

A few thumb rules to select a college that will give you a degree and help you equip yourself with life skills

CHOOSING the right institution becomes an important decision as the three or four years spent in a college form an important milestone in the growth of one's personality. As very few manage to get into the top notch institutions with impeccable reputation, for the rest of the students it is a hard task to decide between colleges of almost similar quality. So here are a few thumb rules that you can use to get the right fit:

■ You may have heard or read a lot about a college but it is a good idea to visit your dream institution and spend a few hours on the campus to be sure that the campus and its culture is right for you.

■ Check out at least three or four colleges to make a comparison of the courses, faculty and infrastructure in order to avoid disappointment later on.

■ In spite of the general perception it is not always right that a private college is better than a government college. So don't be swept off your feet by big ads and media blitz that most private institutions resort to near the admission time. It is the faculty strength, accreditation and the reputation of the managing body that is of importance rather than a snazzy building and air conditioned classrooms.

■ Talk to some former students to get a clear picture of the life in the college of your choice. Discuss with your family as well as educational counsellor about your career goal, course and the choice of college.

■ Be prepared to come out of your comfort zone and one big step in that direction is to give precedence to your career goals and not to peers. There are very few worse reasons to select a col-

The Right Fit



lege than 'because your friends are going there'.

■ Though fee is an important factor in choosing a college but don't rule out a college just because of high fee. Many colleges offer scholarships, financial aid, and tuition instalment plans that make them far more affordable than they may first appear. Check out the details before striking out the name of a college.

■ Always keep your options open. Apply in at least three colleges and be clear about your order of preference.

■ Choosing a college according to location is a crucial factor. You must be clear about the location that is suitable for you — if you want to live at home or you would be happy in a hostel in another city. Students from smaller towns may need to shift base to cities like Delhi, Chandigarh etc in order to pursue courses of their choice in reputed colleges. Here again a college that has a larger per-

centage of out-of-town students may be the preferred choice as it will be easier to adjust with other who like you have stepped into a new environment.

■ While most students check the academic reputation of a college, it is also important to take stock of the extra curricular activities and sports facilities

offered by a college. These days the focus is on skill development so find out how your favourite institute fares in this regard.

■ Once you make your choice, don't have second thoughts. If you have followed these rules there is an excellent chance your final college choice will be a good one. — Geetu Vaid

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