



CATKing IIFT GD PI Workbook

Congrats for IIFT Call.

How to use this workbook!

This is a consolidation of **21 IIFT WAT PI Experiences**. These are consolidated from various online sources.

IIFT WAT PI happens in Bangalore / Hyderabad / Mumbai.

Candidate Profile is also given in most cases, for you to understand the Personal Interview better.

After reading the entire Document you are required to check on your CATKing IIMWATPI Super 30 Dashboard :

1. Build Your Interview Skills (Videos from IIM and SP Jain Alumni)
2. Functional Dossiers: If you want to pursue an MBA in Marketing, choose that dossier first.
3. SOP / Application Forms (Check out Jagesh Golwala (IIMA), Raj Doshi (IIMA), Jay Gosalia (IIM B))
4. Sample AWT from the dashboard to understand the Structured Approach. WAT / AWT / AWA – All of these are same terms of Writing test assignment conducted across various IIMs.

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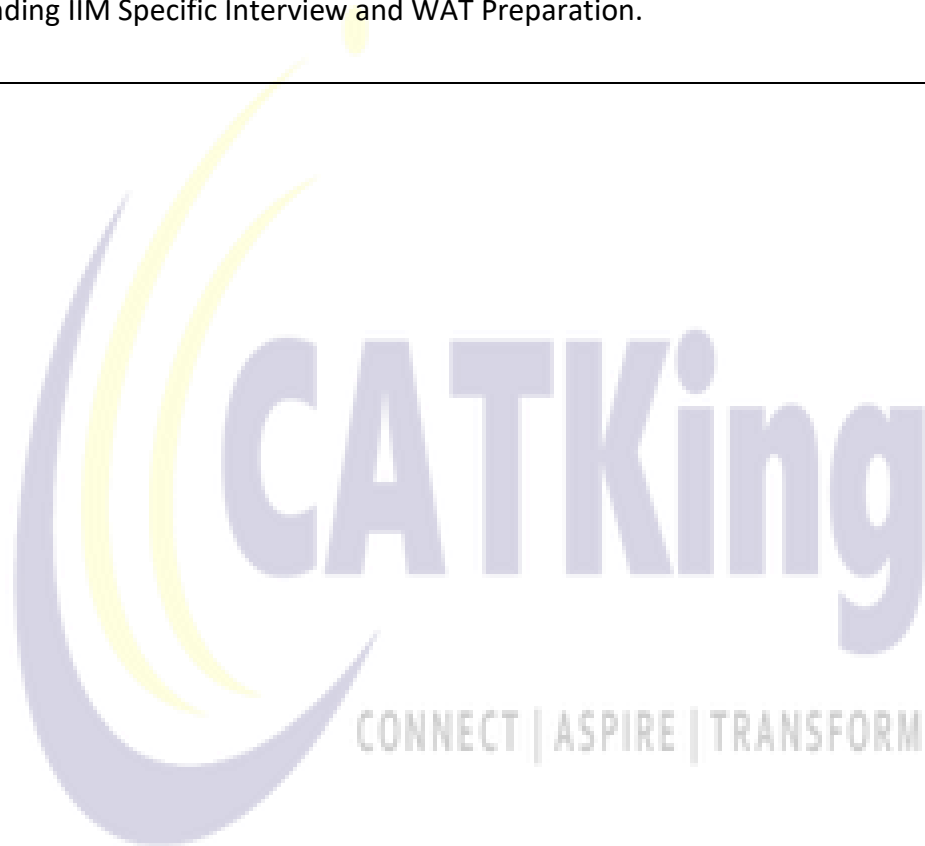
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Summary- What IIFT looks for?

- Excellent academics
- Work Experience is a Good Asset
- Extracurricular and Co-curricular activities give you an edge
- Group Interview Evaluates Candidates on Qualities of – Focus, Clarity of Thought, Learnability, Level of Optimism, Ability to handle pressure, Decision making skills, Discipline

Prerequisite

- Application Form to be Submitted based on Past academics and Work Experience and on basic MBA questions
- Resume (not mandate but always good to carry)
- Original Documents along with photocopies

Insights - WAT

- Time Allotted is 30 mins along with psychometric test
- They look at your thought process and planning

Sample WAT Topics -

1. Who is better, a person with breadth of knowledge or depth of knowledge?
2. Explain your leadership skills

Insights - Interview

Interview time - 20-30 Minutes.

Interview Panel Details – 3 people

Interview Type – Relative Interview and depends how well you can represent yourself even when in a group

Interview discussion Pointers – (as per experiences of last five years)

- Be completely prepared with anything and everything on the form.
- They will go into details of everything you speak about in the interview. (level1- what do you know about Indian Economy level2- what do you think about GST, level3- how has GST affected the sector you work in).
- One can chip in when the panel is interviewing other candidates on the panel
- It is fine if you are anxious and you need not portray a brave face being real with your emotions is better.
- Be prepared to answer everything about you work experience or about your favorite subjects if you are a fresher.

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1) Interview Experience 1:

Interview experience for IB-2020–2022

Background - GEM, 10/12/acads-89,86,75.6 worked with Cracku for 4 months, worked with byjus for 3 months and currently working with ICICI prudential as pricing manager.

We were called at 8.30 but the process started at 9.

We were given wat topic at 9.10 and we had 20 minutes to think and write. 300 words was the word limit roughly translating to 30 lines.

1. WAT topic - Clean Water.

My first thought, is this a 8th standard English examination? Never mind, spent 5 minutes thinking. Started by quoting how WW3 will be fought over water, mentioned 79% of body consists of water and water is one of the 4 basic necessities of life. Then went on to show its impact on health and how clear water is a necessity and not a need. Introduced how it has been used by political parties as their agenda but very litter work has been done. Then wrote about the technical aspects of it as to how it can be done. Ended by saying something on the lines of how clean water is necessary.

2. GD topic - 5 trillion dollar economy by 2025 - a mere dillusion?

Each of us were given 1 minute at the start to say the points after which GD was supposed to start.

As i was well read about the topic started by saying it is under focus because FM said India will become 5 trillion dollar economy by 2025. Said we'll need 11% growth to achieve the same. We have never crossed 8% and it was just before 2008. There was IT boom, Automobile was experiencing phenomenal growth and Telecom sector was also growing rapidly. Mentioned international factors as there was a dissent in US and thus FDI in India was kn rise and no major wars. Ended by saying if we need to achieve the goal we need to repeat the same.

GD was total chaos as there were 18 people in the group and 2,3 were constantly talking. Could enter only once said how unemployment needs to be eradicated for long term growth and how boosting the educational sector is the solution. Said union government needs to take inspiration from the state government and need to introduce much larger proportion to education.

Interview

There were 3 panelist. 2 male and 1 female.

P1(male) - You have already worked for 3 companies on 2 years why?

Answer- Was well prepared for the question. Started by saying i switched from cracku to byjus as the job role there was more challenging and the pay was also better, after which my dad met with an accident and was partially paralyzed and had to take care of family business until he was ready to take care of the same. He was ready by July and i started looking for a job again and got the job offer from icici prudential.

P1 - but why didn't you go back to byjus, your salary was very good there, had you been a valuable employee they would have called you back.

Answer - Told him about how the job role at Icici prudential was much better than that at byjus and how I thought it will help in the wrong run

P1 - How desperate are you to join an MBA College this year?

Answer - Told him I am very desperate to do my MBA this year.

P1 - So what did you do to fulfill that desperation?

Answer - Told him about how I sacrificed everything for 5 months before exams. No parties no movies. Had a fixed schedule and followed it religiously and that's what worked for me.

P1 - What other call do you have?

Answer - IIM C, IIM L, Sp Jain, Nmims

P1 - How much did you score in CAT?

Answer - 99.78 percentile

P1 - If you have to give advice to someone on how to score 99 percentiles, what will you say?

Answer - Told him about how I'll advice him to give a mock first and then I'll be able to analyze where he stands and what needs to be done. Then 2ndly I'll look at the time frame I have. If someone is me right now how to improve my VARC per say then I'll suggest him to start reading articles from aeon, the hindu, aldaily as this will indirectly make you comprehension better but if someone is asking me just 3 months before CAT then I'll suggest him to start practicing RCs as it'll be more beneficial then.

P1 intrupped by saying yeah i get your point.

P2(Male) - What is your job role at icici prudential exactly?

Answer - I do pricing under group creditlife schemes

P2 - What exactly do you price?

Answer - I do pricing for the loan linked products for different banks. As the competition is very tough we cannot give a uniform price to everyone and thus I do the analysis of a bank and the customers they serve and price them accordingly

P2- What are the parameters you look at while pricing?

Answer - Told him all the parameters

P2 - What is the biggest challenge you face and how do you plan on rectifying it?

Answer - Told him about how most of the time the information provided by the client is not appropriate and thus there is under/over pricing happens and it effects the profitability of the company. Told him how sales need to be made realize that profit more than revenue should be your target.

P3(Female) - Do you know who Chanda Kochar is?

Answer - Yes she was the ex-ceo of IBANK

P3 - And what happened?

Answer - Told her that she was involved in a financial wrong doings.

P3 - This must have affected the company's image, as a committee member or a stakeholder what would you have suggested?

Answer - Told her how i will appoint someone who has clean slate for years, someone like sandeep bakshi(current ceo) and then would have asked him to give a clear statement as to this is not what IBANK stands for and this was one off incidence.

IIFT Personal Interview Experience 2:

2) Interview Experience 2:

Profile: 10/95/72.81

Female/general category/fresher/BCom Honors/Graduated in 2018/took an year drop entrance prep :p

Calls: IIFT(98.12%) , XLRI BM and HRM (95.12%), IIM Ranchi (91.83%)

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Another red building! After school, college and now MBA institute also a red building..hmmm, interesting though!

Getting back to the important part, IIFT was my first interview experience in such a professional setting. And definitely the most memorable one :)

Location: IIFT Delhi Campus (February 18,2019)

8:45AM slot. Candidate no.11 Group 6.

WAT starts off sharp at 9 AM.

Topic: Farm loan waivers are a political gimmick!

Put in a lot of data and wrote for solid 15 minutes, took a neutral stance.

GD starts off around 930 AM

Topic: Space versus defence, where to spend more ?

Was the first candidate to begin the GD, because of sequential sitting arrangement.

Generalised views, not a good GD though, as SOME people didn't let everyone speak. 15–20 minutes and no good came out of it.

PI my favorite part. My turn came in around 1230.

3 panelists, F, M1 (sweetest of them all) , M2(didn't ask anything, only observed)

MS is me :P

MS: May I come in sir?

M1: Please do. Have a seat and keep your folder (filled with all my achievements I wanted to talk about :/) on the table at the back.

Why are you wearing specs? They aren't there in the photograph on your form. Did you give us an old photograph?

MS: (facepalm) Sir, the specs are for distance and they make me look a bit nerdy so (wah, couldn't think of anything better hai na)

M1: What did everyone say about the panel?

MS: Sir, everyone was of the opinion that the panel is really cool and are not pressurizing the candidates. (Everyone smiles)

F: Tell us about yourself.

MS: I'm from this place, school college etc etc (wahi well prepared answer they tell you about, during the interview prep)

F: You had an interesting choice of subjects in graduation (I had taken up History and culture of Punjab because panjab university has made it mandatory to take up either this or panjabi.)

MS: told the exact reason I mentioned above. Could've said, yeah, I'm fancy, hence this choice of subjects, but sticking with the truth is better, rather than flaunting.

F: what are the chief exports of panjab?

MS: o.o no clue. Having stayed in Chandigarh for 3 years of graduation and I still don't know chief exports.

So I said, I don't know ma'am. I'm sorry.

M2: (he was a sardar) It is textiles and..

MS: ohh yes, Ludhiana is known for being textiles hub (wah, now you remember, you idiot!)

M1: What are the states that border panjab?

MS: Told them (geography aati hai Bhai :p)

M1: Which one of them has the longest border?

MS: Rajasthan or Panjab, not sure (geography aati hai but egoistic nahi hona chahiye :/)

M1: make a guess.

MS: no sir, unable to narrow it down further!

F: Thank you, we're done here.

MS: -- that's it, that's all I get to present myself as. So not cool.
Just when I stood up and was about to leave

M1: Hold on. I want to talk to you more. Do you mind answering questions further?

MS: (with the biggest grin possible) sure sir, I don't mind at all.

M1: Great. You mentioned about your startup idea which led you to win the competition. Say you come to IIFT, what learnings do you have from that and how can you initiate it here?

MS: explained in detail.

M1: you mentioned CSR. Tell us about it. You'll be a white collar worker and how would you work for social efforts? You can't do both things

MS: elaborated and gave a very convincing answer, talked about reliance too.

M1: Reliance took some steps for CSR. Do you know about it?

MS: told.

M1: which newspapers do you follow?

MS: Bloomberg, New York Times, The Guardian, The Hindu and all other magazines and papers I read (big time newspapers fan :D)

M1: what do you think about the policy of China regarding providing Transport facilities to other countries?

MS: had a full fledged answer prepared on Chinese economy. Sab bataya in detail.. Favorite moment :D

M1: Shinzo Abe nominated Donald Trump for Nobel Prize. What is your take?

MS: gave a very diplomatic answer. Got through well.

M1: where did you take coaching from? Your answers and way of responding sounds very professional and trained.

MS: Hehe.. From Career Launcher and took help from a lot of seniors :p

M1: what do you know about solar alliance and India's role in it?

MS: didn't know much about it. Told them, sorry sir, don't have much of an idea. (Never be proud of your newspaper knowledge :/)

M1: what do you know about BRICS?

MS: told. About its deteriorating importance too.

M1: tell us about SAARC.

MS: told.

Finally, the question which probably helped my nail the interview.

F: how many states does the tropic of cancer pass through? Is India at any climatic advantage?

MS: (geography to the rescue yay) told. Also talked about India and it's geographical location, tropic of cancer and capricorn and world geography etc etc..

All panelists: (all smiling and happy) thank you very much
(No candies available there though)

MS: Thank you so much. :D

Verdict: Converted IIFT Delhi.

3) Interview Experience 3

IIFT MBA IB 2019-2021 Interview (2nd attempt at IIFT)

Venue: IIFT Campus Kolkata

19th Feb 2019

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10th/12th/B.tech: 95/93/67.7

IIFT 2018 Score (32.76 marks) : 96.074 percentile

Reporting 1:45 pm

WAT: Jobless Growth in India: Cause for Social Unrest

GD: "Music" or "Sports" or "Wine": Impact on Perceived peacefulness

Interview:

Panel of 3: All of them Old Gentlemen

I was 9th in my panel to be interviewed.

P1: What is this place Kahalgaon?

Me: Sir, it is an NTPC power project township in Bhagalpur Bihar.

P2: Why MBA?

M: Some gyaan about my own abilities, people skill, affinity for idea based solutions, ability to lead and yada yada.

P2: Why did you drop an year?

M: Dropped so as to get a good college this time as I was unable to last year. Also, appeared for some other entrances where I had some interest.

P3: What area you see yourself in?

M: Marketing

P3: Which sector?

M: FMCG.

P3: What is FMCG? What products do they sell?

M: Fast moving consumer goods. Items of daily use such as hygiene amenities, utilities and food stuff like Colgate, Biscuits, Shampoo etc.

P3: Suppose you are a marketing manager. Your superiors already took care of the marketing. How will you contribute?

M: Will gather data on sales.

P3: Whom will you ask for data?

M: Ask end user for feedback.

P3: So many people use toothpaste. Whom to ask?

M: In case of large segment, will go for data from wholesalers and retailers.

P3: How many shops a day can you visit to do the same?

M: A dozen maybe. (Not sure, probably screwed up here)

P3: How will you gather data?

M: Market surveys. One on one interactions. Sample distribution.

P3: Where will you do it? The local bazaar?

M: Not necessarily. Common man has access to both the local bazaar where bargaining is possible as well as supermarket venues where discounts are available in bulk.

P3: How to go about targeting the market?

M: Segmentation. On the basis of demography, ideology, income group etc.

P3: Who will you sell for, SONY or Colgate?

M: Lean towards Colgate. Insight into the minds of common people. Diverse consumer group. SONY has price segmented product categories. At the outset, pretty easy to analyse and get a basic idea who buys what kind of SONY product and why based on cost of product. Not so for Colgate. Need to know the psychology of people there. Rich poor.... everyone needs toothpaste. More challenging to gain consumers here.

P2: What if your product is not selling? What can be done?

M: blah blah...fumble.

P2: Will you lower prices to match that of competitor?

M: No. We can try packaging as per consumer demand. Instead of 400 mg, we can market 40mg packet. Low price for less quantity. But it would provide new consumer an incentive to try out new product from so called more expensive brand without lowering price.

P2 satisfied.

Was thanked and allowed to leave.

Did decent in all three as per my own thinking. Waiting for results. Moving on to next battles.

VERDICT: Awaited. (Update- DID NOT CONVERT. NOT EVEN WAITLISTED THIS TIME)

4) Interview and WAT Experience 4

MBA IB 2018–2020 Interview

Date: 20th February, 2018

Place: IIFT Kolkata Campus.

Time: Afternoon slot

10th/12th/B.tech: 95/93/67.7

IIFT 2017 Score: 99.74 percentile

The process started with WAT. There were 12 people in my group. We were made to sit around a rectangle table with the moderating professors at the head of the table on a dias.

The topic for WAT was "The merger of Flipkart and Snapdeal". 20 minutes to think and write. Two sides of an A4 sheet. Limit was 300 words.

After WAT, a small break of five minutes, then again the same seating arrangement and GD Process began. **The topic for GD was "Instagram is changing the way we portray ourselves online and is a tool for image management"** Everyone was given a minute or two for their opening statements and then the discussion began. **The whole process lasted for about 20 minutes. (Including opening statements)**

Thereafter, Interviews began. **I was 7th in my panel.**

There were 3 panelists. Aged professors.

Questions from computer science

What is semaphore?

What is L1 L2 cache?

What is auxiliary memory?

Some basic questions related to JAVA.

What is your choice of specialization?

Can you sell me this bottle?

(Proceeded to sell the bottle based on it being ionized and made from natural sources.

Sourced with great difficulty. Essential tapped from natural pure transparent aqueous ravines in the hills. Not processed just purified. Taste is not manipulated and blah blah)

Why MBA after computer science?

Why not pursue M.Tech?

What qualities makes you suitable for an MBA?

Verdict: Waitlisted.

5) Interview and WAT Experience 5

Venue: Ahmedabad

10/12/Graduation: 91.2/93.5/7.65

IIFT Score : 41.2 (99.69 percentile)

WAT Topic: Digital Detox - A way to Inner peace

Couldn't figure out what the f*ck Detox is (-_-) Sat there for 2 minutes figuring out what to write (I know I know, I should know the meaning but I am an engineer, after all, you can't blame me for not knowing). Finally wrote whatever I could think of.

GD Topic: Ease of Doing Business - Dream of Reality?

We were a total of 12 people in the GD room. And let me tell you a fact, I am a 'Bhakt'. And in IIFT GD all will get 1–1.5 minutes initially to present their views and then the discussion starts. I prepared points for in favor of Reality. I was the 7th person to speak and surprisingly 5 out of 6 candidates before I spoke in favor. I immediately changed my stand (to stand out in GD) and somehow spoke a few points. By the time GD started, I figured out 2–3 more points against the reality and spoke 5–6 times during the discussion of 10 minutes, and that was enough and I was happy that I did well considering the fact that I completely messed up WAT.

That's the beauty about GD if there enough people are against you, that comes for your benefit. All other candidates, as well as the panel, will give attention to what you speak.

Interview: I was 7th for the interview.

I asked all the before me about the experience. All had different opinions. Some of them got questions on Academics, some on Work ex, some on Why MBA/IIFT/Trade. The panel was even asking questions on General Knowledge related to IIFT that is, about WTO(members, roles, head, and whatnot), foreign policy of India, etc.

I was so prepared for such questions before I came for Interview. I didn't convert many other colleges except NM, SIBM-P, SCMHRD. IIFT was my best shot.

We are asked to fill the CV form before going for an interview, that contains several questions that can give you a nightmare. You must be prepared for all the questions that can come up from anywhere.

There was 3 panelist, 1 woman (W) and 2 men (M1 & M2), all of them were old enough.

W: So Mr. Jay Dave, your mother is a nurse

Me: Yes

W: How has your mother being a nurse affected your life?

(whaaattt? I wasn't prepared for this)

M: I told that I am in the hostel for the last 13 years so I didn't live much with my parents.

But Still, I don't remember the last time I went to the hospital or any of my family member, as my mother kept us fit.

W: Okay, so when did you graduate and what are you doing now?

M: I did graduation in 2018 in civil engineering and after that, I started working in a startup, which I co-founded.

W: So, why do you want to leave the startup?

M: Ma'am, I am a co-founder but I am not the owner of it.

W: Alright, what do you do? (Thank god she didn't push further)

M1: Told

M1: Your job responsibility doesn't suit your job profile/designation.

M: Explained.

M1: Asked about both patents

M: Told

M2: Asked me 3 questions on civil engineering. (he somehow knew a lot about civil)

M: Couldn't answer 1 properly, otherwise went well.

W: Asked me a question about Reliance entering e-commerce sector(I mentioned it in CV form)

M: Explained nicely.

DONE

THAT WAS IT

I was like what happened? It went just for 8–9 minutes. Everyone had their interview of at least 15–20 minutes.

I said thank you and left.

I kept on wondering about whether I will get into IIFT or not as IIFT doesn't disclose individual weight-age for Exam/PI/WAT/GD.

Verdict: Converted IIFT Kolkata.

6) Interview and WAT Experience 6

Profile:

X | XII | Grad: 10/10 CGPA | 92% | 8.17 CGPA (Engineer)

Work-Ex: 20 Months as on 1-Mar-2020

IIFT 2019: 94.7%ile (General)

Date: 20-Feb-2020

Location: IIFT, Delhi Campus

WAT: Is Disruptive Innovation Sustainable?

20 Minutes to Write 300 Words

GD: What matters more: Important or Famous?

1 Minute each to speak and then Open Floor for 15 Minutes

PI: 2 Female Panelists

F1: Your Dad is a Lawyer, where does he practice?

F1: Why did you not take up Law?

F1: Explain your Role at Deutsche Bank?

F1: Cross-Questioned

F1: Have you practiced anything for this Interview?

F1: What are the latest headlines?

F1: What are your views on CAA?

F1: Give me a Binary Answer, is it good or bad?

F1: Where are you from and where did you do your schooling?

F1: Why MBA?

F1: Why Finance?

F1: Why not CA or CFA?

F1: Why IIFT?

F2: Explain Six Sigma? Derive Mathematically.

F2: What is the % distribution between -1 to 1 sigma?

Total Time: 5-7 Minutes

Result: Rejected

7) Interview and WAT Experience 7

IIFT interview experience for 2021–23

Background : 10/12/Engg - 9/9/6.8. 13 month work ex. (family business)
04/05/2021

This year, the whole process of WAT, Extempore and PI were held online due to Covid-19 pandemic. WAT was done 10 days before my PI date.

PI timing given was 10:40 AM. Panel joined on MS teams at exact time. There were three male panelists. (M1,M2,M3)

Greetings exchanged.

M1 : I will now give you a topic for Extempore. You can take 1 minute to think and 3 minutes to talk. The topic will appear on your screen right now. You can note down points in a paper if you want.

Extempore: Gig economy and freelancing in India

I started by defining Gig economy and freelancing, their advantages and disadvantages for both employers and Employees. Then how this pandemic caused a lots of job losses and how a large number of graduates every year can be given opportunity to showcase their skills with freelancing within and beyond India. And the need of government regulation and to provide a safety net for freelance workers.

M1 Signalled me to stop when I was about to conclude.

Interview:

M1: You have mentioned about a Social media campaign during your college, in your CV form. What was it ?

I started explaining it. What was it, what was my contribution etc.. (The internet got disrupted during my answer. got connected back after 30 seconds)

M1: Okay, leave it. Whats difference between AI and ML. Are they the same ?

Told that AI is bigger concept of making intelligent machines and ML was one way of achieving it by teaching machines to learn from data.

M1: Give me an Example of both

I gave him a vague example as I didn't know specificities examples. (He was convinced)

M1: What is amazon web service ?

started by saying its cloud services provided by amazon.

M1: What is cloud services. what are different services provided through cloud ?

I gave detailed answer about cloud service. And gave example of Web hosting, SaaS, PaaS and IaaS etc..

M1: How many GST slabs are there in India ? Which are they

Mentioned 0,5,12,18 and 28 % slabs.

M1: Have you heard about company BENNET ? they have a university of their own.

I have heard about Bennet university but not the company.

M1: They are famous company. Okay, leave it. What is E Way Bill. Is there any minimum amount requirement for E Way bills ?

I gave a vague answer as I didn't know exactly what E way bill was.

M1: This is my last question Whats role of World bank.

I answered but he was not convinced completely.

M2: I can see you are an Electronics and Communications graduate. What is FDMA and TDMA, and difference between them.

I defined what is multiple access and difference between FDMA and TDMA.

M2: What is modulation ? what is Frequency modulation and Amplitude modulation
I answered that to send signals over large distance, we need to combine to with a carrier signal. And How carrier signals Frequency/Amplitude was varied..

M2: Which is better ? Amplitude or Frequency Modulation

I am not so sure, Can I take a guess. I said Frequency modulation and gave a vague reason. He explained why it was not correct in detail

M3: Shabeeb, I can see you know many languages from your profile. (I had mentioned Arabic). What does your name mean ?

Sir, it means "Youth"

M3: what are your interests in Sports or Arts

I am not much interested in sports. and I don't know if I can include this in arts, I am interested in Magic. Its my hobby.

M3: Thats interesting. What is magic actually ?

gave my definition that magic is 'Illusion of doing seemingly impossible feats'

M3: Can you show us a magic now ?

(I have prepared for this question in case if they asked) Can I take 2-3 minutes ? And may I grab a deck of cards ?

M3: Sure, we have enough time. And you can take whatever you want.

I performed a mentalism based Card trick. I was very nervous still did it well.(M3 was very impressed)

M3: Nice. Now tell me the meaning of 'ASTAGHFIRULLAH'. (an Arabic phrase)

Sir it means 'God, Please forgive me'.

M3: great. Now you pray to god to forgive you. 'cause I am going to cut 5 marks because you manipulated us into showing a magic and giving less time to ask questions. (everyone laughing).

M3: Your PI is over. You may log off now.

Thank you sir..

The End.

Overall the panel were very chill. Gave me enough time to answer questions and No grilling or counter questions.

Now, Waiting for results..

Edit :

Verdict : IIFT Delhi Converted.

8) Interview and WAT Experience 8

Date: 27.01.2020

Venue: The Pride Hotel, Chennai.

Profile:

GEM.

X - 95.6% (Tamilnadu Board)

XII - 92% (Tamilnadu Board)

UG - 67.4% (B.Tech.(IT) from PSG College of Technology, Coimbatore)

Work Experience - 9 months, 18 days as Business Technology Analyst at Deloitte USI

Consulting; 4 months 16 days as DILR faculty member at TIME Chennai as on January 31,

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2020.

IIFT 2019 - 99.90 percentile.

WAT Topic:

Overexposure to Social Media & Negative tendencies.

An easy topic. Started with the definition of social media, moved to how the overexposure of it is happening with increased internet penetration and cheap data prices. Before delving into the negatives, I mentioned some of the positives. The negatives I mentioned include the attention-seeking tendencies, mental disorders like diminishing attention spans, susceptibility to online frauds and even honey-traps. I added some ways of dealing with these issues before concluding by saying the positives far outweigh the negatives. Satisfied with my write-up.

And like the past two years, our WAT answer scripts were sealed and we were informed our answer scripts will be centrally evaluated at IIFT, New Delhi.

GD Topic:

Iran vs US: India's Economic Dilemma.

Our group had around 18 members. **Yes, 18!** And for the third consecutive time, the same professor moderated my GD. The structured GD format of IIFT gives one minute to everyone initially before a fifteen-minute open house. Oil imports, Electric Vehicles and Chabahar Port remained the primary points of discussion. In spite of the huge group size, the discussion remained cordial. I was satisfied with my initial pitch in. I made two short entries in the open house. Three people who contributed comparatively less were asked to conclude. An average performance here.

Interview:

It was long wait for the interview as I was the fourteenth one in my panel. The panelists had the printout of my CV

There were three panelists: All males and all being professors of IIFT. When my turn came, the younger professor went out and he never came back for the whole duration of my interview. The interview began with my last year's calls. In my answer to this question, I mentioned that this is my third IIFT interview. Half of the interview was about last year's interview - the questions asked and my answers to those. This was followed by questions on what went wrong last year and how I worked on improving myself after that. The same professor asked me to choose one area in which he can test me technically. I chose Software Testing. "What are the things to be considered before you start testing?", "What are the differences between BPR and ERP?" were the followup questions. I believe I answered the first one well. Though I answered what ERP is, I couldn't recollect anything about BPR. He said he would have asked "Which one among BPR and ERP comes first?" if I had answered the previous question. He passed on the baton to the other interviewer. This professor started by asking about my CAT percentile and my calls. Then he told that he worked for eight years in EID Parry, which is a sugar factory in my native place. This was followed by a few Why MBA type questions and "Which specialization I'll choose if I get selected". I felt I could have done better in the last part. Overall, an above-average interview in my opinion.

Verdict: Converted IIFT D in my third attempt, but joining FMS Delhi!

9) Interview and WAT Experience 9

Date: 11.02.2019

Venue: The Pride Hotel, Bengaluru.

Profile:

GEM.

X - 95.6%(Tamilnadu Board)

XII - 92%(Tamilnadu Board)

UG - 67.4% (B.Tech.(IT) from PSG College of Technology, Coimbatore)

Work Experience - 5 months, 19 days at Deloitte Consulting as on January 31, 2019.

IIFT 2018 - 97.487 percentile.

WAT Topic:

One nation one election.

An easy topic for any serious aspirant. Started with how countries like USA have a sort of common election; went into the pros of having a common election in India like reduced expenditure, reduced armed forces deployment, reduced time under code of conduct and reduced time spent by the ministers in electioneering leading to more governance overall; moved into the complexities like convincing the states to couple the central and state elections, by-elections, defections and assembly dissolution; concluded by saying a common election is the way forward provided the complexities are removed. Totally satisfied with my performance here.

GD Topic:

Can MOOCs and other virtual learning platforms replace conventional learning platforms? Our group had around 10 members. Incidentally, one of the two GD moderators was the same Professor who moderated my last year's GD also. Everyone was given one minute to pitch in their views and then the floor is thrown open. In my initial pitch in, I classified the education sector into three - primary, secondary and tertiary and argued that these platforms are now restricted to tertiary sector although there is scope in the other two sectors. I was satisfied with my initial pitch in. Once the floor is thrown open there was cooperation among group members and the discussion was cordial. But, thanks to my poor GD skills, I was unable to speak even though I had some valuable points. I was asked to summarize. Although my initial pitch in and the conclusion were good, I did not contribute anything during the open house. A below average performance here.

Interview:

The restobar of the hotel was converted into a PI room. So, literally I had my PI inside a bar. I was the first one in my panel. The panelists had the printout of my CV form.

There were three panelists: one middle-aged lady Assistant Professor(**F**), one elderly male Professor(**M1**), one young male alumnus(**M2**). **M1** called me in and asked me to take the seat.

K: Good morning sirs and good morning ma'am.

F, M1 and M2: Good morning.

F: So tell us about yourself briefly.

K: As you know, I am Karthik. I was born at Puducherry and brought up at Nellikuppam, which is a small town in the coastal district of Tamilnadu called Cuddalore. I completed my undergraduation in Information Technology stream from PSG College of Technology,

Coimbatore. I believe the four years of undergraduation has shaped me into a perseverant and resilient individual. I was also recognized for my leadership skills there as I held two Positions of Responsibilities there in my final year. I secured a placement offer from Deloitte in the final year of my undergraduation where I am working for the past 6 months. I also spent my final semester at Deloitte as an Intern. Apart from this, I like to spend my free time browsing Quora, solving logical puzzles especially sudokus and I follow Cricket.

M1: Why do you read Quora? Is it a reliable source of information?

K: No sir, Quora is not a reliable source of information. Anyone can add wrong information. I read it to gain knowledge.

M1: Then why do you read it? How did it help you? Explain with an instance.

K: I read it because it gives me perspectives, sir. To say an instance, the recent farm loan waivers, sir. I had a chance to read the for arguments and the against arguments. From the for arguments, I got to read about the rural distress, how the Minimum Support Price is not doing enough and how the low food prices because of the excessive supply is hitting the farmers. I noticed most of the writers for the for argument are from the rural areas. From the against side, I got to read about how it is used as a measure to gain votes by putting severe strain in the fiscal discipline of the states and how it is inefficient in the long run.

M2: What do you think is the problem with these kind of social forums like Quora?

K: Sir, as I said...(M2 cutting in)

M2: Not only in Quora, any social forums like Twitter, Facebook, etc,...?

K: Sir, the problem with these applications like I was saying is the reliability of information. These applications depend on the users to generate content. So anyone can add any false information there. And with people getting increased access to digital connectivity, these false information can spread in an exponential speed. The social media sites are taking steps towards it, like WhatsApp limiting the number of forward messages to five. But still the problem persists.

M1: You have your core competencies set. Why do you want to move away from it? K:

(Hesitantly) I am sorry sir; I don't understand what you mean by core competencies.

M2: You did your undergraduation in IT. You work in the IT sector. Why do you want to switch now? And, how does IIFT figures in that plan. That is what sir meant. Right, sir?

M1: Yes.

K: Explained.

F: Karthik, I am seeing your academic achievements. Your college score is very poor. Why ? M2: Yeah, you have written here that you had three backlogs (circles that part in my CV form) K: Sir, it is actually five.

K: Sir, it is actually five.

M2: Ohh, yes, you have written five here. Why? What happened?

K: I come from a small rural town. I did not have much worldly knowledge when I entered college. I was a bit arrogant and I was under the presumption that I possessed great leadership skills. I was ignorant to that extent that I thought getting into a good Engineering college would mean passing out with a good managerial job. I didn't pay much heed to my academics because of this. As a result, I had five backlogs and my grades were in the 50s at the end of the first year. I realised my mistake, I realised that I would get nowhere in life at this pace and started working hard. I studied the basics of my academics and this not only resulted in my grades improving from the 50s to the 60s, but also helped me to secure an Internship + Full-time placement offer from Deloitte in the final year. At the end of the first year, I struggled to hold a single complete conversation in English. I have made good

progress on this front but my English communication is still a work in progress. Apart from this, I started taking part in Extracurricular activities in my college. I went on to become the only student to hold two significant Positions of Responsibilities in the final year.

F: What will be the advice you'll be giving to someone who is coming from such a background?

K: I would advise the person to have good General Awareness and particularly to be more aware of future career prospects.

The three panelists looked at each other and said that we're done. I thanked them and left.

Verdict: Rejected

10) Interview and WAT Experience 10

Attempt 1:

Date: 14.02.2018

Venue: The Pride Hotel, Bengaluru.

Profile:

GEM Fresher.

X - 95.6%(Tamilnadu Board)

XII - 92%(Tamilnadu Board)

UG - 66.2% at the time of the interview(B.Tech.(IT) from PSG College of Technology, Coimbatore)

IIFT 2017 - 99.96 percentile.

Having secured only 99.06 percentile in CAT, I wanted to retake CAT and XAT again and give it one more push for IIM C, FMS and XLRI. So I just planned to attend the interviews of all those institutes which called me (IIM S, New IIMs and IIFT) without serious preparation and gain some useful interview experience for next year.

We were called into the GD room at around 02:00 PM. We were checked for our ID proof. No other document verification happened. The moderator for WAT & GD explained to us the time allotted for WAT & GD and the parameters on which we will be evaluated in WAT & GD. We had different panel members for GD & Interview.

WAT Topic:

You will face your greatest opposition when you are closer to your greatest miracle.

The topic seemed too abstract for me and I wrote on the lines it is the opposition and the way the opposition is overcome decides what the greatest miracle is. I also added that, to a particular person, he/she might have a personal feeling about his/her greatest miracle which may or may not be the same as the public's perspective.

Our WAT answer scripts were sealed and we were informed our answer scripts will be centrally evaluated at IIFT, New Delhi.

GD Topic:

Is India's Demographic Dividend underutilized?

Our group had around 10 members. Everyone was given one minute to pitch in their views and then the floor is thrown open for open discussion. I was satisfied with my initial pitch in. Once the floor is thrown open there was cooperation among group members and the discussion was cordial. But, I was unable to relate to what the other members were speaking and I was one among the two people who were finally asked to summarize since we were the quieter ones.

Interview:

I was the second one in my panel. We were informed no certificates are required to be

carried. The panelists had the printout of my CV form. Heard that IIFT this time are conducting shorter interviews with panelists asking basic questions. It was the case for me also.

There were three panelists: one elderly male professor(**M1**), one middle-aged male professor(**M2**) and one middle-aged lady professor(**F**). **M1** was smiling throughout the interview. I(**K**) entered the room and **M1** asked me to take the seat.

****Thoughts inside double asterisk**** K: Good Afternoon Sirs and Ma'am. **M1: So Karthik, tell us about yourself.**

K: Told them about the place I hail from(mentioned the frequent cyclones we experience), my places of education and my hobbies and interests.

M1: (Skimming through my CV form) What business is your father into?

K: He is a distributor of submersible pumpsets and fertilizers, Sir.

M1: You mentioned that your place frequently encounters cyclone. Have you been affected by Tsunami?

K: No sir. We live around 10 kilometres away from the shore. The effect of Tsunami is limited to 200 to 300 metres and at the most 500 metres away from the shore in my place. But we still suffer from extensive damage by Cyclones.

M1: What do you like about PSG the most?

K: Told them about the place - Coimbatore, the freedom PSG offers to explore oneself, and I used this opportunity to mention about the Higher Education Learning Centre for which I was the coordinator.

M1: How is PSG Institute of Management?

K: Told them about the reviews I am getting from my hostelmates and said that it is an average B-School. Mentioned that it was my IIFT test centre.

M1: (Says about some Professor from PSG Institute of Management who interacted with them for the organizing of the test) Where do you see yourselves in 10 years?

K: Sir, I see myself as a successful manager in whatever the stream and organization I am getting into. ****I should have prepared this basic question at least****

M2: Who do you think a successful manager is?

K: A successful manager is the one who is able to do what is expected of him. ****In a bid to not answer the same thing as I had written in my CV, I blurt out something****

M1: So, a successful manager climbs the ladder quickly.

K: Yes sir, that is because he is able to do what is expected of him. ****It is going nowhere in my favour****

M1: (Makes fun of my answer) So an unsuccessful manager remains stagnant. (They all share a laugh. I laugh with them on my stupidity)

F: You are from Information Technology background. Are you aware of simulation techniques?

K: No ma'am.

F: So Karthik, can you tell us about any business news from the last week?

K: Yes ma'am, I would like to speak about the freefall Bitcoin price is undergoing.

(**F** nods)

The Bitcoin price after hitting a peak of 20000 USD is now on a freefall as experts predicted. It has already gone down below 8400 USD. This is because ... (At this moment, I got stuck. My mind went blank and I didn't utter anything for the next few seconds)

F: It's okay. Are you aware of our country's imports and exports?

K: To an extent ma'am. I don't know the exact figures.

F: We're not looking for exact figures. Just tell us what are the major exports and imports of our country?

K: Ma'am, I think Agriculture and Textile products form the majority of our Exports and Electronic Items form the majority of our Imports. We export a lot of electronic items from China and we import Apple products also. (Also mentioned the Apple facility being setup at Hyderabad. Having blown up my chances already, I started to blurt out something. This answer was complete guesswork and it turned out to be completely wrong.)

F: You have mentioned that you have an offer from placement.

K: Yes ma'am, I have an offer from Deloitte U.S. India Consulting Private Limited. My internship started only two weeks back.

F: Are you placed there?

K: Yes ma'am, I have a PPO also.

The three interviewers said we're done. K: Thank you Sirs and Thank you Ma'am. **Verdict: Rejected**

11) Interview and WAT Experience 11

Venue: IIFT Delhi Campus 21st Feb 2018

IIFT Percentile: 96.57

WAT: Don't get intimidated by things you don't know. Use it as your strength and think differently.

I started with, "I'm not afraid of those 100 moves you practiced once, I'm afraid of that one move you practiced 100 times." Then I wrote about how from beginning we're taught that fish is the queen of water but we never taught that it's a dead body in the land and that it leaves the breath within 10 seconds in the land cuz it's not her strength. She performs well in her strength area. After that I mentioned how Bhutan focuses on the Spiritually and its culture and is one of the happiest nations in the world instead of being worrisome for tech development and all. In last I mentioned about India can also work on its strength areas like tourism, cultural diversity and religion. (Rest I'm not able to recall)

GD: PINK

I said in my 1 min chance about how color stereotype is wrong and it was rather related to men in earlier 20th century and then it changed after British era. Then I talked about Me-too movement and how economic survey was presented. In my rest of the GD I made first entry by telling how 2.1 mn unwanted girl child are born in India in 2017 according to Eco-survey and also that's why Sex ratio of 1000:931 can't be only balancing factor for it. In my next entry I talked about that it's more than govt policies and rather it's about the thinking, by saying that will a man accept his wife to get paid more than him and digest this fact without a hiccup in the name of woman empowerment. (GD was smooth.)

PI: 2 Male Panelists(P1 and P2) of around 50-55 and One Female F1 around 58-60(Who came during my intro question)

I entered and wished the two male panelists.P1 said me to have seat.

P1: Akash Tell us some thing about yourself.

Sir I'm in my final year of engineering from ECE at UIT RGPV, Bhopal. I've been working with

the tech society and cultural society of my college for their promotions and event management from past 3 years and also I've co-founded my own society called Srijan@UIT since I was not able to execute my ideas independently in other clubs.

(Female walks in and eat chips and offers to other two male panelists and also ask me to take. I said Thank you mam, I'm fine.)

P1: OK Akash what are your hobbies?

Sir I love to listen Bollywood music and also write and read on Quora whenever I get free time.

P1: Who's the music director of Padmaavat?

Sir Mr. Sanjay Leela Bhansali.

P1: Sure?

Yes Sir. He gives his music in almost every movie he's involved in.

P2: So Akash you're doing your final year of Engg from...? Which college is this?

Sir UIT RGPV earlier it was GEC Bhopal.

P2: So you're in REC?

Yes Sir.(I misheard him)

No Sir, that's different college. NIT Bhopal.

P2: So tell me some thing interesting about Bhopal? Sir Bhopal has more than 13 operational lakes there. **P2: So 13 natural lakes.**

(I heard lakes.) I said yes Sir.

P1: So Akash have you heard some thing about NITI ayog.

Yes Sir it's formed after reconstruction of our planning commission.

P2: So you know who's the chief? Yes Sir. Mr. Amitabh Kant is the CEO. P2: Who's the Chairman?

Sir PM himself.

P2: And Vice Chairman?

Sir it's someone with the First Name Mr. Rajiv. I'm unable to recall surname right now.

P2: So what's function of NITI ayog?

Sir I think they make the policies and steps to be taken by government.(Interrupted in between)

P2: So is it independent body?

Yes Sir. I guess it is.

P2: Ok so we have three pillars Executive, Judiciary and Legislative. Where would you place NITI ayog?

(Waited for around 6 seconds thinking....) Then said Sir Executive.

P2:(murmured something I couldn't hear him)

P1: So XX which is the one question you would like us to remove from the form.

Sir the last one maybe.

P1: What this declaration? I hereby declare that?(With a smile)

No Sir the last one which says for any extra info which you would like to mention in this form.

P1: Why so?

Sir as other questions have covered almost every side of the candidate from personal to professional.

F1(smiling): So you'll give 10 out of 10 for this.

Yes Ma'am apart from the form also because of the peer learning and brand that IIFT has.

P2: So you've filled whole form by yourself? Have you gone through it completely.

Yes Sir. I've filled the form by myself but I have gone through it at the time of filling only.

P1: You've mentioned the Metoo campaign in your global event. Why?

Sir before meetoo we were not able to detect how much big this issue is and what's the scale of this problem. After this movement at least they are now speaking up without a fear and thus it'll not only increase their participation but also the intensity of the problem more seriously. Sir I belong to a small town of M.P. and I have a schoolmate who has put up her status in her fb too. I want to tell you that this step can be very risky for her so called society stigma and norms, but she ignored all of them and spoke against it.

P1: So which is the one entrepreneur whom you admire the most?

Sir I've done one month marketing internship under an IIFT alumni startup called Knappily. He's Mr. Gautham Sethuraman.

P1: Do you know which batch he's from?

Yes Sir. 15 batch. (He's from 15–17 batch so I should have said 17.)

P1: So what do you like about him?

Sir he's very dedicated towards his idea and he just want people to know about the efforts they're putting in single work. That's what I tried during my internship. I pitched their product to various coachings of Bhopal, in different social media platforms and also have engaged in different colleges to give me a chance to tell their students about Knappily.

P1: What's this Knappily?

Sir Knappily stands for Knowledge app Daily. What Knappily does is they pick up the current trends and do the complete analysis of whole issue in 360 degree perspective from why to what to how.

P1: So which is the latest issue you read there?

Sir I'm not so much well versed with their app these days but the last issue which I read was Padmaavat one.

F1(The only question she asked): What's your take on Padmaavat issue? Why this much protests and all happened

Mam Karni Sena considered Padmaavati as their diety. So in the beginning of shooting if movie, the actor playing Khilji Ranveer Singh casually said in one of the interview that I can romance Deepika who is playing Padmaavati in any movie I would be offered. So how can I see my deity whom I worship daily to be romanced with a cruel ruler like Khilji.

P2: So you think it was a marketing tactic?

Yes Sir it was. But even director didn't knew that it'll go to this extent of protest and all.

P1: So you also have any planning for future entrepreneurship?

Sir to be very honest I'll firstly work 2 to 3 years or whatever time it'll take me to understand corporate environment completely and then finally I've an idea to work upon something like an advertising and marketing firm.

P2: Okay Akash so your branch is Electronics. Can you tell me some Indian companies which make semiconductor chips in India.

Sorry Sir (Now this answer is lined up many times :p). Only company I'm aware of is Intel that too isn't Indian.

P1: So Akash can you tell me 3 companies in IB?

Sir any 3?

P1: Consulting ones.

Sir only MNC I'm aware of is TCS. I beg your pardon I'll definitely check it after interview. (Moment I left the room my mind stuck at Big 4. But there's no CTRL+Z after you left a chance)

Ok Akash. Thank you.

Thank you Sir. Thank you Mam.

Results: Not selected.(It's lame to give explanation after this but after reading comments it's because I'm a fresher with less than 98.5 percentile, so if you're a fresher make sure to get more than 98.5.)

12) Interview and WAT Experience 12

Location – Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, Delhi 23rd February 2018, Morning Slot Profile

Xth – 93.10%

XIIth – 90.00%

UG – 66.24%

Electronics and Communication Engineering graduate from Galgotias College of Engineering and Technology, Greater Noida

IIFT Percentile – 99.04

WAT Topic – Leaders who refuse to listen will eventually be surrounded by people who say nothing.

Wrote a generalised article, gave examples of Napoleon and Hitler and how they lost important battles because they refused to listen to their Generals. Gave recent examples of Cyrus Mistry and Vishal Sikka.

GD Topic – Is India becoming a refugee hub?

Each candidate was given 1 minute to speak and after that, the floor was open for discussion. I spoke about how India is already a refugee hub, about Parsi and Beth Israel refugees in medieval India. Also spoke about Tibetan refugees, Pakistani Hindus, Bangladeshi immigrants and most recently Rohingyas. Gave points as to what should be done to restrict the flow of immigrants, about security threats among other things. Entered the GD four times during open discussion. I must add it was one of the most cordial GDs I've ever been a part of.

Interview

There were three panellists, all male. Will address them as P1, P2 and P3

I entered and greeted them all. I stood beside the chair while waiting for permission to be seated.

P1: Please sit.

Me: Thank you, sir.

P1: So, you're Soman. What is the meaning of your name? Me: Sir it means the Lunar God.

P1: Nice. So, Soman, I see here that you graduated in 2017. What have you been doing since then? Because I see you don't have any work experience.

Me: Sir I was reading, writing, completing online modules of the companies I was placed in and simultaneously preparing for CAT and other exams.

P1: Okay so which companies were you placed in and which one did you choose?

Me: I was placed in Infosys, Wipro and Cognizant. I chose Cognizant because it has a no bond culture, and as I wanted to pursue my MBA, it aligned with my needs.

P2: So you were determined to do an MBA? Me(Smiling): Yes sir.

P2: But don't you think work experience would have added to your profile? Why MBA now

and not after work experience?

Me: I definitely agree that work experience gives an advantage but I was interested in a marketing profile. And after speaking to my seniors I realised that for a marketing profile one doesn't need work experience as such, infact firms usually prefer freshers in such cases.

P1: Soman I see you're from Durgapur, West Bengal. Me: Yes sir.

P1: How many years have you lived there?

Me: Never sir, my father was in the Air Force so I've lived in various cities but not West Bengal.

P1: So you must not be knowing much about Durgapur?

Me: Sir I know it was the second planned city in India after Chandigarh. It is a steel township and it has mainly developed because of Durgapur Steel Plant (DSP) under SAIL.

P1: Do you know other steel townships like Durgapur? Me: No sir, I am not aware of any.

P1: So, where have you lived? From your form, I can see you did your schooling from Agra and graduation from Greater Noida.

Me: Sir I was born in Agra, after that Chandigarh, then Nagpur, then again Agra and currently Greater Noida.

P1: So just North and Central India. Me: Yes sir.

P1: What was the major difference that you found in Central and North India?

Me: Sir as a kid the only major difference I could observe was the climate. Agra and Chandigarh were temperate compared to Nagpur which used to be hot almost throughout the year. I remember my school uniform changing during winters in Agra and Chandigarh but it remained same in Nagpur.

Panellists laugh

P1: Soman, suppose you're heading an FMCG firm. How do you plan on introducing a new product in the market? Just give me a basic idea as you wouldn't be knowing marketing terms.

Me: Sir I know the basic marketing concepts. I will start with market research, knowing about people's preferences, existing competition and all. After that buying out shelf spaces in leading stores. Also as this is a digital age, therefore, social media marketing, especially advertisements on YouTube...

cut me off

P1: Fine I get your idea.

P3: Soman you read, so I will be asking you names of authors of three books. If you can name all three of them I will be impressed.

Me: Sure sir.

P3: Turning Points?

Me: Sorry sir but I am not aware of this.

P3: Ignited Minds?

Me: Dr APJ Abdul Kalam.

P3: Do you know any other books that he has written?

Me: I know Wings on Fire is a semi-autobiographical account of his life, other than that I am not sure of the titles.

P3: Transforming Dreams into Actions?

Me: (thought it was APJ Abdul Kalam but refrained from saying as I wasn't sure) I am not aware sir.

P3: That's also by Dr APJ Abdul Kalam.

Me(Smiling): Right sir.

(It turned out all the three books were written by Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam)

P1: What are your expectations from the marketing course that you wish to pursue?

Me: Sir the profiles offered are something that I am most interested in. Mr. SK Roongta is one of the famous alumni of IIFT and he was a marketing major. He transformed SAIL from a loss making PSU to the world's second highest profit making steel firm during his tenure. So I know the pedagogy provided here is good.

P2: What other calls do you have?

Me: MDI and New IIMs.

P2: What are you looking for in the colleges you've mentioned?

Me: Sir I know what I am looking for in IIFT, I saw the syllabus being taught here and liked some of the subjects like International Marketing and Strategy, International Finance, India and World Economics etc. I believe in this globalised world a marketing specialisation with an international perspective and exposure will definitely give me an edge over a regular marketing course and that's why I am preferring IIFT.

P2(Smiling): You seem to have done your groundwork.

Me(confidently): Yes sir.

P2: What adversity do you think you'll face the most while pursuing your MBA?

Me: Sir whatever adversity I face I am sure I will be able to overcome it.

P2: No, no, you're not listening to the question properly. Tell me a specific adversity that you'll face when pursuing your MBA?

Me: Sir I have stage fear. And as I am targeting a marketing profile, I'll have to give regular presentations and interact with clients, something I am not very good at. Though I have controlled it to a great extent by participating in various debate competitions, and I have a certificate from Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs for the same, but the fear still remains. That might cause a hindrance in my journey but I am sure I will be in a much better position after two years than I am right now.

P1: Okay Soman, you can leave. Thank you. Me: Thank you, sir.

13) Interview and WAT Experience 13

Date:

February 20th, 2018 (Morning Slot)

Venue:

IIFT Delhi

Personal Profile:

General | Male | 0-1 Experience (Investment Banking) | Non-Engineer

Academic Profile:

X - 8.6 CGPA | XII - 97.20% | BMS Finance (Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies, University of Delhi) - 72.38%

IIFT 2018 Percentile:

99.74

Writing Skill Assessment -

Flipkart and Snapdeal Merger - A New Dimension in Indian E-Commerce

For GDPI preparation, visit courses.catking.in | 8999118999 | www.catking.in

I did a decent job at the WAT. The catch was that the topic was a prospective scenario and required us to expound on a what-if type of statement. I managed to write close to the ideal limit of 300 words. Idk what made me write, “Ye Snapdeal bik gyi hai, ab iss Snapdeal mei kuch ni bacha”, though.

Group Discussion -

Mirror mirror on the wall, my Instagram is the fairest among all - Social Media versus Real Life

This went pretty well. Not only did I address everyone by their application numbers (instead of ‘my friend’ or ‘my buddy’), I recollected most of their pointers to incorporate my own. Couldn’t add anything valuable to the discussion though, since everything which can be labeled ‘relevant’ was already spoken within the very first five minutes.

Interview -

I was the sixth candidate to be interviewed in my panel. There were two female panelists (P1 and P2) and one male panelist (P3). As I entered the room, we exchanged pleasantries and seated myself.

P1: So Prakash, tell me something about yourself. A: Before I proceed, can I put this file somewhere?

(thought of squeezing my interview file near the interviewer’s desk)

P3: You may put it on the desk behind. A: (shit!) Sure.

(mentioned in the recited, albeit structured format - my schooling, finance specialization at college, internships, academic projects, PORs, prior work experience, concluding highlighting my long-term goal to be an investment actuary)

P2: So what’s this place you’ve worked with?

A: It’s an Investment startup ‘Anplify’ with an N, ma’am.

P2: And what did you work on there?

A: Right. So, I’ll talk of the various broad components on which I worked first. 50% of the work was into investor presentations or the Confederation Information Memorandums (CIMs), about 30% was towards the preparation of narrative reports or research notes, left 20% was into Financial Modeling and other miscellaneous activities. (gulps) We catered to about everyone from startups, corporations, research houses, to high net-worth individuals. We had a targeted focus on US and Europe, but we did catered to a few of the clients in the Australia as well. I’ll talk of a specialized investment bank for which I majorly worked there. We prepared quarterly newsletters and investor reports in technologically niche areas of Insurance Tech, Securities, Data & Analytics, IoT, (stammers) Bank Tech, Financial Management Solutions, etc.

P3: So after completing your MBA, in which area do you wish to work?

A: Sir, Investment Banking only. I have checked IIFT’s placement reports and Goldman Sachs and the likes would be the ones I’ll be aiming for.

P3: So why pursue Actuary then?

A: Good question, Sir. As mentioned earlier, I look forward to being a risk and investment actuary. He is the one who manages the investments, either directly or imparts his advice in mitigating risks in it. He works in the areas of investment management, investment consulting, investment banking, and risk advisory.

(tried explaining how both the qualifications are related; interviewers seem to be unaffected)

P3: (taking an interest) So how do you plan yourself for the next couple of years?

A: Right. So, I have planned my years ahead in a 5–10–15 years framework in my CV form, similar to a model given by Jim Collins. I'll work in IB for a couple of years until I attain my CFA charter, post which I'll go for my MSc in Actuarial Management at Cass Business School, UK. I'll then work towards my Actuarial Fellowship post its completion.

P3: Why MSc in Actuarial? Why not something else?

A: (saw this coming) Sir, the course grants exemptions in a few CT, CA, and ST subjects. CT, CA, and ST stands for Core Technical, Core Application, and Specialist Technical. Since I have already made some progress towards this qualification, this would expedite my progress towards its completion.

P3: (getting extremely curious now) So MBA bhi, CFA bhi, MSc bhi. Matlab teen alag alag

cheezein.. samajh ni aaya. A: (chuckles) But all these are directly related to what I intend to do later in life, Sir.

(I tried explaining how IIFT's International Business-focused MBA could be of some help, but P3 ignores and cuts in)

P3: (stares at me deeply as if he can see through my soul) Why did you choose such a specialized field?

(at this point it did occur to me that the interviewers lacked sufficient clarity regarding this field.. boy was I on cloud nine)

A: Sir, I had decided to pursue Actuarial Sciences from college itself plus had a thing for numbers from the very beginning. The subject is an amalgamation of five subjects of Economics, Mathematics, Finance, Statistics, and Computer Science. I feel that it would suit my interests in the long-term.

(P3 starts rapid-fire questioning)

P3: Do you invest?

A: No, Sir.

P3: Any plans for starting your own business? A: No, Sir.

P3: What does your father do? A: He operates a business..

P3: (cuts in) What kind of business? A: Sir, trading of plastics.

P3: What kind of trading?

A: Sir, he frequently goes to Chennai, orders the products from there, and sells it.

P3: (cuts in) What type of plastics? Products or raw materials? A: Raw materials.

P3: Why not join family business then?

A: Sir, I do not have any interest towards joining the same. Besides, I have an elder brother who already works with my father. As you can see from my CV form, my mother and father are 10th Pass and 12th Pass respectively, plus my brother left his education early, so my family is kind of banking on me towards attainment of my higher education. My interest in service sector also stems from the fact that I am academically motivated.

(P3 looks satisfied)

P3: What is the name of the MSc institute you mentioned? A: Cass Business School, Sir.

P3: Why this institute? Why not any other?

A: There are not too many business schools which provide an MSc degree in a specialized field as Actuarial Science. UK, being the hub of this field, has a few, among which Cass is the most renowned and is the leading one.

P3: Toh bahar hi settle hona matlab?

A: (what the flying fuck!) I haven't really thought of this as of now, but the role that I am looking for isn't much in demand in our country. As of now, actuaries in India are hired primarily in pensions or general insurance segments. So, can't really commit on that.

P3: (pointing towards my forehead) Why have you put this teeka?

A: (shocked&awed) Oh, that. I actually went to a temple before my interview. Plus, I have strong religious inclinations. I think I mentioned this in my CV form too.

P3: (cuts in) What do you think it is symbolic of?

A: Actually, the Panditji put it there. I think it's supposed to be a token of good luck. Not really sure what it's symbolic of, though.

(P3, after pulling off an entire interview by himself, looks towards P1 and P2, making a gesture if they have anything to add)

P1: Why not an MBA in Insurance or Risk Management?

A: (in a modest tone) That's where the role of an Actuary is misunderstood, ma'am. The role of an Actuary isn't limited to Insurance industry. As mentioned earlier, I wish to work in the Investments side of it. Plus, I feel an MBA inclined towards International Business could of major help.

P2: Okay. That'd be all.

A: (helplessly smiling) Anything else you may want to ask?

(Don't emulate this stunt ever. Unless they explicitly ask you, "Do you have any questions for us?", it's better to stay mum and be done with the interview process. 8 days out of 10, interviewers view this as mildly intrusive.)

All: No, that'd be it. You may leave.

I thanked the panel for their valuable time and left the room.

Verdict: Converted

14) Interview and WAT Experience 14

IIFT- 99.63 %ile

Acads- 96/97.2/81 (Final Year, IIT Roorkee) Second last in the panel

P1 , P3 (Female , Middle Aged Professors) and P2 (Aged Male Prof, Kaafi Jovial) Entered:

P1: Tell us about yourself

P2 and P3 still reading the CV form

Me: Briefly told about my branch and where I come from , not much.

P1: This is your best chance, sell yourself

I am blank. Told I won't be able to sell (Stupid), added that most of the things I say would be cliché

P1: Ok tell me chalo one quality

Me: Hard-working

Now onward whole interview was in Hindi

P1: Maximum stretch kitna kara apne aap ko?

Me: Around 13–14 hours each day for a week while working on Btech Project.

P2 who was reading the form till now

P2: Toh project ke alawa aap nahi padte matlab. Matlab aap kam chor hai.

P1 and P3 starts laughing

P2: Acads are good. You should go for some R&D thing. Why are you here?

Told ki did my best in engineering. Couldn't really get into the rhythm. Tried different courses from Eco , Fin. So thoda better grasping laga as compared to engineering.

P2: Basically you are saying ki that to score same number of marks in engineering subject and eco subject, you require less efforts in eco. Toh basically jyada mehnat nahi karne chahte.

Kaafi chill environment ban gya . All are laughing now. I sheepishly smile and I don't defend myself.

P3 then asked about Marginal utility.

Told.

P1 : I have a flat in Panchkula, should I sell it or hold it?

Me: Real Estate Market is not in good shape right now, Hold it.

P1: How can you be so sure?

Me: We also want to sell our house. Not finding good buyers.

P2 then comes in

P2: Ok, tell me will you become a good manager? Me (after thinking for sometime): I don't think so, sir. P2, P1 and P3 starts laughing

P2: Kyu nahi ban sakte, kya cheez rok rhi?

Me: Sir I don't think I have leadership qualities.

P2: kyu?

Narrated one incident during third year when I managed one event in college and how it got fucked up. Now comes the good part.

P2: "Yaar I personally like you, Kaafi plain aur simple ho. Tumhare gharwaalon ne tumhein sikhaya nahi ki kaise manage karte aise sawaal."

Me: Sir I want to get into research. If I don't really get seat here, I am going to go for MA in Eco at DSE

P2: I think you are fit for research. D School kyu jaa rhe ho, idhar aa jao. Aacha yeh sab chodo yeh batao, since you are second last in the panel, Bahar aur students panel ke baare mein kya bol rhe?

Me: Sir, Panel is great but the middle person is trying to trap you in a smooth manner. He first asks your strength and when he realises you are good at it, He very subtly changes the topic. So you have to be very careful with him

All the three panelists start laughing.

P2: Aacha, how much marks we should award you in this round out of 100?

Me (Idiocy ka limit cross kar dia, Confidence ki band bajj gyi thi): Sir, Below average kitna dete?

P2: 45

Me: Sir toh 35 de dijiye.

P2: You underestimated yourself so much. Itna bura bhi nahi gya yaar tumhara interview.

Thank you and Have a nice day.

Extremely nice panel and kaafi chill.

EDIT: VERDICT – REJECTED

15) Interview and WAT Experience 15

Profile- 10th 84, 12th 85 ,grad.81 ,GEM ,36+ month workex. Upto 12th I was in Hindi medium.

Venue:— IIP, mumbai , Date-Feb 2020, morning 9 AM

GD Topic:— 5 trillion economy.

First they gave around 1 min to think and then sequence wise we need to talk for about 30 sec . After that floor is open to everyone. I made 3–4 entries , since there were 18 candidates,it's kind of noise everyone was trying to cut others but the panelists were very intelligent they judging quality in your thoughts.

Some people who were not able to make any entry ,at the end panelists gave chance to summarise the GD.

WAT- Clean water(Easy topic, but some candidate got very difficult to abstract kind of topics as well so don't underestimate)

Wrote in structure — introduction, body and then a conclusion. The main body contains some pointers related to current affairs.

PI

3 panelists (one was professor, one was an associate professor and one is a consultant from industry)

Q1- yaar tmhe to kaafi experience hai, MBA karke kya karoge (he asked this q in complete hindi)?

Quite surprised at that moment bcz they not started with tell me about yourself .but I took a deep breath and gave ans.

Q2–agar tm MBA karoge to tmhara kaam kon karega (Again in hindi)?

Hesitated and a bit confused but gave ans.

Q3–promotion le lo ek seat bach jayegi IIFT ki (again in hindi . One professor was laughing)?

Gave ans but they are not satisfied.

Q4-Tell me what is your responsibilities during your job.?

Explained properly.

Q5-why INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ?

Explained

Q6-what is digital india ?

Explained

Q7–what is AI and how it can impact the economy in future?

Explained and they looked satisfied.

Q8–what is disinvestment (most important question)?

This is the master questions of my entire interview and I played here very beautifully. All were very impressed. “Kaafi prepare karke aaye ho but ek do point wrong the . Soch lo agar kuch kahna ho phir se to “.

But I know that I was correct . Panelists only trying to deviate me . So I told them I am confident and right also.

Q9-What is ERP. And how it helps organizations to make profits?

Explained

Q10–Pune or mumbai me kya difference hai?

Explained

Q11– Do you have any question for us ?

I just asked , is there any area where I need to improve my self . Since this is my first

interview. Total duration— 30 min approx. (Some candidate has done within 7 to 8 min also)
Verdict- Converted

16) Interview and WAT Experience 16

Date and Time: 27th January 2020, Morning Slot: 08:50 am Location: Indian Institute of Packaging, Andheri, Mumbai

Overall Experience: It was my very first B-school interview. I couldn't prepare much because most of my time was spent in filling Pre-Interview Forms of IIMs. The Interview didn't go very well, but the key learnings from this interview paved the way for converting my IIM interviews later during February end and March (Converted IIM A,B,I,L,K and the new IIMs – Totally 14 IIMs). Read on to know my mistakes and key learnings.

Initially WAT was conducted for 30 mins, then GD for 20 mins and then PI

WAT: Social Media and Negative Tendencies

It was a pretty easy topic. WAT went well.

Group Discussion: Iran vs USA, what are its effects in India

GD was conducted for 20 mins for 16 candidates. It was literally like a fish market with everyone trying to pitch in their points. I was able to speak for 3 times. Overall GD was decent, could have done better.

The Interview. Panel consisted of 3 interviewers P1, P2 and P3. All three were very stern and aggressive. P2 grilled me on Economics.

Entered the room and greeted them.

P1: So Karthikeyan, What do you want to do in life? What's your goal?

Me: Sir, in the short term I would explore the opportunities in management field.

P1: Are yaar ye to koi bhi bol sakta he, Have you ever sat down and thought about what you want to do in life?

Me: (Taken aback for a second) Sir, in the long term I would like to be an Entrepreneur, I have experience in project management and operations domain. For becoming an entrepreneur, I need to have a holistic view of the different fields of management, hence I am open to exploring.

{He didn't seem to be satisfied at all, in hindsight while I gave a decent justification but it was a generic answer, hence after introspection, in my further Interviews I chose to say my goal is to become a manager in operations and project management area because I had 31 months experience in the field, it ensured my story is unique and thoroughly justified}

Over to P2:

P2: So did you require managerial skills or technical skills while at work?

Me: I required both, explained with an example from my work.

Over to P3:

P3: A form was to be filled, have you filled it or not?

Me: Yes sir, I have filled it, Handed over the form to them

P2: What's the national/global event you have written in the form which would change the world of business?

Me: Told him about the recent change in corporate tax cuts which helped put 1.45 Lakh crore money in the hands of corporate for investments

P1: Do you feel the 1.45 L crore could have been put to a better use?

Me: Sir, should I tell any alternative forms of policy? (Actually this question I shouldn't have

asked, he was trying to confuse me, hence I should have backed my original answer with examples, instead I fell into the trap) Meanwhile P2 clarifies (He was a PHD Economics prof who starts to grill me)

P2: Let me clarify, why not put the 1.45 L crore in the hands of the common people?

Me: Sir, this will enable corporates to invest and hence generate more demand.

P2: To increase demand, give money in the hands of the people know why give it to corporates?

Me: (I was cursing myself inside for speaking about this topic involving economics and I became nervous as well) I

repeated the points in a detailed way, couldn't think of any other justification. {In the hindsight, I should have not become nervous and should have thought of other reasons, could have asked for some time to think, instead I started to repeat the points}

P2: (Was very stern) So what, just give money to people.

Me: Sir, we already have MGNREGA schemes for that.

Meanwhile P1 says, Sir chod do isko he is a Mechanical Engineer. He also says, ye to tensed bhi ho gaya.

P2: Then he started to advise me, See corporates will invest, then they will generate employment and then the employees will create demand. Understand that whenever you are countered you have defend it using proper justification. Its an important management lesson.

Me: (Thinking if I am in an interview or in a management classroom) I nodded my head and said Thank you.

P3: Have you received any other calls?

Me: Yes sir, IIM A,B,I,L,K

P1: What if you convert IIM-A and IIFT?

Me: Sir I haven't decided on that yet, but if I have to make a choice now it would be IIM-A

P1: Okay That's fine

P3: Thank you Karthik, you may sign and leave **Me:** Signed the paper, thanked them and left

Verdict: Not selected

Few more questions were asked which I am unable to recollect.

As I said before, this interview was a learning curve for me which helped fine tune the rest of my Interview preparation. Hope the key learnings I highlighted in brackets would be useful to the readers.

P.S. Before going to the interview I asked the other candidates in my panel, they said panel was chill, but it was stressful hence I was totally caught off guard. So, in the other interviews I made it a point not to ask too much about the panel, it was better to have no expectations.

17) Interview and WAT Experience 17

Interview Experience, 19th Feb, Afternoon slot.

Venue- IIFT Kolkata Campus

WAT- Jobless Growth in India : Reason for a brewing social unrest

(Pathetic at writing but included data, facts and figures, like 6th economy, expected GDP 7.5% but huge unemployment wrote about mob lynching, strikes, protests (Karni Sena etc.), how some political and communal parties start these activities but is carried on by mostly unemployed people that too young, what Govt. should do.)

Ok type satisfaction.

GD- Music or Sports or Wine : A way for perceived peacefulness.

Great GD. Best thing was that the point which I pitched in was accepted by everyone and then it went on to be the conclusion too. Added recent examples and events from all the three segments around the world. Most people were not supporting or referring to wine but I went on to say it's benefits, culture wise importance.

Satisfied with the GD.

PI- 3 Males (M1, M2, M3). Me.

M3- So working in TCS, so tell me what work you have done?

Me- Started with my role and my work but was interrupted on the sentence 'Provided solutions to the Customer'.

M3- Tell me about it, explain it.

Me- Which one Sir?

M3- The last one.

Me- Told them that as am working for UK client and as GDPR is being implemented in UK so worked with a team to provide solution so that the applications and the organization should be compliant with GDPR. Told them about the fine for non- compliance and how important User consent is and little bit more about GDPR.

All looked satisfied.

M1- So as you are a CSE, so tell me what is Cache?

Me- Told.

M1- From today's process within the campus, tell me which process you felt like is similar to how Cache works.

Me- Told. (Before being interviewed, I was called from the sitting hall, was asked to sit and wait outside before meeting the interview panel, so that's how I believe Cache works with data.)

M1- Perfect. No questions from my side. M2- What are your hobbies?

Me- Teaching, Watching and following football, Travelling new places.

M2- So what have you done for your hobbies ? You said you like teaching so did you teach anyone?

Me- Told them why I started it, why I like it and also taught in NGO to reach out to children for the purpose of teaching.

M2- Which age group you used to teach and why so?

Me- Told.

M3- So you want to be a Business educator?

Me- Told them and concluded by explaining why teaching is my personal choice and MBA a professional one. Which I would prefer on weekends rather than on weekdays.

M3- So you just want a hike in your salary?

Me- Told why MBA. Told them that hike in salary can be achieved by switching but hike in knowledge, skills network etc can be achieved by an MBA. How my manager and I are different when it comes to management.

M3- So the task of a manager is to just generate the revenue?

Me- Told them how it's just one of the aspect and what are the varied roles and task of a manager.

M3- So which one you will prefer Revenue or Profit maximization. Gave me a scenario where Revenue is increasing but as Cost is high so profit remains same on the other hand, Revenue is low Cost is low so Profit is high. So what I being a manager will choose?

Me- Told.

M3- (Looks satisfied with my view) Okay, no questions from my side now. Anyone else?

M1- Mention one economic or latest happening on which you are having keen interest one?

Me- Asked for re-clarification and was explained by them. In my CV form I wrote about e-commerce FDI bill but speaking on the same would show that I am telling a mugged up topic so instead told about the rise of Chinese power and growth- OBOR, String Of Pearls, Polar Road, Greenland issue, Mercantile Policy, how China wants to displace the US Dollar from the most traded currency, Debt Trap policy and how Trade war is just one aspect of this tension between two powers, US and China.

M3- So what is tariff?

Me- Told about the charges on import and export (Export was a slip of tongue in the flow, Shit.)

M3- Exports too?

Me- No Sir, being US if I am implying tariff then it will be on US imports or we can say Chinese exports.

M3- Done.

All- Thank You.

Me- Wished them.

Verdict- Converted IIFT K.

18) Interview and WAT Experience 18

MBA IB Interview 2019–21

Venue: Indian Institute of Packaging - Afternoon slot Time: 2 PM

IIFT Percentile - 97.98

WAT: Failures - stepping stones or stumbling blocks.

GD: are US's days of dominance numbered?

GD went well, everyone spoke calmly but there was no conclusion that was reached. I went for yes, they are numbered and explained China's candidature for the same explaining the modern silk route they're building around South East Asia.

Interview:

2 Males - one in 40's (M1) and other in 50's (M 2). 1 Female (F) - early 30's

M2- so aman, tell me something about yourself

Me- spoke about my graduation in finance and at the same time jobs in marketing to decide at an early age what I want to do by the time I graduate. Selected marketing and took up a job at Saatchi. He stopped me here.

M2 - what was your role at Saatchi and Saatchi?

Me - Explained in detail my roles

M2- You've named everything. Is there something you didn't do?

Me - Sir, I didn't get an opportunity to work in the mainline team.

M1- how much does the sandwich outside kc college cost? (Since I have done my graduation from KC)

Me - 40-55 rs depending on which sandwich you take sir.

M1 - but you graduated 3 years back. Are these rates from then or recent rates

Me - sir, the last time I visited the stall was a year back and these were the rates then.

M1 - so you haven't been there since then?

Me - No sir.

(remember this conversation)

M2 - what brands did you handle at Saatchi?

Me - told.

M2 - which were your favourite brands and why?

Me - told.

M2 - *Asked me for the names of the brand managers on the client side* M2 - who are the competitors of Saatchi?

Me - watconsult, webchutney, dentsu, grey worldwide, ulka group

M2 - isn't mccaan erickson a competitor too?

Me - sir it is. If we go to see like that there are many others like havas worldwide, Lowe lintas, but it'll take a while for me to name all of them.

M2 - *looking at my CV* you

've done so many things. Why do you want to do an MBA. We think you'll do better without wasting 2 years.

Me - spoke about how big an opportunity it would be to not just learn from the best faculty but also be around 220 bright minds for the next 2 years.

M2 - But still all of this seems a lot. How do we believe you've done all of this.

Me - sir I've carried certificates along with me and if a certificate is missing, I have it all on mail that I can present right now.

M2 - I am done, is there anything you want to ask him? *looking at M1*

M1 - what's the tagline of Aashirwaad atta? (it's one of the brands I handled)

Me - I don't know sir, I am sorry.

M1 - why is west bengal called west bengal?

Me - sir, because before Bangladesh got freedom, it was called east Pakistan and the other side was called west bengal.

M1 - then why is punjab in India not called East Punjab?

Me - sir, its probably because India and Pakistan both want to have a claim on original punjab. If Pakistan names its punjab west punjab then India might follow suit.

M2 - why is your salary at Saatchi so low? Is it the industry standards?

Me - sir the salary might seem low, but the jump I'd got from my previous job was 40%. So when we look at it from a percentage perspective, it's pretty decent.

M2 - Can you name some southern states?

Me - Named them.

M2 - But Andhra Pradesh doesn't exist anymore you know that right?

Me - sir, the state's just been divided into Telangana and AP. It still exists though.

M2 - What role do you want when you sit in placements?

Me - Sir marketing in a food related FMCG company. The likes of ITC and PepsiCo excite me the most.

M2 - what if you get a role in sales?

Me - Sir, I'd happily take it since sales is a subset of marketing. The entire marketing umbrella interests me. I also like public speaking. So that would also help me in sales.

Now the mam (F) steps in.

F- if we were to ask you something in finance, what would you select? *since I did my graduation in finance*

Me - Ma'am, right after graduation I decided that I would not want to major in finance since that was not my area of interest. I'd not practiced concepts after passing out, just read headlines in the newspapers to stay updated on things happening around me. But if you insist, I'd say I'll be comfortable with answering questions from macro economics.

F- what is india's fiscal deficit?

Me - 3.4

F - was that the planned fiscal deficit?

Me - No ma'am, the planned fiscal deficit was 3.3. But due to spendings in the Ayushman Bharat scheme, they had to increase it to 3.4.

F - What is the relation between fiscal deficit and inflation.?

Me - they are directly proportional. More the govt spending, more money is circulating in the economy, higher the inflation.

F - who is the commerce minister of India

Me - Suresh Prabhu.

Here's where the sandwich conversation comes back in

F - so the sandwich rates, you say, are the same since you passed out 3 years ago till now. Didn't he undergo inflation?

Me - ma'am, I feel that when the sandwich guy increases his prices he keeps a considerable buffer for a couple of years. This is because he is serving to college kids who survive on pocket money. If he changes his prices often, he will lose the students to their college canteens who serve really cheap food and a larger variety. The sandwich stall runs on brand name, but he cannot tinker with it a lot since college students are very price conscious. He might lose his customer base if he increases prices too often.

F - who gains money during a farm loan waiver?

Me - In the short run, farmers, but in the long run, nobody. This is because, farmers get the money which they have lost to failed crops. So they aren't really making money, but just getting their cost price back. The banks get paid what they had lent. The govt is the one paying. None of the parties involved make money here.

M2 - if you're so inclined towards public speaking, why don't you become a politician?

Me - sir, everything has a certain time to do it. Right now I want to learn before I change things. This is my time to study and gain as much knowledge as I can. If and when the situation demands, later in life, I can take up politics. But I am very sure about my next 15 years and what I want to do. Politics is not in my plans as of now. And just like Mrs. Meera Sanyal got her degree from Harvard and entered politics later in life, I can do that too.

M2 - Thank you, Aman. We are done. Me - Thank you. Have a great evening. Result: Converted Delhi

19) Interview and WAT Experience 19

Date: 13th February, 2019.

Place: **Hotel Golconda, Hyderabad.**

Time: **Morning slot**

10th/12th/B.Tech: **88/94/87**

Work Ex : **Assistant Engineer (18 months)**

IIFT 2018 percentile: **(98.90 percentile)**

WAT : There were 11 people in my group. The topic for WAT was "**Electric Cars : Jobs VS Pollution**". 20 minutes to think and write. Two sides of an A4 sheet. Word Limit was 300 words (Invigilator stressed this sentence).

After WAT, **GD Process began**. The topic for GD was "**Should Metropolitan Cities be depopulated?**" Everyone was given a minute or two for their opening statements and then the discussion began. The whole process lasted for about 30 minutes.

Thereafter, Interviews began. I was 5th in my panel. There were a total of three persons in the panel, one female(p1), two male(p2, p3).

P1: Kaveti Hruday Kiran! What a weird name?

I just gave a smile, after this P1 was just observing me.

P2: tell me about yourself?

Gave a well prepared answer. P2 interrupted in between and asked me to speak louder. P1 also interrupted in between and asked me about football(as I played nationals). Overall I felt satisfied with my answer as they let me finish my prepared answer.

P2: Why did you take up civil engineering?

Gave a honest answer. Sir I grew up watching my dad excell at his work as a civil engineer. That kind of inspired me to take up civil engineering.

P2: Few question regarding my fathers occupation

Told them.

P3: Tell me about IL & FS Fiasco ?

Told them about how company defaulted on a few short term payments and currently sitting on INR 90000 cr bad loans. Also talked about how major institutions like sbi and lic got massive exposure to the company as they both have combined stake of 30 % in the company. Talked about how poor corporate governance and asset liability mismatch put company in the mess.

P3: what do you mean by poor corporate governance?

Told them about how taking decisions in the intrests of shareholders will benefit the company which did not happen in the case of IL & FS. As the company took short term debt for financing long term projects. (P3 looked not satisfied with the answer)

P3: Asked me about assets and liability?

Told. (Again P3 looked not satisfied)

P3: So, what do you think the way forward for the company?

Sir Govt has removed the old board members and appointed new board with Mr Uday kotak as chairman, who is trying his level best to steady the ship. Company is selling most of the projects in order to meet its obligations.

P2: I think we are done. Looking at other panelists.

Thanked them and left.

Overall it was a very short interview because they did not ask me any questions regarding my work experience and why MBA?

Converted IIFT K

20) Interview and WAT Experience 20

With the **IIFT MBA(IB) 2020–22** results being rolled out this weekend, I feel this is the right time to present my **IIFT interview** experience, which was conducted shortly after the **IIFT 2019** entrance exam.

Before I begin, I would like to state that IIFT has one of the most unique second rounds of selection amongst the top B- schools of India. Once you clear the written exam you have to go through a WAT (written ability test), a GD (Group discussion), and a PI (personal interview), in order to get admitted to this prestigious b-school.

BACKGROUND :

GEM

X - 94.67 %

XII - 94.80 %

Graduation - 90.6 % (Btech in Mechanical engineering, State govt. college)

IIFT percentile: 95 %ile (141 marks out of 300) **Work experience:** 1 month (as per the IIFT form) **INTERVIEW DAY:**

Venue: Hotel Levana, Lucknow.

Slot: Forenoon

Just after the attendance and document verification, all the candidates were divided into two batches of eighteen candidates each. We were then taken to the respective rooms for WAT and GD.

WAT topic - Is life necessarily black or white? (20 min. window)

GD topic - Workforce diversity is a fad or necessity? (40 min. window)

PERSONAL INTERVIEW:

I was the second person to be interviewed in my batch. There were three panelists in the interview room: one lady professor (let's say P1) and two male professors (let's say P2 and P3). All of them were sitting in the same manner from left to right. We were supposed to enter the room on hearing a bell. As I entered the room, I wished all the panelists and walked up to the interviewee's chair, and waited for the interviewers to ask me to sit down.

All three panelists: Good morning Nitesh, please have a seat.

Me - Thank you, ma'am, thank you, sirs!

P2 - You thanked ma'am first, any specific reason for that?

Me(smiling) - No sir, there's no specific reason, I just followed the order in which you were sitting left to right!

P2 - Okay, no issues. Please tell us something about yourself.

Me - Had just started giving the standard answer to this universal question, but was interrupted by P3 in between.

P3 - Can you tell the *sandhi-vichhed* of your name?

Me - Yes sir! Do I have to tell it in Hindi?

P3 - Yes, yes; you can tell in Hindi.

Me - Sir, its *Neeti* + *Eesh*, and *Neeti* = policies while *Eesh* = God/master. So, the word Nitesh means *Master of policies*.

P3 - Okay, but can you tell me the difference between the meaning of Nitiesh and your name?

Me - Sir I'm not quite sure, but both the names have the same meaning, the slight difference between them is due to the *Tatsam-Tadbhav* thing Hindi.

P3 - Fair enough, now you may continue with your introduction!

Me - Sure sir!! (and I continued with my introduction, then P2 asked me a question which was related to my introduction.)

P2 - You mentioned about some books you've authored, what are those about?

Me - Sir one of them is a novel based on the genre - philosophical fiction, one is a collection of poems and one of them is a collection of short stories.

P3 - I see. Can you name some of the awards which are given in the field of literature, (apart from the Nobel prize in Literature)?

Me - Sure sir! Some of the famous awards in this field are the - Man Booker prize, Pulitzer prize, Gnanpith Samman, Nine dots prize, etc.

P3 - Okay, I always had a query about this *Man* in the Booker prize, is this prize only given to men? Do you have any idea about it?

Me - No sir, the *Man* in the *Man Booker prize* is actually an investing company. Hence, the name of the prize.

P3 - Can you name some Indian authors who have been awarded the Man Booker prize? Also, mention the year, if you remember.

Me - Yes sir, Arundhati Roy for God of small things in 1997, and Kiran Desai for The Inheritance of Loss in 2006.

P3 - Okay, can you name some authors from Uttar Pradesh?

Me - Sir, Kaifi Azmi was a poet, he was from Azamgarh, and the other name, perhaps the pen name which I can recall is that of Nirala (his real name was Govind Prasad if I am not wrong)!

P3 - Fair enough. Ma'am do you have any questions? (turning towards P1)

P1 - (Reading the CV form)... I see you have written some research papers...Can you enlist their research fields?

Me - Ma'am one of them was from the field of aeronautical engineering, one from the field of artificial engineering, and one from the field of automobile engineering.

P1 - Okay, suppose I'm an investor. Give me two reasons for and two reasons against investing in SpaceX.

Me - Ma'am the two reasons against this notion of investing should be -
The private corporations (by and large) in this particular field have a habit of overpromising and under-delivering.

Also, there have been multiple failed launches of the different flight missions of this company, which can very well lead to huge losses to the investors.

And two reasons in favor of this notion of investing should be -

The reusable launch pads used by the company are a very sustainable option (gave the reference of a recent flight mission that took off from the Atlantic ocean).

Also, till the time NASA is there in this market, it will keep regulating the market, it won't turn into a monopolistic market, and there will be a good amount of competition, which is good for the investor at least!

P1 - Okay, can you name some other competitor of SpaceX? Anything you can associate with Russia?

Me - Sorry ma'am, I cannot recall the name of that company, but I do know that they had sent a space robot named FEDOR into the international space station, in the month of July last year.

P2 - (suddenly taking the charge from P1) How do you manage to do so many things? What is the driving force behind all these actions?

Me - Sir, I have always focussed on achieving maximum efficiency and productivity, nothing

more than that.

P2 - (smiling) Nice choice of words. Okay, even though you are not from a finance/economics background, can you tell me what is the current economic condition of our country?

Me - Sir the current economic condition of the country can be tagged as Stagflation!

P2 - What is it? Does it have anything to do with a recession

Me - Sir, Stagflation is the situation when the inflation rate is high and growth is low. The next stage after this is a recession.

P2 - Are you sure?

Me - Yes sir, I am quite confident about it.

P2 - Okay, can you tell me the reasons behind this economic slowdown?

Me - Sir, one of the reasons behind this economic slowdown is the slump in the automobile sector which was due to the implementation of manufacturing engines as per the BS-VI norms, also sir the supply chain of the automobile industry is such that it cannot handle such abrupt changes. This slump directly affected the steel industry which is one of the eight core industries, and thus contributed negatively to the economic condition.

P2 - But there are many states who don't have much automobile production or say steel production, why are they also contributing or getting affected because of this slowdown?

Me - Sir, this slump in the automobile sector is not the sole reason behind the slowdown, it is one of the reasons behind it!

P2 - Okay, I see...one of the reasons! (nodding his head.... Then turned towards P3 and asked him to lead the interview)

P3 - You have good academics, you were born and brought up in Lucknow, and also have been working in the same city. Why is it so? Any special affection for this city?

Me - No sir, the reason behind this is a miscalculation that happened on my part! I was quite confident of getting into a good b school last year (and hence did not sit for placements, as the processes required some good amount of time to be invested), but could not and was waitlisted. So the companies related to my specialization which came on campus, had wrapped up their processes by then, and the only option left to me was to go for off-campus placements, and I chose the option which was best available to me, keeping in mind the fact that I'd be writing the entrance exams again.

P3 - Fair enough... Fair enough!

All three panelists: I think we are done now, all the best!

Me - Thank you, ma'am, thank you, sirs.

VERDICT: Converted Kolkata campus in the first list.

P.S - Nobody except a few near and dear ones, ever thought that I could convert IIFT at such low/borderline percentile. I hope this interview experience will bolster the positive feelings of the candidates who are quite skeptical of their conversion incase of touch and go scenario. Always remember if you have a call, you have all the realistic chances of converting your bschool call and this is true for almost all the bschools of the world.

21) Interview and WAT Experience 21

Venue: Hotel Levana, Lucknow.

WAT topic: China's 'One Road, One Belt' policy and its effect on India.

I had no idea about this policy so I wrote as generic as possible. I tried my best not to make any stupid assumptions so as to make my essay a laughter ride for the evaluator. I wrote about India facing greater competition in terms of market, China unveiling its rather

aggressive trade policy and India's urgency to buckle up. A little more about all of China's trade coming under a single mammoth channel of trade. Phew!

GD topic was : Gender insensitivity is the most misunderstood concept in India.

Everyone was given around a minute to speak in the beginning and then the GD lasted for 12-15 minutes.

I was lucky that in the first 1 minute individual slots provided to people before me, no one defined the word 'gender'. People kept talking about Male/Female. So when the ball came to my court, I gave it a fresh start. Here are my words, exactly these:

'With my city Lucknow proudly holding the second 'Queer Pride Parade' yesterday on the 11th of February (well, this is why a little knowledge never hurts), I'd like to draw everyone's attention to what the word gender exactly means.

It's not just limited to Male or Female. There is the LGBTQ community that deserves the equal amount of recognition. Even IRCTC gives the option of Transgender while booking a ticket now, so I think we need to expand our horizon here.'

Well, as smooth as it might sound, the actual group discussion was a crass machli-mandi. I tried talking about the Treadue 'Humankind' comment, in order to speak about how if something is pressed to a extent so large, it becomes laughable. We talked about the Economic Survey 2017-18 being pink, meta preference for sons etc.

A friend of mine later told me that I rolled my eyes in between this hullabaloo and the panelist saw me and scribbled something. That really gave me a hole in my stomach. Now coming on to the interview. The same two panelists who were evaluating us in the GD (One middle aged male, let's say professor M1 and one lady professor F1) were present. In addition one more senior professor, let's call him M2 was also there. He acted more like an observer and didn't ask any questions.

For some strange reason, M1 laughed at me (read hysterically) at every answer that I gave. The moment I entered.

M1: Where will I get the best Roghan Gosht in Lucknow?

(Look at my misery. I'm a Non-Vegetarian who doesn't eat Non Veg from any place outside except for Tunday Kebabi and BBQ. I don't even eat chicken from KFC. I had no idea of the Non-Veg menu of even Dastarkhwan!)

Dastarkhwan Sir. It's very close to this Hotel.

M1: Arrre nahi! I don't like Dastarkhwan. Tell me some other place.

Umm, Sir I think you should try Tunday if you're interested in Non Veg. You won't get Roghan Gosht but they have great Kebabs.

M1: No tell me the best place for Roghan Gosht, not Kebabs.

Sir I think Open Air Restaurant in Gomtinagar. It also has a branch nearby in Hazratganj.

M1: You think a lot. You tell me the best place as per you. Don't think!

Sir Open Air Restaurant. You wouldn't be disappointed.

M1: Why not your home?

(Facepalm! I should've said that. He wanted me to say that) Sir you are certainly most welcome!

M1: So Fatima Firdous. This is your surname? Firdous? Father's Sirname is Rizvi. How come! Sir my actual Sirname is Rizvi. I don't have it on my marksheets.

M1: I see your 10th and 12th percentage is great. But B.Tech percentage has dipped. Why so?

Sir the university is not very gracious in giving marks.

M1: (Looking like I've had a faux pas) Whaaaat?

Sir I mean they have a strict marking policy so percentages do not go very high.

M1: Oh, so you've done B.Tech from IT. What's the difference between Information and Data?

Sir information is something which holds some value, it's of use. Data is a collection of facts and figures. Like the number of pebbles lying on the road outside will be data until it becomes important.

M1: (laughed and laughed.) Well, this is something I've never heard in my last__years of teaching (He said something like this. I don't remember but I was like 'God! Was I so wrong!')

M1: So this is your name. Is it information or data?

If it's of some purpose to you then it's information, otherwise plain data.

M1: You know how information is transferred? How is voice transferred on mobile network? Sir in the form of waves. Analog and digital signals.

M1: Draw it.

I drew the representation.

M1: Is there a way of transferring signals in analog only? Or without converting to digital? (Laugh as much as you want but what came to my mind was the movie Funtoosh and the prehistoric cup with thread arrangement of talking so I told about it)

Sir we can take paper cups and pin holes in them and add a thread. That way the signal will get transferred but the range will be less and also there'll be interference.

M1: Do you know about the Telegram?

Umm, No Sir

M1: Well I guess you must have been around 15 when it was done away with. F1: No she must have been even younger.

(Turns out I was not!)

M1: Acha leave that, do you know about 4G?

Told a little about it.

M1: What's the main difference between 2G, 3G, 4G?

Sir the major difference is the speed at which data can be transferred on the channel. The different names classify different generations of development in speed.

M1: No, where exactly does the difference come from, technically?

I think from the difference in the allocated bandwidth sir. I'm not sure. F1 has been examining my poems and paintings all this while.

She shows this painting and asks me about it:

F1: This is a rather impressive piece of art. What does this signify to you?

Maam it signifies perspective. You turn a page and the birds are free and you put it back they're caged.

F1: Why is globe incomplete? What's the meaning of this?

Umm, it just looked good like that. Besides this painting signifies my wish to travel more.

F1: What do these quotes signify?

Maam a number of writings are my way of giving voice to my low and high moments in life. I come from a conservative family...

M1, instantly interrupting

Your get up doesn't suggest so!

Sir it's more than the dressing. It goes deeper into the thoughts and actions.

I'm thankful for everything that I have and never can I say that I've been through the worst.

But I've had my own small set of struggles to deal with. Like when I was in my class 12th, I

was selected for Jenesys, a 10 day students exchange program between India and Japan funded by the HRD Ministry, but I couldn't be a part of it because my parents were not sure about sending me for an overseas stay. But my parents have come to terms with the fact that I've missed upon opportunities in the past and are a lot more supportive now.

F1: But even if my daughter had been selected, I wouldn't have sent her due to my security concerns. Does that make me conservative?

Maam the main reason was that the 10 days of the program were syncing with the 10 important dates of a religious month in the year 2013. And I have no regrets, I completely understand the underlying fears of safety with mothers.

F1: So what economic newspapers do you read?

Maam economic articles and editorials in TOI and The Hindu.

(Now comes the part that literally dug my grave and I happily went and laid down there i.e. I chose to talk about Crypto Currencies and couldn't defend my stand well)

F1: So which economic news have you been following? Maam I've been following the debate around cryptocurrency. **F1: What's your take on it?**

I think it's a revolutionary idea, almost \$779 billion are invested in Crypto Currency in any form so whether it falls or survives, it'll lead to an impact. But I think it is a great channel for businesses to enter into the market, specially for the third world countries.

F1: What did Mr Arun Jaitly declare about it in the recent Budget Session? Do you think in the Indian landscape, a phenomenon such a crypto can survive ?

Maam crypto currency is not a legal tender as declared in the session by the Finance Minister. Nevertheless, we have so many people in India without an access to a bank account, all they need to get into a transaction is internet connection and a smartphone. In fact as per World Bank, 2 billion people in the world don't have an access to a bank account. So it can be useful in remote locations, specially in the east.

M1: Tell me what is the stand of the world on cryptocurrencies?

In India the government has not yet taken a solid stand. A number of countries have supported it like Canada, but some have outrightly banned it.

M1: Oh, tell me 10 countries which have banned it?

Sir China has boldly banned it. Ecuador has banned it. Sir I can't recollect more names.

F1: Do you really think people in India who aren't well versed with using technology can handle a concept as alien as cryptocurrency?

Maam it's difficult but I think not impossible. I do think it's a ray of hope for....

M1: (In a mocking tone) My dear two people have committed suicide in the past week due to crypto falling prices and you call it a ray of hope!! Besides it's not legal tender.

Sir I completely agree to what you're saying but even gold is not legal tender. I believe if it's understood better than just making fast money it can be put to good use.

F1: But whatever the Government has so far mentioned about these currencies, isn't it for the benefit of the citizens. It has issued warnings against cryptocurrencies and you're saying it's good. Justify that.

I agree the government does look towards the interest of the people and advises them like a responsible adviser but using cryptocurrencies is not completely going against the government because it hasn't banned it yet.

M1: Okay so tell me have you ever heard the name of G Subramania Iyer?

No Sir.

M1: (Laughing) And you said you read the Hindu!

(For those who don't know, including me at that time, G. Subramania Iyer was the founder

of The Hindu)

Okay Thankyou XX, you can leave! Thankyou Sir.

VERDICT: IIFT Kolkata (62)



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CATKing IIM WAT PI Schedule 2021-22

DAY	TOPIC	TIME
Monday	Marketing Mondays	10 to 11 pm
Tuesday	Current Affair Industry Insights (GD/WAT)	10 to 11 pm
Wednesday	How to Crack Interviews	10 to 11 pm
Thursday	How to Crack Case Study/SOP	10 to 11 pm
Friday	Finance Fridays	10 to 11 pm
Saturday	Personal Interview Must Do Questions	10 to 11 pm
Sunday	Concept Builders: GD/WAT	10 to 11 pm

Note: This schedule will be followed every week till March. Some variations may be there as per the B-School interview schedule Students will be informed about it in due course.

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