



Profiles of Electrical Engineers and Computer Scientists



Elizabeth Kaufman

**Vice President
Citibank
New York, NY**

Education:

B.S. - Economics, Rutgers University

Job Description:

Acting Senior Technology Officer, responsible for technology standards, strategy, and direction.

Advice to Students:

"It's important to integrate an awareness of the world around you through extracurricular activities."

Video Transcript 1:

"Because the technology and industry in business are moving so rapidly now that an education over a four year or five year period or six year period is no longer enough. You need to be self educating all the time. And courses given periodically, not enough. You need to be out there reading the literature, understanding what's going on and integrating that into your daily job. These are the kinds of people that we look for today."

Interview:

Elizabeth Kaufman of Citibank is working on a collaborative program between businesses and universities supported by her company and the National Science Foundation. As a member of a group that is trying to design an undergraduate curriculum in computer systems, she is aware of the similar needs of different industries.

Industry, Kaufman explains, is looking for people with multiple abilities. Certainly, a "very solid knowledge base within your concentration in college -- be that electrical engineering or music or whatever" is the most important qualification. Business also looks for candidates who show "critical and systemic thinking skills, so that you can analyze problems and come to logical and reasonable conclusions." In addition, industry wants engineers who can work collaboratively and "articulate their ideas."

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Kaufman points to some other qualities Citibank looks for in candidates. "It's important to integrate [into your knowledge of your field] an awareness of the world around you through extracurricular activities, through community affairs programs, through a course that may not necessarily be a required part of your curriculum so that you bring a holistic view to the world and to life and to your job and to your profession."

Another valuable quality is concern about the community. "Community participation is extremely important because we believe that it creates the kind of individuals who will bring commitment and dedication." Kaufman emphasizes one more characteristic: "The commitment to lifelong learning is what's going to make them important and contributing members of this corporation." Engineers need to keep up with the constant innovations that affect their work, but Kaufman adds, "We need to have people who understand the implications of the outside world on our products and services and technology. We need to recruit people who have a broad view, and the lifelong commitment to learning is what enables that to go on indefinitely."

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