



Stanford eCorner

China's Labor Demands in Computer Science

Robin Li, *Baidu*

September 23, 2009

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2284/Chinas-Labor-Demands-in-Computer-Science>

More than 700,000 computer science-related engineering students graduate each year in China, but few from this labor pool have the experience necessary to help an innovative company grow, says Robin Li, CEO of search engine Baidu. And, he points out, the management opportunities on a global scale are tremendous. That said, he and his company also outline the qualities that they seek in incoming talent - including a readiness to learn, a political and hassle-free outlook, and supreme reliability.



Transcript

Another very unique thing for China is that, for this chart at the bottom, you can tell that there are more than 700,000 engineering graduates each year. Engineering - meaning computer science-related engineering. So the talent pool there is huge. But many of them are not so experienced. When I started this company back almost nine, ten years ago, I started to recruit talents, recruit engineers, and I wrote in the job description that requires five-plus years of related experience. Then I found that I couldn't find anyone in China because nobody at that time really focused on technology. Multinational companies usually hire engineering student to do pre-sells, to do technical support. There's little research, little development, little innovation at that time. So for us to train the students, to train the engineers to become more experienced in developing innovative products, but that's where the opportunities are. If you are experienced, if you have, say, better ways of managing engineering team, this is a very good space you can be in.

You can really manage a lot of people. There are a lot of people that can do work, and if you have a more efficient way to manage a large crowd of engineers, you can be very competitive in the technology world. Well, this is the real purpose I'm here. Baidu welcomes talents like you! So what kind of people we like? We like people who fit in our culture. And we like people who is competent, who can do the job that we require them to do. And more importantly, we like people who have the desire and ability to learn quickly. Because this is a fast-changing market. It's a fast-changing industry. It's very exciting, but if you think you know everything you don't need to learn, you don't belong to us. I always need to learn.

Everyone from our company need to be ready to learn new things almost on a daily basis. So that's very important. What's our culture? It's simple and reliable. Simple means there's no politics. There's no ladder, no differences between CEO and an average engineer on the surface. And reliable means everyone is competent. They can deliver the job that's assigned to him or her. They are very smart. They are intelligent. They can be counted on.

So that's the culture of Baidu.