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How IIMs, top B-schools are helping soldiers transition to the corporate world

IIM Calcutta, Shillong, Lucknow, Indore, Tiruchirapalli offer short courses for armed forces officers. IIM Jammu will launch an executive MBA.



[Pritha Roy Choudhury](#) | Nov 14, 2022 - 12:22 p.m. IST

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NEW DELHI : Indian Institute of Management Jammu (IIM Jammu) is all set to offer an executive MBA programme for soldiers from June 2023. When it does, IIM Jammu will become the first institute to start such a programme for officers in the armed forces. From March 2023, it will also offer a six-month certificate course.

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A number of IIMs, including Calcutta, Shillong, Lucknow, Indore and Tiruchirapalli, have been offering certificate programme in management for the armed forces. IIMs Shillong and Tiruchirapalli started most recently, in June 2022. Other than the IIMs, Management Development Institute (MDI) Gurgaon has been offering a certificate programme for this group for the last 27 years.

"We are yet to finally agree on the modalities regarding the executive MBA programme, but we are targeting that to be launched from the new academic year, starting in June 2023," Dr. Pankaj Agarwal, Chairperson, Executive Education, IIM Jammu told Careers360.

MBA helping transition

An initiative of the directorate general resettlement (DGR), ministry of defence (MoD) in collaboration with the management institutes, the idea behind these programmes is to help retiring officers transition to the corporate world.

Officers of the armed forces are disciplined and quick to take decisions and implement them in crisis situations, explained Agarwal. This is why institute authorities felt management training through specially-designed short-term programmes would be appropriate for this group.

"We have launched a six-month programme and it is slated to start by March 23, 2023. This programme will be available both online as well as offline depending on the preferences expressed," said Agarwal.

While the number of seats for the six-month certificate programme is 50 in all other IIMs, it is 30 at IIM Jammu.



Prof. BS Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu

“Combined with the disciplined life in the armed forces, the newly-planned programs at IIM Jammu will surely shape the men in uniform into top-notch corporate managers,” said BS Sahay, professor and director, IIM Jammu.

The certificate programmes offered by the IIMs are essentially capsule programmes which expose the participant to almost all critical areas of management. There are electives and core subjects too. It is quite comprehensive and rigorous, said Agarwal, where all the elements of an MBA programme have been explained in brief.

Management and military experience

Colonel Vineet Madan, who has served in the armed forces for the past 22 years, working in the area of telecommunication and cyber security, is now pursuing a certificate course, Executive Programme in Business Management for Armed Forces Officers, from MDI Gurgaon.

“I joined this because the business practices, requirements and the dynamics of the corporate world are different and I wanted to understand those dynamics and get some exposure to various business domains before joining the corporate world. So, I thought an executive programme in management will help me towards a smooth transition to corporate and a faster bedding-in,” said Madan, a serving officer with the Indian Army.

Madan will retire from the armed forces in December 2022. He enrolled in the 27th batch of the programme and is among a group of 50 experienced officers selected by his organisation for it.

“The course helps the officer students align and map their military experience and vocabulary to the corporate requirements. This shall help everyone to come on a common platform of understanding and shall also aid officers, to achieve effective and profitable business objectives in the corporate sector, with skills and expertise gained in the military” he added.

Yavnika Tanwar, an officer serving the Indian Air Force, presently posted in Silchar, Assam, is also enrolled in MDI Gurgaon’s executive programme. On a break from her job to attend the course, she will retire on December 14 2022.

“The six-month programme gives one the right kind of exposure to know where one can fit in with respect to their core area. It is a good bridge to understand what the requirements in the corporate sector are,” she said.



Yavnika Tanwar, student, MDI

MBA, management admission

There is no entrance exam for the six-month courses. Officers of all ranks, from captain to brigadier or equivalent, are eligible to join. The candidates are nominated by the DGR and the minimum qualification required is an undergraduate degree.

Quite unlike the certificate programmes, candidates seeking admission in the full-fledged executive MBA programme in IIM Jammu will have to appear in an entrance examination and also clear other elements of the selection process, said Agarwal. The programme will be offered in hybrid mode of which one year of instruction will be through in-person classes on campus and one year, online.

Officers of varying ages are enrolled for the certificate programmes. There are those who are retiring after serving in the army for 20 years or more; there are also those who had joined the forces for short service commissions.

The XLRI-Xavier School of Management and IIM Ahmedabad were offering short-term certificate programmes but haven't for the last two years for want of the right candidates, said officials at these institutes, asking not to be named.

Corporate jobs

Officers who have emerged from the MDI programme have landed in companies like Wipro, Amazon, Genpact, JP Morgan, Capgemini, Ernst & Young, and Reliance. They will work in various fields like marketing, human resource, finance, logistics, and telecommunication, said Raman Kumar Sharma, officer, placement committee, MDI Gurgaon.

The students of IIM Calcutta have found employment in companies like Wipro, Cummins India Ltd, and Gati, said an official associated with the institute.

IIM Jammu will work out a placement process for this group as well. "As far as the executive MBA is concerned, we are actively considering how we can be of use in terms of placements also because of the purpose of this programme is that as these officers transition into the corporate sector. IIM Jammu will be considering how it can play a role in the placement process also," said Agarwal, adding, "we would be eager to extend all support that we can and to the best possible extent offer customised programmes ... without compromising on quality."

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HELPING SOLDIERS TRANSITION

Management institutes are offering short-term programmes to help officers in the armed forces transition to the corporate world. IIM Jammu is all set to launch an executive MBA for them.

by Pritha Roy Choudhury

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DIAN INSTITUTE of Management Jammu

www.iimj.ac.in/



Yavnika Tanwar,
Student, IMDI, Gurgaon

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