

IBM focuses on faculty in its academic initiative

Computer giant IBM has launched yet another academic programme, this time to help university faculty instil modern-day skills among students.

IBM hopes the initiative launched in [Chennai](#) Friday will soon be taken to five other Indian cities.

IBM India has invested \$1.5 million in its academia initiatives in the last two years, imparting training on open standards-based technologies to more than 125,000 students from 575 colleges.

In 2007, it helped 62,000 students from over a thousand Indian middle-level technical institutions in 28 states to participate in its academic initiatives that changes an 'IT student into a skilled and competitive global worker', IBM officials said.

The company also trained over 8,200 teachers last year.

Industry sources say 1.5 million skilled information technology experts will be needed by 2012, a factor fuelling IT education in India, China and Southeast Asia.

'Today's IT jobs require more than just strong technical abilities. They also demand industry and business knowledge as well as effective communication and interpersonal skills,' IBM India's vice president for channels, marketing and ecosystems Anil Menon told an audience of senior faculty members from different universities in Tamil Nadu Friday.

'This makes it imperative for industry, partners and academia to understand what the businesses are looking for in the next generation of IT hires,' he added.

'They (IBM) have a important role - teaching the teachers,' said A. Gopalakrishnan, placement cell head at Vinayaka Mission University.

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