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Mock interview a big draw at Blithchron '09

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With a view to gain an idea of the art of appearing in interviews, particularly at this time of economic slowdown, a large number of students participated in an interview competition called 'Jobless interview' which was designed by the students of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Gandhinagar, as a part of the institute's first annual fest, called 'Blithchron 2009', which ended on Sunday.

Sarthak Jain, a student of IIT-G and event coordinator of Blithchron 2009, said, "The competition saw high participation of students of various colleges. Growing competition for lesser number of jobs during the recession made us to come up with this competition. It was supposed to sharpen skills to face interviews and thereby raise the level of confidence."

In the first round of the event, around 20 participants from different institutions took part in group discussions on topics like 'Media and advertising censorship' and 'Eradication of the use of unfair means in examinations'. It was followed by another round in which the competitors were divided into interviewers and interviewees, and took each other's interview even as judges rated them.

By the end of this second round, the judges short-listed four competitors who had to face another final round of stress interview from the judges themselves.

Despite neck and neck competition between students, the event was a learning experience for the participants and the audience as the two judges, associate professor at DAIICT, Ashim Banerjee, and executive, HR of Tata Consultancy Services, Ashok Kolla, took every opportunity to impart skills of facing the different stages of recruitment to the students.

Appreciating the competition, Banerjee said, "The economic recession is on and the situation is grim. Students have to stay prepared to face competition. Even though this is just a simulated version of the stages of facing recruitment interviews, it is a great opportunity for students to learn by participating in it. Such games should be conducted on campuses even in normal times."

Expressing similar views, Kolla said, "The focus of the game is on developing interpersonal skills which will help students in their career. It is a well-organised event which is very relevant to engineering and management institutes." Participants from other institutes were so impressed by the competition that they planned to include the game in their respective institutes' annual events. Pravin Agrawal, a student of BK School of Business Management in Ahmedabad who won second prize in the event, said,

"It was the first time I was facing a stress interview and the experience is amazing. I shall ensure that the event is included in the annual festival of our institute."

The winner of the event, a student of School of Petroleum Technology, Gandhinagar, Diwankar Jhurani, said, "It was a unique competition and a learning experience."

Curtains came down on Blithchron 2009 on Sunday with the final round of the rock competition 'String Theory'. Several college bands from across the state and outside took part in it. In a fitting finale to the fun-filled annual festival, the popular rock band of the city, 'Purple Flower', gave a scintillating performance.

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