

Acute Shortage of Computing Professionals

KUALA LUMPUR: It is a fact – there is a critical shortage of computing professionals in Malaysia. Out of the approximately 8,000 ICT jobs available in over 750 MSC status companies last year, 25% were unfilled.

This is a cause for serious concern as it affects the government's aim to transform the country into a knowledge-based economy as well as businesses that rely on professionals who manage their IT systems.

Lack of people with the right skills

"Who says there are no jobs for ICT graduates?" asked Mesiniaga Group human resources manager, Megat Anuar Idris.

"There are plenty of jobs – in specific professional ICT skills, such as programming (Java, .Net), database administration, software engineering, systems administration, networking and telecommunications," he elaborated.

Christopher Chan, Technopreneurs Association of Malaysia former president and The Media Shoppe Berhad chief executive officer, echoed the same sentiment. He said that many of his CEO friends would rather hire good Malaysian software developers but they are difficult to find.

60,000 professionals needed

David Wong, Persatuan



Christopher Chan,
Former President
Technopreneurs
Association of Malaysia
and CEO of The Media
Shoppe Berhad



Megat Anuar Idris,
Muhamad Idris,
HR Manager
Mesiniaga Group



David Wong,
Deputy Chairman,
Shared Services,
Persatuan Industri
Komputer dan
Multimedia Malaysia
(PIKOM) and CEO
of SnT Global Sdn Bhd



Ooi Chee Kok,
President
Taylor's College

(MDC) aims to create job opportunities for at least 60,000 knowledge workers in this sector over the next five years. That is 12,000 extra jobs a year for an industry that is already experiencing an acute shortage of qualified professionals.

Relevant education

In response to the need to produce qualified and quality computer-science graduates, one institution of higher learning is taking the lead.

Taylor's College president, Ooi Chee Kok, revealed that there is a lack of understanding about different fields in computer

termed as "IT", which leads students to choose disciplines that are not their first preference for fear there will be no jobs.

"At Taylor's College, we offer computing courses that are highly relevant in the business world, from software engineering to database technology management. In collaboration with our industry partners, we equip students with the right skill sets required by the marketplace," he said.

He added that beyond its commitment in offering a world-class computing degree, Taylor's College is also extending financial assistance to this year's

Competitive salaries

Computing professionals are not only sought after, but well-paid. Computer science graduates with a degree and industry skills can earn a starting salary of at least RM2,500. Those with experience earn even more.

Contrary to popular belief, there are plenty of ICT jobs, and not just in the IT sector. There are opportunities in many other industries, such as Finance, Manufacturing, Oil & Gas, Logistics and Entertainment.

The facts speak for themselves: the demand for ICT graduates with the right skills will always