Course Name- Complete guide for campus interviews: Step by step preparation for Internships and Full-time jobs
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What are skills?

Hello, everyone. Today, we'll be talking about skills. So this session is about a very critical part of this entire skill development exercise. In fact, I would say the biggest takeaway from our course is that identifying skills, working on skills, and making skills a cornerstone of what it means to develop careers is the intention. So we'll delve deeper into skills. And we'll talk about what are skills.

We'll talk about skill identification. How do you identify what skills you want? We'll talk about three types of skills. which is our technical skills, business skills, people skills, and then we'll also talk about skill mapping. This is an exercise you can do to check how good you are with respect to all these skills.

So that's the purpose of today's session. So begin by talking about skills. What exactly do we mean by skills? That's a very common term used all the time. So skills are nothing but the knowledge, competencies, and abilities required to perform a task. how you can get work done right in a structured logical manner which is repeatable.

So that's the identity of a skill. So the definition does not mean much but please understand that a skill has knowledge built into it, has competencies built into it, has abilities built into it. So sometimes you'll hear these words competencies being used a lot when you enter the business world. So remember that competencies create skills and not the other way around. Okay, keeping that aside, the definition aside, let's now delve deeper into what does it mean for you in terms of skills.

So imagine that you're sitting in front of a recruiter, right? You're trying to sell something to the recruiter. And I would say the scenario of you trying to sell yourself is exactly the same of a salesman trying to sell their product. So imagine that somebody comes to your house trying to sell a product to you. So if they keep talking about how great the product is, You mostly wouldn't care because firstly, they should ask you, do you even want this product? Do you already have this product? What do you want, right? That's a question the salesman should be asking. And then they should try to sell you the product.

If they begin by just talking on and on about the product, you will stop listening at a certain point of time. So the critical thing is, this is exactly what you have to do with the recruiter. So when you're approaching a recruiter, you're trying to sell yourself. You are a salesman trying to sell your skills to the recruiter. So you are the product you're trying to sell.

You are both the product and you're also the salesperson. and the company does not know anything about you. So you have to tell the company what is the benefit of having you in that role and what are some of the expectations the person has and how will you go around satisfying those skills and expectations. So that's the idea behind any conversation you have, whether it's resume shortlisting whether it's interviews, whether it's conversations with the

recruiter, all of it involve you selling your candidature to the recruiter. So look at it from that perspective, and I think a lot of issues and problems will be resolved during the job search process.

So there are three types of skills. So skills is a catch-all word, but it can be broken down into three separate groups. We have touched on this a little earlier, but again, repeating that, that there are technical skills, and most students, if you study in a university, you learn technical skills in the classroom. You know exactly, if you are a mechanical engineer, you know about thermodynamics, you know about naval architecture, you know about electronics, electrical. These are all technical skills.

So every company also needs some of these technical skills, but they need a lot of things beyond technical skills. And students, people looking for jobs often forget that other things are required beyond technical skills. So the key thing is business skills. the second big category in terms of what companies expect from job seekers so business skills are nothing but if you look at technical skills they're very very specific to each company for example if you're looking at being a software engineer in google google may have a certain language is proficient in for example it may use python or it may use some c plus plus for coding in certain places and you have to know those skills specifically but at the same time if you're looking at the entire software engineering space, including Google and competitors, they may need a bunch of skills in addition to just the language you can work on. It could be, for example, do you know how to write prediction code? Do you know how to write commons? Do you know how to troubleshoot code? These are troubleshooting skills, debugging skills.

This is not just true for Google, but all of software engineering. So this group of companies and competitors they come together and those are the business skills required and business skills are pretty constant like whichever company you go to whether it's google facebook whether it's amazon or microsoft all of them will require the same set of business skills it's going to be very constant across companies so technical skills vary a lot business skills vary less it's more big picture it is like a technical skill but it's more focused on the business side of it the operational side of it Then you have the people skills. That's the third big category. So people skills are nothing but skills which involve you working with employees. Whenever there's a person involved, when you're having a communication, whether you're trying to show leadership, leadership skills and communication skills are nothing but people skills.

You're trying to sell something to the other person. That's a people skill. A marketing skill is a people skill. So remember that technical skills exist, business skills exist, people skills exist. And if you decide to break down the job description in terms of these three skills, then you can quickly make a lot of progress in trying to understand what do you bring to the table.

Let's dig now a little deeper. We talked about job description. So we'll refer to job description using the word JD. Skills by every company is mentioned in the job description. So if you want to know, for example, what does Amazon look for in software engineering position? What does Google look for in a data analytics position? What is Lassen and Toubro looking for in a civil engineering position? They will tell you exactly what they're looking for if you know where to look for it.

So there's something called job description or a JD. And you basically find this in the career section of the website. And I'll show you how to get it. So look at the job description. Anybody looking for jobs has to look at the job description.

This is like the base. This is the beginning. You have to use this as the fundamentals of where you begin the job search process. Without identifying skills, you will make no progress when it comes to the entire job process. identify the job description, look for skills. When you identify your skills, it helps you in one way is that you can then optimize your resume, and you can also prepare for interviews by using and understanding the skills which the companies expect from you.

Similarly, when the recruiter is reading your resume, what they are gonna do is they're gonna focus completely on what skills you bring to the table, and it's not just random skills, the skills in the job description. Are you a match? Does the resume match the skills as defined in the job description? So that's really what they're looking for in terms of resume screening. Likewise, in the interview process, it's very important for you to talk about skills as much as possible. So you don't talk about yourself. You don't talk about any other thing.

Just focus 100% on skills. Companies do not want to know you personally. It is a different conversation. If they want to know you personally, they invite you for lunch and talk to you one-on-one. That's a different conversation. But in an interview process, it's not about you as a person.

It's about, do you match the skills? So remember that that's what companies are looking for. And There's something called ATS or Applicant Tracking System. Applicant Tracking System is nothing but a software program which is looking at your resume and seeing do you match the job description, the skills as defined in the job description. And if the match is not there, you will not get to the next phase. You may get eliminated in the resume screening process.

so if you if your resume has the right skills defined inside it is a very high chance that the ats the tracking system is going to notice you and the recruiter who is also reading through the resume will also have a very positive impression okay let's shift gears a little get down to skill identification so this is the way i would say that if anybody is searching a job in the open market or looking at campus recruitment, ideally they should begin from this perspective. They should identify maybe five to 10 companies they're very, very interested in. So you need to have a target company. You cannot say, I'm going to apply for every company which comes to campus.

That's just not going to work. If you send the same resume to 100 companies, it is going to be a 100% failure rate. So what's more advised is customize your resume for the company you're applying for. This means, firstly, identify what company do you want to apply for. You don't need to wait till the company comes to campus. Even in your beginning of a third year, beginning of a fourth year, even before campus recruitments begin, you can do this homework.

You can go. For example, firstly, identify the five companies, go to the careers website of each company, go to the career section and search for the role, the name of the role you're applying for. For example, if the networking engineer, whether it's a mechanical engineer, R&D engineer, search for those. job titles in the search option in the careers page you will then get the job description the job description always be displayed in the company career page download the job description and then scroll down to something called the skills section there will always be a section called skills and qualifications in every job description it's 100 going to be there so scroll down scroll down to that and you've got to then begin to highlight some of the skills you want to see Let's take an example. I've been talking a lot. So this is something I want

to show you in terms of, for example, if I'm looking for jobs in Google, what I'm going to do is I'm going to go to the google.

com page. It says google.com slash about slash careers. So I go to that page. And I see there's a search option at the bottom, which is what job do you want, where do you want. So this is what you have to enter. So for example, if I'm looking for a certain job in, say, data analytics role in, say, Bangalore, I type data analytics Bangalore search for it.

And this is what I see. As of today, I see there are two jobs open right now. So both are data analytics jobs, and they're not really meant for freshers, people without work experience. But I can see that there's something called minimum qualifications. There's something called preferred qualifications. And you can see the companies want something from the candidate.

So now I begin to look at this. My mind should be thinking, OK, what does the company want? And more importantly, do I have what the company wants? So most students feel that there will be a fit in whichever company you apply for, and that's absolutely not true. Every company wants something different, and you are not always a fit for every job. You will only be a fit for, say, 10% of the job descriptions you would check out. So if you look very carefully at the job description, you will get a sense of, should you even apply for that job or not apply? For example, here in Google, you see that There is this experience with commission systems and spreadsheet software. So I've basically defined this under three categories, technical skills, business skills, and people skills.

So technical skills are underlined in red, the business skills are underlined in green, and the blue lines represent the people skills. So what I'm doing here is when I look at commission systems and spreadsheet software, this is a very specific need from the company. That's a technical skill. Likewise, project planning, status reporting. This is going to happen in all companies, right? So this is a business skill which I need to have.

Then there's something about gap, internal control practices. This is again a technical skill. Then you have general incentive commission workflows. Again, a technical skill.

which is specific to that company, Google. And then you have attention to detail, focus on continuous improvement. And it says explicitly, excellent organizational and problem-solving skills. So whenever it comes to organizational skills, problem-solving skills, we're talking about people. You're working with people in order to solve problems.

So it clearly is a people skill. So just by looking at the job description, you can see that Google needs a lot of tech skills, a little bit of business skills, and a little bit of people skills. But it needs all three skills. and have to then ask myself, do I have these skills? If you don't have these skills, then maybe you should not even be applying for these jobs. Or if you don't have, you should at least come up with a plan in terms of how to improve your skills for the future so that you can apply for this job. It may not be today, but maybe six months later, could be one year later.

Let's go on to other examples. So this is an example of Deloitte in terms of what their job description is. So I got this from the Deloitte website. So maybe, why don't you take a minute, I'll pause this video, and then look at this job description try to identify okay there's just lots of words out here there's a lot of verbiage out here so can you do the same homework we talked about earlier just take a short try to identify the people skills business skills and technical skills

okay so go forward Okay, so now if you reach this place, that means that you have spent some time trying to go through these skills. Let's dig in, right? Let's see what progress you have made and how does it match. So the ones I've outlined in green out here, the green ones represent the business skills.

The blue represents the people skills. My understanding as an HR person when I look at this job description is that they really don't want too many technical skills. So I would predict that if Deloitte comes to campus, they're not very interested in hardcore technical people. So they're not interested in whether you come from computer science or mechanical engineering or electrical engineering. I think they're pretty open and flexible. In these jobs, anybody can pretty much come in and make a big difference.

Your branch of specialization will not matter. But what matters is, do you bring some additional skills in terms of business skills and personal skills? So let's dig in, right? So first one is problem-solving skills. So as I read this, this is clearly a business skill. And this is a possible question they can ask you during the interview process. Give me evidence of your problem-solving skills. Give me evidence of your outside-the-box thinking skills.

That's also a business skill. There is something about working in a fast-paced environment, which means an intense, hard-working environment. So that's a people skill. So again, Do you have some experience in that direction? You've got to ask yourself. There's something called strategy, productivity improvement.

These are all business skills. It's defining, analyzing, and managing requirements. Again, a business skill. Analytical and critical thinking. That's also, again, a business skill.

It's about communicating your findings. There is a section out here. This is clearly a people skill. So again, do you have evidences in your past where you made some good presentations before a large audience? That's something to ask yourself. We then come across to this competitive positioning, customer relationships, core functions, improving process and so on.

So these are all business skills again. Again, data powered advancements. You're talking about lifecycle activities and innovation. All these are business experiences and you have to ask yourself, do I have these skills? They ask you questions about insightful recommendations in terms of data fuel strategies. So again, data is important.

So data business, very, very important to Deloitte. I see that repeated often. That means that when you face interview, you will definitely face questions around have you worked with data? How well have you worked with data? And how did you make recommendations? How did you present to a large audience? So I can just by reading this job description, I can begin to see where the interviews are going to go towards. It talks about working in collaborative culture. That's a people skill. So Deloitte, my big picture reading is that it doesn't need too much of technical skills, but it definitely need a lot of business skills and people skills.

Okay, so let's go on to McKinsey, right? Let's do a similar exercise for McKinsey. This is a business analyst position at McKinsey. Let's dig in deep, do a similar exercise like we did with Deloitte. So why don't you folks take a minute, pause the video, again, go through this entire section and ask yourself, how do I divide this job description into different skills? Go for it, get it done. Okay, so now that you have taken a shot at trying to describe the people skills, business

skills, and technical skills, let's look at it, right? So again, McKinsey II does not need too much of technical skills.

They seem to pretty much want business skills and the ones in green which are the business skills and the ones in blue which are the people skills. And you can see that ability to work collaboratively, that's a people skill. You see that ability to communicate effectively, that's a people skill. Breakdown problems, a business skill.

Working independent work streams, a business skill. Building relationships with clients, that's a business skill. That's a people skill. And then working with larger audiences, that's again another people skill. Coming up with complex information and breaking it down into clear takeaways, that's again a business skill. So when you face a McKinsey interview, it's a very good chance that all your questions will be around these skills, right? There will not be any other question you will face.

It will all be about give me experiences, give me an example of time in the past when you had to show these skills and you had to come up with these stories and examples to share with the recruiters. And that's how you end up impressing the recruiters. So just by looking at the job description, you're beginning to see a lot of commonalities, trends. I pulled up a similar job description for a core engineering company like Intel to see what is it they are looking for.

So if you look at Intel, it says clearly what they want. They want people who can work in a very compressed work schedule, so that's a people skill. It's ability to work hard, like work nonstop, that's a people skill. They also want some minimum of business skills. They want a little bit of working with complex equipment.

If you have some internship experience, you can share with them. The ability to work with Excel, MATLAB, GMP, so that's again on the business skills. So you can see clearly that compared to say McKinsey, the Intel expectations in terms of some of the business skills is going to be much, much lower. It's a very different set of skills you're looking for. That also means that once you join Intel, you will learn a lot of things. So in companies like McKinsey, right from the beginning, you're expected to have lots and lots of fantastic skills.

You will have learning in the company, but then you should have those sort of experiences well in advance. But in a place like Intel, If you're starting off as a core engineer, production engineer, R&D engineer, you will learn a lot in the workplace. So even if they don't expect too much from you in the beginning, you can develop these skills as you go forward. So what do you do with all this knowledge? So this is where I feel that all of you, especially if you're a student, you should do this work.

It's something I call a skill gap analysis. The top MBA programs in the US highly recommend this to the students as they begin their job search process. And even when they begin the first year of the MBA program, they expect you to do some work in terms of what skills do you want to develop during the MBA program? something i want to share if you can do this for example during the end of your second year of the undergrad program or if you're doing this at the beginning of your first year of your mtech program or me program that's definitely going to help ideally you should do this with at least one and a half years ahead of you or two years of education in front of you so that you can plan what is it you have to do to improve skills so let's begin by what the skill gap analysis means so what you're going to do here is you're going to identify the the skills as defined in the job description for your target companies. What are

some of the skills the companies are looking for? Like I said earlier, identify five companies as your target companies. So list down all the skills the companies want, all the five companies want, and ask yourself, okay, these are all the skills, all the people skills, these are all the business skills, these are all the technical skills.

What are the skills? List it all down. then try to guess what sort of skill level do these companies expect. For example, if it is working with Python, and you're going to join a company like, say, Lassen and Tubro or Tata Motors, the expectation may be more of like a basic introduction to Python. They don't want very advanced skills, but then if you're going to work in a company like Goldman Sachs or D.

E. Shaw, they may want advanced programming skills. So use this framework. So when you look at skills, look at it in terms of three levels of categorization. One is basic, the other one is intermediate, and the other one is advanced. So basic, intermediate, advanced, and try to slot the expected skill level across these dimensions. What do companies want? Sometimes you may not be able to answer this question, so talk to your friends, talk to people working in companies, talk to your professors, they'll give you some idea of what level of skill do these companies want. Then ask yourself, what do I bring to the table in terms of the same categorization, whether it's basic skills, intermediate level of skills or advanced skills.

Then you do a comparison between the expected skill and the skill you have. if there's a large difference right if the skill levels are exactly the same there's nothing for you to do you're already there so what you bring to the table is more than what the companies want from you then it's fantastic you don't need to do anything there but in most cases you're going to find that companies want more from you than where you are right now and that's where you'll have to create this something called skill bridging how do you bridge this gap and you can bridge this gap in multiple ways so one way is you can volunteer for work, you can volunteer for internships, projects and so on. You can do that in the workplace, I think that's the easiest way to gain it and you can do short-term internships, long-term internships, externships, easy ways to get that exposure. Volunteering for internships can be a low-cost way for you to actually gain skills. So internship is not just about putting stuff on your resume, but also gaining skills so that you get ready for full-time jobs.

You can volunteer for work if you don't get to work in a big company. You can even work in a non-profit organization and gain leadership skills, for example. So you can do a lot of things. You can take up online courses on Coursera, on YouTube.

You can take up additional courses on NPTEL, for example. List it all down. What is it you're going to do? Are you going to, for example, Use books to improve your knowledge. For example, if you want to pick up marketing, do you want to just use a book by Kotler and improve your skills? So Kotler is a very famous book. Philip Kotler is a very famous marketing guru. He's a professor from the US and he's written a fantastic book on marketing.

So you can read the book and gain skills. Some people prefer that. Some people would probably say, I want to do a course or a course so that I can put it on my resume. So ask yourself, what is it you're going to do? Are you going to attend a workshop organized by people? Are you going to listen to some lectures? How are you going to improve your skill levels? That's really what you need to be asking. You could even say, I want to work with a professor on a certain project. And through that work with the professor, I want to gain these one, two, three skills.

So this way, when you're working with a professor, there's a definite goal in mind. So you know exactly what you want. And the professors are also like people who have a clear goal. And if you can define it in terms of skills and your resume, that's fantastic. I did this similar exercise for another scenario again skill gap analysis how do you map what else can you do you can take IIT courses you can read books you can take online courses finally your projects again students often forget that in the end of your fourth year of the undergrad program and second year of your master's program you do a long big project so if you can link it to a bunch of the skills you want to gain that's fantastic right if you're So this means that by doing the project, you're getting industry ready and there can be no better way for you to pick up the skills which industry needs.

So don't do random projects or easy projects. Try to pick projects where you get to learn something. The more you prepare and define what is it you're looking for, then you can find the topic which helps you get to that end goal in terms of what you want. So look at the skill gap analysis. I think it's a great way for you to map the skills and ask yourself, how much do you want to learn? What is it you want to do? And begin doing this work at least one and a half years before you graduate because then it gives you some time to work on this. If you do it too close to when you graduate, you probably will not have any time to pick up skills. Okay, folks, come to the end of this conversation. Thanks.