

IT Firms Tighten Process for Hiring Freshers

Lower demand for IT services sees cos going slow on recruitments

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Bengaluru: As India's \$160-billion IT industry faces one of the leanest years of growth in its history, the lower demand for IT services is driving down hiring numbers, which in turn is forcing companies like Infosys and Wipro to become extra selective in hiring even freshers — a departure from the traditional "mass hiring" strategy that IT firms have followed for the last two decades.

In an interview, Infosys veteran Binod Hampapur Rangadore who previously headed the company's talent and technology operations said that Infosys is in the process of tightening hiring processes at campuses that the company will visit, even as it plans to hire roughly 20,000 freshers this year.

"We are trying to see how we can improve the quality of hiring. In the yesteryears, more number of people were being taken from various colleges, the good people would get distributed across. This year, the kind of recruitments in colleges may go down with fewer companies going to the campuses — the economy is a little tight, so job markets will be tougher," said Rangadore, who now heads the company's quality unit and government relations.



HAMPAPUR RANGADORE
Head, quality unit, Infosys



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"One is to tighten our process of recruitment to see who are the best and brightest that we should recruit — that is a continuous process. We tighten each time — tougher questions during interviews, performance of past students from colleges we go to. We short-list those colleges," added Rangadore.

This trend spells doom for engineering graduates at another level — they are unlikely to see a jump in starting salaries.

Freshers joining the IT industry, thus, find themselves on sticky wicket. Entry-level salaries have not seen an increase in nearly a decade now, with most companies still offering packages of around ₹3.25-3.5 lakh.

Despite marginal salary hikes offered by US-based Cognizant — followed by TCS — last year, experts point out that the range of salaries still largely remains the same. While Cognizant raised fresher salaries from ₹3.05-3.35 lakh last year, TCS hiked fresher wages from ₹3.18-3.30 lakh — well within the ₹3-3.5 lakh range that has been prevalent for the last decade since at least 2007-08.