

Career Orientation Program for First year Degree Pharmacy Students: facilitating Personal effectiveness, Leader effectiveness and Resource effectiveness

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Abstract : The objective of the present study is to assess the need for career orientation programme for First Year pharmacy students. A Questionnaire Survey was conducted amongst First year students of few Pharmacy education institutes affiliated to Pune University and the data obtained was analyzed. Of total sample size of the students participated in survey, 85% of students feel that the college should undertake career orientation programme, which in turn will help them in deciding career option after completion of their graduation.

The 90% of students surveyed were very enthusiastic about knowing the various requirements of their job like leadership skills, personality development nature and functions of the job, etc. They feel that they may mould themselves according to the job requirements during their four years of the course, which may save their energy and time that they would have had invested after the completion of the course which may lead to decrease in employee turnover in the pharmaceutical industry. This should be beneficial for the industry as low employee turnover rate can save a lot of time, energy and money on training and development of employees.

Moreover, institute can tie up with the industry and thereby can facilitate the students with experts from the various fields to deliver seminars and deliberations on the job requirements and functions in various areas of pharmaceutical industry. Thus an effective liaison, networking and co-operation between them can make a difference where both pharmaceutical education institute and pharma industry would be in a win-win situation.

Key words: career orientation programme, students, employee turnover.

Introduction

With the pharmaceutical companies, witnessing fierce competition there is an urge for diligent and versatile pharmacists, to enhance their growth and corner the larger slice from the market share. Due to the demand for the high quality intellectual resources by the pharmaceutical industry, it is indispensable for the students pursuing Pharmacy education to elevate their standards right from the very first year of the degree course. Orientation program provides a wonderful opportunity and bigger platform to inculcate and reinforce positive attitudes, added values, behaviours, self-confidence, improving their skill sets in the areas of communication both verbal and non-verbal, building up leadership qualities, and overall personality development

in order to get a headstart in the field of Pharmacy. The basic aim of orientation program is to help in discovering self- potential and generating their hidden capabilities necessary for enriching their competitiveness to become a distinctly different professional a pre-requisite for an ideal pharmacist. In this process, the budding pharmacist is acquainted with the various different processes taking place all around him/her with a true multi-disciplinary approach.

Present approach in Pharmacy Educational Institutes

Most of the pharmacy institutes in our country start their academic session by teaching the pharmacy subjects right from the day one without undergoing career orientation programme to the first year students. On the other hand,

few institutes undertake orientation program of not more than a day but only provide information to students regarding different examinations, pharmacy subjects that are included during their four-year curriculum, and various scholarships offered to them, but fails in explaining the various avenues available for them after the successful completion of the course. Moreover, the students are not made aware of how significant is their role in the healthcare system in this global era and fails to impart the sense of pride, honour, dignity and respect of becoming professional Pharmacist.

Novel Approaches in Pharmacy Educational Institutes

There is an apparent need in the present global scenario to have a sea change in the present approach of pharmacy educational institutes. They need to have a leading edge not only in the academic area but also in nurturing and fostering various aspect of the profession right from the commencement of the first year's academic session. This will give a lot of enthusiasm and momentum among the first year pharmacy students that will motivate them to accomplish their desired goals, thereby fulfilling their aspirations in the field of Pharmacy. Therefore, it is paramount that pharmacy educational institutes must not only be academic oriented but also be activity oriented to mould their students so that they are accustomed to the present competitive and demanding industrial environment. In doing so, the career orientation programs plays an important role to cater to the first year pharmacy students the information about various available fields after graduation like job requirements in various fields gain more knowledge, to acquire necessary skills, about the specific field he/she would like to join in future and accordingly may mould themselves.

Due to the fast pace of change in pharmaceutical industry, the requirement for trained graduates is increasing. Orientation programme is the "gold standard" for developing leadership skills. Developing the leadership skills in an academic environment is a challenge, which few universities have chosen to accept. Leadership skills impart personal effectiveness, leader effectiveness and resource effectiveness that will enable to:

Attain success and effectiveness by building capacity, developing competence, becoming capable.

Discover breakthroughs by searching for new ways, taking calculated risks, going beyond limits.

Engineer situations by developing resourcefulness, engineering it to one's favour, avoiding of being a victim.

Build self-esteem by not waiting for the big success but celebrating small successes which will motivate them.

Develop qualities like identifying good qualities and developing them, recognizing another's too.

Realizing the power of body system by concentrating on positives, feeling proud of them, respecting oneself.

Build self-confidence by avoiding low self-esteem and building a strong self-esteem.

Human relations skills like covenanted, respect and concern.

Handling effective criticism by describing your behaviour, register feelings, reporting tangible impacts.

By being with people first, performances second, person-centredness.

Responding effectively by accepting facts, checking hearsays, respecting opinions.

Art of convincing by listening carefully, identifying arguments, refute where needed.

Art of describing by painting word pictures, present minor details, using descriptive words.

Art of arguing by using logic and rationality, giving reasons, sequencing reasons.

Art of refuting by proving the other's incorrectness, provide reasons

Social skills like practicing politeness, expressing respect, showing courtesy,

Reporting skills like use of reporting action words, sequence logically, narrate or tell.

Human relations skills like covenanted, respect and concern

Human skills by sharpening the intellect, schooling the mind, developing hardware (brain) and software (mind)

Becoming a part of working team by in which team goals are more important sacrificing individual goals and identifying another's needs

Contributing to team work by resolving conflicts among them

Moreover, institute can tie up with the industry and thereby can facilitate the students with experts from the various fields to deliver seminars and deliberations on the job requirements and functions in various areas of pharmaceutical industry like drug regulatory affairs, import and export of drug, production and manufacturing, analytical and quality control, quality assurance, clinical research trials, Research & Development (R & D), Formulation & Development (F & D), biochemical studies, toxicological studies, pharmaceutical marketing and sales.

The students should also be made aware of other career opportunities which include Government services, community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy, Drug control administration, library information services including Pharma Journalism, Nuclear pharmacy.

Career Orientation Programme will also focus on various prerequisite for individual jobs like personality, in depth knowledge, communication and other specific skills which will enable the student to select the job of his/her interest. Thus the pharmaceutical companies will be

recruiting job contended and highly motivated employee rather than the ignorant pharmacy graduate who is completely unaware of the various job aspects. This may help them to keep their employee turnover rate to a very low and thus save revenue and time on training of employees.

Through Career orientation programme a small group of 5-6 students can be formed according to their chosen field in which they would like to pursue their career in future, and are given various tasks, assignments and projects in that particular field which are job related.

The cost of development and training of fresh graduates and post graduates in the pharmaceutical industry is very high. Many industries do not take this seriously as employees change with employers with high frequency (1) As compared to bygone era, where students were not

planning in terms of their career, today there is perceptible change in current generation (2) Career awareness is found to be more profound in third and final year B.Pharm and M.Pharm students, but the extent of awareness is much less in first year and second year students. (3, 4)

Therefore undertaking career orientation programme in the first year itself will form a road map for their desired destination in the field of pharmacy.

Thus we can achieve a win-win situation both for the pharmaceutical company and the pharmaceutical educational institutes which will boost pharma sector in this global scenario thereby drive the country's economic growth and prosperity.

A Questionnaire Survey :Need of Extensive Career Orientation Program for First Year Pharmacy students	
Name of student:	
College name:	
Q 1	Why did you choose the Pharmacy as a career? a) Your liking b) Your inherent interest c) Last choice d) By peer pressure e) Any other reason
Q 2	How did you come to know about pharmacy course? a) Newspaper b) Friends c) Career counselors d) Any other source
Q 3	What are the career options do you think available after completion of course?
Q 4	Did you gone through career orientation programme in your college at the beginning of your first year? a)Yes b) No
Q 5	Do you think that pharmacy colleges should organize extensive Career Orientation program so that you can select the option of your choice from the so many alternatives in the very first year of your course?
Q 6	Do you agree that the career orientation programme may help you in selecting your dream career and you can channelise your all energy in developing your personality that fits for your dream career? a) Yes b) No c) Don't know d) Can't say
Q 7	Do you feel sense of pride considering yourself as a part of esteemed profession, which plays a vital role in healthcare system?
Q 8	Do you agree that carefully selected career after undergoing career orientation Program help reduce frequent switching over jobs and gives job satisfaction?
Q 9	Do you think job satisfaction is important parameter for selecting right kind career? a) Yes b) No c) Not that important if the returns in terms of salary are high d) Can't say
Q10	Do you think carefully selected career options by employee makes him happy and contended with his job results into less employee turnover for the company which in turn companies have to spend little and save more on employee training.

Conclusion

Career Orientation Programme should be provided to first year B. Pharmacy students in order to make them aware about various opportunities in the field of pharmacy and educate them on various job profiles thereby serving as a tool for them to form a career path of their interest. It also aims in imbuing in the first year students leadership skills and developing their overall personality which are essential ingredients thus giving them distinct edge which is imperative in the present fast growing industrial scenario.

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