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Marine engineering: Busting the myths on deck

C Amirtha Kumar | May 1, 2019, 04.21 AM IST

There has always been a demand for marine engineering and nautical science jobs but one needs to constantly upgrade oneself to stay in tune with the times. With changing laws, there is more emphasis on subjects such as pollution and safety, which were not taken so seriously a few years ago.

Even after joining work, graduates should pursue short-term courses on topics like firefighting, power generation and water supply so that they can climb the ladder. One should be ready to stay away from home for long periods of time. Every engineer on board gets an eight-hour break for every four hours of work. And you get good pay as well as international exposure.

Entry level trainees are paid over Rs45,000 a month. They can become chief engineers or captains (navigation sector) in seven years and will receive a monthly pay of Rs8 lakh, and all of this is tax free.

The demand for marine engineers has shot up in hospitality, health and energy sectors. Five-star hotels, multi-speciality hospitals and power plants are ready to recruit marine engineers as they would have significant experience in multiple engineering fields.

Earlier, there were a lot of myths associated with these jobs. For instance, many assume that sea navigators smoke and drink a lot. But international laws are very strict and one cannot be inebriated during working hours and, on several ships, smoking is strictly prohibited.

With change in import and export policies, we can see an increasing demand for these jobs in the coming years and this is reflected in campus placement. A few years ago, hardly 10 students got placed but now almost 50% of graduates get a job on completing the course.

There is no fixed retirement age. Even at 73, I am earning a decent salary teaching young students.

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