willing to embrace this industry, now have the advantage of equipping themselves beforehand.

Moving on to the functioning of this industry

A company that requires the service of a software engineer commonly falls into one of the below categories
A product company [MacAfee,Microsoft]
A services/ consulting company [TCS/CTS]
IT Startups / apps/websites [Urban Clap]
Large banking/insurance firms [Morgan Stanley, JP Morgan & Chase]

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The nature of work is more or less the same in either of the above mentioned categories. But each of these operates differently. A product company would create their own licensed products for the market like Microsoft Office.

A consulting or services MNC would generally have a lot of clients from all over the globe across domains. For example, TCS can have clients from Telecom background like Vodafone or from the healthcare sector likeApollo hospitals etc., Vodafone/ Apollo can engage TCS to develop their websites/app. Thereby if you work for a consulting/services firm you would be catering to the IT needs of the clients of your parent employer in most cases.

If you are employed with a startup, it's most likely that you are developing your own website/app providing services to your relatively smaller client base. If you are working for a global bank or any insurance sector you would be developing softwares or apps that are required for their internal day to day functioning. Example: Application for their back office settlements etc.,

So which amongst this is the best category to choose?

Well, there isn't really an answer. Working with a reputed product company would for sure be demanding and would give you an excellent exposure where you would get to work on quality parameters. You would also get a chance to be a part of teams that create products used by masses. This job will demand great perfection and sound technical skills.

In consulting firms you would be exposed to working with clients across domains. You get variety. Also this industry may offer opportunities to work closely with your clients thereby providing onsite opportunities. They also outsource employees on contract basis to their client organizations. Once a given project or assignment is complete, the resource management team will thereby allocate the next assignment and so on.

A startup usually has some risks associated until they are well established. Considering the learning point of view, it stands ahead as they may not be able to recruit in bulkand a single individual would be assigned with end to end tasks and multiple responsibilities. Working with an investment bank might give you a great exposure to the ins and outs of a banking world and demands a great degree of ownership and accountability and technical expertise. Work culture is highly secure in such sectors.

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'Software Engineering' is a very broad term as far as the IT industry is concerned. Being a software engineer, you can assume any of the below mentioned roles in an IT organization like Developer, Production Support Engineer, Database Administrator, Test Engineer, Design engineer, Analyst , technical architect ,UI/UX Engineer and many more. Developer will be responsible to develop new modules or enhance existing modules in the application as per Users expectations. A Production support Engineer would be closely connected with the actual users of the application and resolve on priority any real time issues faced by them after the code is in production.
A DBA designs and maintains your Database server and schemas. Test Engineers responsibility is testing the newly developed modules and they are responsible for Quality Assurance. Design Engineer/Analyst would design the functional flows of your application. Technical Architect would design the architecture; decide the technology stack and technical flow for your application. UI/UX Engineer is responsible for the look and feel i.e. screen design of the application. Once you have decided to enter the industry, it's advisable that you are pretty clear on the role you want to take up as switching roles can get quite cumbersome at later stages.

Moving over to technology stack

Most applications are Java Based applications So with command in Java, you will definitely have an upper hand and be exposed to a wide range of opportunities. Specifically, if you are a full-stack developer (UI Technologies, Java, Database) you stand a higher chance to land up in a better opportunity. Mobility (android/ios), BigData, Micro Services, Machine Learning, Block chain are fast emerging. There are other technologies like PEGA, AB Initio etc.., these are a bit uncommon technologies. However, you are rewarded well if you master them. Also industry now expects people who can assume techno functional roles, i.e. resources who have business knowledge as well as

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Your learning curve never ends here rather reaches newer horizons.

"Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young. "

- Henry Ford

Wishing all of you the strength and wings to soar higher and higher!!!
With a word of gratitude, I humbly pay my obeisance to my teachers and great masters who inspired me to realize my potential at MCET and reach where I am today.

LALITHA PARAMESWARAN
EEE – 2010-2014
Software Engineer, Mumbai

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EXHORTATION BY AN ALUMNUS

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Parameswaran Samiappan is an alumnus of NPTC and MCET, apparently he is a TVS Collaborative Education Program's (CEP) product. He has composed this beautiful communiqué to our beloved Secretary, Dr. C. Ramaswamy, fondly recalling the liberty he grants to students and alumni to freely communicate their thoughts, which he deems will help in augmenting the quality of service offered by our institutions.

In his mail he underscores the value and qualities TVS CEP has instilled in him, one among which is the Self Learning Ability that drove him to complete ten online courses through MOOC, Coursera, etc.

He emphatically recommends his juniors be advised to develop this quality of self learning through online courses, particularly Data Science.

It is overwhelming to see a sagacious alumnus who has vividly realized and utilized the support system offered by the institution for his self development and wholeheartedly wishes his juniors also utilize the opportunity to accomplish a gainful career. It is my humble request to all students to read the following mail from a discerning senior.

From:ParameswaranSamiappan<parameswaransamiappan@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2019 9:13 PM
To: Secretary <secretary@drmcet.ac.in>
Subject: Regarding Imparting Data Science education to MCET Students

Dear Mr. Ramaswamy Sir,

Greetings.

Hope your stupendous journey of pioneering the education for the people of Pollachi and to all the students of our beloved NIA Institutions is continuing as always for the past 50 years.

I am one of the First batch students of TVS CEP program in Nachimuthu Polytechnic as well as the one who had the opportunity again through TVS MCET partnership. I feel privileged till today for being in the campus for 6 years and I will feel the pleasure as always.

I am always impressed by the efforts you as a Secretary and the others staff members put in, for both Diploma as well as Engineering programmes. From bringing loads of Centres of excellence and pioneering in many fronts, you have set a great benchmark.

EXHORTATION BY AN ALUMNUS

The culture TVSM CEP program at both NPTC and MCET set in made me to never stop learning and during my free time, I did as many as 10 online courses through Massive Open Online courses in platforms such as Coursera - https://www.coursera.org/. Special thanks to Mr.Deepak Chandra Sekaran for introducing me to this platform of learning.

While doing some of the Data Science courses I happened to come across many courses by Bigdata University - https://cognitiveclass.ai/ I am doing some of the courses right now. As much as everyone know Data science, Machine learning, Deep learning and Internet of things are badly needed across industries, I would like to request your valuable support in making the students understand the importance and focus on the same for improving their job prospects. For my industry of mechanical engineering, this skill is really in demand by many HRs of top organisations.

This particular field learning process can be fostered among our current students and also to our future students, by creating awareness and bringing it in curriculum as part of the regular education syllabus, as well as through professional value added courses. The value of data science related knowledge on our students' resumes will make them favourites among their peer groups by hiring companies.

In this regard I would like to request you & the team to put efforts in making the students understand this future requirement. This can be done by setting up a Centre or Excellence for Data science and related knowledge. I am sure this will help us pioneer among many other colleges in Tamil Nadu and making our engineering graduates more industry ready.

Our NIA Educational institutions are known as a factory churning out engineers with knowledge and skill, and I would love that this future requirement is also fulfilled. The monetary benefits for students with Data Science skills and domain knowledge of individual streams are significant.The millennial of our generations did not have much of the opportunities to learn these things. Now many are changing industries with less than three months of training in Data Science field.

Hope my request is genuine and I look forward to hearing from the team with positive feedback. I have written this mail, due to the encouragement given by you to be in touch and write to you for any request during our studies sharing your mail ID.

EXHORTATION BY AN ALUMNUS

Thank you very much sir for the never ending inspirational leadership. Look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Parameswaran Samiappan,
First batch CEP Student
[2008-11(NPTC), 2015-19(MCET)]

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PARAMESWARAN SAMIAPPAN

**Senior Engineer,
TVS Motor Company.**

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CIVIL SERVICE PREPARATION – MYTHS & TRUTHS

I made the decision to prepare for the civil services after I graduated from college. It was a huge decision since I had to choose between a lucrative career in the semiconductor industry and a distant hope of cracking the most coveted exam in India. I chose the latter on an impulse – to be honest, it wasn't a well planned decision. I had secured a scholarship to aid my coaching and I accepted it as a good omen. I am glad that I am closer to realizing this dream soon.

I wouldn't be dwelling into the facts about the exam here since a simple Google search would yield you relevant answers. The aim of this article is to break some unreal myths surrounding the civil services.

First & foremost, one should understand that there are a lucky few who manage to get through the final list in their first attempt. There are others who crack it in their 4th,5th or even the last, 7th attempt. Then there are others who are unable to crack it even after exhausting all attempts.

The reason behind this is not that the exam is very difficult to crack – it's just that lakhs of people compete for a handful of jobs every year – and almost everyone is equally competent. One needs to come to terms with this fact – which the preparation phase is going to take away more than what we can imagine viz, years of youth, energy, finances, a lot of alternative career possibilities and sadly, a lot of people from our life. Before taking the plunge, one needs to come to terms with this hard truth – that getting into the final list is ONLY a possibility when we are ready to face the sacrifices.

But serious aspirants might understand what it's worth. At the end of the journey lies a massive lifestyle change – a satisfying career of serving those in need at the ground level and some respect in the society. There might be lakhs of aspirants competing for less than 1000 jobs, but you only need 1/1000 vacancies to realise your dream. It doesn't seem so impossible now, does it?

One mistake most of us aspirants do is to treat the preparation phase as a DO OR DIE mission – this is a very unhealthy way of preparation. This leads to most aspirants developing a low self esteem & at times, clinical depression too. One has to enjoy the journey in order to reap the fruits at the destination.

The journey of preparation itself changes you as a person – you become more self-aware, more empathetic about the history of your own, the problems of the people around you and feasible solutions. More often than not, aspirants enter the journey of preparation as very indifferent people and find themselves transformed into more

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rational individuals. This should be the key take away of this journey – You will always be a step ahead, even if you decide to switch careers later on.

Talking about switching careers, the effort you put into studying for this exam never goes in vain – this can be used as a base for several careers like in the public policy development. Look out for fellowships like LAMP, PM Rural Fellowship etc., for a clearer perspective. Please bear in mind that UPSC isn't the only means to serve the society. Another mistake aspirants make is to belittle other exams like the state service exams. Every exam you give adds to your experience, helping you inch a bit closer to cracking the CSE (Civil Service Exam).

Preparing for UPSC naturally groom's you for the other exams – the effort needed to crack the lower level exams becomes less cumbersome. You are free to treat these as a backup in case Mission UPSC doesn't work out. It's a win-win situation. So please do not let your ego get the better of you.

If you are worried about financial support during the years of your preparation, here are some scholarships & free coaching centres that might lend a helping hand -
State Training Institute; Scholarships under Ministry of Social Justice;

Private Trusts like the Velammal Community Services, Sigaram, Shankar Memorial Trust, Manitha Neyam IAS Academy,etc.

The employment wing under each district collectorate also organizes free classes for aspirants.

Also, once you are clear about the syllabus and the preparation strategy, the utmost help you would need is to understand the concepts for which videos are available on YouTube. But self preparation will work out, only if you are self-disciplined.
People say the first two years after you graduate from college can either make or break your career. Even though I can't deny the fact that the early bird gets the worm, it doesn't have to be entirely true. I have seen married men and women preparing for CSE and eventually cracking the exams. Employees at private companies and even serving government officials have managed to crack the exam – all it requires is a customized plan and persistent smart work.

If you have the will,
you will eventually find a way.

May all of us eventually find what we are seeking.

Z KHALIDHA BANU
BE - EEE, Batch of 2017
Khalidha.zia@gmail.com