



Business-Related WAT Bible

Most Common WAT Topics with Sample WATs

Hi,

Welcome to the Written Ability test or 'WAT' section for your MBA Admission process!

The WATs in this section have been curated by alumni of top business schools like IIM A, C, SP Jain, and SCMHRD. Few authors have been panellists for top business schools and have formal experience in taking interviews of the candidates.

The document and content below have been created concerning the past 5 years of WAT experiences for the top B-schools and will be useful for a quick walkthrough. Each category covers a wide range of topics followed by sample WATs. We recommend you read through the topics and the sample WATs for greater insights. Hope these add to your preparation and help you in levelling favours up your game plan in the admission process!

All the best!

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Written Ability Test (WAT) Preparation

WAT or Written Ability Test is one of the two shortlisting rounds conducted by b-schools to assess the candidate's reasoning abilities and written communication skills. The WAT concept started anew last year by top IIMs of the country (Indian Institute of Management) to replace the group discussion round (GD). Many other B-Schools followed the lead of this protocol and have incorporated WAT as one of their selection parameters for MBA Admissions. Major IIMs and other top b-schools of the country award a significant weightage to the WAT round (more than 20%), the second stage of their shortlisting process. This article summarizes all the tips and strategies devised by CL experts to help you with your WAT preparation. Without further ado, see how one should take necessary steps anent WAT Preparation to crack it successfully.

What is meant by WAT?

WAT (Written Ability Test) is a written examination that includes one unique essay question a student needs to answer within the time bracket of 10-20 minutes. This round is conducted somewhere between early afternoon to late afternoon. The style and type of the essay differ across several institutes. The WAT round's primary purpose is to evaluate the candidate on four major proficiency strands, i.e., understanding, fluency, problem-solving, and reasoning. This round is similar to an essay competition. Several IIMs (including new IIMs and Baby IIMs) have replaced the original group discussion round with the WAT round. The reason for this modification was threefold; the inability of candidates to creatively construct their opinions during the earlier group discussion round, the GD room's chaotic environment, and the lack of confidence amongst candidates to speak up their part without any hesitance.

What are the pivotal factors in any plan?

- The objective.
- The resources.
- The time available.

The objective is to compose an essay that displays clarity of thinking, simplicity of phrasing, breadth of viewpoint, and robustness of logic.

The following are the resources: We don't have any reference materials, so this is a little tough. As a result, we must rely on our memories. The assignment is somewhat easier if the topic is open to interpretation and allows the writer to pick a framework for debate. When it comes to a certain issue (such as 'The Demonetisation in India,' for example), we must rely on our existing understanding of the subject. As a result, all WAT candidates must be current on current events.

The amount of time you have: We must divide our time correctly among the essential processes, regardless of how much time we have, rather than committing it completely to the act of writing. Let's pretend we have 20 minutes on our hands to better comprehend the procedure.

How to approach a WAT:

1. Understand your topic: Read the topic carefully and try to understand what is being conveyed
2. Take a stand: Based on your understanding, form your opinion and build your pointers.
3. Connect the dots: Organize your points and build your WAT.
4. Conclude: Make sure you conclude the essay well and proofread it before submitting it.

Types of WATs

The following types of WATs have been observed in the past 5 years:

1. Abstract based WAT
2. Business-related WAT
3. Current affairs-based WAT
4. Lifestyle based WAT
5. Philosophy based WAT
6. Politics based WAT
7. Science-based WAT

Let's dive into each type!



Business-related WAT

This type of WAT is used to test your managerial acumen. You would be given topics like "How will you bring more employment in India". In this type of WAT, you will have to think on a macro level. You will have to strategize something. Evaluate the pros and cons of your solution. Do a SWOT analysis and devise ways to mitigate the risks?

How to approach Business-related topics?

Read/watch the news and even if you don't remember stats, try describing the topic and have some opinion

Sample Business-related Topics:

1. The future of cryptocurrency
2. Are cryptocurrencies worth the hype?
3. Can a startup survive without investors?
4. Challenges in the IT industry
5. Coaching centres are destroying education
6. Are corporate jobs a new form of slavery
7. Is a mechanical engineer worth getting an IT job?
8. Is RBI's autonomy under threat
9. Is the privatization of the public sector a good initiative?
10. The future of crypto-verse in India
11. Is fintech a creative or destructive force?
12. Are the valuations of new-age startups like Zomato and Nykaa justified?
13. Gig Economy: Pros and Cons
14. Trouble in the telecom sector
15. Will automation increase or decrease jobs?
16. Is the stock market a good indicator for the economy?
17. Is FDI good for the economy?
18. Is the privatization of the public sector a good initiative?
19. Your thoughts on RCEP Agreement
20. Gita should be taught in MBA classes?
21. Browsing at the workplace affects productivity
22. Globalization and Jingoism exist together
23. Is work from home a better alternative?
24. Is sustainability more important than industrialization?
25. Are we forgetting our roots?
26. What changes do you see post-Covid?
27. What is more important: motivation or discipline?
28. How will you reduce air pollution in Delhi?

29. Is an MBA necessary for business?
30. Are cryptocurrencies a boon or curse?
31. Do corporate jobs imply paid slavery?
32. How to increase workplace productivity at the time of COVID when everyone is working from home?
33. Fourth Industrial Revolution
34. Workplace politics: Can it be avoided?
35. Is diversity needed in B-schools?
36. Impact of falling rupee on Indian economy
37. Should businesses focus on social impact or business impact?
38. Metaverse: The next trillion-dollar industry
39. How will you improve the condition of sports in India?
40. How can we deal with the next pandemic?
41. How will you make Indian PSUs profitable?
42. How will you deal with the plastic problem in India?
43. How important is organization culture?
44. Corporates can go to any extent to improve the bottom line
45. Startup boom in India: Causes and the Future
46. Is paternity leave required?
47. Should space travel be privatized?
48. Should women be paid for their household work?
49. Formal degrees are no longer required to get a job in the market
50. The circular economy is the key to being sustainable

Sample Business-related WATs

1. The future of Cryptocurrency

Key Points:

- a) What is cryptocurrency?
- b) Current state of cryptocurrency → can use Bitcoin as an example to make your point
- c) Advantages and Disadvantages
- d) Theories and opinions predicted by different financial eminent and analysts

A cryptocurrency is a digital currency harmful Many they 'created and managed through advanced encryption techniques known as cryptography. Cryptocurrency leapt from being an academic concept to (virtual) reality with the creation of Bitcoin in 2009. While Bitcoin attracted a growing following in subsequent years, it captured significant investor and media attention in April 2013. It leapt there significantly There, peaked at a record \$266 per bitcoin after surging 10-fold in the preceding two months. Bitcoin sported a market value of over \$2 billion at its peak. Still, a 50% plunge shortly after that sparked a raging debate about the future of cryptocurrencies in general and Bitcoin in particular. So, will these

alternative currencies eventually supplant conventional currencies and become as ubiquitous as dollars and euros someday? Or are cryptocurrencies a fad that will flame out before long? The answer lies with Bitcoin.

Some economic analysts predict a significant change in crypto is forthcoming as institutional money enters the market. Moreover, there is the possibility that crypto will be floated on the Nasdaq, which would further add credibility to blockchain and its uses as an alternative to conventional currencies. Some predict that crypto needs a verified exchange-traded fund (ETF). An ETF would make it easier for people to invest in Bitcoin, but there must-stop still needs to be the demand to invest in crypto, which might not automatically generate a fund. The future outlook for bitcoin is the subject of much debate. While so-called crypto-evangelists increase the financial media, Harvard University Professor of Economics and Public Policy Kenneth Rogoff suggests that the “overwhelming sentiment” among crypto advocates is that the total “market capitalization of cryptocurrencies could explode over the next five years, rising to \$5-10 [trillion].”

The historic volatility of the asset class is “no reason to panic,” he says. Still, he tempered his optimism and that of the “crypto evangelist” view of Bitcoin as digital gold, calling it “nutty,” stating its long-term value is “more likely to be \$100 than \$100,000.”

Rogoff argues that, unlike physical gold, Bitcoin’s use is limited to transactions, making so-called crypto-evangelists proliferate the financial media more vulnerable to a bubble-like collapse. Additionally, the cryptocurrency’s energy-intensive verification process is “vastly less efficient” than systems that rely on “a trusted central authority like a central bank.”

Bitcoin’s main benefits of decentralization and transaction anonymity have also made it a favoured currency for a host of illegal activities, including money laundering, drug peddling, smuggling, and weapons procurement. This has attracted the attention of powerful regulatory and other government agencies such as the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), the SEC, and even the FBI and Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In March 2013, FinCEN issued rules that defined virtual currency exchanges and administrators as money service businesses, bringing them within the ambit of government regulation. In May that year, the DHS froze an account of Mt. Gox – the largest Bitcoin exchange – held at Wells Fargo, alleging that it broke anti-money laundering laws. And in August, New York’s Department of Financial Services issued subpoenas to 22 emerging payment companies, many of which handled Bitcoin, asking about their measures to prevent money laundering and ensure consumer protection.

2. Is RBI's autonomy under threat?

Pointers:

- a) Present status of RBI and risks associated with it
- b) Different points for the motion and explaining each one of them in brief
- c) Different points against the motion and explaining each one of them in brief
- d) Concluding the overall topic

Rifts and conflicts between the 'Mint Street and the North Block' are like the relationship they share, which has been evident in the past. But in the present arrangement, these raise a threat to RBI's autonomy. While the heart of the issue is RBI's denial to give a chance to grow on the risk of inflation, other reasons like Public Sector Bank control, Liquidity crunch, disputes over RBI reserves, and payment regulations are not to be ignored.

Points for the motion: -

Demonetization RELATED MATTERS: - RBI stated to Bloomberg that the decision to withdraw legal tender was agreed by the RBI board less than 3 hrs. before the PM announced it for the public. Also, overnight declaration of crores of currency as illegal indicates that the government did not heed the central bank's suggestions regarding the grave problems such a measure could create.

RESIGNATION BY URJIT PATEL: - EX-RBI Governor Urjit Patel's resignation is the consequence of the tussle between the GOI and RBI. Although he started his reasons as being personal, it is deemed that his resignation was much anticipated due to the government's continued interference in RBI matters.

SECTION 7 OF RBI ACT: - There were speculations regarding the exercise of Section 7, which provides the government with the power to direct RBI for the public interest. With Urjit Patel's resignation, this enactment seems very much probable. This will undermine the primary purpose of RBI being autonomous.

SETTING UP OF INDEPENDENT PAYMENTS REGULATORY BOARD: - The government has rejected RBI's proposal to maintain the existing system and has set up an Independent Payment Regulatory Board. The chairperson to this board shall be appointed after the consultation of GOI with the RBI governor in his ex-officio capacity. This indicates how the government has set up a trap to sideline the RBI interference in this Board.

DEPUTY GOVERNOR ACHARYA'S SPEECH: - The central bank feels that it is being pushed to the corner with potential government policies, and DG Acharya's open criticism of the government is just a reflection of interventions made by the government which curbs the independence of RBI.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RBI- RBI has been an institution that has performed exceedingly well in the past years. Despite differences, there has never been a question about its independence. Thus, if the current members on board speak up openly about the pressure it is facing, it should not be considered well-rooted.

STATEMENTS OF PREVIOUS RBI GOVERNORS: - The former and hugely respected RBI governors, including YV Reddy, Raghu Ram Rajan, D Subbarao, have always hinted at the need for RBI to stay devoid of government interference for nations continued macroeconomic stability.

REVALUATION RESERVES ARE NOT FREE RESERVES: - The primary role of RBI pertains to regulation; for this, it needs to maintain a healthy balance sheet. What is being perceived as excess capital is the gold and currency reserves. Thus, revaluation of the foreign assets cannot be used as free reserves.

Points against the motion: -

- **BLANK INDEPENDENCE CAN NEVER BE PROVIDED:** - The RBI is independent in its operational activities but has to act under the government rules and regulations. Thus, the created can never be independent of the creator. The RBI can be autonomous but not omnipotent.
- **THE FIGHT IS BETWEEN THE RBI BOARD:** - A significant section of the newly appointed non - permanent members of the RBI view it's a liquidity crunch and thus a need to increase liquidity. The government is just being framed into the picture. The conflict may be due to the inconsistency of the Board.
- **RBI'S FAILURE TO EXERCISE REQUIRED CONTROL:** - The RBI has failed to exercise required control over the indiscriminate lending by public sector banks during 2008-2014, which calls for government intervention.
- **GOVERNMENT RESPECTS RBI'S AUTONOMY:** - The government has stated that it gives due respect to the autonomy of RBI, but it has to be guided by the motto of public welfare.
- **SUGGESTION OF CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISER:** - Arvind Subramaniam's statement also suggests that RBI's excess capital can be used to strengthen the capital of the under-performing commercial banks.
- **PROPOSED CHANGES:** - The Finance Ministry has promised to strengthen the Prompt Corrective Action policies for stressed banks.

Conclusion: -

Although there is a threat to RBI's autonomy, to maintain a healthy international relationship and a prospering external trade, the GOI and RBI must settle the matter as both have to work in unison for economic stability. With the RBI board meeting held on 19 November 2018, the same has been resolved for the greater interest of the economy. The key issues include Capital Requirements of the Central banks and the Government; Financing norms for SMEs and laying down rules for suppressed banks are expected to settle down with the reconciliation of the Government and RBI.

3. The future of crypto-verse in India

With an investment of over \$6.6 billion in the crypto market, it has become imperative for India to have a structured mechanism to regulate the market. In light of this, a crypto bill is in pipeline that aims to define and classify cryptocurrency assets in India and focus on the end-use of these assets for regulatory purposes to clear the ambiguity around crypto space in the country.

The bill is likely to classify crypto tokens as digital assets and not currency. It will also shed light on the tax treatment of gains in the crypto market and a tax similar to Securities Transaction Tax could be applied to all transactions in the market. The bill will also clear the air around exchange ownership parameters, accounting and reporting standards, and KYC of market participants.

The actual working of the proposed framework will become clearer once the bill is approved and enacted. Most of the big players in the crypto market are in support of the new bill as it will enhance the confidence of investors and lead to the growth of this market in our country. The crypto bill is likely to be a game-changer for the country. It will result in the innovation and application of crypto in segments where “digital assets” can be created. It will open new sources of revenue for the country and will attract much-needed FDI.

4. Fintech: Destructive or creative force

The growth of Technology and its importance is reiterated in every other article that we come across. In businesses, every function has adopted tech to great extent. Finance function when Computer programs and other technology used to support or enable banking and financial services is known as FinTech.

Fintech Disruptions

Earlier it wasn't easy for startups and small firms to enter the financial services sector. But these small firms and start-ups have become fast-moving companies focused on innovation and technological solutions. Fintech disruptions are finding a new way in. These are much more profitable in comparison to traditional financial services. In a recent PwC Global fintech survey, a quarter of such businesses are at risk of being lost to standalone Fintech in 5 years.

A walk through what next

The competitive environment of financial service institutions and markets is in an important turn and financial models are adjusting their business models accordingly. The accelerating pace of technology has proved to be a creative force.

Sharing Economy and digital is mainstream

In this case sharing economy refers to decentralized asset ownership and using information technology to find efficient matches between providers and users of capital. Digitalization makes the sharing

economy possible. Due to the pandemic digitalization became rapid and things that were expected in few years down the line have happened rapidly. Nowadays consumers do not prefer visiting physical set up, instead, they would like to receive services through online mode due to its various advantages of time and money efficiency.

Blockchain and Public Cloud

Investments in blockchain technology and Fintech are a must stop. The use of blockchain “public Ledger” became an integral part of financial institutions’ technology and operational infrastructure. Many financial institutions have adopted or in a way to adopt cloud-based software-as-a-service (SaaS). They also turn to SaaS for point solutions on the fringes of operations and KYC verification.

Customer Intelligence

Earlier customer intelligence was built on individualized data about customer behaviour. These were proxies for real and results were quite hazy. Technology advances have given access to huge data and through analytics we can unlock the information inside, to give customers what they want.

Embracing disruption

The technology is still in its growth stage and still faces some security challenges and it cannot be completely avoided. But we can on our part use best practices to secure our data and network. Firstly, we should update our operating models regularly. Secondly, technological architecture must connect to anything and everything. The endpoints to keep connected are enterprise data, cloud services, b2b, b2c, third-party big data sources, etc. Thirdly and most importantly You cannot pay enough attention to cyber security. So keep a check and be attentive.

5. Gig Economy: Pros and Cons

Pros:

Flexibility is the most obvious benefit of gig labour. You get to select when and where you work as a gig worker, which customers you take on (and which ones you don't), and in some cases, even your prices. If you choose, you can work only on weekends, nights, or one hour every week.

Take a test drive Something Different: Gig employment is a way for some people to supplement their income. Others, on the other hand, use it as a means to try out a new job. For example, if you enjoy animals and have considered becoming a pet sitter, working as a pet dog walker or pet sitter on the side is a terrific opportunity to test the waters and see how much you enjoy—or dislike—doing it.

As a gig worker, you can pursue a passion and determine if it's more than a passing interest without jeopardizing your main source of income.

Save time and money while increasing business agility: Companies may be able to reduce their costs associated with resources such as money and time in a gig economy. Hiring professionals for shorter project-based timescales rather than longer permanent durations saves money. This also saves money on the amenities of high-paying employment that any permanent specialist receives, like as paid vacations and insurance. This is especially useful for positions that require higher technical expertise and where the employee is only recruited for a limited time.

Cons:

Affordability: When you go into business for yourself, you go into business for yourself. As a result, it's up to you to give the advantages. Yes, you have the freedom to choose when you work and when you don't, but the truth is that if you don't work, you don't get paid. You won't have health insurance or other benefits as a freelance worker, either.

Unpredictable Income: Most gig jobs pay you by the project or task. The problem is that you might not be able to regulate how many chores you can finish in a day or a week. You won't make any money if no one wants a ride, needs anything assembled, neighbours subsidized or wants you to deliver something.

Burnout is a risk that not everyone is willing to take. Working several jobs or at strange hours is not for everyone. Gig work, as flexible as it is, may become tedious and stressful for certain people after a while.

