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[TopTalent.in] Interview With Nandini from VNIT Who Bagged an Off Campus Job in Microsoft

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It is not just intelligence but intelligence coupled with inherent confidence is what makes a person truly remarkable. It is these truly remarkable people who go that extra mile to achieve their dreams. Nandini Yeltiwar, a student of VNIT Nagpur, bagged a job in Microsoft India, not through campus placements but through the off-campus employee referral channel. She was happy to share her experience with\xc2\xa0TopTalent\xc2\xa0and gave us some interesting insight into how she landed a dream job in one of world\xe2\x80\x99s top software companies.

So here is her interview where she talks about the Microsoft interview process and how she landed a job there. Don\xe2\x80\x99t forget to\xc2\xa0download her resume\xc2\xa0by logging in to understand what makes her special.

TopTalent: Can you describe the hiring process in detail?

Nandini:\xc2\xa0We had applied off-campus through employee referral and we were initially shortlisted based on our resumes. The first two rounds were an aptitude test followed by a coding round test in which we were required to give syntactically correct code. The coding round had short basic coding problems. After each round some applicants were eliminated. People shortlisted from coding round had a phone interview which had mostly behavioral questions. They went through our resume and asked us questions on internships. Some of us were even asked technical questions in this round. Those of us who cleared the phone interview were called to the Microsoft IDC campus in Hyderabad for the technical rounds of interviews. There were three rounds which focused on each of the different positions for freshers which are Software Development Engineer and Software Development Engineer in Test. The technical interviews mainly stressed on data structures and algorithms. One round was entirely focused on testing. For each proposed code we need design test cases and hence verify the code.

TopTalent: What skills according to you was the company looking for in candidates?

Nandini:\xc2\xa0 The company looks for candidates who are strong in algorithms and programming and have good problem solving ability. They\xe2\x80\x99ll start off with simple problems and they\xe2\x80\x99ll keep adding more conditions to the problem. They require you to be good at optimizing the answer and modify the solution after each condition that is added. You need to be good in communicating your logic to the interviewer. In case of testing, they expect you to cover all boundary and special conditions.

TopTalent: What was that x-factor which might have helped you over others?

Nandini:\xc2\xa0 My final year project was on testing a software produced by a company. I feel that this made me a good fit for the testing profile since I studied quite a lot about testing due to the project. Apart from this, I had practiced a lot of coding questions, available on Internet and through

various books, before the interview which helped me in clearing technical interviews successfully. I had given quite a few interviews at campus before appearing for Microsoft, which helped in handling interviews well.

TopTalent: How important are resumes in the whole process?

Nandini:\xc2\xa0 The initial screening was based on our resume. However, the resume is not very important once you start the interview process, though a striking resume always helps. It\xe2\x80\x99s alright if you do not have impressive internships and projects. They don\xe2\x80\x99t expect rocket science from freshers. They do ask questions on the projects and internships listed on the resume in the phone interview so be well versed with all the projects you mention. You need not have a lengthy resume mentioning every small thing you did, but a short one having the major things. Whatever you mention in the resume you need to know it well in order to answer any type of questions on it.

TopTalent: What tips you can give which might help others applying to similar jobs?

Nandini:\xc2\xa0I would recommend practice. Improve and practice coding problems, basic data structures and algorithms. During the interview there won\xe2\x80\x99t be any compiler or syntax highlighter, so be proficient in writing code on paper or a white-board. Always communicate your logic to the interviewer. Sometimes they may forgive stray syntax as long as your logic is sound. You will be asked some testing questions which you need to crack even if you aren\xe2\x80\x99t interested in the Testing profile. For such problems, develop test cases based on the requirements of the software. During interview keep telling the interviewer the ideas or the way with which you are thinking to solve the problem, this is always appreciated and they can even help you in case you get diverted from the proper way of solving.

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