

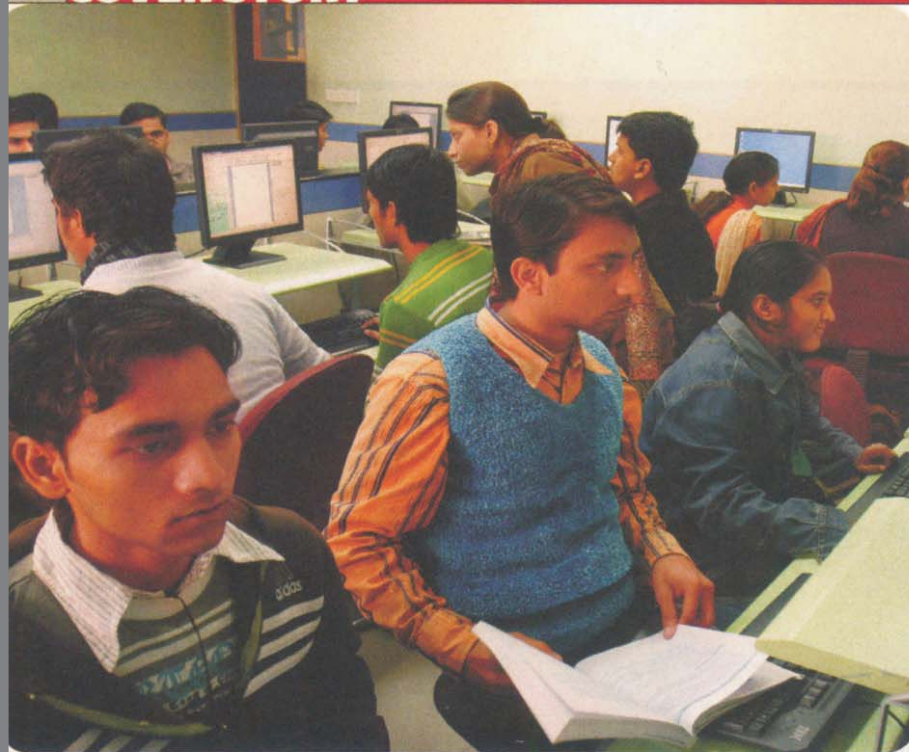
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COVER STORY

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Quick fix: NIIT promises to get people job-ready in 99 days in six areas of IT

Instant karma

Short-term courses are the flavour of the season

By Vijaya Pushkarna

Despite the gloomy market forecasts and pink slips flying around, short-term job-focused training programmes are increasingly taking job seekers' fancy. Eager to start working and impatient to spend long years in class rooms, many are taking these courses that will make them job-ready 'in weeks'.

For instance, leading IT trainer NIIT promises to get people 'Job-ready in 99 days' in six focused areas of information technology. Graduates and final-year students can choose from Java, .Net, Web 2.0, creative publishing, systems and networking, and business intelligence and data warehousing. "I am waiting for the 99th day to be over," says Isha Thakur, who is doing the .Net programme.

It seems the employers also are in favour of these courses. According to THE WEEK-Nielsen survey, around 92 per cent of the employers are ready to recruit candidates who have completed a job-oriented course after graduation. While 47 per cent students want to do a job-oriented course to upgrade their skills, says the survey, 46 per cent want to do it to fetch a good job.

Institute of Computer and Finance Executives, which has 63 centres across the country, offers a programme called Speed which, the institute claims, will make one ready for an accountant's job in 100 days. According to Atul Gupta, operations manager, fresh graduates who enrol for the programme will be all set to work in the area of manage-

ment information systems after the training. What attracted Bhoomi Upadhyay, a graduate from Delhi University, to the course was the complete hands-on training it gives. And the bonus was a 10-day personality development programme. "This is probably one area that decides who is going to be selected," he says.

Jyotsna Wahal, the DD News weather girl, says she owes her job to the month-long course in radio jockeying, news reading and anchoring she did at the Delhi Film Institute. "I'd done my BA, but wanted to be a TV anchor. Now I feel I should be an RJ," she says.

Many people are convinced that formal education beyond graduation can wait or go alongside job, but skills training cannot. Around 72 per cent of the students who participated in the survey think doing a job-oriented course is mandatory to fetch a good job. However, three-fourth of the students prefer to upgrade themselves with post-graduation degrees to get their dream job.

The fact that youngsters today want to be multi-skilled is one reason why institutes offering short-term courses in specific skills are thriving, says Deepak Gulati, who offers half a dozen short-term courses in film-making. Though he does not guarantee placement, the students invariably find a job in the chosen field, he claims.

Has not the global slowdown and a shrinking job market, especially in the IT sector, affected the job-oriented courses? "The acknowledged superiority of Indian software professionals is not because of the cost but because of the skill level, the ability to take up complex projects and find solutions for customers the world over," says G. Raghavan of NIIT. Its 99-day modules, he says, are in sync with the fact that the world looks at India to provide people with software solutions in banking, airlines, hospitality and infrastructure. As per THE WEEK-Nielsen survey, seventy per cent of the job-oriented courses taken by students are in the IT field.