

# Virtual campus recruitment: the future of campus hiring



welcome to brighter

# Contents

## **01 / The campus hiring season**

## **02 / Best practices for a virtual campus hiring drive**

- Campus selection
- Pre-placement engagement
- Candidate screening
- Selection interview

## **03 / Conclusion**

## **04 / How Mercer | Mettl can help you conduct a virtual campus hiring drive?**

# The campus hiring season

Campus hiring caters to organizations' growing talent needs by enabling them to hire candidates from educational institutions. Most organizations possess a campus hiring team or create one during every recruitment season. These teams visit different colleges and institutions and zero in on the best-in-class potential resources.

## Let us assume a scenario:

There are 4 crucial steps in any campus recruitment process.



**Campus  
selection**



**Campus  
engagement**



**Campus screening  
the students**



**Campus  
interviews**

The campus team shortlists the campuses, initiates a relationship with them and promotes their brand on the campuses. After the first phase, the team visits the educational center and engages with students through a detailed PPT, followed by a Q&A session. Afterward, interested students are offered a short test, typically a pen-and-paper exam. The campus recruitment team invigilates the proceeding to maintain the sanctity of the test-taking process.

The campus recruitment team scans each test to shortlist the students for a final list of students for the interviews. This long-drawn process, spanning over one or more days, has its pitfalls. The interviewers often don't remember to ask the right questions or lack a uniform approach. The challenges mentioned above only enumerate the tedious process in one hiring exercise on one campus! Only a handful of students are probably selected from one campus. Meanwhile, the target is hiring 80 students. The recruiting team must visit several more campuses. Add to that the hassle of handling its team's logistics while visiting them. This does sound like a time-consuming and intricate process.

*Organizations might have assumed that there was no need for tech-interventions in the campus recruitment process. However, the on-ground campus hiring drive is an extremely challenging proposition for the corporate team on a college-visiting spree each day. The financial resources subsumed in the process undermines any benefits accrued from the strategy detailed above.*

We now know that there must be a more efficient process to undertake campus hiring, especially in current times amid the need to maintain business continuity with limited available options. Here's how we envisage organizations utilizing technology to shift from a traditional process to a virtual campus recruitment drive.

- Campus selection - Lack of data analytics to shortlist campuses
- Campus engagement - Lack of interactive processes, beyond archaic presentations
- Candidate screening - Lack of tools to gauge broader candidate fitment, and the need for manual intervention
- Campus interviews - Lack of an efficient platform to conduct structured and unbiased interviews

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# Best practices in a virtual campus hiring drive

Campus hiring is integral to the recruitment process for most businesses. Companies invest substantial resources in their campus hiring drives each year, hoping to onboard the best quality talent for their companies.

Technology advancements are disrupting the talent industry, setting the stage for a dynamic and exciting future of recruitment. From a business perspective, too, if an organization continues to use primitive technology, it is unlikely to corroborate the process with the eventual ROI.

With significant developments in recruitment technology, organizations can skip the conventional campus hiring steps, meaning:

- No more advance booking of time slots and physical venues
- No need for repetitive pre-placement talks and presentations
- No logistical hassles, such as preparing for a large number of candidates to take the screening tests
- No need to dedicate invigilators for every exam room to prevent cheating
- No need for manually evaluating the assessments
- No need for manually shortlisting candidates for the selection interviews

The traditional process is highly resource, and time-intensive and organizations spend substantial sums only on the campus hiring drives. Such an extensive and cumbersome campus hiring process is challenging to scale and requires technology intervention.







## Campus selection

55%

Participating organizations have highlighted targeting the right set of campuses as their most critical challenge in our recently released report 'Campus Hiring 2020: Challenges, Trends & Best Practices.'

Without any real intelligence, shortlisting campuses every year is a tedious affair. What if we were to tell you that there is a scientific method to select the colleges that fit your requirements? Campus intelligence is a process of campus selection that relies on validated statistics to help organizations make data-backed decisions. Organizations are often unaware of how to undertake this process.

Campus intelligence consists of competency scorecards and heat maps that rate students' overall performance on specific competencies based on the assessments. It creates a campus mean score to help shortlist campuses based on your requirements. Organizations such as Mercer | Mettl have conducted over 20,000 campus drives and have abundant data on numerous colleges and universities. You can rely on this information and obtain a campus scorecard for competencies sought by your organization.

### Overall college performance based on students' competencies

Campus	Result Orientation	Market Insight	Customer Focus	Fostering Relationships	Leading People	Emotional Stability
AIMS HE	69	75	86	63	75	74
Bharathdishan	75	74	81	67	76	79
BIMM_Pune	76	83	83	76	82	83
Birla Institute Bhu	79	89	86	83	91	87
Birla Institute Noida	82	83	88	75	87	82
FORE	80	69	80	76	81	78
GIM_Goa	62	69	81	59	69	72
IFIM	83	79	89	70	80	79
IIFT	66	64	85	75	73	51
IIM Nagpur	82	77	85	69	82	78
IIM Raipur	72	73	85	67	76	75
IIM Ranchi	80	75	88	71	80	79
IIM Rohtak	78	74	86	71	81	76
IIM Bhub	73	78	88	72	84	81
IIM KoI	76	69	89	61	75	75
Indira Group of Institutes_Pune	76	85	83	78	84	84
ISB_Hyd	77	76	86	76	80	80
Jaipuria	68	75	82	70	80	78

Very High High Moderate

Top Campuses

Jaipuria

BIMM Pune

Birla Institute BHU

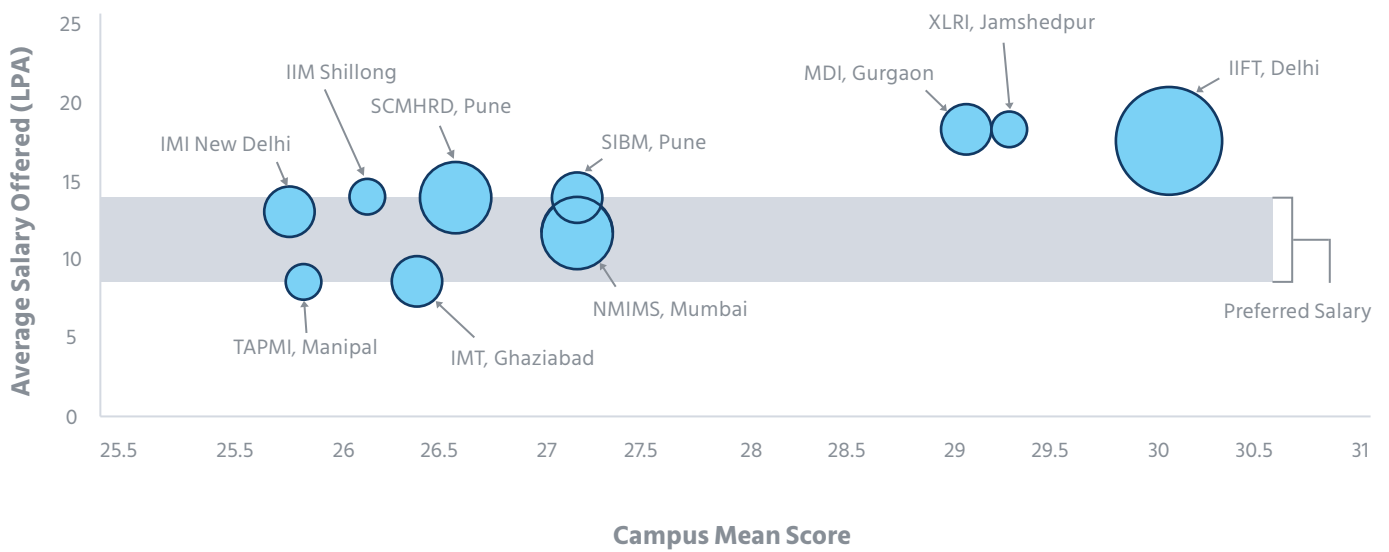
Birla Institute Noida

50%

Organizations make their campus targeting strategy based on their previous year's experience and the quality of the onboarded students.

This strategy places organizations in a loop where there are no avenues to explore newer campuses. This is where campus intelligence can help you with rich data and campus analytics, built over time. Campus intelligence maintains a thorough record of campus drives held over the years, considering high and low performing campuses. The latter is filtered out, which creates a dynamic and up-to-date process.

### A higher mean score means a higher average salary



You can access campus data across various profiles, based on your requirements. Whether you intend to hire engineers, business graduates, marketers or researchers, campus intelligence can customize a campus scorecard based on your competency framework and skills demand. Campus intelligence provides a holistic strategy to approach campuses, enabling you to make decisions about salary benchmarks. Such an insight serves as the first step toward a virtual campus recruitment strategy. It reduces manual interventions and offers a seamless experience to organizations involved in the exhaustive task of campus selection.

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## Pre-placement engagement

After you've selected the colleges through campus intelligence, student engagement is the next step in campus recruitment. In a world where information is available at the click of a button, presentations and talks offer no real value. Organizations need to create an impression on students by connecting with their aspirations. Every fresh graduate wants to work in a trendy organization. You must exhibit the company's culture, offer them a glimpse of the stimulating environment and the work being done by the company. You must use this opportunity to provide them with a brand recall value and gain their interest, which would ensure a wider reach.

## Now you might ask about ways of doing all this without ever meeting these students in-person?

*The answer is online contests, such as coding hackathons, innovative ideathons and case study competitions.*

Pre-placement talks are a thing of the past. A virtual campus hiring strategy involves organizations taking the engagement to the next level, using technology and offering students a unique platform to connect with the brand. Online competitions provide organizations with an excellent platform to introduce themselves, also enabling candidates to showcase their innovative and problem-solving skills.

Hackathons and ideathons are events where people from different backgrounds, such as coders, analysts, designers, business strategists and creative thinkers, etc. cumulatively solve predefined challenges within a specified time frame to create a working solution or a prototype of a product, service or business model. A hackathon is not just restricted to coders and engineers but can be designed inclusively, challenging the best minds to find 'out-of-the-box' ideas.



A case study competition is a useful means to assess business graduates' understanding and provide them a glimpse into some of the real challenges on which they would be working.

Pre-placement talks are likely to attract dispassionate students. Conversely, interactive and high-on-energy contests can be extremely useful ice-breakers, ensuring participation from fresh graduates, genuinely interested in the business and its products. This would ensure quality hires.

Online competitions, such as hackathons, can serve as a one-stop-shop for your recruitment process. If you are looking to hire coders, you can stage multiple coding rounds in a single hackathon to lead to the final interview. The hackathon can be your engagement, screening and selection tool.

Online competitions can be conducted on online platforms to efficiently implement all processes together in one place. Easy outreach is the most significant upside to using an online platform to conduct virtual contests. Hackathons or case study competitions can be rolled out simultaneously at numerous campuses across the country. Additionally, most platforms provide marketing support by promoting them on social media channels for improved visibility and outreach. The online buzz helps gain significant traction among college students, driving better participation and high-quality submissions.

Hackathon platforms, along with a team of subject matter experts, help you create an engaging problem statement, design an online event, define multiple stages of participation, enable students to form groups and submit their projects in a streamlined manner. They ensure an excellent student experience, which doubles up as a fantastic branding exercise. It is easy to judge the submissions and declare the winners without any manual intervention.

Hackathons and other types of online contests are powerfully interactive and engaging. Virtual hackathons are cost-effective and save notable time compared to traditional student engagement activities.

*Mercer | Mettl recently conducted one of the most popular and largest campus engagement competitions in the Asia Pacific region, in association with Amazon. Amazon's annual flagship event, the ACE Challenge 2019, was an inter B-school case study competition that strategically positioned itself as the forerunner of innovation, strategy and simplicity. With its footprint across all premium B-schools in the Asia Pacific region, the competition set the stage for the sharpest minds from top B-schools to exercise problem-solving, lateral thinking and evaluate live case-simulations. Mercer | Mettl was the technology partner, ensuring the smooth execution of multiple stages of the contest. It also played an integral role in student engagement and the outreach strategy across the region.*



## Candidate screening

### Online assessments

The next step is to roll out the screening assessments to interested candidates and shortlist them for the final interviews. The 4 pillars of screening are technical or domain skills, cognitive skills, behavioral and personality traits and effective communication. A screening method based on these 4 pillars can genuinely uncover a student's potential.

Online assessments are used widely in the screening process. They enable organizations to test the candidates' core skills and suitability, considering the role and the company, and shortlist them for the selection interview. Most organizations choose skill-based assessments to ensure they hire people that can adequately perform the desired tasks. However, no team in an organization works in silos in this age of digital transformation and collaboration. Psychometric assessments empower you to find the right fit for your company's culture.



## Domain or technical skills

Let's assume an IT company has to conduct campus placements to fill multiple vacant positions in its various global centers. It wishes to test students' coding knowledge and hands-on coding ability. Disbursing a coding test with MCQs that can filter a large number of students is an excellent way to undertake this exercise. It would ensure that students who match the benchmark scores and are serious about the organization, will make it to the next screening round, which is hands-on coding in a real coding environment. Coding simulators allow students to apply their skills and showcase their problem-solving approach, which is graded on predefined parameters without manual intervention.

Organizations can use readily available assessments, combining them with a coding simulator for a holistic overview of a candidate's coding potential. This would ensure that students, making to the subsequent rounds, possess a certain degree of proficiency.

## Cognitive skills

In a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous) world, organizations are stressing the importance of cognitive skills such as learning agility, problem-solving and innovative thinking, etc. These are open-ended skills and can be applied to any job role, and are sought-after.

## Behavioral & personality traits

Every organization has its culture and mission, and potential employees must easily fit into the company culture. Thus, assessing for behavioral tendencies and personality traits offer recruiters an insight into a person's behavioral patterns and help predict their ability to deal with pressure, conflict resolution, and other such typical workplace problems. As there are no right or wrong answers, scores are often in the form of a scale and the percentile in which a student falls. These include aggression, motivation and honesty, etc. It helps recruiters to map candidates' personalities to organizational benchmarks.

## Communication skills

Effective English communication is perhaps one of the most critical skills. Communication is an essential consideration for most roles and organizations. However, many companies do not assess candidates' spoken English skills, except perhaps in the interviews.

However, with increasingly global roles, spoken English must be measured using the latest technology, i.e., language proficiency evaluators. This allows conducting evaluations at scale. An English language evaluator auto-evaluates the results. The evaluation can be sent to multiple students at once, and the results can be fed into the student's final scores. Language proficiency evaluators combine assessments for pronunciation, fluency, listening and comprehension abilities to assess all communication elements. They highlight the trainable and non-trainable aspects of a candidate, depending on the role's requirements.

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# Why are online assessment platforms important to your virtual campus hiring strategy?

Virtual college recruitment can produce measurably superior results in a relatively short time with online assessments compared to campus visits. Therefore, instead of employing traditional recruitment processes, recruiters can view their candidates' performance and scores virtually, from the comforts of their offices.

Online assessments can fast track the efficiency of a virtual campus hiring process in numerous ways by enabling students to take the test from anywhere. This also removes logistical hassles of booking venues and time-slots to conduct the screening test on the campus.

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*You may ask how one ensures a cheating-free test environment when students are sitting at different locations, and there are no invigilators? Well, the answer to that is 'proctoring.'*

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Remote proctoring can act as an enabler in the campus hiring process, whereby companies roll out online assessments on a secure proctored environment and leverage technology. Remote proctoring uses manual and AI-based remote invigilation technologies to conduct remote online assessments that prevent candidates from indulging in unfair means. A test can be taken from anywhere using remote proctoring, and the candidate only needs a computer with a high-speed internet connection.

There is no limit to the number of candidates one can proctor, allowing access to a larger candidate pool. As remote proctoring gives candidates the freedom to attempt their test at their time of choosing, a higher participation and attempt rate can be expected.

Risk-free proctoring lends credibility to the results, also significantly reducing manual intervention in the initial phase. The campus hiring season out-spreads simultaneously, and multiple assessments at multiple campuses coincide, which enhances the benefits and criticality of remote proctoring. It helps create a campus pipeline for future recruitment needs. Remote proctoring helps you set benchmarks and accordingly target campuses for an efficient campus hiring strategy.



Here are ten reasons why an online assessment platform can make or break your virtual campus recruitment drive:

1. Online assessment platforms provide complete control to the employers over test creation, distribution, invigilation, evaluation and report generation. Recruiters can easily create and administer a test.
2. Companies can reach out to a large number of previously unexplored colleges due to resource limitations (time/personnel unavailability).
3. Enhanced reach aside, this system addresses a significant challenge of simultaneously conducting thousands of tests. Imagine the administrative expense and time you would need to visit each campus and give hundreds of tests.
4. It offers the flexibility to add layers of tests onto a single defined assessment. For example, apart from general MCQs and essay type questions, you can add coding simulators, language proficiency evaluations, case study simulators, and psychometric/personality tests.
5. Minimum system requirements (a computer, a browser, and internet connectivity).
6. Autosave the candidate's answers to manage infrastructure issues (internet, network, power outages, system crash, restart, etc.).
7. Proctoring empowers companies to curb cheating and other assessment-related malpractices.
8. The turnaround time is the most notable advantage of online assessment platforms. Since the tests are web-based, the test evaluation and report generation happen in real-time. As the candidates finish their test, detailed reports are generated within minutes, with scores on each assessment on a single dashboard. This expedites the decision-making process, enabling recruiters to select quickly and wisely.
9. Superior, actionable analytics allows companies to compare different campuses, performance trends and gain granular and regional insights.
10. Flexibility to conduct the test in a contest, game, or a code challenge format enhances engagement and brings out maximum participation from the students while strengthening the brand recall.



## Final selection interviews

While organizations often prefer to hold an in-person interview round, adopting a virtual campus hiring strategy means not stepping on the campus while ensuring better results and ROI.

There are numerous video interviewing platforms available on the market, like Google, Skype, Zoom, etc. that can be used for virtual interviews. But the right interview platform offers power-packed features, such as setting a path for your interview process by defining key competencies, the option to choose from a library of sample questions to evaluate specific skills, rating the candidates, and ultimately making data-driven decisions by assessing candidates' data from multiple interviews and screening modes.

Competency-based interviews are consistent, structured and unbiased. They provide a platform to list down the various competencies and corresponding questions based on the job role and allow interviewers to score on the same platform.

*Video interviews also promote real-time collaboration for everyone involved and address time and location constraints, besides being cost-effective. Digital transformation requires organizations to scale up quickly, yet a face-to-face interview is not the most scalable model.*

Many video platforms also feature the option of allowing pair programming that enables technical hiring managers to combine interviewing and code testing onto one platform.

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# Conclusion

Technology is pushing every business function to adopt innovative and cost-effective methods to streamline and accelerate their processes. The time is right to embrace an all virtual campus hiring strategy. It is an opportune moment to transform your organization's campus hiring processes and move toward the future of recruitment with an all-in-one platform solution.



Traditional campus hiring	Virtual campus hiring
Deliver a pre-placement talk	Conduct a highly energetic and interactive contest – hackathon, ideathon, case study competition
Book a physical venue and schedule slots	Roll out online assessments (personality, behavioral, cognitive, technical, domain, communication) that are time and location agnostic
Send a dedicated team of recruiters and invigilators	Evaluate from the comfort of your location employing manual proctors or let AI flag malpractices
Candidates using unfair means to cheat and clear the test	An anti-cheating software to prevent impersonation, with a lockdown browser, detect objects in the background such as phones and multi-factor authentication, etc.
Logistical costs and execution	Cost-effective solutions, without the need to physically visit any campus
Spend long hours to interview candidates	Interview candidates anytime, anywhere with structured video interviews
Long and unstructured processes	Decreased time-to-hire with smart sourcing, screening and interviewing tools

# How Mercer | Mettl can help you conduct virtual campus hiring drives?

Campus hiring drives demand significant resources, financial and otherwise. Therefore, an increasing number of organizations are seeking to transform this process. Mercer | Mettl enables organizations to break away from traditional and redundant hiring processes, and take a step toward better hiring, using the best available technology.

Mercer | Mettl's technology-driven solutions can help you conduct large-scale virtual campus recruitment drives through the following offerings:

Mercer   Mettl's offerings	Tool description
Campus hiring strategy for an end-to-end implementation	<p>Mercer   Mettl's campus hiring strategy has enabled India's leading organizations to reach and filter a large pool of candidates, increase campus footprints and improve the turnaround time. Our comprehensive 6-step campus hiring strategy includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Building campus intelligence</li><li>• Building relationships with campuses</li><li>• Connecting with the students</li><li>• Using modern screening tools</li><li>• Conducting structured interviews</li><li>• Engaging students post the rollout of the offer</li></ul> <p>Mercer   Mettl's team of experts can help you develop and execute a strategy that meets your business needs.</p>
Xathon for an engaging pre-placement activity	<p>Xathon is a platform to conduct fully online hackathons. It offers you complete control over the event with the ease of scheduling multiple events and coordinating with numerous stakeholders with just a few clicks.</p> <p>Mercer   Mettl's team of subject matter experts help you execute a successful virtual hackathon, from ideation to execution.</p>
A suite of assessments to screen efficiently	<p>Our vast library of tests and simulators allows you to create your own tests and challenges to evaluate the shortlisted candidates' real skills. Choose from a wide range of psychometric, cognitive, domain and coding assessments to secure the best fit for the role.</p>



<b>Mercer   Mettl's offerings</b>	<b>Tool description</b>
SpeechX to evaluate the candidates on the nuances of speech	Powered by a reliable Artificial Intelligence Speech Technology, SpeechX is a fully machine-administered and auto-graded tool to test the ability of a non-native speaker to speak and understand English. It is a ready-to-use, scalable and highly accurate assessment solution.
ProctorPLUS to conduct credible remote assessments	ProctorPLUS is Mercer   Mettl's cutting-edge tool, driven by artificial intelligence, to provide a holistic solution to ensure the integrity of your assessments in a cost-effective and scalable manner. It comes pre-integrated with Mettl's examination platform.
Interview platform to conduct smart and structured interviews	Our intelligent interview platform supports competency-based structured interviews with collaborative tools that allow you to create a panel of interviewers, define the grading framework and easily schedule interviews.
HireTrack for an end-to-end virtual hiring	An intelligent hiring platform that lets you screen, select and interview candidates on a single dashboard, making your virtual college recruitment process highly efficient.

## About Us

At Mercer | Mettl, our mission is to enable organizations to make better people decisions by making credible people decisions across two key areas: Acquisition and Development. Since our inception in 2010, we have partnered with 2900+ corporates, 31 sector skill councils/ government departments, and 15+ educational institutions across 90+ countries.

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