



When Every Disadvantaged Student Ends Up with a Job

The entire disadvantaged intake at Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya Polytechnic College Networking Academy found work

Increasing Family Incomes by as Much as 620 Percent



"If we had not done the CCNA course, I really do not think we would have got employment with these kinds of companies. We would have had to go cold-calling to local companies, taken jobs in cyber cafés, and so on."

Selvaganesh S,
Student

Seeking work if you come from a disadvantaged background is difficult enough anywhere in the world. In India, where more than one in 10 people is out of work and 80 million new workers are expected to enter the workforce this decade, it can take a miracle—or the skills and recognition that come from studying a Cisco® Networking Academy® course. That is what 42 students of Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya (RMV) Polytechnic College in Coimbatore, southern India, found when they all ended up with jobs at the end of their Networking Academy studies. These students received Cisco CCNA® training from the college.

The 100 percent job placement success rate for disadvantaged students was a first for RMV Polytechnic College, which has operated as a Networking Academy center for half a decade and has a fixed allocation of places for poorer-background pupils.

Traditionally between 20 percent and 25 percent secure work placements after their studies, notes Jagan Jothivel, Cisco Networking Academy education program manager for India and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. "The fact that all the disadvantaged students on this course were able to find jobs is testament to their drive and talent, as well as a growing awareness among employers of the immense value of a Networking Academy certification."

Each year, RMV Polytechnic College accepts about 40 students who are orphans, have single parents, have been deserted by their mother and

father, come from families with incomes of less than US\$500 a year, or are poor yet meritorious. The Ramakrishna Mission, a philanthropic volunteer organization founded in 1897 by Swami Vivekananda, a disciple of the mystic Ramakrishna, pays for their studies. This means the students, men mostly aged 18 to 20, can enroll on Cisco CCNA® Discovery and Exploration courses either free or for a nominal fee of up to around \$10. It is a valuable incentive, says instructor R M Sridhar: "Offering courses at minimal charge motivated most students to get involved. They recognized the value it would bring to their skill sets and knowledge."

For those who embarked on the course in 2010, the investment in time and money paid off handsomely. Within a few months of having completed their CCNA courses, in January and February 2011, all 42 of the underprivileged students had found full-time employment, and two had also completed international certification in CCNA. An additional five students, who were in the Computer Applications master's degree program at the same time, also found work. Employers included the Indian computer giant HCL, which took on 11 people, Mumbai-based Hexaware Technologies Limited, which took on nine, and the American cloud-computing applications developer ZOHOO Corporation, which took on seven. And critically for students hailing from families where the annual income is often less than INRRs24,000 (about US\$500), all the placements were in technical roles with salaries of Rs100,000 to Rs150,000 (roughly US\$2250 to US\$3600). That is equivalent to up to a 620 percent increase in family income, with the potential for further increases through promotion. Spurred on by the success of this batch of students, RMV Polytechnic College is looking to integrate other Networking Academy curricula, such as Cisco CCNA Security and Cisco CCNP®, into courses such as its master's of science in network engineering program.

For More Information

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