

Interview of the Day: 'We are providing in-house training to employees to bridge skill gap required into operations of the company'

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What will be the hiring trend in 2013 for logistics sector?

It seems that the hiring trend will improve in the logistics sector in 2013. Unlike the financial year, where the logistics sector suffered due to slow economic growth, 2013-14 may witness significant growth in the logistics sector in view of FDI in retail sector, effect of which will boost growth and investment in logistics and the 3PL segment.



Has the industry witnessed any substantial growth in terms of hiring over the past few years? Please give examples.

Due to the surge in the Indian economy over the last few years, logistics industry has witnessed significant growth, many multinational firms made investments in India, started operations, entrepreneurs entered into this segment, and also, many manufacturing units have setup their own logistics department, thus hiring in this sector grew significantly.

Modern retail, e-commerce segment entirely rely on efficient supply chain, therefore, they either have their own supply chain setup or outsource the activities.

What have been the major challenges in hiring relevant candidates so far?

The logistics sector is continuously evolving. However, the sector faces major challenges leading to the existing skill gaps in the sector. According to the white paper by KPMG and CII on the Skill Gaps in the Indian Logistics Sector, some of these concerns are:

- Poor image/ lack of attractiveness for new recruits arising from poor working conditions and relatively lesser attractive pay and progression incentives – in turn arising from the fragmented and unorganised nature of the industry.
- Rapid evolution in the logistics management processes and operations with technological change and changing customer requirements.
- Absence of an institutionalised skill development environment.
- Emergence of attractive alternate career options leading to attrition.

What kind of innovative measures are logistics companies taking to beat this challenge? Give your company case if relevant.

Logistics companies are employing multiple strategies to beat the challenges in hiring. Some of them are as follows:

- Tying up with business schools for hiring: A company usually ties up with a business school/institute to build relationship and attract the best of talent. Leadership talks, interactive sessions/workshops are continuously organised to develop the interest amongst the students towards the sector.
- Engaging students from 10+2 schools: TCI is partnering with CBSE to offer a 10+2 vocational course on Transport System and Management. Presently, this course is offered at schools in Rajasthan and MP.
- Tying up with skill development organisations for developing pre-employment skills among unemployed youths: TCI is working with select foundations for skill development among rural unemployed youths in Rajasthan.
- Organising job fairs to hire entry level operational employees.
- Creation of a vigorous institutional framework for creating logistics manpower: It is very important to create a vigorous institutional framework to bridge skill gap in the logistics industry. As of now, there is no formal education available in terms of the logistics sector. We feel that quality services can be delivered by only professionally qualified manpower. Also, the sector is not just about transportation, but includes movement of cargo through air and ocean, inland water ways, courier, express cargo, warehousing, IBL & OBL operations, freight forwarding, etc.

With the regulatory environment evolving in the country, trained manpower is need of the hour to bring in efficiency into the sector.

Do you agree that there has been a skill shortage in this industry? What is the reason behind the same?

Yes, to some extent it is true. However, companies like TCI are relying on providing in-house training to its employees to bridge the skill gap required into operations of the company. However, not everyone can afford to spend so much on skill building.

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