



**IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY:** Faculty of engineering colleges with officials of Anna University of Technology Chennai on the Cognizant campus.

## Industry insights from Cognizant for AUT faculty

There are felt needs to keep the faculty of engineering update with the latest technological developments and on the use of emerging technologies. In order to meet these needs, Anna University of Technology Chennai (AUTC) has started tapping industry experts.

Cognizant Technology Solutions came forward, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), to conduct long-term structured Faculty Development Programme (FDP) named 'Ripple' for the benefit of faculty and students of AUTC.

In the first phase, to bridge the gap between IT industries and institutions, Cognizant conducted a two-day workshop for 53 faculty members from engineering colleges affiliated to AUTC. The faculty had to go through theory and practical sessions on soft skill development such as employability, innovation, IT project implementation, social learning platform among others in its campus.

"The faculty trained by Cognizant will act as mentors in their respective colleges. There will be a similar programme for students at the University College of Engineering, Villupuram, where 242 students will be trained in a one-day workshop," says R. Venkatraj, director, Centre for Planning and Development, AUTC. Each classroom will also have four mentor teachers to train the students, he adds.

The university has a three-pronged approach. The objective is to familiarise students to industry needs, make them job-ready and have an active collaboration with industries, says Prof. S. Gowri, Registrar, AUTC.

The Cognizant Academy's new initiative, Ripple, encompasses all its faculty development programmes. In the first session for AUTC faculty, volunteers of Cognizant's Outreach (Cognizant's grassroots corporate social responsibility arm) in association with an international NGO called Junior Achievement, provided insights into the IT industry and the skills / attitude / aptitude needed for students to get employed in the growing IT sector, said Balakrishnan Shanmugam, vice-president, Cognizant Academy. As part of Cognizant Ripple, a series of core technology and soft skills programmes will also be offered.

"Cognizant's volunteers will continue to mentor these faculty members covered by Bridge IT so that the latter can take the same message and industry insights to more faculty in their respective colleges. All of them in turn would offer the same training to students in their respective colleges. This is a scalable model for improving the employability of the large number of engineering students who are aspiring to enter the IT sector," Mr. Shanmugam said.

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