With a view to improve employability, the ITM group has rechristened its full-time management programme to 'iConnect'. Knowledge finds out more

Keeping up in tandem with the changes that are happening in the industry worldwide, the ITM group of institutions have brought about a series of changes to its existing full-time management programme, and aptly rechristened it iConnect. The new design and delivery, which is a product of interaction with faculty, alumni and over 200 business leaders across India, will be offered at the institute’s Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad campuses.

"There are three key shifts in the iConnect," explains Prof. R. Mani, Vice President - Institutional Development, ITM Group of Institutions. The first is that instead of the usual eight-week summer internship a student goes through, students here will be engaged in a 28-week ongoing internship during the duration of the programme. This will be closely monitored by the faculty with every student having an individual faculty mentor who would visit the student at the internship location. "The internship will no longer be a sum total of convenience and connection. Students will be provided with inputs and a thorough review during a two-week break mid-internship, after which they will resume the latter half of the internship," elaborates Prof. Mani.

For facilitating these internships, ITM worked much in advance, and has come up with solutions through suggestions from the industry itself, saying that longer internship with a larger number of students enables even companies to plan their projects well in advance. The Institute has already confirmed internships with names like the Future Group, Sunlox, Energo, Nestle, Godrej Agrovet, Coca Cola and Raymond among many others.

Along with the internship, there will be a focus on life-skills and career management skills, right from day one, rather than just the last semester. "These skills would be developed via insights sessions, from the time to enter the institutions, right up to the third semester which is when most placements take place," says Prof. Mani. Further, he emphasizes the need for personal development, confidence building, and coping mechanisms for students among other things. According to him, this too can play a major factor in converting the 28-week internship to pre-placement offers for students.

The third difference is in the NGO projects. Instead of taking up a project for a few weeks to obtain the certificate at the end, iConnect students will involve themselves with concurrent NGO projects for a period of three months, from December to December. In this manner, they will be sensitised towards the cause and build an emotional connect with the members. In fact, many NGOs have had their briefing sessions with the students where expectations are clearly laid out, and names like Kokil Education Foundation, Aksharsha Foundation, Dhananjay Foundation and Surajya Foundation have already confirmed their participation in the programme along with many others.

**KEY CHANGES**
- Twenty-week internship for every student
- Greater focus on life-skills through insights sessions
- Concurrent NGO project