# Digital skills

*How can you outshine the crowd? The answer lies in sharpening your IT skills in a smarter way*

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With technology taking centre-stage, the role of IT has grown to become essential. It plays an integral role in every industry, starting from helping companies in improving business processes, achieving cost effectiveness, expediting processes, driving the revenues to maintain a competitive lead in the marketplace. Information and technology managers are today crucial in every industry, including in non-IT companies. Therefore, an IT degree along with graduation opens multiple job opportunities for an individual.

Realising the power that knowledge of information technology holds and avenues it opens, a large number of students today are turning to pursuing multifarious IT courses. Some learn programming, others venture into computer aided design (CAD), and yet others take to learning hardware and networking. Now, the question is when a large number of people are acquiring this additional degree, how can you outshine the crowd? The answer lies in sharpening your IT skills in a smarter way.

Three essential things - institute, course and classes, if kept in mind while opting for IT training can do wonders for you, and make you stand out in the crowd.

## Select the right institute

A single click on the Internet can give you an unending list of IT institutes in your vicinity. However, not all are credible enough to provide you the best training. Increase in demand for IT courses has led to a mushrooming of IT institutes everywhere. Unfortunately, some of them do not even have experienced trainers and required infrastructure. Selecting the right institute will help you win half the battle as it ensures you will get your education and training right, and this is arguably the most important thing. Accredited training centres are the best bet to gain certified technical skills.

Niche IT skills are hard to come by and fathom. While selecting the training centre, make sure that it is capable of providing a healthy amount of practical training and their labs are well equipped with all resources necessary to provide the required exposure. Apart from touring the institute and talking to a few trainers, also try to do a value check by speaking to some students who are already enrolled or have passed out to know the quality of education being provided there. Whether it has good trainers, whether labs are well equipped, and whether the course patterns meet the market standards, are questions you must sort out before deciding on an institute.

## Choose industrially relevant courses

In the era of blink and miss developments and rapidly changing technologies, one with the latest knowledge tends to stay in the lead. Staying abreast with the latest development in terms of software, applications, latest programming languages and developments in the field of IT will help you acquire the next generation skills that are set to dominate the industry. Studying a language that is currently in demand, but is likely to become obsolete five years down the line, would not be a sagacious thing to do.

Since the technology landscape changes at a dramatic pace today, look for courses and skills that will keep you afloat in the market for some time to come. Try to get advanced knowledge in a sphere that is new. This will help you spearhead the field and even become a trainer yourself. Stay abreast of the latest technological advancements, and make sure that the courses you are attending are relevant and help you land the job opportunities with updated skills.

## Augment skills as you work

Look for institutes and courses that can be pursued even as you are doing your job. Today, there are multiple options as well as alternatives to the traditional classroom learning that can be helpful in augmenting your skills without compromising with your work life. It is not necessary to take time off from work to earn a new certification. Select centres that are flexible with their timings, have multiple batch options, who hold classrooms in late evenings to accommodate working men and women. Online classes are another viable option.

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