

Best Practice: I

1. Title of the Practice:

Implementation of the Integrated Soft Skill Development Model

St. Xavier's Catholic College of Engineering (SXCCE) offers a variety of soft skill programs aimed at enhancing students' personal and professional development. These programs are part of the institution's holistic approach to education, focusing on improving communication, interpersonal skills, and emotional intelligence, which are crucial for career success.

2. Goal

The primary goal of the soft skill programs at St. Xavier's Catholic College of Engineering (SXCCE) is to enhance students' employability by developing critical interpersonal skills, communication abilities, and emotional intelligence. The college aims to mould its students into well-rounded professionals who are not only technically proficient but also adept at collaborating, leading, and adapting to dynamic work environments.

3. The Context

In today's competitive job market, employers increasingly seek candidates who possess a balance of technical knowledge and soft skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership. Recognizing this demand, SXCCE has integrated soft skills training as part of its holistic educational approach. The college aims to prepare students to succeed in professional environments by offering targeted training in these areas from their first year of study onwards.

4. The Practice

a. Orientation and Induction Programs: The college conducts multi-week induction programs at the start of the academic year. These include workshops on:

- Communication skills
- Personality development
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Motivation and emotional resilience

b. Continuous Soft Skill Training: Soft skills training is delivered throughout the academic year via workshops, seminars, and activities like group discussions, presentations, and role-playing exercises. Focus areas include:

- Verbal and non-verbal communication
- Leadership and teamwork
- Conflict resolution
- Time management and productivity

c. Personality Development & Value Education: Dedicated sessions on personality development are a hallmark of SXCCE's soft skill programs. These include exercises in self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and social responsibility. Through this training, students

learn how to build professional relationships, manage stress, and present themselves confidently in interviews.

d. Extracurricular Engagement: In addition to classroom learning, soft skill development is integrated into extracurricular activities. Programs run by the National Service Scheme (NSS) and Youth Red Cross (YRC) offer students opportunities to engage in leadership roles and community service, further refining their soft skills.

5. Evidence of Success

The success of these programs can be measured through several outcomes:

- **High Placement Rates:** SXCCE has a strong record of securing placements for its students, particularly in top multi-national companies. The continuous training in soft skills contributes significantly to this success, as employers increasingly prioritize candidates who possess strong interpersonal and communication abilities.
- **Positive Student Feedback:** Surveys conducted by the institution indicate that students find the soft skills training beneficial, particularly in preparing for interviews and navigating professional environments.
- **Employer Endorsements:** Companies participating in campus recruitment at SXCCE have often commended the college for producing well-rounded graduates who excel not only in technical knowledge but also in essential soft skills.

6. Problems Encountered

While the programs have largely been successful, several challenges have been encountered:

- **Time Constraints:** Fitting comprehensive soft skills training into a rigorous engineering curriculum can be challenging. Students sometimes struggle to balance technical coursework with these additional sessions.
- **Student Engagement:** Ensuring active participation in soft skill development programs can be difficult, particularly when students prioritize technical skills over soft skills.
- **Resource Allocation:** Developing effective soft skill programs requires significant faculty involvement and resources, particularly for activities such as workshops, role-playing, and group discussions.

7. Resources Required

- **Experienced Trainers:** The college has invested in experienced faculty and external trainers specializing in soft skills. Sessions on emotional intelligence, leadership, and communication are often conducted by industry professionals.
- **Technological Tools:** For communication skills, multimedia tools like presentation software, video analysis, and feedback platforms are used. Online platforms have also been utilized for remote training.
- **Collaborations with Industry:** SXCCE collaborates with various companies and external organizations to conduct workshops, seminars, and mock interviews, which help in preparing students for real-world professional challenges.

8. Conclusion

The soft skill programs at St. Xavier's Catholic College of Engineering are comprehensive, focused on the holistic development of students, and closely aligned with industry needs. While the college faces certain challenges, the evidence of success in placements and student feedback suggests that these programs are crucial for producing industry-ready graduates who possess both technical and interpersonal competencies.

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Best Practice: II

1. Title of the Practice:

Merit Scholarship Exam

The Merit Scholarship Exam conducted by **St. Xavier's Catholic College** is to recognize and support academically talented students. These exams are designed to identify students who demonstrate outstanding performance in various academic subjects. The scholarships provided through these exams typically offer financial assistance, helping students cover tuition fees and other educational expenses.

2. Goal

The Merit Scholarship Exam (SXMSE) conducted by St. Xavier's Catholic College of Engineering aims to provide financial support to academically outstanding students, especially those enrolling in engineering courses like B.E./B.Tech. The scholarships are meant to reduce the financial burden of education and encourage talented students to pursue higher education without being constrained by tuition fees.

Goal of the Merit Scholarship Exam include:

1. **Promoting Academic Excellence:** The exam encourages students to strive for high academic standards and rewards their efforts with financial support.
2. **Providing Equal Opportunities:** Scholarships help deserving students from different socio-economic backgrounds access quality education, regardless of financial constraints.
3. **Encouraging Holistic Development:** The scholarship motivates students not only to excel in academics but also to develop other skills through the opportunities it opens up.

3. The Context

The exam has been held annually since 2017. It is part of the college's larger initiative to foster academic excellence and offer scholarships to deserving students. The scholarships are awarded based on a combination of the students' +2 exam scores and their performance in the SXMSE. This initiative aligns with the college's mission of making education accessible to all sections of society.

4. The Practice

Students seeking admission to St. Xavier's participate in the SXMSE, which evaluates their eligibility for the scholarship. The score for awarding the scholarship is calculated as follows:

- 75% from the student's +2 cutoff marks
- 25% from the SXMSE exam score

Eligible students can receive a variety of scholarships ranging from full tuition waivers to partial fee concessions, depending on their scores in the SXMSE. For instance:

- Students scoring above 95% are awarded a full tuition waiver.
- Students with scores between 75% and 95% are eligible for different levels of fee reductions.

5. Evidence of Success

Since the implementation of the SXMSE, numerous students have benefited from the scholarships, leading to an increase in the college's intake of high-performing students. The merit-based approach has enhanced the academic environment, attracting students who are committed to academic excellence. The financial aid provided has allowed many economically disadvantaged students to complete their engineering education without heavy financial burdens.

6. Problems Encountered

Some of the challenges faced include:

- Difficulty in conducting the exam on a large scale due to logistical issues.
- Occasionally, students from remote or economically weaker backgrounds face challenges in accessing information or preparing for the SXMSE.

7. Resources Required

The key resources required to implement and sustain this practice include:

- A robust administrative setup to manage the exam and scholarship distribution.
- Qualified faculty and staff to develop the test and evaluate results.
- Financial resources to support the scholarship fund.
- Technological infrastructure for administering the exam online, where feasible.

8. Conclusion

The Merit Scholarship Exam at St. Xavier's Catholic College has been a vital initiative in promoting academic merit and providing financial assistance to deserving students, thus reinforcing the institution's commitment to inclusive and high-quality education. Each year, students who qualify through the Merit Scholarship Exam gain not only financial benefits but also recognition and encouragement, fostering a competitive yet supportive academic environment.

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