

Contextual Inquiry: Fresher at VIIT Pune

Fresher Profile

Participant: Shubham Sathe

Date of Inquiry: 09 August 2024

Interviewers: Aman Shaikh & Abhinav Thodmal

Location: VIIT Pune Campus

Question: What was your first impression of the campus when you arrived? Did you find it welcoming?

Response:

My first impression of the campus was quite mixed. It seemed large and a bit overwhelming. The entrance was impressive, but it took me a while to get my bearings.

Interpretation:

Shubham felt both impressed and overwhelmed upon arrival, indicating that the campus's size and layout might be challenging for newcomers.

Question: How did you locate the campus before your visit? Did you use any maps or navigation apps?

Response:

I initially used Google Maps to locate the campus. It directed me to the main gate, but the campus layout was a bit confusing at first, especially since there were multiple institutions in the area.

Interpretation:

The presence of multiple institutions near the campus adds to the confusion for newcomers, even when using digital navigation tools like Google Maps.

Question: Once you arrived at the main gate, how easy or difficult was it to find your way to your intended destination?

Response:

After entering the main gate, I found it tricky to navigate the campus. I saw a nearby university and mistakenly thought it was VIIT. It took a few moments to realize I needed to go further and ask for directions.

Interpretation:

The initial entry to the campus can be misleading, causing confusion and misdirection. This highlights the need for clear signage or guides at the main gate.

Question: Can you describe any moments where you felt confused or uncertain about where to go on campus?

Response:

I was confused when I first saw the Vishwakarma University right after entering the main gate. I thought it was part of VIIT because of the proximity and didn't realize I had to go further.

Interpretation:

Confusion arises due to the close proximity of other institutions, which could be mitigated with better signage or orientation materials for newcomers.

Question: How effective were the signs and directions provided around the campus? Were they clear and easy to understand?

Response:

The signs and directions around the campus were somewhat helpful, but not very prominent. I had to rely a lot on asking people for help rather than following clear signs.

Interpretation:

The signage on campus is insufficiently prominent, leading to a reliance on personal assistance rather than self-navigation.

Question: How helpful was the staff or security personnel in guiding you to your destination? Were their instructions clear?

Response:

The security personnel and staff were quite helpful. When I asked for directions, they were friendly and provided clear instructions, which helped me find my way.

Interpretation:

Staff and security personnel are crucial in compensating for the campus's confusing layout and insufficient signage.

Question: Did you find the layout of the buildings (like A, B, C, D, E) logical and easy to follow?

Response:

The layout with buildings named A, B, C, D, and E was somewhat logical once I got used to it, but initially, it was a bit confusing. It would be helpful if there were clearer markers or maps.

Interpretation:

While the layout becomes understandable over time, the initial lack of clear markers or maps contributes to confusion.

Question: Did you have access to any campus maps or guides? If so, were they helpful in navigating the campus?

Response:

I did find a campus map online, but it wasn't very detailed or easy to follow. It would have been better if there were more accessible and detailed maps available on campus.

Interpretation:

Existing maps are not sufficiently detailed, and there is a need for more accessible and user-friendly maps both online and on-campus.

Question: How easy was it to find the admission process location? Were there adequate signs or directions leading to the admission office?

Response:

Finding the admission office was a bit challenging. It was in Building E on the first floor, but there weren't enough signs to direct me specifically to that building.

Interpretation:

Inadequate signage to key locations like the admission office poses significant challenges for newcomers.

Question: How did you find the location of the canteen or food facilities? Was it easy to get information about where to eat?

Response:

I asked a security guard about the canteen, and they told me it was near Building D. It was somewhat easy to find after that, but there weren't any clear signs indicating the direction.

Interpretation:

The lack of clear signage for essential facilities like the canteen forces newcomers to rely on personal assistance.

Question: Were the buildings clearly labeled with names or numbers? Did this help you in finding your way around?

Response:

The buildings were labeled with letters, but I found that a bit confusing at first. Maybe having building names or additional indicators could make it clearer.

Interpretation:

Building labels alone are not sufficient; additional indicators or names could improve clarity.

Question: Did you use any digital tools (like a campus app or online map) for navigation? How effective were these tools?

Response:

I tried using a campus app, but it wasn't very up-to-date or user-friendly. A more interactive and detailed app could be really helpful for new students.

Interpretation:

The existing digital tools are not up to standard, highlighting the need for better, more interactive, and user-friendly digital navigation aids.

Question: Were there any orientation programs or tours available to help new students familiarize themselves with the campus?

Response:

There was an orientation program, but it was quite brief. A more detailed campus tour or map session would have been useful to get a better grasp of the layout.

Interpretation:

A more comprehensive orientation or guided tours would be beneficial for helping newcomers familiarize themselves with the campus layout.

Question: What specific changes or improvements would you suggest for the way-finding signage on campus?

Response:

I would suggest having larger and more frequent signs, especially near major buildings and intersections. Clear directional signs and maps at key points would greatly help.

Interpretation:

The participant emphasizes the need for improved signage, particularly larger and more frequent signs at key locations.

Question: Overall, how would you rate your way-finding experience on campus? What was the most challenging aspect, and what could be done to improve it?

Response:

Overall, my way-finding experience was a bit challenging. The campus is large and the signage could be improved. However, with some help from the staff and a bit of patience, I managed to find my way.

Interpretation:

The participant's overall experience was challenging, with significant room for improvement in campus signage and navigation aids.

Summary and Recommendations:

The inquiry highlights several key issues faced by newcomers at VIIT Pune, including insufficient signage, confusing campus layout, and inadequate digital tools for navigation. To improve the way-finding experience, the following actions are recommended:

Enhanced Signage: Implement larger, clearer, and more frequent signs across the campus, particularly at key decision points like intersections and major buildings.

Improved Maps: Provide detailed, accessible campus maps both online and at strategic locations on campus.

Digital Navigation Tools: Develop or update a campus app with interactive features, ensuring it is user-friendly and regularly updated.

Orientation Programs: Offer more comprehensive orientation tours and sessions to help newcomers become familiar with the campus layout.

These improvements could significantly enhance the way-finding experience for all newcomers, making the campus more welcoming and easier to navigate.