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Congrats for IIM Call.

How to use this workbook!

This is a consolidation of 33 IIM Ahemdabad , WAT PI Experiences. These are consolidated from various online sources.
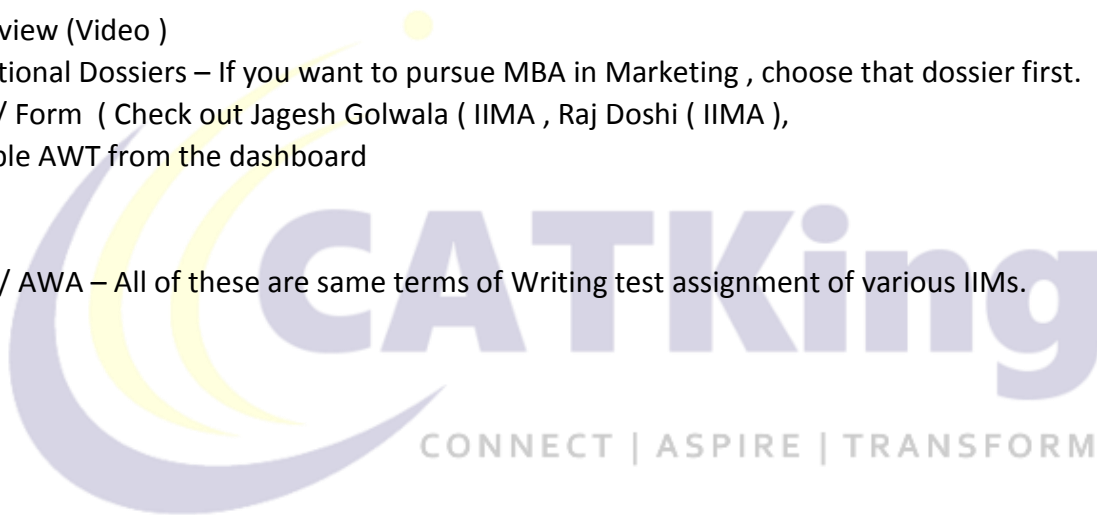
IIM WAT* PI happens in Bangalore / Delhi / KolKata / Hyderabad / Mumbai.

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 dashboard (if you don't have the acess to the dashboard get it here ..

1. Interview (Video)
2. Functional Dossiers – If you want to pursue MBA in Marketing , choose that dossier first.
3. SOP / Form (Check out Jagesh Golwala (IIMA , Raj Doshi (IIMA),
4. Sample AWT from the dashboard
5.

WAT / AWT / AWA – All of these are same terms of Writing test assignment of various IIMs.

Disclaimer – This is just a repository of the past interview experiences , if a candidate was rejected

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Interview and WAT Experience – 1

<u>Venue -</u>

Indian Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi
10th February, 2018

Candidate Profile -
X-94.43(Aggregate)
XII-93.60(Aggregate)
UG-7.04(As per CAT Application), Engineering Physics-IIT Guwahati
CAT-99.98%ile
Fresher

AWT Assessment – 1
Technology impacts how children think and feel. They tend to think superficially and lose creativity. The ones who spend too much time online tend to lose focus. So they should be kept away from technology till they are 12 years old. We had to take stand for or against it and explain.

20 minutes and 1 lined page on the other side of the questionnaire to answer the following 4 questions.

Identify the author's claim(s).
What is the reasoning behind them?
Whether the reasoning is weak or strong?
Justify your stand.
It was well coordinated by P1, who was on the interview panel. It was informed that the interviews would be of 20–25 minutes duration. Meanwhile you could get your documents verified.

Personal Interview Experience 1
2 panelists, **Panelist 1** (Prof. Arindam Banerjee) and **Panelist 2** (Prof. Dhiman Bhadra). As I enter P1 is the only one present as P2 is leaving the room. I stand near the seat to wait for the permission to be seated.

Panelist 1: Sit down, please, Eshan.
Me: Thank you, Sir.

Panelist 1: (Scrolling through his tablet): So Eshan I see that you're from Jhansi, you study in Guwahati but I'm seeing you here in Delhi. Why not Calcutta?
Me: Sir, I'm just more familiar with this place as I've been here many times. Also, on a personal note, I'll be meeting my sister who's leaving for NZ come Sunday.

Panelist 1: Okay. So tell me about all that you've done in the past 4 years in IIT Guwahati?
(Thinking this is the perfect opportunity to pitch in my extra curricular and make up for the fact that my application form was blank in that section-because they'd asked for ONLY State/National/International events. I'd been pretty stressed about this fact)
Me: Sir, I've participated in numerous activities during my stay holding several key Positions of Responsibilities. I was the Undergraduate Senator in Student's Gymkhana, Internship Secretary in Placement Cell, Student's Mentor for which I

was even awarded the best mentor award, Literary Secretary of my hostel and also the City Representative of Technothlon-an exam that the student body of IIT Guwahati conducts…

Panelist 1 : (Interrupts): Eshan have you taken any prior coaching or professional training for this interview?
(Seems like I'm doing a pretty good job speaking confidently. That's why he's impressed. Couldn't be more wrong).

Candidate - (energetically): No Sir, I prepared all by myself. Self-study. *Almost grinned*

Panelist 1 -(in a reprimanding tone): Okay Eshan, even though this is not my job to counsel you and I'm here to just judge you in interview but I'll give you an advice which you should keep with you for the rest of your interviews. You never ever start telling about your college life with extra-curriculars. There's a reason they're termed 'extra'. Now begin all over again (in a loud angry tone).

Candidate : (smiling and totally calm): Thank you, Sir, for the feedback. I'll surely keep that in mind(indifferent). Told how I didn't really study for the first two years but found my way back in last 3 sems as apparent from my scores(My first 4 sem aggregate is 6.51 and next 3 sems is 8.17).

Panelist 1 - (interrupts): Whenever I talk to you IIT guys, you all are like, "Sir I didn't study much". Why? What's the problem? Seems like I'm talking to all the wrong people.

Candidate : (smiling): No, Sir, they're certainly the right people. They've just gone through a wrong time maybe. Even I realised after 2 years that I am not being the student I'm supposed to be and not doing justice to what I came to do here.

Panelist 1: Why, what happened after 2 years? What realisation? Did you somehow sleep one night and woke up next morning metamorphosed to just score high grades?
Candidate: Sir, it wasn't an overnight thing. It had been bugging me for a long time and eventually I got depressed. Depressed over my pathetic state. That motivated me to get back on track.

Meanwhile **Panelist 2** enters. Doesn't talk much, just keeps observing me.

P1: So what all did you study in Physics?
Me: Nuclear Physics, Cosmology, Human Resource Management(running out of subjects to name, even though I was prepared with 10!) and almost any subject from the last 3 sems because I was really sincere during this phase. Not much comfortable with first 2 years(said this because couldn't recollect subjects' name).

P1: What does Cosmology mean?
Me: The study of space and objects in it.

P1: Okay Eshan. I'm a common man. I don't know anything about Cosmology nor am I interested in it. But I want to know something from the subject that would seem intriguing to people if I tell them. What is it?
Me: Sir, it has to be General Theory of Relativity or the Big Bang Model.

P1: Relativity sounds fascinating. Tell me more.
Me: Sir, it was propagated by Albert Einstein. It has one very special postulate that the speed of light is a universal constant and remains same for all observers irrespective of frame. We have spacetime…

P1(interrupts): Spacetime?
Me: Sir, the fabric of space and time. We merge the three dimensions of space with another dimension of time.

Now the real grilling part begins. I just couldn't get to convince him from here.

P1: I don't understand why are you considering time as a fourth coordinate? Are my 3 spatial ones with which I can figure out the coordinates of this room, enough? What is the significance of this coordinate?
Me: Sir time becomes necessary if you want to study the evolution of universe. For forming models of the universe.

P1: I'm not interested in evolution. How does it affect my life? I just want to measure distances. How does time come into picture?
Me: Sir, the same point in spacetime next moment will be treated as a different point.

P1: But you introduced time as per your convention na. If I remove it, there will be just 3 coordinates. If I'm measuring distance from Earth to Mars, I just need the location and it can done in kms. Why time?

Several failed attempts at explaining via rocket examples, speed of light, NASA and what not. Now that I think about it, even I don't know what the hell I was talking about.

P1: No no. Every time you're introducing a new term. You're not getting to the point. You haven't even touched my question.
Me(frustrated by now): Okay, Sir. Can I take a minute to think on it?

P1: Yes! Ofcourse you should. You should've done that a long time ago!
Me: Trying to explain via a figure.

P2 (breaks the silence-with a helping smile): You can go back on your words, Eshan, if you think you answered incorrectly. There's no shame in that.
Me(sort of taken aback that I screwed up-with full confidence): No, Sir, it IS required. Maybe I'm not able to get it across, but I do know my concepts.

P1: Sir, I'm done with him. He constantly beats around the bush and can't get to the point. You can proceed with him now. (Rests his hands on his head now and just sits back).
Me: *smiling constantly and not flinching a bit. Portraying my bravest face. Still don't know how.*

P2: So Eshan, do you have any hobbies. Any extra curriculars you participated in?
P1(in a joking way): Arre Sir inhone toh hazaar activities mein part le rakha hai. Extra curriculars hi inke curricular the.

All share a light laugh

Me: Sir, I'll answer the hobby part now that extra curricular is taken care of(with a grin).
P2: *smiles*

Me: I like writing. About feelings, emotions that a person feels and the reasons behind it. I really like to decipher the emotions. *Thinking if I should mention reading or not*

P1: So do you maintain a diary?

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Me: No, Sir, a blog.

Silence for a moment when I realise this could be a important point of my interview as this is something I can talk about for hours. I do this with all my heart.

Me: Sirs, if you'd like to read, I have a few articles with me. Would you like to read them? *puppy face towards P2-please help me get something right, because P1 simply doesn't care*

P2 understands the desperate helping look in my eye and complies.
Me-*sending out blessings for the gesture*

P1(while P2 reads my articles): So when did you start writing?
Me(low key happy): When I was in depression back in 1st year. Took more intensely to it during 2nd year.

P1: So this is an outlet in a way?
Me: Exactly! Sir, channeling your emotions in a productive way is also an art. I penned down my deepest thoughts and feelings in words.

P1: So how has all this helped to transform you as a person? To grow?
Me: Sir, writing about feelings requires introspection. You get to know yourself better, people around you better. You learn how to truly appreciate what you have. You learn how people treat you, why and how you should treat them. Empathy is a great takeaway here.

P2: What's the difference between empathy and compassion? *grins*
Me(seemingly synonymous terms are to be differentiated-writer mode on!): Sir, may I take a few seconds?

P2: Sure.
Me: Sir, empathy is about a person understanding and relating to another person's emotions and feelings. Compassion is about helping, regardless of the fact that you may or may not be understanding their feelings.

P1: But I don't think anyone can feel what I feel. My feelings are unique to me. So what does empathy even mean? It means that compassion is same as empathy!
Me: Certainly not, Sir. They ARE different. I never said that someone can totally understand the other person's feelings. But even if they are successful in relating to them to a certain extent(which may vary), that is empathy.

P2: So Eshan, you mean to say that empathy is a better emotion? So if compassion is an actionable emotion then in empathy you are just feeling, not acting. So doesn't that make compassion a better emotion? *grins yet again*
Me(thinking okay he's now trying to wrap my words around me. I won't let it happen. Let's end this discussion once and for all): Sir, having empathy doesn't necessarily mean that you won't act. You may just understand the emotion and show it through words. Or you may go a step further and help them. That part is compassion.

Both look convinced.

P1: You've lived in Guwahati for 4 years now. Can you tell me something about river Brahmaputra?
Me: Yes, Sir. I can tell you an interesting fact about it as well which you might not know about if you haven't visited Guwahati. The river bank is hardly 150m from my college. *smiling*

No expression on either of their faces
I realise it was a stupid statement-time to talk sense

Me: Sir, Brahmaputra originates from China, comes in India from Arunachal Pradesh and goes from Assam into Bangladesh.

P1: So is it called Brahmaputra in China as well?
Me: No, Sir. Tsang-Po, with 't' being silent.

P1: And in Bangladesh?
Me: Jamuna.

P1: Sounds like Yamuna? Is it Yamuna?
Me: It does sound same. Maybe it's the regional pronunciation that they adopted the name. But no Yamuna is different.

P1: Jamuna doesn't go to become Yamuna later, right? *teasingly*
Me: No, Sir. *almost laughing*

P1: Where does it originate from in China?
Me: Some southern province.

P1: Give me the exact name.
Me: I don't know, Sir. *P1 gives a don't worry look the first time*

Thinking to say that Brahmaputra is also the widest river but interrupted

P1: So any issue on the river you might be knowing about?
Me: Yes, Sir, it has come to our information that China is trying to build a dam across the river. That would stop the water flow or greatly reduce it leaving us to China's mercy. The water is really important for NE India because the region is greatly separated from the rest of India and not much heed is paid to it. So people depend on the river for their livelihood to a great extent.

P1: What can we do to stop it? What can Assam government do?
Me: Sir, I don't think the state government can do anything directly but…

P1(interrupts): By Assam I mean through the central government.
Me: Yes, Sir, this is what I was about to say. That the actions will be taken by the central government. Sir, we can go to the United Nations and hold diplomatic talks to resolve the issue.

P1: But UN is a completely useless body. It doesn't resolve any world issues(looks at P2 and both smile-I smile, too). They don't have any political stance. What else would you do?
Me: Sir, we can't take up arms. It would result in nuclear warfare. The only action in today's world can be through dialogue, diplomatic talks.

P1: It takes years at a time. What else?
Me: Sir, in that case we can divert water from the river originating from Bengal to NE through Bangladesh because they'll also suffer from the water loss. We can make a deal with them which shouldn't be tough.

P1: How will you divert the water? Are you trying to pull of a Narmada canal here?

Me(clueless now): Yes, Sir, it's possible.

P1: What possible? You're agreeing to everything that we're saying. *P2 laughs*

Me: Sir that's because your arguments are reasonable so no harm in agreeing to a possibility which I'm unable to think of.

P1: So you said river coming Bengal? *astonished*

Me: Sir, not exactly WB. I meant Bay of Bengal.

P1: Bay of Bengal?! *Even more shocked*

Me: Yes, Sir, the rivers.

P1: So the rivers originate from BoB?!

P2: Eshan do you know that rivers don't originate from BoB rather end up there? Can you tell us why?

Me: Sorry, Sir. Seems like I didn't pay much heed to my basic geography.

P1: Where's the empathy now? You IIT guys pay heed only to yourself and what happens in your campus. You don't care about the world.

Me: *smiling* Sir, absolutely not…

P2(interrupts): So where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Me(looking deep in his eyes and very confidently): Teaching. *Both look shocked*

P1(instantly): Why?

Me: Sir, I believe in giving back to the society and not just taking it all in to grow. Teaching is the noblest profession I can think of.

P2: So who is nobler, a Teacher or a Doctor? (My mom being from Education Dept. and Father a Doctor-they picked this up)

Me(confused for 3 seconds about Doctor being a PhD doc or a medicine Doc-then bulb lights up): Okay, Doctor!

P1: Why? You just said Teacher is "noble-st".

Me(confused-didn't realise they misinterpreted my reaction above as the answer): Sir, I never said Doctor.

P2: You just did! You said, "Okay, Doctor!". *imitating me*

Me(FML): Sir, that was just me understanding…

P1(interrupts): But why Teacher?

Me: Sir, this is an extremely subjective view. For you it might be teacher. For someone it might be a doctor. For me a teacher will hold a value close to my heart. I don't think it can justified.

P1: Okay, Eshan, we're done here. Thank you. You may have a cookie now.

Me(shocked that there was no cross questioning on what sort of a teacher or why MBA): Okay, thank you, Sir. *take a cookie*

My past 1.5 years flash back in an instant as to how I worked my ass off to get here and don't want to leave any stone unturned. Desperation kicks in. Good? Bad? Remains to be seen.

Me: Sir, off the record, I want to say something. Off the record. *looking for cooperation in P1's eyes*
P1 nods

Me(offering my last and best blow holding my nerves-both listen intently for the first time): Sir, I was an intensely self-disciplined, hardworking student till class 12th. I studied in a small city all by myself to reach the place I am today. I do agree I lost track of my sight in first 2 years of my college but once I realised my mistake, I left no stone unturned to make up for it. I promised myself that my B.Tech. would be divided in 2 parts both of which would be polary opposite. And I think I did a pretty good job in overturning my situation.

P1: So you did all your extra-curriculars in first 2 years?
Me: Yes, Sir.
P1 smiles and nods in approval

Me: So Sir, to be seated here despite a 5.9 pointer I worked hard to take it above 7. I had to get next to a 100%ile to make sure I come here. I just work very very hard for everything that I want and have. This is all I wanted to say once to the interviewers. I think I've done that today with you, Sirs. *smiles*

P1: It's okay Eshan. We appreciate the efforts you are putting in. It's really good of you to work so hard. Good luck for your future!
Me(smiling): Thank you very much, Sir!

One thing that I maintained during the entire PI was my composure. The calm o and smile on my face was a constant. No sign of being scared or shocked. Although, there's so much more I could've said in right time. So many better words I could've used, which I generally do. But the fact that I prepared insanely for the interviews in the past 2 months and sacrificed so much in past 2 years would leave no regrets even if I fail to convert now. Simple reason: I know I gave my best. An interview won't define me. Not even WIMWI's.

Verdict: Reject

Interview and WAT Experience – 2

Background
10th/12th/Grad: 94.60/92.67/(8.8/10)
Graduation: B.Tech (Electrical) from NIT Durgapur
Work-ex: 2.5 years in JSW Steel (Electrical maintenance team in steel manufacturing plant)

AWT Topic -
We were presented with an A4 size paper having a brief essay of around 300 to 400 words. For our panel it was about money and its power.
Money is very important in present world and it can buy you happiness. It does not matter how that money is earned because irrespective of the source of its generation, you can use it in myriad of ways to fulfil your needs and wishes.

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People who deny this fact do so to hide their inability to earn more. Money can give your children education in prestigious colleges and can help you enjoy exotic vacations. If you earn good money, you can even retire early from your job and enjoy a good life ahead.

So, this was the reasoning presented in the brief essay, following which there were four questions which we had to answer. The time alloted for this entire exercise was 20 minutes.

What are the reasonings presented by the author?
What are the possible reasons behind such reasoning?
Do you find the reasoning weak or strong?
State your reasons.
I think I did reasonably well in jotting down my thoughts. For most of us, it'd be a no-brainer to reason out that the thoughts presented here is lopsided and not entirely correct. I came up with a few examples in the answers as to why money is not everything which is fairly easy to come up with, even when you are racing against time.

Interview:

I was first in my panel and there were two persons in the panel. P1 (aged around 45), very calm and composed, he listened to me very attentively during the entire interview. He was paying attention to minute details and was keen to extract more information about things which intrigued him. P2 was much younger, aged around 32 (might be a faculty or alumnus but seemed more like a faculty).

So after the usual exchange of greetings, P1 asked me so you are Nitish Kumar.

Ans: Yes sir and coincidently, I am also from Bihar.
P2: Who is Nitish Kumar?
Ans: He is the current CM of Bihar and holding his 2nd term as CM.
P2: Why did he break his alliance with Lalu Prasad?
Ans: Sir because he got convicted in several fodder scams and it would not have been good for Nitish Kumar party's image.
P2: Did Lalu Prasad get convicted only now. Was he not accused from quite long? Then why did he break his alliance now?
Ans: Sir, he was an accused from quite long but he had not been convicted. Further, once a person goes into jail, the public perception of that person changes dramatically.
P2: (continuing further on this same thing) What is your perception of Lalu Prasad?
Ans: He is notorious for doing politics on the basis of cast and creed neglecting the growth and development of the state.
P2: Why did you use the word notorious (by his look, he was saying, don't you think it's too uncharitable to term him notorious)
Ans: Sir, he did not have any firm political ideology and kept making fool of people for around two decades. He has time and again supported the dalits and muslims just to grind his own axe.
P2: (he was in no mood to let it go and was pushing me further) Then do you think that Nitish Kumar did the right thing first by forming a coalition with him and then breaking it?
Ans: Sir, Nitish Kumar also did it for his personal benefit and as the situation suited him. (me thinking inside that I need to come up with something which would close this political newshour debate so that the interviewers can know me in other aspects besides someone who give naive remarks about sensational political happenings) So, I proceeded, sir there is a quote about politics,

Politics is the art of gaining political campaign funds from the rich and votes from the poor on the pretext of protecting each from the other. So politicians do things not because it's in the best interest of their subjects but because it serves their purpose.

At this moment, P2 seems a little satisfied but by now, I have got the idea why IIMA and consequently its filtering process for selection is different. P2 was in no mood to let me go easy and I had further rapid fire rounds with him later in the interview. He was a little fastidious, as I guess many intelligent people are, and kept nudging me on every answer.

P1: (after a long time) Whose words are these?
Ans: I don't remember exactly but I think it is of Mark Twain.

P1: So have you read Mark Twain?
Ans: No sir, I haven't but I am interested in reading other stuffs. Lately, I have been reading about behavioral economics.

P1: Behavioral economics as in Freakonomics and all that.
Ans: Yes sir and like Thinking Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahnemann, Predictably Irrational by Dan Ariely etc.

P2: (back in the mood) Pointing towards the AWT paper, so what you have written here has come from your exploration of this behavioral economics?
Ans: No sir, these are my personal opinion too.

P2: Can you summarize in one minute what you have written here?
Me: Sure sir. So the author's reasoning is that money is everything irrespective of its source and one should strive to earn as much as one can by whatever means possible. But I beg to differ sir.

P2: (interrupt) So you think money is not everything then why are you here?
Ans: Money is important but there are other things as well which are equally important if not more. Self-satisfaction and a sense of achievement by legitimate means fall among such things.

P2: Can you give an example?
Ans: (pointing towards P1) As sir named Freakonomics, in the book, the authors (Steven Levitt & Stephen Dubner) have detailed the story of drug dealers who earn very handsomely however they always live with the fear of getting incarcerated or worst yet, murdered. Similar to this this when last week, ED (Enforcement Directorate) asked Mehul Choksi to consult the nearest Indian embassy so that he can return to India to co-operate in the investigation process. His immediate response was that he won't do so because he knows that as soon as he'd land in India, he would get arrested. So with money which has been acquired illegally, there is always a fear of getting caught. (In that month Nirav Modi & his uncle Mehul Choksi had given the page 3 celebrities a run for their money and were in every print and online media, so I thought it appropriate to offer this example)

P2: But don't you think there is one Nirav Modi who gets caught among thousands who manage to escape the clutches of law successfully?
Ans: You are right sir but that does not decrease the fear and anxiety of being proven wrong.

P1: What is your job about?
Ans: Sir, I work as shift-in-charge of electrical & automation team for hot rolling mill. I lead a team of 4-5 people and tackle the problems which we face during running of the mill. My job is to increase the overall availability of the plant so

that production is not hampered. Besides my day to day activities, I have also done few small improvement projects using quality circle and TQM (Total Quality Methodology) methodology.

P1: What is FMEA and how is it done?
Ans: Failure Mode Effect Analysis (FMEA) is carried out in a manufacturing hub to suitably address the problems according to their severity and frequency. This is done by first making a tree diagram of all equipments in the manufacturing facility and according to the relative importance of various machineries, they are treated accordingly.

P2: You mentioned TQM, have you used any technique related to this in your plant?
Ans: Yes we use control chart which falls under SPC (Statistical Process Control) to monitor the variation of any ongoing process.

P2: Tell us something more about it?
Ans: Sir, even in the best of the processes, there occur some variations which can be of two types, the first due to chance or common causes which are inherent to the process and can't be eliminated until some major modifications are made in the system. The other kind of error is special or attributable and happen rarely in a well controlled process. Using control chart, we monitor the numerical values of any process by drawing three lines on a paper (mean, upper control limit and lower control limit), where,

UPL=mean+3∗std.deviation and, LCL=mean−3∗std.deviation

P2: Are these limits used always to make a control chart?
Ans: No sir.

P2: So you mean this is not a universally accepted approach?
Ans: For making a control chart, we take historical data and calculate these values, however, as process may improve or deteriorate over time, we need to adjust the limits so as to identify the two kind of causes.

P2: Nods.
P1: What were your favorite subjects in undergrad?
Ans: Electrical machines and power electronics.

P1: What is power electronics?
Ans: Told how it's similar to basic electronics but differs in the capacity of power handled and its requirement of being more efficient overall unlike basic electronics.

P1: Ask to draw the diagram of 3-phase AC to DC converter.
Ans: I drew the diagram and explained in context of an electrical drive as to how speed control can be achieved by varying the output voltage.

P1 seems satisfied.
P1: We are done. Take a candy.
I rose from my seat. One thing was coming into my mind. Outside I had seen an interviewer who was in another panel and he was probably Satish Deodhar (author of few books in IIMA book series, most famous among them being Day to Day Economics, it's a good book to begin understanding economics for tyros). I had seen his photo somewhere but was not sure. So, I wanted to confirm if I had really seen Mr. Deodhar (I had really liked his lucid and perspicuous style of writing).

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So I sheepishly asked, may I ask one small question sir?

P2: Yes yes go on.
Me: I saw one other sir outside, is he by any chance Satish Deodhar.
For the first time, P2 smiles.

P2: We are not allowed to confirm identity but yes you are mostly right.
Me: Smiles and thanks them.

Verdict: Converted.

Interview and WAT Experience – 3

Indian Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi
11th February, 2018 Forenoon slot

Profile
X-94%
XII-94.8%
UG-84.8% Physics, St. Stephen's College, Delhi
Fresher
AWT Topic : The #MeToo campaign has been quite an exaggerated one. It is ruining the foundations of our society and worsening the current situation regarding trust on men. These allegations on men, who were respected in the society otherwise, could be disregarded until these numbers become sensational.

We were provided with a page, and 20 minutes. One had to adjust his handwriting accordingly so that the answers could adjust within a page. The passage was followed by four questions regarding the author's reasoning and whether I agreed to the same, and my stand too.

The panel consisted of two members, lets say P1(Most probably a professor, 40's maybe) and P2(A middle aged man, probably an alumnus). There were 8 candidates in each panel, and we were asked to come in the order prescribed by the panel. Meanwhile, one can get his/her documents verified by the professors in the hall.

Personal Interview:

P1 went to the washroom after the previous candidate left. When he came back, he asked me to come along with him. I greeted both of them, and waited for the permission to be seated.

Part 1: The Mild Introduction
P2: Sit down, please.

Me: Thanks a lot, Sir.
Waited for P1 to sit down, and settle

P2: So Tanmay, we see that you're from Stephen's. Tell me something apart from the existing elitism that Stephen's should be known for. (All giggle a bit after that elitism reference)
Me: (Taking 5 seconds) Discipline, Sir. In my three years of college, I've never seen a day wherein all our classes had been suspended, and mass bunks are a rare phenomenon. The teachers are really (P2 cuts in)

P2: So, how are the teachers at Stephen's? Are they good?
P1: (Interrupting while seeing the picture I had submitted in my form) Is this really you Tanmay? Doesn't seem like so! What sort of metamorphosis have you been through?(I had a picture with a beard, and quite understandably I had come for the interview clean shaved)
Me: (In a humorous tone) It is me, Sir. Just that I had a beard on. The picture is just two months old. (P1 laughs, then stays quiet after this)

P2: (Continues) Yes, so, How were the teachers?
Me: Yes sir, I must say the teachers are really good.

P2: (Interrupts) Accha tell me, what is the percentage of teachers that you consider are good?
Me: I can easily say that 7-8 of the 10 teachers of my department could be considered excellent.

P2: So Tanmay, in your opinion, what is the definition of a good teacher?
Me: According to me, a good teacher is one who doesn't just "preach", but "interacts" too. Because for the student to excel in his/her respective field, he should share a healthy relationship with the teacher so that his problems can be issued anytime he wants. (P2 nods)

P2: Who would you choose Tanmay, a teacher who delivers great lectures, and has supreme knowledge of the subject, but doesn't interact much or let's say, isn't that friendly; or the otherwise?
Me: Sir, as the knowledge of the subject is the first and the foremost requirement of a teacher, then I would choose the first one as he had a better knowledge of the subject.

P2: No, consider that the second teacher also has a good view of the subject, and he can reasonably impart good lectures on the subject as well.
Me: Then I would stick to my point sir. I would choose the more interactive one.

P2: Okay, okay. (Silence for a while)
Part 2: The gruelling academics
P2: So Tanmay, Physics. Should I ask you some questions on Physics?
Me: Yes sir, sure. (Gets scared a bit)

P2: Can you tell me what is a white dwarf?
Me: (Smiles) It is a small star in its end state. The white dwarf becomes too small, and above a certain limit, which is equal to 1.44 times the mass of the sun,i.e. The chandrashekhar limit, it collapses onto itself and becomes a black hole.

P2: Okay, so how is this limit detected? Does it really exist or is it just an assumption?
Me: No sir, it does exist, and it is an actual limit.

P2: How is this limit checked/detected then?
Me: White dwarfs with a mass less then or equal to the CS limit have been observed/detected by us. But no white dwarf with a mass greater than this limit has been detected. So that is a pretty solid evidence about the existence of such limit.

P2: You talked about black holes. So, what are these black holes, or first tell me why is a black hole black, why is a white dwarf white? Does it really appear white?
Me: No Sir, it's not necessary that it should appear white. There is a classification of stars based upon the luminosity, under which different stars are allotted different colours.

P2: Okay, are you sure?
Me: Yes sir, I am. (I was a bit wrong here, which I found out later)

P2: So tell me about black holes then? If light cannot escape it, how come we are able to detect it?
Me: Black holes are detected using the absence of light/waves from a particular part of space, which comes under the general theory of relativity. It (Interrupts)

P2: What are the two theories of relativity, what is the difference between the two?
Me: The first one is the Special theory of relativity, which deals with objects moving at or above the speed of light (ooops)

P2: Above the speed of light?
Me: (Shit!) No Sir, I'm sorry. At the speed of light. So, yes, objects moving at light speed and the phenomenon that occurs in such situations like time dilation, length contraction,etc. And the general theory of relativity deals with the concept of gravity. It states the concept of spacetime.

P2: What is this spacetime?
Me: It can be regarded as a fabric of space and time. Umm, let me show you.
(The table was covered with a cloth, whose sides were hanging across the table. I took that part of the cloth, and lifted it with my hands)
Me: Consider, this is spacetime. And anything that has a mass leaves a depression in the fabric, which is actually gravity. Also, if two black holes revolve around each other at fast speeds, a disturbance is caused (Showed him the waves created by the disturbance in the cloth). These waves which you see, are the gravitational waves, around which lot of research is going on in physics currently. (On seventh heaven after doing this) *P1 and P2 both nod*

P2: So you're talking about ripples, then?
Me: Yes sir, exactly.

P2: Why did you say waves then? Is there a difference between ripples and waves?
Me: Yes sir, ripples are generally circular, but waves can be one dimensional too (Told him an example about standing waves)

P2: So you're saying that ripples aren't waves?
Me: No sir, they are. But with the restriction of the circular centre etc.

P2: But you said, ah okay, accha leave it. *All have a light laugh after this small confusion*
Part 3: The Weird Question

P1: So Tanmay, why do you want to do an MBA? Being from physics, and doing so well, why the transition?
Me: (Just started to blurt out my memorised answer, when P1 interrupts and throws the really unexpected question)

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P1: I've heard a lot of such answers, Tanmay. Rather, tell me, what is that thing, or what is the one thing that can keep you in Physics?

Me: May I take a minute, Sir? (Had no idea how to tackle this)

P1: Yes, sure.

Me: (Started blabbering some answer about arousing interest in popular physics at school level)

P1: No, that's not what I'm asking. Let me ask you something, As I can see that you've done so well in Physics, and having gone through such a rigorous admission process at Stephen's (Asked me about the interviews which had been a regular part in admissions since 40 years at Stephen's), right?

(I nodded)

P1: As you know that this country has a lot of managers, but the number of physicists is too less. And once you go on to do an MBA, you can't return back to Physics. Shouldn't you think about your choice once again?

Me: I've been studying this subject since the past ten years now, and if I'm still not able to tell that whether I want to continue with it in my career, then my studying should've gone in vain.

P1: You people at this age just want instant gratification, and do not intend to do the "Tapasya" that a student should do.

(I just nodded)

Part 4: The Smooth End

P2: Have you done any courses on websites like Coursera?

Me: (Thank God, it ended) No, sir. I haven't.

P2: Okay tell me who is the Vice President of US?

Me: M. Pence. I'm sorry I don't remember the first name.

P2: Was Donald Trump the governor of any state before becoming the President?

Me: No, Sir.

P2: What was he then? What was his occupation?

Me: I've tried to search a lot about that, but to no avail. He was a celebrity cum actor cum wrestler cum businessman cum.. Whatever you want to add. (All laugh after this)

P2: What do you think about his policies?

Me: Most of them are downright absurd, for instance, the wall on the US-Mexico border.

P2: Why does he want to build such a wall?

Me: To stop illegal activities like drugs, illegal trade, etc.

P2: What is wrong with the plan, then?

Me: In this age of globalisation, you can't stop trade between two active countries of the world due to such minor factors.

P2: Then why does a border(LOC) exist between India and Pakistan? It should be removed.

Me: To stop the inflow of hostile elements like terrorists etc.

P2: That can also be the case with US and Mexico then.

Me: (Getting a bit frustuated) Sir, India and Pakistan have been in a state of war since 1947. We've fought such deadly wars and the situation isn't stable still. This is not at all the situation between US and Mexico.

P2: (Seemed satisfied) Thanks Tanmay. We're done, I guess. Take a cookie.

(I take a cookie with some hesitation. Bid thanks to both the panelists and left the room.)

The interview was overall decent. However, the panelists weren't that satisfied with that Physics-MBA question. Apart from that, the panelists were really nice, and they didn't grill that much. In my view, I had done pretty well, but we never know about the future. Fingers crossed.

Verdict: Converted

Interview and WAT Experience – 4

Date & Time: 9th March'2018, 8:15 am
Venue: Monarch Luxor, Bangalore

Profile:
10th - 91%
12th- 88.9%
Grad(BS, Mathematics) - 82.32%
Work Ex: 36 months (Associate - Business Analytics at Myntra)
There were 7 panels with 6–7 students in each panel. Initially I was in Panel 6, Slot 7 (last one) but later got moved to Panel 2, Slot 6 (still last!) as one candidate didn't show up.

Analytical Writing Test (AWT) Topic: A paragraph was provided on how social media is becoming an integral part in political campaigns and other social movements. Political parties are increasingly using social media platforms to target and influence specific set of people. The argument was that it created a level playing field for everyone, and that it is overall good for humanity. We had to identify the claims made by the author, the line of reasoning, and also analyse if the argument was strong/weak and provide reasons for the same.

Time allotted: 20 minutes

Post AWT, document verification and interviews were taking place in parallel. Since I was the last in my panel, I had to wait for over 2 hours before my turn. I had hoped that I would get an earlier slot and get done with it but it wasn't to be.

Meanwhile my mind was busy testing out catchy opening lines to questions like "Tell me about yourself". I overheard bits and pieces of the candidates interviewed before me and each time I could hear the panelists sharing a hearty laugh. This helped calm my nerves a bit as I thought they would probably be among the "nice" ones.

Finally at around 11.45 am, I get called in. There were two panelists, one middle-aged male(P1) and the other was a lady(P2), probably in her 30s. The former surely looked like a professor.

P1: Please come in, take a seat.

Me: Thank you Sir. Wished them both good-morning after taking a glance at my watch.

P1: Ok Arunabh, so you're from Assam and now you stay in Bangalore?

Me: Yes sir.

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P2: And you are a Maths graduate, why maths and didn't you want to continue further?

Me: No sir. It's actually a complicated story. I had always loved Maths during my childhood and schooling period, I enjoyed number crunching etc. So after 12th, I wanted to take up Mathematics & Computing in IIT, and I appeared for JEE. But i failed…

P1(interrupting): But there is no failure in JEE, you just get a score..

Me: Right sir, what I meant is I failed to get into IIT. So I decided to give it another shot. Meanwhile, IISc had also launched a new 4 year BS course which married pure science with engineering and I was interested in that as it offered a major in Maths with mathematical computing as a component. I appeared for JEE again and failed again ! Failed to make it to IIT and IISc. I had the opportunity to enrol for engineering in a few engineering colleges, but opted for a similar course like IISc by Bangalore University, which later got reduced from 4 to 3 years. And that's another long story. Also I was very much interested in entrepreneurship and that was a deciding factor to move to Bangalore as i thought it has the perfect ecosystem for start-ups. I had a start-up during college and decided to continue working in it instead of studying further at that time.

P1: Okay. So you work at Myntra. What is you role there?

Me: Over the 3 years at Myntra, I have had three different roles. I joined initially as a content specialist for products team and in that year Myntra moved from desktop to app-only.

P1: Sorry..what?

P2(explaining to P1): They moved to the app version and shut the desktop site.

P1: Oh okay..continue..

Me: So one of the key projects that year for me was to ensure a smooth transition from desktop content to mobile content. I was promoted to a senior role after a year and here I had to take on a broader responsibility of handling the strategy and operations of content for entire catalogue. I also had to supervise 30+ executives. During this time, I worked on a key project on content automation. Basically the content you see on Myntra app/website product pages are all generated by a machine. We partnered with a firm in Chicago, Natural Sciences that generates our content through Natural Language Processing..

P2(for the first time): Okay I have a question..So why does Myntra need content as such because it is more of a visual dominated platform, where does content come in?

Me: Yes ma'am it is a visual dominated platform, but content has a major role to play as well. So if you have visited the app or website, and when you click on a particular product, you can see certain content fields like the display name of the product, description about the product and a paragraph called style notes which basically gives style tips, on what to pair the product with for example. All of this was manually written by writers before but now they don't have to.

P2: So how does this automation happen through Natural language Processing..and I don't know any of it so explain each and every step to me.

Me: Sure ma'am. So one of the first challenges that we faced was how to make the machine string the content required. Each product or category had a different format and entirely different requirements. So the solution that we arrived at for this was to create attributes i.e specific features for a particular product. For example, let's say for this shirt that I'm wearing, the attributes would be collar, sleeves, colour, pattern etc. Each attribute would have n different variations like for collar it could be spread, mandarin etc. We created attributes and their respective values for all the categories and these served as data points that we could send to NS to string the content.

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P2(interrupting): Okay but then this is more of basic automation through indexing, how does NLP come into picture I'm still not clear..

Me: Yeah so basically first we had to train the NS machine to understand the different variations. So we sent out sample data for each and every category with the filled attributes for the machine to pick up the variations…

P2(interrupting again): Yes I get that but you are telling about Machine Learning as Natural Language Processing..still not able to understand how NLP is used here.

Me: So I am not exactly aware of the technical part of NS and their patented algorithms. But as far as I know, Natural Language Processing in general is the ability for a machine to understand and generate language. In our case, it's not just about stringing attributes but also understanding the different variations and generating content based on it. Like it has to understand that a shirt has to be paired with trousers and not something else and those kinds of variations need to reflect in the content. Now, writers fill up these attributes and the data is sent to NS servers, they generate the content for all fields and send it back within a few seconds which is then made live to the platform.

Both P1 & P2 nodding.

Me: Also, we are working with something which is purely Machine Learning or Machine Vision to be precise, where even the attributes are extracted by a computer through images.

P2: So you said some 40 executives reported to you..and how old are you (checking my data form)..just 26 years..I'm sure you must have faced challenges as they are executives and must be older to you. Can you tell me about it?

Me: So they didn't exactly report to me..I just supervised them and my KRA was based on their performance….

P2(interrupting): Yes I understand and that is how it is with most companies. What I would like to know is that if there were any instances where say you would call up your Mom and tell her about it, "hey Mom, I had to face this today at work"

Me: Yes ma'am so there were many who were older than me..Luckily there weren't any major issues during my tenure and it went pretty smooth. However like I said their performance was my responsibility and if they didn't perform well I would have to answer. There were cases where say few individuals were constantly performing poorly over a period of months..my challenge was to understand what caused it..was it a 'skill' issue like if they needed training etc, or a 'will' issue and they were probably bored with the work. I had to take one-on-one meetings to gauge that. Also since I am not usually good with hard talk and can't be rude or stern, I was nice to them and tried to explain the issues calmly. But I'm not sure how effective that was.

P1: You are a maths grad, so why did they select you..maths and fashion are wide apart?

Me(excitedly): Exactly..Exactly..

Both P1 & P2 broke into laughter..

P1 to P2: Look at him, exactly..exactly it seems..

P1: So why exactly..do you ask this question to yourself?

Me (grinning widely): No sir, but it's a question I get asked a lot. I am a numbers guy, and my knowledge on fashion was just t-shirt, jeans and shoes that's it. So I had to learn a lot and learn I did. I can now tell you about 10 different types of dresses or heels and the likes. And as far as selection is considered, I think my start-up experience helped. I had a start-up for 2 years prior to joining. I had also published journals in both the schools that I attended. They selected me the very same day I was interviewed. Later my hiring manager revealed to me that they were actually surprised when they saw my resume and thought what was I doing there since I had a start-up already.

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P1: Start-up? is it mentioned here (checking at my data form)?

Me: Yes sir, in the discontinuity in career section. (Hoping that the conversation would move towards my start-up) But it didn't.

P1: Oh yes..okay. So how you think your Maths knowledge is applicable at your work?

Me: That's where my current role comes in sir. I was missing number crunching for over 2 years now and wanted to go back to it. So I sought out for projects in the analytics team and the then manager allowed me to work on a few. I have now permanently moved to the Business Strategy & Analytics team and working on critical projects which are CEO level. So we are solving problems currently persisting in catalogue and also bringing in innovations in process. One of the projects is to reduce the TAT for products to go-live on the platform. Recently, Sachin Bansal had done a survey with vendors where it was revealed that vendors are displeased with Myntra due to the long time it takes for their products to be live, as compared to Amazon or even our parent Flipkart which take about 2–3 days at max. So our CEO wanted the TAT to be brought down to 3 days. That's what we are trying to do now through a data-led approach, figuring out the bottlenecks and coming up with solutions. It's more like a consulting role.

P2: So what is the TAT(turn-around-time) currently?

Me: So we have two different models, the marketplace model where vendors directly upload their products and the other is inventory model where we keep inventory in warehouses. The TAT for marketplace is over 10 days and for inventory also it's around 8 days.

P2: So recently Amazon has announced that it will enable customers to access designer made garments straight from the ramp to its website. So in terms of supply chain can you comment on the TAT and implications in Myntra?

Me: Okay so in this context, I want to mention that we are working on machine-generated designs to reduce time taken for new designs to reach market.

P2(interrupting): Machine generated designs are fine but they won't be like the ones designed by fashion designers right. So tell me about that.

Me: Currently, from the time a design in apparel or product is launched in ramp, it takes about 3 months to reach in customers hand. We tried once by launching a huge sale event called Vogue Fashion night where we sold apparel displayed in Vogue Fashion show on the same day on our platform. But it didn't do too well owing to high costs of the products.

P2: Can you tell me the percentage of textiles exported from India? Do you have an idea?

Me: Erm..no ma'am I don't have any idea on this.

Me(with a puppy face and grin): Sorry ma'am

P2(smiling): It's okay.

P2(again going through my form): Oh you stay in Koramangala, hub of CAT coaching, TIME, IMS..which stable are you from?

Me (with a sly grin) : Yes ma'am it is. But I didn't take any coaching for CAT. It was only after I got calls that I attended some sessions in TIME.

P1: So you've spent a lot of time in Assam right, which places have you stayed?

Me: Yes sir, till my 12th standard and I stayed in Tezpur & Guwahati.

P1: Assam is mentioned from the times of the Mahabharata..do you know or can you tell me something about it?

Me (mumbling to myself): Mahabharata..Ram..Ramay….

I guess my mumbling was loud enough for them to hear and both started laughing..P2 was like..Mahabharata & Ram..oh my god..

Me (laughing along): Sorry I got confused, Ram is in Ramayana..Mahabharat is about Krishna. So yeah, in fact there is a story about how Tezpur got it's name. Tez means blood in Assamese so Tezpur means the land of blood. So it is believed that there was a huge war between Krishna & Shiva there. Krishna's grandson, Anirudh eloped with the then Tezpur's King, Ban who was an Asura and a devotee of Shiva. Upon learning that his daughter has been 'kidnapped', he asked for help of Shiva. And a huge battle ensued leading to a lot of bloodshed. There is also a tourist now spot named Agnigarh depicting the battle.

P1: There is a place called Kamrup as well right?
Me: Yes sir, Guwahati is in Kamrup itself.

P1: So have you travelled anywhere in India or abroad?
Me: Abroad no sir, but in India I have visited a few places in the south, the popular tourist destinations.

P1: Okay..so can you name the southern states and their languages?
Me: Sure. Karanataka..Kannada, Tamil Nadu..Tamil, Andhra Pradesh..now bifurcated into Telangana & AP..Telugu, and Kerela..Malayalam.

P1: Do you know where Konkani is spoken?
Now I don't know what happened here, I know very well it's spoken in Goa and I have friends as well from there. But the following ensued..
Me(blurting out without thinking): Konkani..erm..Pondicherry.
Both P1 & P2 laughing and asked me where Pondicherry is.
Me: It's near to Tamil Nadu (FML!)

P1 & P2 (laughing again): But Tamil Nadu is such a large area…
Me(grinning along): Ah..It's somewhere in that East Coast region..
Me: And Konkani..Goa I think?
P1 (with wide grin): I don't know.

P1 looks at P2 and asks if she wanted to ask anything else. She said no.
P1: Okay Arunabh, that's it. Thank you.
Both P1 & P2: All the best!
Me: Thank You.
No toffees or cookies offered.
And these were 25 minutes of my life that I will never forget.

Verdict: Not selected(Waitlist), but converted IIMB and joining the same :)

Interview and WAT Experience – 5

Background: CA (Chartered Accountancy), Bcom
Work Experience: Nil (Articleship/Internship of 3 years not counted as workex)
Profile: X - 100% | XII - 88.83% | Bcom: 7/7 CGPA | CAT - 99.84%tile

Location: Vivanta by Taj, Mumbai

Panel: 1 Professor (around 45years old) and another Female Professor (around 28-30 years old)
Date: 17/02/18
Time: 8:15am
Institute: IIM Ahmedabad
P1 is the old professor and P2 is the Female Professor
P2: So Manan, Good Morning, What are doing currently?
Me: Nothing Ma'am, told them that I have been preparing for interviews since Jan'2018. Prior to which I completed my CA in 2017 and articleship till OCt 2017 in Deloitte
(I had mentioned a 3-month break in my IIM A form. From Oct to Jan)
P1: You are a CA Manan and you are walking in for such an important interview and you are saying you are not doing anything? What kind of impression you are giving me?
Me: I explained that I have done my articleship in statutory audit till Oct'17 post which I gave CAT and was waiting for the results. Mentioned that I have written in my form as well.
P1: Oh, so you have mentioned you roamed around in India for 2 months, where did you go?
Me: Alibaug and Goa with friends and Jamnagar for a family function
P1: So you traveled north and south right?
Me: (Confused) No, Sir. I was in the West only. (Trying to show with a gesture that all these places lie in Western India)
P1: (Loudly) Gujarat is North of Mumbai na? And the other two places are south of Mumbai? So, you went to North and South, na?
Me: Yes, sir.
P1: So you went to Alibaug, how many feet Alibaug is above sea level?
Me: Sir, I could see the sea from the beach, so I guess it will be at sea level only.
Everyone, including me, started laughing.
P2: Okay, since you have done audit and recent scams are happening in India, if you were the given 3 ways to change the control system of India, which would be those 3 ways and why?
Me:
1. Implementation is lacking. So I would want to actually train people at the grassroots for proper implementation of controls. I propose to train all the audit firms by having monthly compulsory training by the institute. Also, I would like the big corporates to conduct internal training.
2. Update our controls to be comparable to other countries.
P2: (Cuts in) Which country do you think has the best control system?
Me: USA
P1 and P2 both start laughing
P1: You know the USA has the recorded the highest amount of frauds in recent times!! How can you that the USA has better control systems? I am very curious to know!
Me: Sir, what I meant was that their control framework is very strong. PCAOB standards which are part of SOX are very robust.
P1: What do you know about SOX?
Me: Spoke for like 5 minutes detailing everything and how India has replicated SOX compliance through SEBI.
P1: If you are an auditor, what will you focus on more? Misappropriation of Assets (MoA) or Financial Fraud at C-Level? And Why? Do you understand the question?
Me: No, Sir.
P1: Repeated the question with more detail
(Asked for time, he was like sure)
Me: Financial Fraud, Sir.

P1: Why?

Me: Because that is done at a big level and auditors have a responsibility to present true and fair information to investors. And we can stop it from happening or at least detect it.

P1: So assets don't form part of the balance sheet? Fraud at the asset level is not material?

Me: Sir, that is a small level and it can be stopped by proper implementation of controls. (Narrated an incident from my article ship related to the same. Everyone had a laugh over it)

P1: So you are telling me MoA is done by stupid people and Financial Fraud is done by smart people so I will focus on smart people, right?

Me: (Confused) No sir, not like that…

P1: No, its right only. It has to be like that only. (Started Laughing)

P2: Explain me MoA in very simple terms

Me: If I take the toffee on the table given its importance without your permission then it's a MoA

Both of them started laughing

(Thought my interview is over and I am not getting selected, put my head down in disappointment)

P1: Why did you stop? Go ahead, you put such a complicated thing into such a simple construct!! Usually, CAs do the opposite, they take simple things and make it very complicated!! Good stuff

P2: What are your Hobbies?

Discussion on them for like 4–5 minutes

Interview ends.

I go towards the door and pull it

P1: How was your interview experience? Please rate it for us, you are an auditor!!

Me: It was Decent.

P2: What is decent? Tell us whether we have done a fraud or not!

Me: Nobody has done a fraud, neither you nor me

P1: Oh, you took it too literally! But then that is what CA's are supposed to do.

Me: Yes, Sir that is what I have done since the past 3 years.

P1: Fair Fair, You are a good CA.

P2: You can take your MoA as a token!

Me: (Goes to the table and grabs a toffee!!)

P1: Is this a MoA now?

Me: No sir, I have permission!!

Everyone shares a small chuckle.

I thank them and leave.

Verdict: Converted

Interview and WAT Experience – 6

Personal Profile -
General | Female | Fresher | Non-Engineer
Academic Profile -
X - 10 CGPA | XII - 96.2% | B Com (H) - 8.96 CGPA (till 4th sem) from DU
CAT 2017 Percentile -
VA & RC - 98.29 | DI & LR - 99.17 | QA - 95.58 | Overall - 99.09

IIM - Ahmedabad Interview
24th Feb, 2018, 1:00 PM

India Habitat Centre, Delhi

After document verification, we were taken to the interview room for the **AWT**. There were two panelists, P1 and P2 (both male), they gave the instructions and we began writing. The question was (non-verbatim) -

"IITians are offered subsidy for their education and it is taxpayers' money. They end up taking management jobs and hence it is a wasteful expenditure on them. Write the claim of the author, whether you agree or not and why?"

Please note that there's no correct answer to such questions. So, it's hard to say how I performed, but I explained my stand and gave logical reasons to back it.

After the AWT, we were asked to wait in the hall for our turn. I was the 7th person (out of 8) to be interviewed in my panel. When the 6th person came out, he looked shocked. I asked him how it went and he said, "They're grilling".

My turn came at 4:00 PM.

P2 came out and announced my name. I followed him to the interview room, which was very spacious, so I had a long walk inside, smiling at P1.

I greeted them and they asked me to have a seat.

P2 - So, Shweta, why don't you introduce yourself first?

S - (I had a folder of documents with me along with 2 CVs prepared) Sure Sir. While I do that, would you like to have a look at my CV?

(P1 and P2 together)

P2 - Sure! P1 - No, we have your form.

(they looked at each other and P2 said, it's okay, start with your intro)

S - (I said something semi-prepared) where I was born and brought up, how I helped my maternal uncle with his general store sales as a child, which lead to my interest in studying customer behavior.. (interrupted)

P2 - I'm sorry, how old were you then?

S - about 11, Sir.

P2 - (surprised) and how did you help?

S - (smiling) It was very primitive, I loved to come up with promotional offers, which attracted customers and since he's a retailer, there's a lot of competition in the market. So, I helped during the festive seasons. (P1 smiling for a reason I find out later)

P2 - (nodding) Okay, go on.

S - then I talked about my choice of commerce, extra-curricular participation in school and how B Com (H) as a subject has given me a holistic view of business.

P2 - How has B Com (H) given you a holistic view?

S - explained how the curriculum introduces all functions of a business - finance, accounting, HR, marketing, etc. and how my internships have offered the opportunity to experience them all.

P2 - (nodding) Go on.

S - talked about my interest in marketing and advertising, how it started, the extent to which I like it.. (was flowing with emotions and ended up saying) Sir, you must have gone through my form, it might have seemed that I want to pursue finance, but that's not the case. I want to learn more about marketing.

P2 - (some cross-questioning on marketing)

S - (answered all the questions with enthusiasm, real life examples and a smile on my face as if I'm living a dream)

[Now, the grilling part begins. P1 takes over]

P1 - So, you mentioned that your maternal uncle is a retailer and faces competition, what kind of a market does he operate in, in context of economics?

S - (thinking) umm, Perfect Competition.

P1 - (in a calm voice looking at my form) Would you like to change this answer?

S - (confused) Sir, given the options I have, monopoly, oligopoly, it fits the best.

P1 - (still looking at my form) - And, Kirori Mal College didn't teach you about monopolistic competition?

_____

S - (facepalm!) Sorry Sir, I forgot to mention it. But, I still think it is PC.

P1 - (looking at my marksheet) You studied economics in your first semester, right? Is first semester so old a story that you don't remember economics?

S - (ouch, it hurt) No Sir, I remember the concepts. Explained what Perfect Competition is. What Monopolistic Competition is. Their differences and how in this case, PC fits better.

P1 - (not convinced) Then, how did you attract more customers? Didn't you offer discounts?

S - explained how goods are sold at MRP in that market and the promotional schemes didn't involve any reduction in the price of the goods.

P1 - Leave it, do you read newspaper? Or are you just interested in the soft news about marketing and sales offers?

S - (feeling insulted) I read newspaper, Sir.

P1 - Have you read that the method of calculating national income in India has changed recently?

S - (in utter surprise, what!?) Sorry, Sir. I haven't read about it. (Later found out that he was referring to some news in between 2012–15)

P1 - Why are you ignorant about it? Does your marketing not account for the national income?

S - (my marketing!?) No Sir, it's not like that. In fact, the marketing industry.. (interrupted)

P1 - What? Industry? Is Marketing an Industry?

S - Shared the stats of Advertising Industry and explained how advertising is a subset of marketing and hence it should be an industry.

P1 - You know there are 3 sectors in India?

S - Yes, Sir. Primary, Secondary & Tertiary.

P1 - So, where does your marketing fall?

S - Sir, since it's a service industry, I think it should contribute through the tertiary sector. But, in the form of the manufacturing companies' marketing department, it also contributes indirectly through the secondary sector..

P1 - (laughing) you're so confused!

(P1 looks at P2)

P2 - Sir, now, you're confusing me too.

(they laugh and I smile)

S - Sir, to further add to this confusion, I think it also contributes through the primary sector, like we have the FABM program at IIM-A, which provides marketing assistance to agriculturists.. (interrupted)

P1 - "Arey yaar, finally btao na". (What's your final say?)

S - (smiling) Sir, I'd like to conclude by saying that as an industry (he smiles), it contributes through the tertiary sector, but also contributes indirectly through the other two sectors.

P1 - (not in a mood to spare my economics) How is national income calculated in India?

S - Stated the methods.

P1 - Explain the product method.

S - explained.

P1 - What is GVA?

S - told.

P1 - How to go from GVA to National Income?

S - explained the 3 factors - NFIFA, NIT, Depreciation.

P1 - So, you mean GVA + these 3 = National Income? What have you studied?

S - (Arey yaar!) No, Sir. I meant an addition or subtraction of these depending on whether we wish to calculate domestic income or national income. Explained how the conversions of GDP to NDP, GDP to GNP and MP to FC take place.

P1 - (gave me the first satisfied nod, dear lord, how I craved for it!) How is FC calculated in the primary sector?

S - (nooooo!) I don't know, Sir. But I can try. I try to explain it using the A2, C2 methods which were in news related to the Budget.

P1 - (annoyed) Are you trying to tell me the budget?

S - (scared) No, Sir. I was trying to connect the dots.

P1 - Just so that you know, in C2, it's not imputed rent.

S - (another facepalm!) Oh, Sir, can you please share what it is?

P1 - explains C1, C2, C3 and says, let it be. It is not relevant to this interview.

(P1 looks at P2) (P2 gives a nod)

P2 - (smiling) That'd be it, Shweta. Please have a candy.

(My head was cluttered with thoughts at this moment. How can it get over on such a note? Half of the time I was being grilled. No, this can't be A. It was the most important call. Please, don't do this to me. Marketing and Economics, that's it? No hobbies, GK, extra-curricular?)

I looked at the candies, picked up one and thanked them. On my way out, I just asked them with a smile on my face, "Sir, should I send the next person in?" They both smiled and told me that there's no need.

After coming out, I met the 8th person, told him holding my tears that they might grill him. Asked him to stay confident. He smiled and thanked me.

I went outside and called my father. In a 'I-am-about-to-cry' voice, I told him, "It was the worst interview of my life. I won't get in."

He listened to the whole experience and told me, "Don't worry, you will."

Verdict - Converted.

Interview and WAT Experience – 7

Name: Anil Jangid

Profile: B.Tech (Mech, NITK), X- 10 CGPA, XII- 94%, Grad- 7.49 CGPA, CAT 2017- 98.89 %tile, OBC-NCL, Fresher

Location: Hotel Monarch Luxor, Bangalore

Date: 15 March 2018, Morning Slot (8:15 AM)

AWT: (Not verbatim, though close to it) People say that money is not important for happiness, but I believe money can buy you things like trips abroad and other things that will make you happy. Also, those who say that money is not important are in fact consoling themselves for their inability to earn more. Concepts such as job satisfaction are pointless, because if you earn enough doing something that you don't like to do, you can retire early and enjoy your post retirement life with that money. Therefore, money is very important for happiness in life.

i) What is/are the main arguments made by the author?

ii) Do you agree with those arguments?

iii) Justify your opinions.

In the answer to these questions, I tried to find a middle (and a safer) place by agreeing with some of the author's points as well as supporting the concept of job satisfaction to some extent, justifying my opinions in the best way I could.

Personal Interview: Panel 6 : Two men. P1 - young guy in early 30s and P2 - a professor perhaps in his 50s (never heard the voice of P2 during the interview, I guess he was there just to observe).

Duration: 18–20 min.

P1: So Anil, didn't you appear for campus placements from your college?

Me: I did, and I am placed in XYZ company.

P1: Then why don't you go for it and gain some work ex.? Why do you want to do MBA now?

Me: I have taken up quite a few responsibilities in my college, hence I believe I am ready to take this up.

P1: What kind of responsibilities? Personal or Professional?

Me: Sir, professional.

P1: What responsibilities?

Me: (Mentioned all the positions that I held in the college, and they were quite significant).

P1: (After listening to all of those) These are all useless. Tell me something else.

Me: (In utter disbelief, and shock, almost heartbroken because those positions were supposed to be my strongest argument) Sir, at the college level, that was the best that I could do. Also, I have been playing professional cricket for more than 7 years now where I got to experience teamwork and leadership (I have captained various teams at various levels)…

P1: (Cutting me short) So play cricket.

Me: (Running out of thoughts, but somehow managed to blabber something) It's my passion, I will keep on playing cricket even after getting into the corporate world.

P1: In that case, you won't even be a good manager, as half of your time will be devoted to cricket.

Me: Sir, even after playing cricket, I have managed to get good grades.

P1: (Looking at my grad scores) These are not good scores.

Me: (Almost dead) Sir, grad was not as good as I would have liked, but I did pretty well in 10th and 12th.

P1: But why don't you pursue a career in cricket, after all it's your passion?

Me: To be frank, at this stage it's very difficult to get back to the level where I used to be. I used to take coaching for cricket in my school days, but because of my parents' wish, I had to get into engineering.

P1: So you couldn't gather enough courage to convince your parents.

Me: Sir, at that point, even I was not pretty sure what's right for me, so I just followed my parents' advice.

P1: So you want to do MBA now, is it again your parents' choice?

Me: No, it's completely my choice. Now my parents trust my decisions, so they don't force me into anything.

P1: (Not looking convinced) Ok, so you are in Mechanical, tell me what have you learnt in Mech.

Me: Heat Transfer, Thermodynamics (I read these two subjects a week before for the interviews).

P1: (Not interested in both of these subjects) And?

Me: (Not able to recall any other subject :p) Sir, mechanics.

Then there was a series of real life questions from 11th class physics, on projectile motion, centrifugal force, friction, collisions. I knew the concepts relatively well, but the mathematics surrounding those concepts was nowhere present in my mind. I could only explain the concepts theoretically.

After the physics session, it was time to move on to some other topic.

P1: So are you interested in philosophy or something of that sort?

Me: Sir, I like to read books on human behavior.

P1: Which books?

Me: (Named a few books)

P1: But these are not human behavior books, these are just self help books. (He was right, and I thought I am gone)

Me: But still, through these books, you get to learn something about human behavior. (Thought I played well :p)

P1: Ok, anything else that you are interested in? Politics, or something?

Me: Politics and Finance. (Have been reading a lot on finance in past few days, and was confident)

P1: Oh finance. So tell me, how will a change in repo rate will affect unemployment.

Me: (Knew this, started explaining, but somehow he was not ready to get convinced. I kept on explaining and he kept on countering my arguments. At one point he exclaimed that the arguments are not good, but I still persisted with those arguments)

P1: Ok, so now tell me something about bank recapitalisation.

Me: (Dead, read the term somewhere, but only this term, nothing else related to this) I have read it somewhere but am not able to recall.

P1: Do you remember anything related to this?

Me: (Thought better to not answer than to make wild guesses) No sir, nothing.

P1: You said you are interested in finance, you should know this, it's very recent.

Me: (I felt bad) I am sorry Sir, but I don't remember.

_____

P1: (Asking P2 if that was enough, he nodded) Thank you Anil, take a toffee.
Verdict: Converted.

I was not confident after the interview, but now that I have converted, I can think of some positives from my interview. First of all, I kept smiling for the whole duration. Second, I persisted with my answers, didn't change my opinions, even when he was countering them. Third, didn't let my confidence drop at any point.
Edit: My CAT Score Card (VARC- 97.65, DILR- 99.61, QA- 93.34), Calls from- IIM ABCLKI, XLRI (XAT- 98.990), SPJIMR, FMS

Interview and WAT Experience – 8

Background:
X-10CGPA, XII-95.3, B.Tech, Mechanical Engineering (Hons), IIT Hyderabad- 86.2%

AWT: The Kannada Development Authority recently protested against the conducting of a Staff Selection Commission recruitment exam in Karnataka and Kerala to fill the posts of clerks, assistants and data entry operators as the exam was conducted only in English and Hindi. The KDA felt that it would put the local aspirants at a disadvantage as they wouldn't be able to attempt it in their mother tongue. SSC countered by saying that the jobs being central government based, would be subject to transfer to other states, where they would be at a disadvantage. The conducting of a language test before moving to other states is not feasible. Hence candidates should know Hindi to attempt the test.

Q. What is the claim?
Q. What is the reasoning provided?
Q. Is the reasoning strong or weak? Why?
I did a good job of it, by analyzing the argument and finding the fault that aspirants from Hindi states would face the same problems when they come to non Hindi speaking states, while retaining the advantage in the exam. Hence, it is a weak support.

There were seven panels and around 6-7 people per panel. I was the first in my panel. The panel seemed to consist of one alumnus and one professor by their ages. Let the professor be P and the alumnus be A. My answers shall be represented with the letter G.

The alumnus came out and asked me to enter after closing the door behind me. P was reading my AWT as I came inside. They asked me to take a seat and the interview started.
P: So you work at BPCL. Where do you work?
G: Yes sir, I work at the Kochi Refinery of BPCL in the maintenance department.
P: So what units do you take care of? What kind of equipment do you handle?
G: (At this point, I understood that P had more than a passing idea about how maintenance works and that I would have to weigh my words before I spoke them.)
Sir. We have an area concept and I work in area 1. As a part of the area, we have the second largest crude unit, the fluidized catalytic cracking unit and an isomerization unit. I am in charge of rotating equipment along with 15 technicians who work in the field to solve problems in any rotating equipment.
P: So what do these rotating equipment generally consist of?
G: For the most part, these equipment consist of pumps. There are also turbines and compressors. So yes, pumps, turbines and compressors.
P: So Ganesh, is BPCL a profitable company?
G: (smiling) Yes sir.
P: Lots of profits, eh? So which of the Public Sector Oil companies have the best profits?

_____

G: That would be IOCL sir. Indian Oil.

P: Oh. And why is that so?

G: It is majorly due to their vast distribution network sir. They own close to 46% of all the retail outlets in India.

P: Oh. Is that so? So tell me, there seems to be awfully little to do in this industry. The prices are fixed by the government. Are they fixed by the government?

G: They used to be fixed by the government sir, but now they are free to fix their pricing on a daily basis based on their costs and the current market petrol and Diesel rate. Each of the companies is allowed to place their own rates.

P: So is there a price war between these companies?

G: No sir. For the most part, all of these work together. The difference in pricing is less than 1 rupee per liter.

P: So is there a committee that determines the price of petrol?

G: Sir, there is a committee that determines the targets for each of the three companies each month. They also determine the price range. (Blunder. The price is determined by each company's costs, as I've read. I have no clue if the professor knew what the right answer was. I was confident in saying this though.)

P: Oh. So are there any private competitors in this market?

G: yes sir. The major competitor is Reliance. There is also Essar and Shell. Shell does not have great presence in India, but it does exist.

P: So how do they price their products?

G: Sir, their products are a little higher than the market price. They price it around 2 rupees higher than the other three companies.

P: Why do people still buy at their centers then?

G: Sir, the kind of service that they provide at their retail outlets is better than the service that you would receive at the government outlets. They have lady DSMs, a more service oriented experience to give a premium feel.

P: Don't you think you can implement the same in government companies.

G: Sir, initiatives such as Pure for Sure are present in government companies like BPCL. For instance, BPCL has a 20 point checklist including cleanliness, service to customers, ensuring zero before filling, etc. But since these employees are majorly contract employees, the service does not mostly carry on to the customers.

P: So you are a mechanical engineer. What is honors?

G: The honors program at IIT Hyderabad involves two M.Tech level courses in the fifth and sixth semester and a project in the seventh and eighth semester, which is usually a research project.

A: So your publication is from that?

G: No sir. It is from an earlier work I did in my second year summer and through my third year.

A: So what was that about?

G: There is this material called GFRP- Glass Fiber Reinforced Plastic with a high strength by weight ratio. These panels are generally used in aircraft wings and ship hulls. We were trying to determine the effect of stiffening on these panels and their compressive strength.

P: Okay, coming back, you're a mechanical engineer. So I always had a doubt. How did these steam engines work?

G: Sir, I'm not exactly aware, but I'd guess that they worked with the help of a piston arrangement in a chamber. The fluid, in this case steam, expands and there is a reciprocating motion that is generated in the engine.

P: Okay. So how is this used to drive wheels, to convert reciprocating motion to rotating motion?

G: sir, using a crank arrangement.

P: Okay. So now tell me, how does a turbine work? Does it also have a reciprocating motion?

G: Sir, in the case of a Gas Turbine, there is an arrangement with multiple cylinders, where the combustion takes place.

P: But in the case of a steam engine, you don't need all that right?

G: Yes sir, in a steam engine, we wouldn't require a cylinder arrangement. The energy of the steam is directly transferred to kinetic energy.

P: So why use all this crank arrangement? Why not use a turbine to run a steam engine directly?

_____

G: Sir, turbines are high speed machines that provide high thrust. It requires a huge amount of steam energy to make a turbine rotate at such high speed. Hence, they are primarily used for applications where high thrust or high speed is required.

P: High thrust? But all these are used to produce power in power plants. Why do they require high thrust there?

G: sir, I was referring to the example of Jet Engines. There the exhaust gases propel the flight forward providing thrust. But in general, it is used for high speed applications where the rotor is required to rotate at a high rpm.

P: Okay. But high speed is good, right. We get faster trains. Tell me finally, can we use a turbine or not?

G: Yes sir, technically, we can, but our infrastructure does not support such high speed.

P: okay. So if I were to give you a function f(x), assume it is continuous differentiable and all that and I ask you to find the length of the curve, how would you do it? You can use a paper.

G: (I've never ever been able to solve any math question in any interview before, and froze for a moment. Then I decided I had to think aloud and try to get at least an approach.) *Drawing a random shape* So, first I'll divide the curve into small pieces. Now, to find the length of each of these small pieces, let's say this is x1 and that is x2 *pointing at two points* - oh. So that would be whole root(dx^2+dy^2). Then by integrating this-

P: Correct. *Looks at A*

A: So what do you do in your free time?

G: (Finally!) So ever since I was a child, I have been an avid reader. I have majorly read fiction over the years, but I've tried to move to non fiction recently.

A: So you're majorly an indoors person?

G: Not really sir. I do go out to the occasional movie every week or so and enjoy spending time with my friends. But if I have nothing to do, reading is my go to hobby.

A: Oh. So what is the latest movie you've watched?

G: (At the pain of being honest, I sounded the most stupid I've ever sounded in my life.) Sonu ke Titu ki Sweety.

A: So you watch a lot of Hindi movies?

G: Not really sir. It was the preference of the person who was going with me.

A: So what were the books you recently read?

G: I completed reading the Origin by Dan Brown yesterday. I am also reading Jane Eyre simultaneously. I also completed my annual rereading of Harry Potter.

A: Annual rereading? You read all the books?

G: Yes sir. All the seven books.

A: So how long have you been doing this?

G: Ever since I was 13 or 12 years old.

A: Do you still have to read the books? Or do you have it all in your memory?

G: Not really, sir. I still do have to read it.

A: Who's your favorite character from Harry Potter?

G: Luna Lovegood, sir.

A: And why is that so?

G: Because first of all, she was an interesting and a very independent person. Irrespective of what people thought about her, she never backed down. People humiliated her, and yet she spoke her mind. That shows her strength of character. She also valued her friends a lot. This can be seen by her room decorations.

A: So what do you want to do after MBA?

G: when I was at IIT Hyderabad, I was involved in a lot of extra curricular activities. I founded the literary society at IIT Hyderabad, was also involved in the Entrepreneurship Cell at IIT Hyderabad. So I think I gained an inclination to brainstorm for solutions. That, combined with the knowledge I gained as a part of the oil and gas industry, makes me want to get to a role where I can brainstorm for solutions to large scale problems. Maybe in the oil and gas industry, but I would be open to options, based on the exposure that I gain in an MBA.

A: So you're sure you will do an MBA this year?

_____

G: I would definitely do an MBA if I get it this year. If not, it would probably be postponed, but doing an MBA is definitely on the charts sir.

P: So this Entrepreneurship cell, is it connected to the T Hub?

G: We have had people coming from the T Hub and the Indus Entrepreneurs regularly, but we didn't have an official relation.

P: But IIITH does?

G: Yes sir. T Hub is practically located in IIITH

A: So what other calls do you have?

G: B,C and K sir.

A: So what would you choose between A,B and C?

G: Ahmedabad sir.

A: Why so?

G: Because of the reputation that it enjoys in India and the rich history that it has. Bangalore would be nearer home but Ahmedabad, with all it's merits would be my first choice.

A: ISB would be closest home. Why not ISB?

G: I believe that the opportunity to learn would be much higher over a two year period as opposed to a one year course. I also haven't given my GMAT.

P: Okay Ganesh. Thank you for attending our interview process. All the best. Take a candy.

G: Thank you sir.

The interview was pleasant enough. I had no idea of the mistake I made until after I left the interview.

Result: Converted!

Interview and WAT Experience – 9

Background: CAT percentile: 95.89, shortlisted in IIM Ahmedabad

Yes IIM Ahmedabad aims to bring people from diversified background in the classroom and hence I was lucky enough to get a call even after scoring that percentile as I was probably chosen because of my good grades in CA.

Interview Date: 17th March, 2018

Venue: Taj Hotel, Kolkata

There were around 60 shortlisted candidates divided into eight panels

WAT Topic was based on **'Chalta Hai attitude of Indians'** - Was okayish for me

I (to be referred later as A) was the fifth person to be interviewed (in Panel 1 consisting of 2 interviewers, both males – M1, M2)

M1 – So your name is Achnit Parama….??

A – Sir, My name is Achint Parmanandka

M1 – Achint means one who has no understanding, right?

A – No sir (feeling happy that this question had been asked before) Achint means without any 'Chinta' that is tension whereas what you are saying means without any 'Chintan' which means understanding which is not the meaning of my name

(This seemed to be a good ice breaker)

M2 (smiling a bit) – Ok (Looking through my profile) So you are Chartered Accountant…

A – Yes Sir. I have also cleared all levels of CFA and FRM

M2 – What??? Then why do you want to pursue MBA?

A – I have been lucky enough that I have been brought up amongst smart friends who are also academically brilliant and I believe I have been able to learn and develop myself because I was with the cream of commerce most of the time…

M2 interrupting me in between..

_____

M2 (smiling widely now) - and you will get to interact with creamier people here

A (thinking what is that supposed to mean :P but now a bit relaxed with the environment in that room and almost forgetting that it was IIM A interview) – Yes Sir. I will get to interact with a diverse set of smart people here and off course I will be learning from the best professors of the country

M1 – I see that you are currently employed in ITC. What is your role there?

A – I am currently employed (although not currently) in ITC as Assistant Manager, Finance. I head the finance department of Delhi Marketing division of ITC

M1 – What all ITC products are available in the market?

A - Would have mentioned about 6-7 products. But this changed the course of interview and made it Cigarette oriented…

M2 – What percentage of ITC's revenue is from Cigarettes?

A – As per the last published annual report, ITC's revenue was 55000 crore of which more than 50% share is from Cigarettes

M2 - So ITC has heavy dependence on cigarettes?

A - At present yes sir. Also mentioned about Vision of ITC by 2030 of 1 lakh crore from Non- Cigarette industry

M2 – Hmm.. So do you smoke? (I was perplexed at this time as I didn't know the relevance of that question) --- Look I don't smoke and this sir (referring to M1) is a chain smoker..

A – No sir I don't

M2 – Why?

A – Because smoking is injurious to health

M2 – So why are you working in such a Company?

A (feeling elated as I was all equipped to answer that) – I mentioned about the contribution to exchequer, illegal cigarettes, other forms of tobacco (like khaini, gutka), graphical health warnings and possibility of health deterioration because of other hazards in details

M2 (seemed impressed) – Good. So Tell me are you allowed to do advertisement in Cigarette industry?

A – Talked about COTPA in details (regarding advertisements, distance provisions, packaging regulations etc) In the mean time also directing my answer towards M1 stating that he could even vouch for packaging details since he is a smoker

M1 – Do you think a Class Action suite can be filed against any Cigarette Company in India?

A – Gave my answer based on legal provisions and determined it's consequences

M1 – How does your company segment the market for Cigarette industry?

A (shocked as I looked after the finance aspect of Marketing and not the marketing – marketing aspect) – (Started my answer with a caveat - although I look after the finance aspect of Marketing and this area is untouched by me, I would like to give it a try) No segmentation based on age (as people of all age categories smoke) and then I mentioned about a consulting company's research report in regard to target marketing of say 60% customers in a given area and converting actual outlets served to the target number

M2 (after drilling me on tobacco industry questions) – How do you CAs always tally Balance Sheet(BS) or Income statement? Is there any theory like there is in science – theory of thermodynamics (or something I don't remember the exact name) which balances both sides of the equation ?

A – Sir, Income Statement is generally not tallied, It will have a positive or negative balance – i.e. profit or loss. However BS is always tallied and also there is a golden rule of accountancy for that.

M2 – Suppose I give you this pen – how will your BS tally?

A – Answered – based on given information after requesting details on how the source of fund is obtained

M2 – But you forgot depreciation?

A – Sir that can also be incorporated – Explained

M1 – Still I am not clear how this equation of BS/ Income Statement works?

_____

A – Answered with the help of maths – positive or negative sign. Then explained with the help of the example of two sides of a Beam Balance

M1 – Ok Good. Thank you. Have these. (Offering 2 toffees)

A – Thanks Sir. (Took 2 and turned to get up)

(Feeling happy about the interview)

M2 – Achint wait – do you know about the Lodhi Garden issue?

A (then it struck me – after all it is IIM A interview, but sadly my answer) – No Sir

Ok never mind. Thank you.

Result: IIM A converted

Interview and WAT Experience – 10

Background- Xth- 10 CGPA(Assisi Convent School,Etah)

XIIth-97%(Assisi Convent School,Etah)

Graduation- BCom(hons.) -8.34 CGPA (SRCC)

CAT Percentile-99.73

Work Ex- Fresher

Location- India Habitat Center, New Delhi.

Date: 09/02/18

Time: 8:15am

Panel -Two people, one middle aged person (around 40 yrs old) probably from Tamil Nadu (Guessing from his accent), hereafter referred to as P1 and other one was slightly older, hereafter referred to as P2.

I was the last one to be Interviewed in my panel and was dead scared (because it was my first and most important interview. However, both the panellist looked relatively chilled out and their smiling faces helped me calm down a bit. So here is how my Interview started:

P1: So Mr. Arpit, you have been waiting for a long time. Tired?

Me: Not Much sir.

P1: Good Good! So can you give a brief introduction about yourself.

Me: Started with my rehearsed introduction (I would rate my intro as Average).

P1: So Arpit, can you tell us the capital city of Andhra Pradesh.

Me: (Smiling inside as I knew this was a trick question and I knew the answer to this) Sir right now Hyderabad is the de-jure capital of AP while Amaravati is the de-facto capital.

P1: Finally someone who has answered this question right. All the 7 people before you have answered this incorrectly. (I did a little Victory dance inside my mind)

P1: So you are interested in cricket (I have stated cricket as a hobby in my intro), so when do you think that Virat Kohli will be able to surpass Sachin Tendulkar.

Me: Surpass in what sense sir, in terms of overall runs or in terms of no. of hundreds or in any other sense?

P1: Lets say in terms of no of hundreds in ODI cricket.

Me: (After 10 seconds of thinking), so sir Virat as of now have 34 hundreds against his name (luckily I knew this no. as I have fair amount of knowledge in cricket) and he has played around 200 odd no of matches so on an average if we divide 200 by 34 we would be approx a hundred every 6th match. However considering the fact that Kohli is in his best of forms right now which may slightly deteriorate in future it would be reasonable to assume that further hundreds may

be scored by him say every 7th match and to surpass tendulkar he needs 16 more hundreds so we get 16*7=112 matches. So as per my estimate he would be able to take over tendulkar in around 110 -120 matches.

(Both P1 and P2 looked Impressed by my logical Approach to the question)

P2: (In a slightly humorous tone) But don't you think Virat's marriage with Anushka will deteriorate his form in future.

Me:(Also slightly smiling on the question), Sir Even Roger Frederer is married and he is still winning Grand Slams, so i think Kohli can also manage a world cup with a Wife.

(P1 and P2 both laughed loudly on this answer of mine)

P2: So you are from commerce background, so can you please tell us right now what the biggest problem with the Indian Banking industry is?

Me: Sir I think the biggest problem with the Indian banking industry right now is that of the increasing amount of NPAs with them. (described NPA and the Twin balance Sheet problem.)

Then we had some discussion regarding GST and pros and cons associated with it.

P1: Ok Arpit so tell us which industries in India are amongst the best in the world.

Me: Sir I would say aerospace and healthcare industries. Although there is a lack of health care at the primary level, but if we look the high quality healthcare provided at some of India's best hospitals, then it is definitely amongst best in the world.

P1: (Nodding in approval), hmm okk…..but don't you think you are missing one of the major Industries.

Me: (thinking for 5 seconds and sticking a smile on my face to hide my nervousness) Sir I can't remember any.

P1: Don't you have any friends from South India?

Me: I do have a lot of friends from there.

P1: Then you should know it, its located in south India.

Me: (Remembering Immediately and cursing myself that how could I forget something so easy) The IT Industry sir. I don't know how it slipped off from my mind.

P2: Do you remember the formula for area of sphere and volume of sphere.

Me: (Immediately told them the answer thinking why would they ask something so easy)

P2: So you know sphere is a Symmetrical figure. Don't you think formula for its volume 4/3*pi*r^3 is way to absurd for a perfectly symmetrical figure like sphere. Means can you explain it to me how do we arrive at this formula.

ME: (Tried to figure it out, but ultimately failed.)

P2: (smiling): Koi nhi beta leave it. It was nice having you here. (Offering his hand, I reciprocated through a firm handshake both with P1 and P2).

P1: Please have a toffee. (took a polo from there)

ME: Thank you Sir.

Verdict: Converted. Will be joining IIM-A batch of 2020.

Interview and WAT Experience –11

CAT 2017 99.85 percentile

Profile X (CBSE 2012) 95.00 | XII (CBSE 2014) 95.40 | B.Tech. (Mechanical Engg.) NIT Raipur 86.20 (As per CAT application) | GEM Fresher

Extra-curricular: University rank 3rd in 'Vid'-Diploma in Tabla, AIR 4 in 'Quad Torc'- quad bike manufacturing team event, Intra-state and inter-college winner in quizzes, Inter-zone winner in group singing, International and National rank holder in Maths, Science and English Olympiads.

Pre-interview feels: *In a way, this was the biggest interview of my life. And the first of all the IIM interviews I gave. I was feeling nervous as all those dreams and hard work were to be put to test that day*

Date: February 9, 2018

Venue:India Habitat Centre, New Delhi
Slot: Morning
6 panels, 6 students each.
I was the last in 2nd panel.
AWT:

Cleanliness is something which the western world follows out of ethics and an efficient waste management system. While some other countries follow it due to imposition of draconian laws. India follows neither- and hence the leads to unhygienic public places. Children follow the cleanliness only if they are taught about it. What India needs is a proper civic education system. But who will impart this lesson? The schools and teachers are neither interested nor are willing to take up the challenge. It seems impossible that cleanliness will be taught to students. We should stop hoping for a Clean India.
(a) Identify the author's claim(s).
(b) What is the reasoning provided?
(c) Provide arguments to strengthen/weaken the given reasoning.
(d) Justify your stand.
20 minutes and one ruled-page was provided.
INTERVIEW:

A= Prof. Anindya Chakrabarti
B= Prof. Ankur Sinha
B opened the door. A welcomed and told to sit.
A: So, how is the pitch report?
Me: (Perplexed) ???
A: You must have talked to previous interviewees. What are they saying about us?
Me: (Realizing what they meant) Sir, an exhaustive questionnaire on academics.
A: So what are you expecting?
Me: Everything!
Both smile
A: So tell us something about yourself.
Me: I am an 8th semester mechanical engineering student…
A: (Turning towards B) Are ye to aapki field se hai.
Me: (Shit! I hope they don't grill me on academics)
Then I continued with my answer, stressing on my hobbies and strengths
B: So you have interest in music. Compare sur and wave.
Me: *I talked about source and manner of propagation*
B: Okay differentiate between Sa and Re in terms of physics.
Me: (Hesitated)
B: Accha write the general wave equation and then differentiate.
Me: (Wrote the equations) Amplitude and frequency, sir.
B: Also k which defines the shape of the curve.
Me: (Nodded)
A: Tell me, how we account for the attenuation in terms of frequency.
Me: It is done by frequency modulation.
A: And the equation for the same?
Me: Sorry sir I don't remember.
B: Okay tell me your favourite subject in mechanical engineering.

Me: Automobile.

B: Differentiate between the engines used in spacecraft to that in road vehicles.

Me: *Told the basic mechanism*

B: How does the aircraft or spacecraft get the initial motion?

Me: *Could not explain clearly*

B: Draw and explain the two mechanisms.

Me: *Drew and explained*

A: Okay so what are your hobbies?

Me: Music, Tabla, Quizzing.

A: I see that you have participated in International Mathematics Olympiad.

Me: Yes sir.

A: Tell me about the Fourier series?

(Here I would like to state that though mathematics has been my favorite subject, my performance in engineering mathematics was absolute disaster)

Me: Sorry sir, I don't know.

A: OK. Tell me the largest prime no.

Me: *Told about the most recent finding*

A: So is the prime number series infinite?

Me: Yes sir.

A: Prove it.

Me: (Err…) Maybe because there are infinite numbers.

(A didn't seem impressed)

A: Can we calculate log(-7)?

Me: Sir it won't be defined in real terms.

A: Yes. Though imaginary, but there are methods in engineering mathematics to obtain an answer.

Me: Sorry sir I don't remember.

B: Which book did you refer to?

Me: B.S.Grewal.

A: (Turning towards B) That seems to be the common book.

B: Didn't you refer any foreign author?

Me: No sir.

A: You don't seem to remember the mathematical concepts. Then how did you do well in the Maths Olympiad?

Me: Sir, I love mental maths and calculations.

A: But what is its use? That can be performed using calculator as well.

Me: Sir I try not to use the calculator as much as possible and perform the calculations in my mind as fast as possible.

B: What is 85*85?

Me: (Quickly) 7225.

B: What is 185*185?

Me: (Again quickly) 34225.

B: Do you use certain trick?

Me: No sir. Simple multiplication and addition.

B: Alright. Then you should be able to tell me 184*184 as well.

Me: (After a second's pause) Sir 32856… sorry 33856 sir.

(Both A & B seemed impressed)

A: Okay I see you have mentioned about QUAD Torc. What is it?

Me: Sir it was a quad bike manufacturing event.

B: What's a quad bike?

Me: *Explained and gave a brief description about the event*

A: Okay what are your other hobbies apart from music and Tabla?

Me: Quizzing. I read and follow news.

A: So what are the three most pressing world issues at the moment?

Me: US-North Korea tussle, Middle East crisis and immigration issue.

B: What is the difference between Middle East and immigration issue. Both seem to be the same.

Me: Sir, Middle East issue is centered on power tussle and geopolitics and the immigration issue there is just a consequence. But in general, immigration problem includes the middle-east, Rohingya, US-Mexico etc.

A: Alright so what do you make of the US immigration issue?

Me: They are trying to boost local employment but it surely will lead to decline in the performance as the foreign workforce there seems to be well equipped for the job and hence were employed in the first place.

B: I see no harm. Why not promote your own people? Who are we to judge them even if it is leading to a poor US economy?

Me: Sir to promote one's own is fine. But to say that employing people from outside US is a loss-making process isn't right. The Association of NRIs in USA had stated that there was a requirement of 3 lakh skilled employees in the STEM sector i.e. Science, technology, Engineering and Maths. With people from outside US ready to take up those jobs which would ultimately benefit US economy, it seems absurd on the part of Trump administration to turn them down. Also US lies in the centre of world economy and a declining US economy will hamper the world economy too.

B: Don't you think Trump is trying to bring in communism?

Me: I don't think so. Even if he is intent on bringing communism, it wouldn't be in its true essence as USA has been a capitalist nation for 250 years.

B: What is the difference between communism and socialism?

Me: Both focus on welfare of all. Communism is governed by the state while socialism is expected from the people.

B: Not quite.

Me: Sir as I understand, while communism focuses on reducing disparity between the poor and the rich, socialism promotes equality of all religions, caste, creed.

B: Okay, you said isolating US will lead to a deteriorating economy. China did just that and it has prospered.

Me: Sir, China never was a centre of global trade. They, under the Communist party, turned into a manufacturing work horse. After becoming self-reliant, they opened up and captured the global market.

B: What do you think India should do to reduce the trade deficit with China?

Me: Sir in my opinion the primary requirement today is investing in the manufacturing sector.

B: How will that benefit India? Why not invest in service sector?

Me: There are several reasons sir. India has been doing very well in service sector and scope of improvement is not that big. With a huge but unskilled workforce, it will take a rigorous skill development program to prepare people for service sector. Also with our main service importers like USA closing their boundaries, the export of our service market may also take a hit. Hence, investing in manufacturing would give us better returns.

B: But how would you compete with the cheap market of China? And if by some means you are able to achieve a low price, China wouldn't allow you to access its domestic market.

Me: To answer the first question, cheap labour, greater investment and research- all of which is being targeted under Make in India- will allow us to bring down the cost. With equivalent or better quality of products, we may be able to compete with them.

For the second question, I would like to cite an example. A few months back, I had read an article in The Economist about Chinese Daigous in Australia. Daigou means to purchase on behalf of. These Chinese Daigous purchased cheaply available products like medicines, apparels, FMCG and sent it to China mostly via sea routes. It is a fledgling trait as the Australian products are similar or cheaper in price and of more assuring quality. So the Chinese market isn't impenetrable after all!

A: Alright. (Turning towards B) Anything else from your side?

B: No. Okay, thankyou so much.

Me: Thankyou sir!
 Converted!

Interview and WAT Experience – 12
Profile: X - 10 CGPA | XII - 85.2% | B.Tech - 7.94(at the time of interview) | CAT - 95.47% | Category - General

Background: Food Process Engineering, NIT Rourkela

Date of Interview: March 18, 2018

Time: Morning slot - 9 AM

Venue: Taj Bengal, Kolkata

AWT & GD:

Duration: 10 min- Case Reading | 10 min- Group Discussion | 10 mins - Summary writing (200–300 words)

Panel: 4 members

Topic: A Case study on a Beverage Company's Kola drink.

There were strong allegations against the company for using acids above the permissible limits set by foreign authorities in their Kola drink. Whereas there were no such permissible limits set by any governing bodies in India. Due to a high level of acidity in the drink, children were suffering from illness…etc…

You are the Marketing Manager, who is on leave for 2 days to look after your daughter who is sick, might be because of drinking the same Kola drink. As a Marketing Manager, how would you handle this situation after joining back? What would be your plan of action?

AWT & GD was not an elimination round. All the candidates were divided into two groups. I was in 2nd group.

Personal Interview:

I was 4th in my panel

Panel: 2 members (Let's call them P1 & P2)

Duration: 30-35 mins

I handed my file along with the Resume to P1 and then the interview started:

P1: So, your name in the form is Poonam but in your Resume, it's Poonam Heda, why?

I: Sir, in my 10th certificate it's mistakenly written as Poonam, that's why for all the academics related work I have to write Poonam, but everywhere else it's Poonam Heda.

P1: So, what is your final year project? (as it was mentioned on the 1st page of my Resume)

I: Describe briefly about my project, its application in food industry, why this is better, related technologies currently being used in food industry, etc

More discussion on the Project followed by some questions...

(As I used an underutilized tradition fruit of Meghalaya which they didn't have any idea about! :-D explained them from the procuring of fruit to its wide applications, why I am using a particular technique, etc. and from this somehow I introduced a topic which I was not much familiar about and P1 sensed this!)

P1: So, what are the procedures and principles used in Cold Pressing? (The thing I was not much familiar about!)

I: I answered whatever I got to know during my summer internship and after that, I simply told them the truth that I don't have much idea about this. (the best decision! if you don't know anything, simply tell them.)

P1: okay! Can you tell us any five Food companies?

I: (the easiest question you can ask any Placement Coordinator :-D I was trying to control that expression which says …huhh! dude I can tell 50! haha…) Amul, Britannia, Nestle, ITC, Perfetti Van Melle, Milk Mantra, MTR Foods, IDMC, blah blah

P2: Is Amul National (Indian) or International? Tell us about the History of Amul, how it was formed, etc etc

I: Answered everything confidently.

P2: Is Britannia Indian Company?

I: Yes sir.

P2: Are you sure? Doesn't Britannia sound like a foreign brand? (was trying to confuse me but didn't succeed)

I: Yes! Its full name is Britannia Industries Limited and their headquarter is in Kolkata!

P1: What about Nestle?

I: It's not Indian and their headquarter is in Switzerland! etc etc(gave some more info about Nestle)

(Out of excitement I told them that I am the Student Placement Coordinator :-D and brag a little bit about myself :p)

P1: You have tell us your secret! (both laughing)

As so many Food companies visited your campus, you must be placed in one of these Food companies! Which company are you placed in?

I: I am placed but not in any of these Food companies. I opted for Analytics and Consulting firm.

P1: Which company are you placed in? And why not in Food Company?

I: Skaipal Consulting. Told that there are few profiles for female candidates in Food Companies and that profiles didn't interest me. Although I am interested in working for Food Companies in the Managerial role and not in a technical role like in Quality analysis, Quality control, etc…

P1: Why Analytics and Consulting?

I: Answered them what drives me to work for analytics company by backing up my answer with few of my previous work.

P1: What do Analytics companies do? What will be your role?

I: Told about basic work of an Analytics firm by giving an example and explaining it briefly. Explain about my role, what tools I will be using, how I will be contributing to the firm, etc etc

(After I answered, I realized that both the Panelist were not convinced with my answer and I had goofed up badly!)

P2: Will you be able to do that job? How can you be so sure?

I: Somehow convinced them.

Both P1 & P2 started bombarding questions related to analytics and I was not prepared for it. (I never thought that in my FABM interview I will be asked about Analytics!)

P2 started asking me about Statistics.

P2: Do you know the difference between Mean, Mode and Median? Where are they used? followed by more questions on statistics

I: Answered all the basic questions correctly but after a certain point, I told them I don't know much about statistics.

Then they started looking over my Maths Grade of all the semesters.

I had got C, B, A & UR in Maths I, II, III & IV respectively. (I had a backlog in Maths IV) I told them that I am giving Maths IV again this semester.

P2: You will be having statistics courses in IIM A, will you be able to do that?

I: Of course sir! We had statistics in Maths-II & III and you can see that as I scored pretty good in both Maths-II & III and Maths IV doesn't have statistics.

(Finally, I think both got convinced!)

P2: This course is not only based on Food, its Food and Agri-Business Management…Do you know anything about Agricultural? Did you ever

lived

in the rural area?

I: Yes! I lived in a village when I was a child, after that I didn't get any chance to live in rural but we- I along with my family visit our village 1–2 times a year! I lived in many cities as I did my education from different cities and lived

P2: Will you be able to live in rural, as you will have to stay in the rural area as a part of the program?

I: Yes sir! Talked about my experience when I visited my village.

P1: Where are you from?

I: Akola, Maharashtra.

P1: What it is famous for?

I: Oranges, Cotton, Sugarcane, etc etc (Answered by taking Akola and its nearby area)

P1:(While reading all the achievements written in my Resume) How did you manage all this?

I: Answered confidently!(little bit more bragging about myself :P)

P1: Okay Thank You Poonam! You may leave now.

No cookies or toffees offered.

P.S.: I was not confident after my interview but after I got to know the result I thought for the positive points which helped me to convert IIM A. I guess they are:

Panelist are not looking for a candidate who knows everything rather they are looking for someone who knows what he/she knows!

If you don't know anything, just tell them you don't know!

Answer confidently. You must know your knowings before the interview!

Verdict: Converted! Joining IIM A PGP-FABM

Interview and WAT Experience – 13

Date: 24th February 2018.
Time: 8:15 A.M
Venue: Indian Habitat Centre.

Acads:
X: 10 C.G.P.A
XII: 95%
Graduation: 83%

Profile:
General
Fresher
CAT Percentile: 98

AWT:

The topic presented to us an argument about how we should not care about the environment as once we have reached the pinnacle of our development we can take care of it anyway.

We were asked to answer the following questions:

Identify the author's claim.
Identify the reasoning behind it.
Is the reasoning weak or strong?
Justify your stand on the argument.
AWT (Academic Writing Test) is more skewed towards the AWA pattern of GMAT than the WAT of other institutes. I had prepared a set format to answer the AWTs and stuck to it. Finished the writing well before time.

PI:

I was 4th in my panel.

Two professors P1 and P2.

P2 called me in.

(In my head I was traversing through all the questions that I had prepared like the 'Tell me about yourself', 'Why MBA?', et cetera.)

P1: Please have a seat.

P1: So the thing is I don't know much about music. Why don't you tell me about this event you took part in?

(One of my extracurriculars mentioned the fact that I play the keyboard and have represented my school at a national event.)

M: Explained.

P1: Okay great but how do you decide which instruments need to be played in a given song.

M: Explained how emotions play a big role in music. Gave an example of how a sharp staccato of a flute can instil fear or how the beats of a drum have the ability to relax and energize one, at the same time.

P1: (satisfied with the answer) Hmm.. What about the prices of these pianos you play?

M: Sir I play the keyboard. I went on the explain the difference between the two..

(Suddenly interrupted by..)P1: The answer to my question?

(My first mistake. I immediately realised that he was expecting a very concise answer.)

M: Told the base prices and the fact that as we go up the feature/brand ladder the price soars.

_____

P1: Alright.. But if you know so much about pianos and are even passionate about it you can also consider this as your career line you know.

(It must be noted that this wasn't a question but more of a direct statement followed by a question. My initial response was going to be a nod of the head but I realised the ramifications of the same. P1 was suggesting me an alternative career and I was simply going to reply in the affirmative).

M: I'm sorry sir but I would beg to differ here. I explained how various factors come into play when one's hobby turns into one's career.

(Both P1 and P2 smiled and welcomed the argument.)

P1: Does YAMAHA make keyboards?

M: Yes.

P1: What is the profitability of YAMAHA?

M: (This was something that I couldn't have anticipated.) I'm sorry sir I don't know.

P1: Is it even profitable?

M: (With a nervous and confounded expression)...It should be!

(P1 smiled and P2 laughed. I spoke about this to an IIM-A alum who suggested that such questions are generally to throw you off your game or test your presence of mind).

P1: So you're from Computer Sciences, explain to me how a laser printer works.

M: (I hadn't studied about laser printers, albeit I did remember something pertaining to how charge accumulates on the sheet from class XII. I chose not to answer as I wasn't sure.)

P1: Not a problem. How is data stored on RAM?

M: Explained.

P1: Asked about the architecture of a system.

M: Explained.

P1: Everything around you is binary when it comes to systems, are there currently any disadvantages to it?

M: Tried to explain how we're reaching the end of the line when it comes to the capacity of binary systems(in terms of gates) and the solution to it.

P1: (Seemed satisfied.)

_____

(I believe I digressed here a little as well.)

P1 signals P2

Enter P2 with his questions.

(Until now P2 was busy writing. While I tried to make eye contact with him he was mostly engrossed in his notes.)

P2: So Shaunaq, do you know who is Shashi Tharoor?

M: Sure sir. Gave a description in one line.

P2: (with a smile) I'm not quizzing you on him, your hairstyle just reminded me of him.

(both P1 and P2 laugh)

M: (poker face) but I give in eventually and start laughing as well.

P2: Do you know about the situation in Maldives?

M: Told about the state of emergency.

P2: What is your opinion on it?

M: Answered. Dwelled around how the emergency was being misused by Mr. Yameen.

P2: How can you say it is being misused? The provision for emergency is there for a reason.

M: Explained how I am not against the provision but against the reasons stated by Maldives.

P2: Elaborate.

M: Told about the three reasons under which an emergency can be declared. (P1 nods).

P2: Did we have it in India? Which year?

M: Explained, but couldn't recall the year for one of them.

P2: (seemed satisfied) you are from Delhi you should know.

M: Noded in agreement.

P2: Okay Shaunaq, we're done. Thank you! Do not discuss these questions outside.

M: Sure sir, thank you!

(P1 offers an eclairs.)

_____

Verdict: Not Selected.

Interview and WAT Experience – 14

IIM Ahmedabad PGP interview at IHC, Delhi.

Verdict: Selected for the programme.

To give some background, I belong to a physics UG programme (currently in my 4th year) with decent research and academic credentials. My interview preparation involved researching about economics of Science & Education in India and opportunities after an MBA programme in order to tailor my background, reasoning and aspirations together. I was the 8th candidate (last of our slot) of the panel assigned to me, so it might be safe to assume that they were a little exhausted.

Two panelists. One was a senior Economics professor (P1), the other was a relatively younger professor (P2).

P2: "Good morning."

Me: "Hi, Good morning!"

P2: "Why are you here?" (in a very unwelcoming note if felt)

Me: "Can I start by telling about my background?"

P2: "Sure. Go ahead."

I explain my academic background and inclination towards Sciences (particularly Physics and Biology), and how I had strong intentions to apply for graduate school programmes (PhD) till the end of my third year. I also tell how I taught Math online for free (for a Khan Academy project) to support my interest in Education problems in India. I further justify why I decided to not apply for those programmes. They did not nod or express any concerns to my rationale.

Me: "After my 3rd year, I explored opportunities apart from academic research. I ultimately want to solve foundational Education based problems in India. I interviewed with a firm that is trying to solve ground level education problems through technology, and they were started by IIM A alumni. Mr X, Mr Y and Mr Z. They started off as a school in Ahmedabad itself. After interacting with them and the team, the idea of solving education problems through an economically sustainable model creeped in me. I am also interested in Management Consulting, in order to gain experience before I start something of my own."

P1 interrupts.

P1: "Management consulting is of course about management, but it's also about solving domain problems in industry. Due to which I think your background in sciences is a poor fit and won't provide any special expertise."

Me: "I would politely like to disagree with you."

P1 laughs.

P2 smiles.

P2: "Me too. I would like to disagree as well."

Me: "I think the skills and experience I gained in academic research goes well with management consulting. Scientific research is not about solving complex problems while being alone in a room. Due my research internship at XYZ University (one of the top uni in US), I realised (and learnt) the importance of 1) communicating research results. I constantly had to show my results to the Principal Researcher, the Post-doc etc. 2) I developed strong problem solving and critical skills while working in research. Especially in Sciences, we do not make vague qualitative claims, but have to be extremely precise and critical about what we say about things. 3) I am not sure as to how relevant this is, but I also learnt building relationship with fellow researchers. Apart from this, academic researchers are high in demand for such roles in US. As an example, expertise in Molecular Biology goes very well with Pharma industries."

P2: "Okay. But why Management Consulting and MBA? Why not some other route to enter industry like Law, or for your interests, a masters in Education?"

Me: "I think that's because I am exposed to such opportunities and options through batchmates and family."

P2: "What does you father do? Is he an academician?"

Me: "No, he is a Chartered Accountant."

P2 laughs.

P2: "Now it makes sense. Continue."

P1:"So you mention modern problems in Physics is currently at halt, and you feel you do not have the freedom to pursue questions that interests you. We are layman in sciences, can you elaborate on what these problems so that we are able to understand?"

Me: "Sure."

I further explain problems with fundamental incompatibility of QM, GR. How QFT explains things but we are looking for a unified theory. I also explain the common buzzwords and relevance of them (like string theory, CERN etc). I remarked how CERN has been pretty useless, and we don't hope to progress smoothly for the next 10–20 years.

P2: "What did you learn in Physics that you think you can apply to problems in Business context?"

Me: Explains scientific method (hypothesis building, analysis, drawing inferences etc) and how problems are essentially broken down into such steps in research and consulting both.

P2: "But consulting, you only get to the scratch of problems, and you work in an environment which would be entirely different from academic research."

Me: "I agree with you."

Small pause

Me: "I agree with the fact that it may not be the perfect option but I still feel it's a solid option."

I further explain what I can learn in consulting (problem solving in business context etc) which can still be a strong leverage to what I want. (despite what the drawbacks pointed out by P1)

P2: "Fair. So, apart from Research and Business, what do you do? Hobbies?"

Me: "I like to read Philosophy."

P2: "What kind?"

Me: "I recently finished reading Arthur Schopenhauer's essays in Pessimism."

P2 interrupts.

P2: "Oh! Schopenhauer! I have tried reading it, it's a pretty heavy read. I know that he influenced eastern culture and philosophy"

Me: "Uhm. To elaborate, Schopenhauer is the one influenced by eastern schools like Buddhism etc." (Schopenhauer is much recent, 1800s)

I continued to explain how his work was influenced, and how he was the first western guy to put eastern philosophy in western context and structure. I also explained difference between the approaches and works of eastern and western philosophers, and how I find eastern philosophy to be more complex/abstract than western.

Me: "I just read his comments on Education, quite fascinating."

P2 ignores and interrupts.

P2: "What else do you read?"

Me: "I am reading Beyond Good and Evil by Friedrich Nietzsche."

P2: "Yeah, I find it much easier to read and he puts these funny aphorisms."

Me: "Yeah! The first chapter was ironically about bashing the act of doing Philosophy. He is funny."

P2: "Okay, thank you!"

Me: "Thank you. Alright. Bye!"

I think I was a little nervous in the beginning, but I caught my pace. I did not learn or prepare any of my answers, so my structure was a little off when I was telling my background. I am not sure as to how convinced they were to my answers and logic. They did't provide any feedback in the middle (like nodding etc).

Interview and WAT Experience – 15

Morning Slot; 10th Feb, Delhi

10th/12th/Grad/CAT: 91.2/94.4/85.7/100

19 months work experience in analytics consulting

M: Good Morning sir

P1: Morning, have a seat. How're you doing?

M: I'm good sir

P2: So you've done your MTech in Biotechnology, tell us what is Biotechnology?

M: (Fumbled a bit) Biotechnology is a field which uses bacteria to help out in many different cases. It consists of several fields, like for example, there's plant cell technology, so we get some important biochemical compounds from plants, in this we grow plants inside the lab and improve their growth and biochemical compound production

P2: So what is a bacteria?

M: It is a unicellular or multicellular microorganism. There're many bacteria, some are also present in our body

P2: Are all bacteria harmful to us?

M: No definitely not, there're many bacteria which are present in our gut and aid us

P2: Is Staphylococcus a bacteria?

M: It is a microorganism

P2: Tell me any bacteria

M: E coli

P2: So how do bacteria operate in our body, is there a specific structure that is followed or does it depend on different bacteria

M: So microorganisms in all, whenever they enter our body, if it is a new bacteria/microorganism, our body creates antibodies against it to prevent from any harmful effect it may have

P2: How do we get in contact with bacteria?

M: Apart from being inside us, bacteria are present in the air, water, food, everything around us, so we get in contact with them while we ingest food/breathe.

P2: Are antigens created for all bacteria that come in contact with us? What do they do?

M: They are created for any new bacteria which might be harmful to us. They kind of encircle the microorganism.

P2: So they make it ineffective

M: Yes, it is like a line of defence

P2: So are antigens like living organisms? Like hormones are there, so what are they like?

M: Hormones are not exactly living organisms separately, but they exist inside living organisms

P2: What about antigens?

M: They are also similar, they are not living organisms, but they exist inside living organisms

P2: What does penicillin do? What disease does it cure?

M: It is an antibiotic which works against bacteria

P2: All bacteria?

M: Many of them

P2: What disease does it cure?

M: I'm not aware

P2: Who discovered it?

M: Alexander Fleming

P2: So tell us more about what is biotechnology, make us understand some applications.

M: As I discussed for example in plant cell technology, I've done some lab work on this. So I worked on a plant Artemisa annua, which produces artemisinin, which is used to cure Malaria

P2: Artemisinin, penicillin sound like twin brothers. (Laughing).

M: Most of the antibiotics end in "in".

P2: So what does penicillin cure?

M: I don't know sir.

P2: So biotechnology is more like combination of biology and technology right? Can you explain a bit.

M: So as I was saying I grew some plant cells in lab and cultured them. We had some plant cells, and I grew hairy roots out of it, that is artificially grown roots, and I had to culture the same and by changing parameters like frequency of media addition, had to optimise and increase the growth

P2: So where does technology come in

M: This is where, the point where we need to adjust parameters to maximise plant growth and metabolite production

P2: What do you mean by plant growth? How do you measure?

M: The weight of cell mass that is growing, compared to the natural growth.

P2: So have you heard of hybrid rice? Is that also biotechnology?

M: I've not heard of hybrid rice.

P2: These genetically modified crops, so are they also part of biotechnology

M: Yes sir

P1: You might have heard of genetically modified crops, like BT Cotton

M: Yes sir, I've

P1: So what does BT stand for?

M: Umm.. (gave a wrong answer)

P2: Can Basmati or has Basmati been genetically modified and different strains grown?

M: It can be modified, I don't know if it has been.

P2: Don't guess, anyone can make that guess. What is one company that does this genetic modification work?

M: Biocon does quite a bit of biotechnology work

P1: Ok, have you heard of <some company>

M: No sir

P1: Oh you haven't heard of it. So Chhavi seems like you've lost touch with Biotechnology after studying it for so long, and you've shifted to something that has nothing to do with Biotechnology. So what are you doing at Opera?

M: I'm a Business Analyst. I've to interact with the client, understand their problem, understand what kind of solution they want, then work with my team, make a solution hypothesis, work with the analytics team to see if it is feasible in

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the required timeframe. And once the solution is out, I understand it, draw insights and show and present it to the client.

P1: So you're a client engagement person, so you don't actually do the work, you just engage with the client

M: I said yes mostly that, but I'm also involved in making hypothesis.

P1: So how did you shift from Biotech to data analytics field?

M: I was always good at problem solving and hence I took science and maths in school and I chose IITD post that, where apart from academics I was also part of the placement cell, annual cultural fest's organisational team, I've also worked in a startup, an NGO, etc. So through these years I got to know that I've good managerial skills, and I decided to pursue a career in this field, and I chose Opera Solutions.

P1: How can you work on solution if you don't work on the data?

M: I don't do the actual coding, but at IITD I've also done a minor degree in computer science and I understand how it works.

P1: (Cuts in) No no, doing a few courses in computer science is not the answer to it, I mean how do you find solutions without working on data. I mean you sound like a data person, but you don't work on data.

M: No while doing those courses I also understood how the overall algorithm and problem solving works. And also it is like I look at the data and understand the parameters and see which are relevant from a business point of view.

P1: Tell me what do firms like yours do?

M: They use data to derive insights and build a solution that is backed up with data proof

P1: What are some disadvantages of finding solutions with data?

M: It has some problems in identifying behaviour of outliers.

P1: What do you mean by that?

M: Ok, so I'll give an example, I'm currently working with the Income Tax Department on demonetisation data analysis, so like if there're a few taxpayers of similar profile, and they pay X amount of tax. A taxpayer of similar profile is expected to pay similar taxes, but if he's paying less than that will be flagged, however, it might be possible that there's nothing wrong in it.

P1: So that is not a disadvantage, I mean it is giving you something out of line.

M: Yes, I want to say that it might give a lot of false positives

P1: What do you mean by false positives?

M: Like here, the taxpayer paying less is tagged as high risk, when it might not be, so that is a false positive. So solution of data might give quite a few false positives.

P1: So that is ok, that tells us that there's no trend. That is not a disadvantage of data analytics. Tell me a disadvantage.

M: (thought a bit) I think if the data is not standardised or the sample set is very small, we might not get the desired results.

P1: But these are the things you already know about. Give me a disadvantage, where you think that the data is fine and you run it but lo behold the solution is not what the client expected?

M: (thought thought) I can't think of anything like that right now.

P1: Have you heard of spurious correlation?

M: Sir, correlation is basically some linkages or relations between several variables/parameters

P1: That is correlation, what is spurious correlation?

M: I don't know sir

P2: So tell me some of your hobbies

M: I like reading a lot, I also write a bit on Quora

P2: What is Quora?

M: It is a question answer platform, where in people ask a lot of different questions, and it is very knowledgeable, like there was a question about bullet trains and Mr. Piyush Goyal had written an answer to it

P2: So basically it works like you ask questions and people answer? So all questions get an answer?

M: Mostly it does.

P2: So how many followers do you have on Quora?

M: Sir, 5000

P2: You've 5000 followers! How do you get followers?

M: Sir I think they like the answers that I've written

P2: What all have you written about?

M: Sir mostly my life experiences, like I went to intern at Cambridge, so I've written an answer about that and some about some preparation tips etc.

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P1: Ok Chhavi, so you're a through and through Delhi-ite?

M: Sir I'm natively from Jaipur, but I've stayed in Delhi for the past 15 years or so, so yes I consider myself to be a Delhi-ite.

P1: Yes, so you've done your schooling from here, your college here, your job is also in Noida. So what is India to you, is it just Delhi or more than that?

M: (Smiling) No sir, India is definitely a lot more than Delhi

P1: So what other places have you visited, and tell some significant places not nearby ones.

M: I've visited Taiwan in Arunachal Pradesh

P1,P2: You mean Tawang

M: Yes sir, sorry, so Tawang in Arunachal, Leh Ladakh in J&K, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Kanyakumari. My parents like to travel a lot so I've been to almost all the places.

P1: (Smiling) Your parents like or you like?

M: I mean sir, they liked and now I also like.

P1: So Andaman and Nicobar, you mean Port Blair, what are other cities in Andaman and Nicobar

M: I said, umm, there're towns like Havelock

P1: That is not a town that is an island. So you've been to Tawang, tell me something about Tawang, something about its history/significance

M: Sir, it is very close to the China border

P1: So is Leh

M: Yes sir, but China claims it to be part of their territory

P1: Yes, but that is for the whole of Arunachal Pradesh

M: Yes sir

P1: What is special about Tawang? What all did you visit there?

M: Madhuri Lake

P1: Oh okay. That'll be all.

M: Thank you, good day sir.

Converted

Interview and WAT Experience – 16

Profile:

CAT: 98.77%ile

10th - 91.2

12th - 94.8

Grad (BCom) - 85.45 (till sem 4)

Fresher (final year student)

AWT Topic:

A brief passage regarding the inappropriateness of GDP as a measure of a country's welfare followed by a few questions seeking views on the correctness of this claim. (250-300 words in 20 minutes)

I was able to write my answers comfortably. I wrote about the flaw of GDP calculation which ignores distribution of wealth. I cited several other measures that should be used instead of GDP such as HDI and Gross Happiness Index. I wrote about US and China and how the top 1% controls more wealth than the bottom 20%. Overall, I felt that I did well in my AWT.

PI:

I was 6th in my panel. The interviews of candidates before me lasted for 25-30 minutes.

The panelists were two male professors, P1 and P2. P1 is a stats professor. I haven't been able to identify P2.

Me: Good evening!

P1: Don't scare us. It is still afternoon.

P1: How has your day been?

Me: I am doing good so far, sir.

P1: So, you are a local boy. Where do you live?

P1 going through my form sees my pincode

P1: This is also our pincode.

P2: How far is your home from here?

Answered.

P1: Okay, so tell me. What do you do apart from studying?

Me: I am a basketball player. I enjoy playing basketball, watching it, analyzing it and listening to podcasts related to basketball. I wake up early in the mornings at 4:30 or so to watch basketball matches.

P2: So, why do you listen to podcasts?

Me: I listen to podcast during my commute. I like listening to podcasts because they are very informative and entertaining. They give greater insights into the games and supplement my game watching.

P2: Don't you ever like to travel in complete silence?

Me: Sometimes I do. Rarely, though.

P2: When do you do that?

Me: There are no such parameters. When I have completed listening to podcasts before my commute, I travel in complete silence.

P1: I saw you talking to the boy whose interview we took before you. He told you that we were talking about GDP. Tell me which other measures we should consider?

Me: Sir, HDI and Gross Happiness Index are two good measures of welfare. While Gross Happiness Index may not be very useful for economic purposes, it is a good indicator of welfare.

P1: What are the components of HDI?

Me: Access to healthcare, education and another component that I am unable to recall right now.

P1: You talked about Happiness. Who would you consider happy?

Me: I would consider myself happy.

P1: No, not like that. For high Happiness index, what should happen?

Me: Social rights, no segregation, no diseases, access to amenities like health, education, adequate food

P2: You are from Ahmedabad. Tell me something that is bad about this city.

Me: Talked about segregation of different communities. Certain communities confined to certain areas.

P2: Why is it so?

Me: For protecting each other.

P2: Any other bad thing?

Me: Traffic sense.

P2: Have you heard about the Me Too campaign?

Me: Explained.

P2: Was India also speaking up?

Me: Unfortunately, not.

P2: Why?

Me: Society, corruption in those meant to protect victims

P1: Any Indian organisations, people speaking about this issue?

Me: MARD, Kangana Ranaut

P1: Have you completed your graduation?

Me: No.

P1: What are you studying right now?

Answered

P1: What do you like in economics?

Me: Demand and Supply

P1: Explain.

Explained.

P1: Any commodities whose demand rises with increased price?

Me: Prestige goods.

P1: Anything else?

Me: Inferior goods

P1: What do you mean by inelastic supply?

Me: Explain perfectly inelastic supply. Hopefully doesn't hurt me.

P1: In your form, you have mentioned an English Olympiad rank. What did you do?

Me: Written test. However, a lot of other activities apart from it: Managing events, students' council, sports events, playing basketball.

P1: Thank you. Take something from the bowl and go.

Me: Thank you.

Entire interview lasted for 15-17 minutes. Shorter than others in panel.

Result- Converted

Interview and WAT Experience – 17

Profile:
10/12/Graduation(IITK-EE) : 10/93.6/9.0
Work Experience: American Express (7 Months at the time of Interview)
CAT'17: 99.86

This was my second interview of the season, the first one, IIM Kohzhikode was held just a day before this one.

AWT:

Time: 20 minutes

It was a passage about how social media and internet reflect the ideas and behavior that our society reflects and identifies with. The passage mentioned about a fictional character on twitter with the name 'Pakalu Papito' has so many followers on twitter and retweets, even more than most of the celebrities. How he tweets mostly about money and his tweets portray an exhausted and demotivated guy. His huge following means that he strikes a chord with the world. So, this implies that our society is also demotivated and exhausted. Hence we can conclude that we have no future as a society.

Based on this passage we had to answer the following questions:

What is the conclusion drawn by the author?
What is the reason given behind this this conclusion?
Do you agree/disagree with the conclusion?
Give reasons in your support.
This was the most interesting WAT/AWT I came across in all the interviews.

PI: (Brief Summary)

I was the second last in my panel which consisted of two professors.

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Panel: So you graduated in Electrical Engineering from IIT Kanpur.

Me : Yes Sir !

P: And currently you are working in American Express. What use of electrical engineering are you making in AMEX? *with a smile*

M: *nervous laugh* No use of Electrical engineering sir. It is a non core job with an analyst profile.

P: Why did you chose to work in AMEX?

M: Sir, I did a course in Data Mining which interested me and that matched with the job profile that I am currently having so I…

P: *Interrupts me in between* So you did a couple of courses in the field of data science and data mining and got interested but did a whole lot of more courses related to core electrical but that didn't interest you to do a job in core electrical field. Does that mean you don't have good electrical professors at IITK?

M:*thinking, that escalated quickly!* No sir, its not like that. In the starting years of my B.tech I did projects under professors of my department to explore the field of core electrical Engineering. Along with that to explore the corporate and Industrial life I did an Internship with ITC. After both the experiences i decided to pursue the path of Industrial and corporate life. To strengthen my decision I even completed a minor under the Industrial and Management Engineering Department of IITK.

Also, we do have great professors in our department of Electrical at IITK. A lot of my batch mates have gone on to pursue jobs in core electrical engineering and also pursue higher studies. So my choice of non-core job doesn't mean that we don't have good electrical professors at IITK.

P: So what work do you do in American Express?

M: *Told about how I am a part of Fraud decision science division of AMEX. Part of Fraud modelling team whose main role is to build models that detect fraudulent transactions happening in the US market, live on the go. Gave examples to explain how our model work. Was well prepared for this answer (obviously :P)*

P: What supply do we get in our household? AC or DC?

M: It is AC.

P: What are the advantages of AC over DC ?

M: It is easier to step-up or step-down the voltages in AC while transmission to avoid transmission losses. While transmitting over long distances AC is being used in the world currently except when the transmission is between countries under the sea. Because of high capacitance of cables under sea HVDC is used instead of AC because the capacitance will increase transmission loss significantly.

P: How do we step up or step down in AC?

M: We use transformers.

P: What is the operating principle of Transformer?

M: It is mainly based on the Lenz law (when I actually wanted to say Faraday's law of Electromagnetic Induction) where a changing flux in one coil-primary induces changing flux in the other secondary coil which then induces the voltage in the second coil. The ration of turns of primary and secondary coil determines the step-up or step-down in transformer.

P: So you are from Raebareli and currently working in Gurgaon. Who is the MP of Raebareli?

M: Mrs. Sonia Gandhi.

P: What is the connection between Raebareli and Gurgaon?

M: * trying to think very hard ! Unable to think of any answer I was just going to say I can't think of any connection except me :P *

P: Have you heard of Robert Vadra?

M: Yes, he is the son in law of Mrs. Gandhi. And I think the connection you are referring to is based on Robert Vadra. There was a controversy of Robert Vadra being offered land by DLF very cheaply.

P: So you are from UP. What was the old name of UP?

M: I guess it was United Provinces.

P: What was the old capital?

M: *thinking* Sir, I don't know the correct answer but if I had to guess I would say it might have been Agra. Because I believe Agra was a city of significant importance in UP in past. Mughal rulers also had their capital in Agra.

P: Which ruler?

M: I can think of Akbar maybe, Fatehpur Sikri?

P: What are your hobbies?

M: Sir, I like to follow WWE, Tennis and cricket.

P: Oh, WWE ! Isn't it all fake?

M: Yes Sir! It is professional wrestling where the fixtures are scripted. It is like watching movies ,which are mostly fake too.

P: What is the full form of WWE? And what was its old name?

M: WWE stands for World Wrestling Entertainment and earlier it was WWF- World Wrestling Federation.

P: So what has changed between the two except names?

M: Well they have tried to re-brand themselves as more family friendly especially to cater to children as their audience. We could see quite some content obscenity and vulgarity when it was WWF but since it has become WWE that has reduced significantly with more focus to Wrestling.

P: Who is your favourite Tennis Player?

M: Rafael Nadal

P: Really, why not Roger Federer?

M: I have always enjoyed watching Nadal play from beginning. Federer is definitely the most naturally gifted player out there but Nadal has achieved all that with his hardwork .

P: Do you think Nadal can surpass Federer's grandslam tally?

M: I think yes he can. If he plays 3–4 years more than that would mean atleast couple of French Opens and I think he can win couple of hard court slams also just like last year's US open. But it also depends on where Federer ends his tally because he is in great touch now a days.

P: Okay, Do you know who is Manish Sisodia?

M: *thinking where did that come from* Yeah, he is an AAP (Aam Aadmi Party) leader and also part of the current Delhi government ministry.

P: What is his post in the government?

M: *not sure* I am not 100% sure, but I think he is the Education minister of Delhi Government right now.

P: Okay Salil, I think that would be it.

Offer me to take one toffee from the bowl. I take a polo after a lot of thinking

Overall it was a decent interview experience where the panel was friendly and didn't grill a lot :P

Result: Selected :)

Interview and WAT Experience – 18
SRCC (2017);
 Work Experience: 8 months (at the time of interview)- Currently working at S&P Global

Institution: IIM Ahmedabad

Date: 24th February, 2018

Location: India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi

Slot: Afternoon Slot (1.15 pm)

After entering the Magnolia Hall, IHB, we were asked to fill out a form for marking the available documents and were informed that we can get our original documents verified either before or after the interview till 6–6.30 pm (I got the chance to get it verified after the interview at 5.10 pm)

After this, our respective panels were announced. I was the last one in the 3rd panel (each panel consisted of 8 candidates)

Academic Writing Test (AWT)

Started at 1.45 pm
Time allotted - 20 mins
Topic of Case Study: IITians are offered subsidy for their education and it is taxpayers' money. They end up taking management jobs and hence it is a wasteful expenditure on them. Write the claim of the author, whether you agree or not and why?
Had 5 related questions to the topic which we had to answer (didn't remember any of them)
After the AWT, we were informed that they'll start with the interview in the serial order and each interview would last nearly 20 mins and by that time other candidates can get their documents verified. Since I was the last candidate in the panel, a professor in the panel smiled and told me that you will have good 2–3 hours to get your documents verified. I smiled back.

Ironic to the professor's statement, I was not able to get my documents verified in those 2–2.5 hours because they were giving preference to those who got their interviews finished (which really make sense)

To keep myself away from any questions asked to other candidates, I chose to explore the place and scroll the news feeds on facebook. IHB is very beautiful place to explore, there were many art galleries, exhibitions, etc. I spent 20–25 mins on a exhibition on creative and artistic uses of daily wastes in different countries which was put up in the center of the complex. I would rush to the hall in between to the check the serial number of the candidate who went into the interview room and then I would go back to see some other artistic work. Frankly speaking, this kept me away from the big tension of IIM Ahmedabad interview. I tried to get my documents verified but failed since others who have done with the interview were also waiting so I decided to get it verified after the interview.

Personal Interview

(Full transcript)

I was waiting outside the interview room from 4 pm and my turn came around 4.30 pm

Panel number 3 :- 2 professor
P1- Male (was very sweet and greeted with a big smile)
P2- Female (seemed to be a rude one in starting)

P1 (Smiling): So Sundeep, you were the last one in the panel, you must have asked a lot of question of the interview from the other candidates.

Me: No sir, I got a chance to explore this beautiful place. I saw a lot of art galleries and art exhibition.

P1: What all did you saw?

Me: I saw an art exhibition on creative waste management which was put up in the center of the complex.

P1: Where do you work?

Me: Sir, currently I work in S&P Global.

P2: Where?

Me: Ma'am, I work in Standard & Poor's

P2: But you have written Phronesis Partners (my former employer) in the form (they both had tablets in hand with my form opened).

Me: Ma'am, that was my first employer. I have recently changed to S&P.

P2: Okay! What is Standard and Poor (independently), were they any two individuals?

Me: Yes ma'am, these were two individuals who formed this company which was later acquired by a company named McGraw Hill Financials in the 1950-60s. And this standard and poor's brand became so popular due to its ratings business that the holding company recently reorganized and rebranded itself as S&P Global. Standard & Poor's is now an obsolete term, we only use S&P in our daily working.

P2: (Looked impressed with my answer/ story of S&P)

P1: So, what's your work profile there?

Me: Sir, I work in the Market Intelligence division of S&P wherein I work in the Entity Management team. We have to conduct indepth research of companies which may be very small that you might not find anything or very less data on the internet.

P1: So, how do you search for that?

Me: Sir, our first hit is Google always, we try to search data about companies on Google and then……

P2: (stopped me) But you just said that these are too small that you might not find anything on the internet.

Me: We have paid vendors around the globe which provides a basic profile of these companies. And we also refer to the official business registers of various countries

P2: (Not so impressed)

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Me: Ma'am, you need some starting point for your research. We cannot think of a company name randomly and start our work on the basis of that. These paid vendors provide us with a LEI number and a basic profile of these companies which we have to validate.

P1 & P2 : (started showing some good interest in the profile)

Me: (I continued) My current project in the organisation is LEI which stands for Legal Entity Identifier. Its like an Aadhar number for companies in Europe and North America. We receive LEI from paid vendors and then our first is to validate the entity's name, whether this company actually exist in the world or not. Then we classify these companies as private company, public company, investment firms, etc and then we can also classify these entities as the educational institutions, foundations, charitable institutions, etc. Then we search whether the companies are operating currently or not and then we also track down the primary location of business conduct of these entities.

And recently our workload has increased a lot after European countries passed a law named MiFID which requires all the entities to get this LEI issued and the deadline is kept as June this year. My manager told us that he used to receive a workload of 6000 companies a month, now he is receiving 6000 companies a day.

P1 & P2: (looked satisfied and impressed with my answer)

P2: (scrolling my form in the tablet she had) What is the meaning of Phronesis! (Phronesis Partners was my former employer)

Me: Ma'am, This is my first company and I was placed from my graduation college there. It is a market research firm based out of Singapore.

P2: (in not so good tone) I asked you about the meaning of Phronesis.

Me: (in low tone) Phronesis is a Greek work meaning Intelligence in english

P2: You left this?

Me: yes ma'am, last month

P2: Why?

Me: (explaining to both the panelist since I was prepared and expected this question) Ma'am, actually I was campus placed from SRCC there. Being a graduate only, I did not have any idea of the corporate culture. After being there for 3–4 months, I did not liked the overall environment of the company. I went there for learning and not for money. I used to ask my manager to review and provide feedback of my performance. He used to skip this by saying that we'll discuss this in the next KRA. But it never happened.

Me: (raised my tone a little bit) I told him, good or bad, whatever the feedback is, I want it. Even if it is bad, I'll accept it but atleast give me the feedback of my performance. But he never did and one day S&P called me…

P2 to me and to P1: (looked satisfied with my reason of changing the company) Yes! feedback is necessary for learning

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P2: But your profile with this company (S&P) doesn't seem to fit with your education.

Me: Ma'am I have a completed B.Com (Hons) which a general course and you can opt for any stream of business after that. The reality of this world is everyone dream consulting jobs at big companies like Mckinsey, BCG, etc but these companies only hire a few people. In SRCC also, out of a batch of 750 students, they hired only 10–15 students. This doesn't make other people less capable or any other job good or bad. I think I am working in a company which is providing most of the things I want.

P1 and P2: (Looked satisfied with my answer)

P1: Sundeep, which was your favourite subject in college?

Me: Sir, I used to score good marks in Taxation subjects. So you can consider these as my favourite subjects.

P1: (sat more comfortably, as if he was waiting for someone to say tax :p) Okay! The budget has been recently introduced in the Parliament. Do you know something about that?

Me: Yes sir!

P1: Okay! I'll ask you about the new provision/changes made under different headers.

Me: okay sir!

P1: Tell me about the changes made for Individuals.

Me: Sir, the Income Tax slabs for individuals has not changed at all but a standard deduction of ₹40,000 is proposed in place of medical and travel allowances.

P1: Corporates?

Me: The corporate tax rate has been reduced to 25% from 30%

P1: For entities upto?

Me: for companies having turnover upto ₹250 crores

P1: Anything about LTCG ?

Me: (Confused LTCG with LTA) Sir I know there has been some changes in that but i don't remember .

P1: There has been a major change related to stock exchange (the professor helped me with LTCG change related to stock market)

Me: Ohhh!! i got it. The government has introduced a tax rate of 10% on long term capital gains on sale of shares even if you hold you security for more than 3 years which was exempted earlier.

P1 (smiling): Do you think its correct?

Me: Sir, everything has its pros and cons.

P1: Okay tell me the pros and cons of this change.

Me: Sir, the con is that it will demotivate the investors to hold their security for a long period of time and coming to the pros, I read the finance minister's statement who said that as much as ₹3.5 lakh crore was claimed as exemption under this provision and most of this exemption was claimed by high net worth individuals and foreign investors.

P1: Okay! (satisfied with the answer)

Me: The government has also introduced a new insurance scheme called Ayushmaan Bharat wherein the government is planning to provide insurance worth ₹5 lakhs to almost 10 crore families in the country. This could potentially be the largest health insurance scheme of the world.

P2 (taking interest in the topic): So do you think families will benefit from this scheme.

Me: I think a lot of stakeholders will benefit from this. The people will benefit because they'll get insurance for their families, this will create new business opportunity and revenue for the insurance companies and finally hospital will also see increased revenue.

P2: (nodding head)

Me: But I fear that this could create a problem that America is facing. I remember when Manoj Bhargava (a billionaire philanthropist) visited our SRCC campus, he told that if you have a headache in US, the hospitals will recommend you a head surgery.

P2: Ohh! thats very bad

Me: Yes ma'am

P2: So you fear that the same head surgery situation can come to India also

Me: Yes ma'am…..

P1 (breaking the entire discussion, started a new topic) Sundeep, which all places have visited ?

Me: Sir, last month only I visited Shimla and I have visited a lot of hilly places in North India and then after 3–4 years we go to our hometown which is a common thing.

P1: Where is your hometown?

Me: Allahabad!

P2: But you have written Kalkaji, New Delhi in your form.

Me: Ma'am, I was born in Delhi only but my parents are from Allahabad.

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P2: Ohh! your ancestral home.

Me: yes ma'am

P2: tell us 3 famous things about Allahabad

Me: (after taking 10 sec to think) Ma'am, the most famous thing about Allahabad is a place named Prayag wherein 3 major rivers Ganga, Yamuna & Saraswati meet and merge into Ganga river!

P2: Have you visited that?

Me: No ma'am, didn't got a chance to visit there. But the reality is somewhat different. Though we say that 3 rivers meet there but in reality only two rivers Ganga and Yamuna meet there because Saraswati river is extinct now.

P2: Extinct??

Me: Yes ma'am, historically we used to have the river Saraswati meeting there but that river is no more present. But I saw a news that ASI found the path of a extinct river which is assumed to be that of Saraswat.

P2: Ohh! They used satellite images?

Me: No, they had found by digging several places in North India.

P2: (looked confused)

Me: The common belief is that the river had submerged underground and ASI has found some flowing underground water in the path which is considered to be that of Saraswati.

P2: okay! Any other thing for which your hometown is famous for?

Me: (after thinking for 10 sec) The MahaKumbh Mela takes place in Allahabad

P2: Ohh! Kumbh Mela

Me: The last Kumbh Mela held in Allahabad in 2013 which witnessed a footfall of almost 3 crores people which is the highest concentration of human beings at one place in the entire humankind!

P2: Ohh 3 crore!

Me: Yes ma'am

P2: So Kumbh Mela takes place at an interval of how many years?

Me: It takes place at every 4 years at different places of India. But it is held in Allahabad every 12 years!

(P2 looked at P1 if he had any other question to ask)

_____

P1: Okay Sundeep! Thank you! have some toffee!

Me: (Picked up a toffee and smiled & thanked both the professors and left)

(While leaving and closing the door of the interview room, it somehow banged by mistake with a loud noise. I opened it again and apologized and left! I went back to the waiting area and got my documents verified- the last person in the entire slot :p)

(I was very happy and relieved after having such a decent interview. The Coaching centres hype these interviews which is not the case in reality. The things they look in you is your confidence and your general knowledge about everything)

April 8, 2018:

The link for admission status on IIMA website was not working. Found a link on a coaching centre website saying that IIMA results announced. The link redirected to IIMA website. I entered my creditentials

Result: Converted!!

Interview and WAT Experience – 19

Profile :

10–95%

12–87

Ug-9.0 (till 7 sem)

Cat score -99.86

Work ex nil

Academic writing test : case study on freedom of expression .should there be limits or not

Interview

2 profs . Let's call them P1 and P2

Duration : around 20–25 mins

P1: Tell me something about yourself

Me : told

P1: ok so tell me different type of operating system

Me : told

P1: Gave some programming and told me to write

Me : Wrote something

P1: Are sure it's correct

Me : No sir will get 1 or 2 error I guess

P1: Can u correct it ?

Me : No sir

P1: Why it will be easy for you ?

Me: Told something

P1: Did u got placed

Me : Told

P1: Wat is your job role in the company

Me : Told

P1: Which language is easy java or python

Me : told

P1: Told me to write a program in python

Me : Wrote and showed to him

P1: Wat is your favourite subject

Me: Data Structure

P1: What is a tree ?

Me : Told

P1: Difference between tree and graph

Me : Told

P1: tell me some properties of red black tree

Me : Told something

P1: Define binary tree

Me: Told something

P2: Do u know integration

Me :Yes somewat

P2: Gave me a sum

Me : Did something and showed to him

P2: wat about graphs

Me : Somewhat sir

P2 : Wrote a equation and told me to draw a graph

Me : Did but answer was wrong

P1:Why MBA when u already got placed

Me : Told the answer which I prepared

P2: Tell me about your final year project

Me : told my role any why u choosed this project blah .

P2: But there are already many ERP model

Me : Explained

P1: SaaS based model ?

Me : Told

P1: So how will u store the data

Me: Explained

P1: Are u sure it will work .

Me : Told

P2: who is chief minister of Jharkhand

Me : told

P2: Can u tell something about current situation of Jharkhand government

Me : Blabbered something

P2: Ok great I am done Amit you have any questions?

Me: None now

P2: Ok great we are done all the best Amit

Interview and WAT Experience – 20

Background: B.Tech (Mechanical engineering)

Work Experience : ITC Ltd (8 months)

Profile: X - 94.57% | XII - 94.5% | Btech: 9.58 CGPA | CAT - 99.94%tile

Location: Hotel Monarch Luxor, Bangalore

Panel: Panel 4. 1 Professor (around 45 years old) and another Female alumnus (around 28-30 years old)

Date: 09/03/18

Time: 8:15am

Institute: IIM Ahmedabad

AWT: Social media is has helped in making our world more democratic. It helps politicians reach out to the people. Even people looking to gain traction in politics can share their views and build up popularity helping them enter the political circle. Social media also helps to reach out to people to gather funds. Forums like Facebook and WhatsApp helps people communicate between themselves. (There were more positives of social media which were mentioned which I am unable to recall)

Hence, social media can only lead to a harmonious future.

1. What are the claims made here?

2. What is the reasoning provided here?

3. Is the reasoning strong or weak?

4. Give reasons.

Ans: I think I did a pretty good job. I pointed out the claims which were made and the reasoning. The reasoning was flawed because all the examples were only looked at from the positive aspect. I mentioned how politicians like Mr Raja through a post on social media incited people to vandalise Periyar's statue in Vellore. I said that all the claims could be looked at from two ways and we cannot just conclude that social media will lead to a harmonious future. It has to used with caution.

Interview:

(Let us call the 2 panelists P1 and P2. P1 was the older professor and P2 was the alumnus)

P1 started the interview.

Q1. P1: So Anik, you are a mechanical engineer and you are working in ITC?

Ans: (I had made a point that I would try to smile no matter what). Yes Sir.

Q2. P1: So you promote cancer?

Ans: Cancer?

Q3. P1: I mean that you sell cigarette sticks which cause cancer?

Ans: No sir. I spoke at length about how ITC provides employment to thousands of people in different divisions, is a major contributor to the exchequer. Also, at the same time it keeps people informed about the cons of cigarette smoking through 85% health warning. I said it believes in delivering value to the customers who are smoking cigarettes.

Q4. P1: What value do you provide?

Ans: Spoke how there are people who are very stressed in life and how cigarettes give them a way out and helps them calm down. I also mentioned how people who are constipated also consume cigarettes which eases their bowel movement.

Q5.(both P1 and P2 laughing now) P1: So you are saying that doctors should recommend cigarettes to people who are suffering from constipation?

Ans: No sir. I'm not saying that. I said that people often use cigarettes for that. Neither the government nor ITC promotes or forces people to smoke cigarettes.

Q6. P1: Okay Anik. You have made your point. You have defended your company. Now tell me something. We promise that we will not tell ITC. Do you think ITC is an ethical company?

Ans: Yes sir. I think so.

Q7. P1: Are businesses ethical?

Ans: In general?

Q8. P1: Yes in general.

Ans: I don't think there is any black or white here. I think all businesses are unethical to some extent.No business will be completely ethical. I said that if a company has to set up a machine and a police officer asks for a bribe of 100 rupees, the company would pay that bribe to quickly settle the matter than drag the issue to court because of their ideals. I think refusing to pay the bribe would only delay the process and waste more shareholder money. Paying the bribe here will help to quickly resolve the issue.

Q9. P1: So you are saying that the money which was paid to the Government of India for the furtherance of the arms deal was ethical?

Ans: No sir. When the scale is huge and when you are doing something where you are increasing your chances over other companies, then it is both unethical and illegal. That qualifies as a scam.

Q10. P1: What is legality and ethics?

Ans: Legality is set in stone by laws enshrined in the constitution of India. It is set by the Government and if you break them, then you are doing something illegal. However ethics is something deep down. It has something to do with how we have grown up, our morals and values and doing what we feel is right.

Q11. P1: Can you tell me something which is legal yet unethical?

Ans: Can I have some time to think? (The first thing which came to my mind was cigarettes!! :P)

Q12.P1: Yes Anik, please think.

Ans: Sir, lets talk about dams. I don't remember the name of the dam. It was the dam which was set up on River Narmada. That's the only thing which is coming to my mind. A lot of people were displaced and were promised new homes and new jobs which would give them a mode of living which is at par with the life they were leading earlier. However, many of the people were given new homes which were subpar. Few were not even given homes and employment. While this is not illegal as it is claimed that the process of helping these people is ongoing, this is unethical.

Q13. P1: Who made this dam?

Ans: I'm not sure but I think it was set up by the Government of India.

Q14. P1: Okay. So tell where is this dam situated?

Ans: Sir, I apologise, but I really can't remember the area.

Q15. P1: Take a guess. Where is the river Narmada?

Ans: Sir it is in the North- Western part of India. But I really am not sure.

Q16. P1: Please draw it on the map. Is it in Himachal Pradesh?

Ans: No sir. Not that far North. (I drew a map of India and drew a large circle around Gujarat and to its right.) Sir it should be somewhere in this region but I am not sure.

Q17. (Both of them laughing). P1: So it is in Rajasthan?

Ans: No sir. It isn't in Rajasthan. It is somewhere around or near Gujarat.

Q18. (Laughing again) P1: So Anik, Geography isn't your forte?

Ans: No sir. I'm extremely sorry. But geography isn't really my forte. (Smiling)

Q19. P1: Fair enough. Okay you have mentioned in your SOP that you reduced the trim margin and saved costs for your company? You have also mentioned that Production always prefers a buffer of excess inventory. What does this statement mean?

Ans: I explained how ITD (Indian tobacco division) isn't clear about their plans or volumes and they give us volumes suddenly depending on the market or sudden requirements. Explained how production always prefers long running jobs to increase their efficiency and reduce wastes. Hence they always want 2 days inventory of every format which is not possible to maintain as we have to control inventory at the same point of time.

Q20. P1: Why do they prefer long running jobs?

Ans: Explained that there are different formats. Let us take the DSFT (Deluxe sized filter) format. Production would like to run that same format for 7-8 days as it would reduce changeovers and reduce losses and waste.

Q21. P1: Why do they want to reduce changeovers? What are the costs involved?

Ans: Mentioned that the first cost would be the Machine hour rate which would be lost. I explained that every machine had a rate which was derived from the price of the machine and the numbers of years in service. I said that a changeover typically takes 1-2 hours depending on the numbers of cylinders to be changed or the ink to be altered or format change. The machine could have been effectively used in those 2 hours to run some other job and it wouldn't have remained idle. Hence production tends to avoid frequent changeovers.

Q22. P1: Okay what other costs are there.

Ans: Explained that a machine is typically 50-70 metres long. So the board has to be carefully threaded into the machine which takes around an hour. Now inks have to be changed and varnishes altered. Machine settings have to be changed. Now if we do a changeover, we are losing that amount of board which is used to set up the initial settings. Frequent changes would waste the ink and varnish which had been used. Example: Say job 1 uses blue ink and job 2 uses white ink instead of blue. So changing the ink before it has been fully used would lead in wastage of that ink. Similarly the board would also be wasted. Hence this leads to loss of Raw Material.

Q23. P1: Okay. Any other costs which come to your mind?

Ans: (Thought for some time). No sir.

Q24. P1: What about labour cost? Different labour is employed during a changeover right?

_____

Ans: No sir. Each machine has around 4-5 operators and the same operators do the changeover operations.

Q25. P1: Okay. Let us talk about other industries and not the manufacturing industry. Do you think there are changeover costs associated with other industries?

Ans: Yes sir, I think changeover costs would be there in any industry.

Q26. P1: What about software industry?

Ans: Sir, in a software industry people would effectively be writing a program or a piece of code. So if there is a changeover meaning that the previous programming is stopped abruptly and a new program is started, then the time devoted to that program would be lost where something else could have been done.

Q27. P1: What if we finish that program properly and now move onto another program?

Ans. Sir, if the program is similar then there would be no loss and there would be a seamless change.

Q28. P1: But don't you think that there would be training costs involved?

Ans: Sir the assumption here was that the new program is similar. If it is a completely new technology then training costs would definitely be involved.

Q29.(P1 looks at P2 now) P2: Okay Anik, tell me difference between operation of external and internal combustion engine.

Ans: Explained with examples.

Q30. P2: Tell me about the laws of thermodynamics.

Ans: Explained starting from Zeroth law to Third law.

Q31. P2: What do you do during your free time.

Ans: Mentioned how I am passionate about football and I play football. I also work out. However, due to the hectic work life and lack of company, football has taken a sort of backseat. However, I workout regularly. (I should have spoken about my football related achievements here. This was a blunder)

Q32. P2: Okay, who is the captain of the Indian Football Team?

Ans: Sunil Chhetri.

Q33. P2: India is a country where there is a lot of income inequality. What can be done to solve that problem?

Ans: Can I have a moment to think?

Q34. P2: Yeah, surely.

Ans: I broke it up into three strategies.

1. Taxation where the rich and people from affluent classes are taxed more and the burden on the poor is reduced. However, as only a small proportion of Indians pay taxes, this wouldn't be a very comprehensive solution.

2. Reservation which is caste based should focus more on the non creamy layer. Explained about how there are people from backward classes and castes who have had a good upbringing and are of sound social status. They can be excluded from reservations and it should be given to people who really need it. This would give more people access to quality education and would help to solve the income inequality to some extent.

3. Third is Universal Basic Income. A few countries have implemented this and it has found to help the people in the lower strata of society. It will help to give them a boost in life and help them reach a certain standard. This will motivate them to reach high levels of income and help alleviate some the problems they face. However in India it is a challenge to implement this step due to the large and diverse population.

P1 and P2: Okay Anik. Thank you. Best of luck.

Feedback: It lasted around 30-35 minutes. I felt that I should have known about Narmada. I should have also gone into much detail when asked about what I do in my free time. I should have talked about my sporting achievements.

Verdict: Converted!

Interview and WAT Experience – 21

ate: March 9, 2018

Venue: Monarch Luxur, Bangalore

Time: 08:15 AM

Panel: An experienced male professor and a middle aged lady professor.

AWT:

The author described about social media being used by politicians to conduct campaigns, fundraisers and even influence opinions. He claimed that social media had made a fair ground for everyone to compete. The author had concluded that the social media has made the world a more democratic place to live.

Questions:

What are the claims author?
Do you agree to his claims?
If yes, why. If not, why.
I wrote a single page essay answering all these questions. I had concluded that the author was making generalisation in his claims with little or no evidence.

_____

Resources used to prepare:

WAT/AWT(IIMA)/PI Preparation for B-School Interviews - Unacademy

Bodhi Tree - Articles/Study from best sources for being better informed

After WAT, I came out and checked IIMA faculty page for the credentials of professors.

Apparently the male professor was an economics major, the chairperson of PGP program.

The lady professor had PhD from IIMB and has been teaching Marketing at IIMA.

I went to read the blog of the male professor, he had written about Made in India campaign, his interest was on food quality and control.

I was the 5th person to be interviewed in my panel, it gave me around 2 hours time to read and research some stuffs.

Personal Interview:

Greeted and taken seat.

Let's call M, L, K as male, lady professors and Karthikeyan respectively.

M: Karthikeyan. Who is other Karthikeyan do you know?

K: Sir, Narain Karthikeyan, former formula 1 racer, he is also from my hometown, Coimbatore.

M: * Smiled *

L: So Karthikeyan, you have mentioned about cafeteria management system project. Can you tell me about that.

* This was a project I did during the training phase of my first job, I had mentioned that we developed a simple learning algorithm to predict the expected food wastage *

K: * Explained *

L: You have mentioned that you have developed a learning algorithm. Can you tell me about that?

K: Yes mam. We developed a linear regression algorithm to predict the food wastage on the given day of the week.

L: I am not sure what do you regressed against? What are the coordinates, can you name them?

K: Mam, we can take the day of the week on an axis and amount of food waste on another axis and find the line of close fit.

L: But doesn't it involve simple math than a learning regression algorithm?

_____

*Realised time to accept the failure *

K: Yes mam, it's a very simple algorithm we did, as a campus trainee.

L: Don't get me wrong, I love the idea of simplicity, I was wondering what you meant by learning algorithm.

M: What is the difference between co-curricular and extra-curricular activities?

K: Sir, co-curricular refers to the activities that are relevant to our academic curriculum. For example, if I am a science student and I participate in a science exhibition, it is a co-curricular activity. If I do swimming or play chess, that's an extra curricular activity.

M: Well, you have mentioned that you won national rank in general knowledge test conducted by United Schools Organisation.

K: Yes sir, I did. *grin*

M: Is that a co-curricular activity?

K: Sir, you have given only 3 rows to mention extra curricular activities but i have many accolades in extra curricular hence I sneaked that one into co-curricular activities.

M: So you think numbers do matter.

K: Yes sir. They do.

L: Your school needs to be part of United Schools Organisation for you to participate in this test?

K: No mam, I am not sure whether membership is required to take the test. But United Schools Organisation is affiliated to United Nations Organisation, they conduct these tests to promote extra curricular activities among school students.

M: Do you think United Nations in democratic?

K: Sir, I would say to an extent, yes they are democratic.

M: But they have veto and non-veto members.

K: Sir, They had Kofi Annan from Ghana, Ban Ki Moon from Korea as secretary generals. So from the point of representation, I think they are democratic.

M: Who are the veto members?

K: United States, China, Russia, France… I think Germany.

* forgot UK. -_- *

M: Germany? But they caused second world war.

K: Yes sir, they are growing as the super power in Europe under the leadership of Angela Merkel. So I think they are in veto council.

M: * smiled *

L: So Karthikeyan, you have left your first job in 8 months.

K: Yes mam. I gave the interview with Freshdesk during my final year at college, but they asked me to apply after 3 months so I took the offer I had from my university placements.

L: So you wanted to join the startup, left your job and went back to it.

K: Yes mam. * grin. *

L: What is the country that has it's map on it's national flag?

K: Cyprus, mam.

M: Which city you said you were from?

K: Coimbatore sir. It's called the Manchester of South India.

M: This is what everyone says.

smiling

You go to Mumbai, they will say they are the Manchester of India, you go to east, Calcutta will say they are the busy business location.

K: Sir, there were lots of cotton mills around Coimbatore, Tiruppur which is the neighbouring city is a leader in cotton export. I think they are rightfully called Manchester of south India.

M: Why do you think they have started the business in the specific locations. Like Coimbatore, Mumbai etc.

K: Sir, I think they look out for variety of parameters before starting a business. Procurement of resources, labor charges, transportation etcetra.

M: What about the climate? Do you think it plays a role?

K: Yes sir, they do consider weather situations.

* grinning about pleasant Coimbatore weather *

L: So you have mentioned Quizzing, didn't you participate in Tata Crucible quizzes.

_____

K: Mam I was more into General quizzing during college days. During my final year I founded my college's official quiz club, Quizzers Anonymous. Even though CEG(my college) had rich legacy in quizzing, there was no official community to organise the activity. I took the initiative.

* smiled again *

L: So you must have followed the University Challenge and all.

K: Mam, I have not…. wait, this is from 2000s-2002s right?

L: Yeah, your college did pretty well in that event.

K: Yes mam, I do remember. Siddhartha Basu was the host.

L to M: That's it. We are done.

M: I am also done

I said 'Thank you' and started staring at the toffee jar, wondering whether they will offer it. They said, "you can take the toffee".

I took it and said, "Sir I have a question"

M: Go on.

K: Sir, Government has passed IIM bill last year, will it have any impact on the batch that is going to join this year?

M: Well, we dont know. These things take time. You know Karthikeyan, information is costly.

L: Will it influence whether you join an IIM?

K: No mam, it has nothing to do with me joining the IIMs. I was just curious.

M: What are the IIM calls you have?

K: All calls sir, I applied for FMS alone outside the IIMs.

M: Well, thank you Karthikeyan. All the very best.

K: Thank you mam. Thank you so much sir.

Verdict: Converted!

Interview and WAT Experience – 22

10/12/Graduation : 94.14/94.40/81.03

Graduation: BSc Statistics,St. Xavier's, Mumbai

Work Experience: Aon Consulting (10 Months at the time of Interview)

This was my 4th interview, and i had 3 interviews in the same week! (IIFT, IIM - Lucknow, IIM - Ahmedabad)

AWT:

Time: 20 minutes

It was a passage about how the law against ragging in Indian colleges should be revoked, as ragging was a way seniors and juniors mingled. There were a series of questions that followed the passage.

Personal Interview:

I was 5th in my panel, and entered at about 2:45 pm.

There were two panelists, both middle aged men, professors. P1 looked a little disinterested :P

I was called in, and greeted them both.

P2: So Meghna, can you tell us a little about yourself?

Spoke about where and what i studied, how i work in Human Resources Consulting (compensation practice) and how long it has been there.

P2: Okay, what is compensation consulting? could you explain it to us?

Me: Sir, we advise clients how best to pay their employees, and this we do by compensation benchmarking, etc, etc (explained the whole process hereafter)

A few follow up questions from P1 about the process.

P2: How do you think Statistics helped you have an edge with respect to the job?

(i was pretty stumped, did not really use any tools i'd learnt in college)

Me: Sir i think, i understand measures of central tendencies well, hence it becomes easier for me to produce compensation benchmarking reports.

P1: See, averages anyone can compute, what else?

Me: (trying to think of something that made sense) Sir, i ensure that the sample is representative in nature. And all companies data is well represented.

P1: Okay, How do you ensure that?

Me: Sir internally, we have a limit of a certain percentage of each sample to be of one company, and hence i ensure the same.

P1: Can you write a formula where that might cause bias?

Me: (absolutely confused) Sir, I'm sorry, i do not understand what formula you are referring to.

P1: Do you think this method is foolproof? Dont you think stratified random sampling is better?

Me: Yes sir, 95% cases it is, but sometimes it does cause an issue, and hence some clients request unsampled data. Wrt to Stratified sampling, it is very time consuming, and not very cost effective sir.

P2: Why do they ask for unsampled ?

Me: Sir these firms look more at headcount comparison than actual compensation comparison, as they perform mass recruitment, especially at lower levels.

P2: was not completely convinced, but said okay.

P1: First you said this is the method you use, now you're saying your method is wrong, and clients are dissatisfied.

Me: No Sir, i said some large clients prefer the unsampled route, however largely our clients are okay with sampled data, as they want equal representation.

P2: (Smiling) Yes, Yes, its fine.

P2: So Meghna, what are some statistical tools used by humans?

(i thought he meant database management tools)

Me : Sir, R programming could be one.

P2: No, no, like you studied concepts right, so any of those?

Me: (so many, could not think of one) Sir, Big Data is a phenomenon floating around.

P2: Any other core tool?

Me: Sir, ANOVA is used extensively, like in biological sciences for Clinical Trials.

P1: Okay so we don't know anything about ANOVA or Clinical trials, can you explain it to us?

Me: Sure Sir. i spoke about the placebo sugar pill and the test drug being administered to two groups and the mean effect of the two drugs is compared. (I screwed up here saying control group gets the test drug which was completely stupid! realised after the interview x_x)

P1: can you write down the testing part for it?

Me: okay sir, so we would have Placebo and Test drug, and administer different levels of it, say 50 ml and 100ml.

P1: no, i want only 50 ml.

Me: (i realised with only one level, we could use the T-test) Sir, in that case you can use a simple T-Test of means, since there is only one level.

P1: Oh wow, first you started with Big data, then anova, now you are saying t-test!

Me: No sir, i assumed we would administer multiple levels, hence.

P1: Anyway, yes, continue the testing.

Me: Wrote the null and alternate hypothesis. P1 asked me to draw the T distribution curve. Drew it. Asked me about Type 1 error. stopped me halfway when i was writing the procedure-

P1: Okay, what distribution is the null hypothesis?

Me: (confused) sir, that depends on the sample size, if it is large enough, it will tend to normal.

P1: Okay. Now you said Big Data. What is this big data? what is big? how do they even define what is big?

Me: (Stumped, i had no clue why it is called big, although had read a little) Sir, i read somewhere that it is data that cannot fit onto an excel sheet. (cant believe i said that)

P1: Haha, that depends on the version of excel. No, why Else?

Me: Sir maybe 1,00,000 and above data points in some cases?

P1: So <100000 is medium data?? (how stupid of me)

Me: Sir i guess it is largely contextual. Hence in some cases it might be safe to say 1,00,000.

P1: So how is it even used, this big data?

Me: Sir, in our country especially, we find it extremely difficult to get representative data, and sometimes a sample might not be completely adequate. However big data gives us a broader prospective, is more representative in nature, and its facets are a lot closer to the population parameters.

P1: (not convinced) So your saying CENSUS is the best?

_____

Me: No Sir, larger data which is now readily available due to technology, and hence the population parameters are better furnished.

P1: What Population Parameters?

Me: could be anything you define - mean, etc.

P1: Okay. So why do you want to do an MBA? you have only 10 months work ex.

Me: Sir, the curriculum is perfect as it teaches you finance, marketing and HR, something that is not available in any other form, also the leadership skill development i think is brilliant. I also want to advance my corporate career.

P1: (I think he was very sarcastic) But you seem to have learnt all the stats and know all the HR already, why do an MBA then?

Me: No Sir, I have a lot to learn. i have spent only 10 months and do not know everything i need to about HR.

P1: Okay Meghna, we are done. Thank you for being here.

(At that moment i looked down at the toffee bowl. Haha)

P1 continues - and you can take a toffee. all the best!

Me: Thank you Sir.

Verdict: Converted

Interview and WAT Experience – 23

Slot- Morning (8.30 am)

Last Candidate on Panel No-6 (Also the only female on it)

AWT

Our AWT topic was about how technology and video games in general have negative effects on the learning and grasping power of children below the age of 12 years and how it adversely affects their creativity. The author was of the view that because of these reasons, children should be kept away from technology till they turn atleast 12.

The following questions had to be answered on the basis of the information -

What are the claims made here?
What is the reasoning provided?
Is the reasoning strong or weak?
Give reasons.

_____

The AWT happened quite early in the morning and the interviews started right after it. Candidate 1 was asked to wait outside the room wherein we had the test, the rest of us went to another building and got our documents verified. I found the AWT to be pretty simple and finished about 5–7 minutes before the other candidates.

I was the last person to be interviewed on my panel. I was called in around 12.20 pm and the interview lasted only for 20 minutes. All the other candidates had their's for about 35–40 minutes; needless to say, I freaked out when I came out and realized how short mine was.

The Panel consisted of two male professors. One of whom was Professor Vishal Gupta and the other was Professor Rama Mohana R. Turaga (I'm not 100% sure if it was Rama Sir) Both of the panelists were extremely warm and accommodating. They were extremely patient with me and there wasn't any sort of grilling that happened.

Interview

Me- Good afternoon, Sirs. (I smiled at both of them and stood right next to the chair)

P1- Good afternoon, please sit.

(I said thank you and sat)

P1- So, Laiba, where are you from?

Me- Sir, Meerut.

P1- Oh? What is the historical significance of Meerut?

Me- Sir, The Revolt of 1857 started from Meerut. It was led by Mr. Mangal Pandey.

P1- What was the reason behind the revolt?

Me- Sir, I don't know.

P1- So, Laiba, you're doing b.com?

Me- B.com(hons), Sir.

P1- Well, I'm sure you must have been placed by now.

Me- Yes, Sir. I have been.

P1- Where?

Me- Sir, KPMG. The profile is of an Audit Analyst.

P1- You already have a job, why do you not want to go for it?

Me- Sir, audit is not something I want to do in life.

P1- What do you want to do?

Me- Sir, I want to take up social entrepreneurship; but what exactly it is that I want to do in it, is something that I haven't decided.

P2- For profit or not for profit? (This is the first time he spoke since he called me inside the room)

Me- Sir, not for profit.

P1- So, Laiba, if you want to take up Social entrepreneurship, why do you want to do an MBA?

Me- Sir, because an MBA will ensure that I pick up... (I started fumbling/stammering a little at this point and I could see Panelist 1 raising an eyebrow. So I decided to pause)

Me- Sir, I'm a little nervous right now, would it be okay if I take a minute calm myself down?

P1 & P2- Oh, Absolutely. It's fine. Don't be nervous, please calm yourself down.

P1-Please have some water.

(Both of them were smiling at this point)

Me- Thank you, Sir but I just need a moment.

(I took a pause for some seconds, calmed myself down and recollected my thoughts in the meantime)

Me- Sir, I'm okay now. Basically, why I want to do an MBA is because that it'll ensure that I pick up critical thinking and analytical skills that'll be required for social entrepreneurship. An MBA will also ensure that the scope of mistakes in the real world is minimized since I will be learning in a stimulated environment.

P1- If it is just about the skills, why an MBA? Why not another course?

Me- Sir, it's not just about the skills but also about the curriculum it offers. I won't get that in any other course.

(Panelist 1 smiled at this answer.)

P1- So, Laiba, what is your subject of specialization in college?

Me- Sir,we don't have a specialization as such.

P1- Okay, Laiba, tell me the methods of accounting for depreciation.

Me- Sir, depreciation can be charged directly to the asset,the journal entry for this would be Depreciation a/c dr. To Asset a/c. Or else, we could also create a provision for depreciation and charge the depreciation to it. If any part of the asset in question is sold, the accumulated depreciation on it is transferred to the asset from the provision.

P1- I mean the accounting for depreciation.

Me- This is the accounting,Sir. If you want to know the methods, there are two. Straight-Line method and Written-Down Value method. Under SLV, an equal amount of depreciation charged on the original value of the machine while under WDV, the percentage of depreciation charged is same but the amount on which it is charged keeps on changing. For instance,if my machine costs 90,000 and the depreciation rate is 10% then, under SLV, the yearly depreciation will be 9000 but in case of WDV, the depreciation in year 1 will be 10% of 90,000 which will be 9000 but in the second year, it will be 10% of 90,000–9,000. 10% of 81,000 will be 8100 and so on.

P1- How do you calculate the useful life of the asset?

Me- Sir, I'm not really aware of that.

P1- You don't know how to calculate the useful life?

Me- No, sir. I have never had to calculate it. It's usually given in the questions.

(At this both the Panelists started smiling)

P1- It's given in the questions? (Still smiling)

Me- Yes, Sir. However, I can try to make an intelligent guess here, I'm not sure though.

P1- Go ahead.

Me- Sir, the useful life is probably caculated on the basis of what the government organizations are taking the lives of similar assets to be for their accounting. Say, I have a machine and the income tax department has a similar machine and they depreciate it for 7 years, I'll take the useful life as 7 too.

P1-What if it is a new machine, first of its kind? How will you calculate the useful life in this case?

Me- Sir, on the basis of market research. I'm sure the machine has been bought or created to manufacture a product. I'll take up market research and see how long the product lifecycle of the said product will be and I will depreciate it accordingly.

P1- Suppose, the product has a lifecycle of 5 years. What will you do?

Me- Sir, I'll take the useful life as 5 years because after that the machine won't be of any use.

P1- You'll charge depreciation to all five years?

Me- Yes, Sir.

P1- Alright, so Laiba, what is the difference between Journal and Ledger?

Me- Sir, a journal is an original book of entry and when a transaction occurs, it is first recorded in the journal, from where it is posted in the ledger. There's a column in the journal that tells the page number on which the same transaction can be found in the ledger. So, basically, we post first in the journal and from there in the ledger.

P1- So, which one out of these two do you think, is closed?

Me- Sir, Ledger.

P1- But you just said that we post in the journal first, shouldn't that be closed ?

Me- Sir, I don't know.

P1- Alright, what is the difference between between Cash Flow Statement and the P&L?

Me- Sir, in the cash flow, we only take transactions which effect the cash availability of the organization. Like the amount that's deducted as depreciation is added back here because it doesn't effect the cash flows. While in P&L, cash and non-cash transactions both are considered.

P1- I am a layman. I don't know accounting. How would you explain the difference to me then?

Me- Sir, in P&L, we see what the profit is. While in case of Cash Flow Statement, we see how much cash we have available.

P2- Okay. Now, why have you written what you've written in your AWT? (He had my test in his hand. Panelist 2 spoke after quite some time)

Me- Sir, because the author had presented a biased picture. He has only highlighted the cons of technology and not considered the advantages at all. There is actually a report published by NYU that states the opposite about video games. The author has only put forth his point of view without giving any facts to back it up.

P2- There is a report published by NYU?

Me- Sir, I'm not sure if it was NYU but it was definitely by a university from New York and the report does talk about how video games are actually beneficial. They help in improving hand-eye coordination and also help in improving decision making ability. I'm not saying that video games don't have any disadvantages but they have a lot of advantages that need to be considered. Talking about young kids, there are games available that facilitate learning. They can be found even on services like Tata Sky.

P2- So, this report, this holds for children who are aged 12 too?

Me- Sir, the report talks about video games in general, I'm guessing it is applicable.

P2- If there is a report, why does the author believe otherwise?

Me- Sir, he probably believes that the cons outweigh the pros. I, on the other hand, think that there are more advantages. Our personal biases, maybe.

P2- Oh? Personal bias? I don't know anything about the pros and cons but I find the author's argument better. Why is that?

Me- Sir, you find his side more convincing. Maybe, you've had a life experience that adds to it.

P2- What about a villager with no access to technology? Would there be a personal bias in his case too?

Me- No, Sir.

P2- So, the personal biases don't hold for everyone? But you just said that it did hold for the author and yourself?

Me- Sir, I really don't know.

P1- Alright, Laiba, now, we'll give you some names and you'll have to tell us what you know about them.

(He was smiling and what followed was a rapid fire. Here, I didn't answer anything I wasn't 100% sure about. I was only able to answer for about half of the names)

P1- *name I hadn't heard before.*

Me- I don't know, Sir.

P1- *another name I hadn't heard before*

Me- I don't know, Sir

P1- Mamta Banerjee

Me- CM of West Bengal.

P1- Vasundhara Raje Scindia

Me- She's from a political as well as royal family from Rajasthan (I was able to answer this one after connecting her to Jyotiraditya Scindia)

P1- Political or Royal?

Me- Sir, both.

P1- Where in Rajasthan?

Me- I don't know, Sir. (Mother told me later on, Gwalior.)

P1- Capt. Armindar Singh

Me- CM of Punjab.

(After I said Punjab, they looked at me in disbelief so I thought I had messed up.)

Me- Or Haryana. I'm not sure, Sir. But, he's the CM of either of the two states.

P2(laughing)- Sushma Swaraj?

Me- External Affairs Minister.

P2- P.V. Sindhu?

Me- Badminton player.

P2- Are you sure?

Me- Sakshi Malik was the first Indian woman wrestler to win in the Olympics. She won Bronze and during the same Olympics, P.V.Sindhu won a Silver in badminton. Yes, Sir, I'm sure.

P1- Okay, Laiba, now tell us, what do you like to do in your free time?

(I was relieved and started smiling.)

P1(laughing)- Look at her! She's so happy that the rapid fire is over.

(Panelist 2 also started laughing.)

Me- Yes, Sir, I am. (I was also laughing as I said this :p)

Me- Sir, I read, I cook and off lately, I have also started traveling a little.

P1- What books have you read?

Me- Sir, currently, I'm reading No More Mr. Nice Guy by Dr. Robert Glover

P2- What?

Me- No More Mr. Nice Guy by Dr. Robert Glover.

P2- Fiction or non-fiction?

Me- Non-Fiction.

P2- What is it about?

Me- Sir, it's about how people, men in general think that they would get their needs met if they're nice to everyone around them but I think it's actually a paradox because being too nice makes them hesitant and they're not able to communicate their needs and wants effectively.

P2- If it's a men-oriented book, why are you reading it?

Me- Sir, I'm reading it because a friend recommended it.

P2- Why did your friend recommend it?

Me- Sir, because he felt that I wasn't vocal about my feelings?

(Panelist 2 laughed at this.)

P2- What other books have you read?

Me- Sir, I've read Eat Pray Love, The Last song, Mornings in Jenin, Looking for Alaska, The..

(He cut me off here)

P2- Looking for Alaska?

Me- Yes, Sir. John Green's debut novel.

P2- Fiction?

Me- Yes, Sir.

P1- What is about?

Me- About a boy who's nicknames Pudge. I don't remember the actual name in the book. So, he moves, to a new school where he meets this girl Alaska. All's well but then one day, she suddenly dies in a car crash and they can't figure out if it was an accident or if she killed herself. There's actually an interesting story behind why she's called Alaska. On one of her birthdays, she spins a globe and points at the place and tells her mom that she wants to be called that. I thought that was sort of funny because Alaska means 'that which the sea breaks against'

P1- What does it mean again?

Me- 'That which the sea breaks against' If you see it in literal sense, it means invincible. I thought it was funny because she dies in the book. So, looking for Alaska is basically about looking for the reason behind Alaska's death.

P1- Okay. Now, Laiba, before we're done for the day, please tell us what does your name mean?

Me- Sir, it means an Angel.

P2- It means what?

Me- An angel. As per the Quran Shareef, there is an angel named Laiba in heaven who is also the most beautiful among them all. So, Laiba also means beautiful but mainly, it means an Angel.

P1- Alright, I don't have more questions.

(He turned to the other panelist)

P1- Do want to ask her anything?

P2- No.

P1- Well, that's all for the day then, all the best for your future.

(He then moved his hand forward and asked me to take Polo/Cashews that were kept in plates. I took a Polo mint and said Thank you to him.)

P1- You may leave.

Me- Thank you, Sirs. (I then got up and walked out.)

After coming out of the room, I was freaking out too much because my interview was extremely short when compared to others and I couldn't answer a lot of questions. I went back to my pg, called my mom and cried; cried a lot because I didn't think I would make it.

What followed were two months full of anxiety.

Final Verdict- Selected.

Interview and WAT Experience – 24Background:
- Applied with GMAT (750) (overseas Indian candidate)
- Work experience: 3.5 years (1.5 years overseas)
- Xth: 96% (ICSE) , XII: 94% (ISC), Undergrad: NUS 2:1
- The dreaded Male, Engineer, General cat :)
- Interview location: Mumbai

Analytical essay: Fuzzy memory here; but something on a pedestrian accident and analyzing the relevance of a measure introduced to prevent recurrence

Interview
There were 2 interviewers: 1 alum, 1 prof

Alum did all the grilling; the prof never spoke

Post-interview thoughts:
I thought this was a disaster; I was the second last candidate and my panel had already acquired a sinister reputation. All the prior candidates had left the room shaken. My experience was no different and in 20 short mins I emerged disappointed, confused, and most crushingly, without the customary toffee :(:(. This looked like a bad indicator.

Q1: When did you fly in for this interview? (im based overseas)

Q2: What exactly do you do? (I work as a product manager; but they interpreted this as a highly technical field)Ans - <brief description of work before I panel abruptly cut me off>

Q3: What algorithms are used in the e-commerce industry?
Ans - Some colloquial terms such as 'Image recognition / User browse pattern'

Q4: Can you describe / tell us the exact algorithm used, give some examples of image recognition algorithms?
Ans - No <my technical chops are wanting :)>

Q5: Describe Eigen values
Ans: Don't know
…
some more technical questions; ans: series of 'don't know's'

Q ~10 : Can we ask you any technical question that you know?
Ans: No <to be fair, it's been 3 yrs since I wrote my last line of code>

<interviewer shows exasperation>

Q 11: Do you know <name>?
Ans: No
Interviewer: He won the Nobel Prize in <something> this year
Me feeling really stupid and regretting the long flight in cattle class

Q12: Since you are a product manager; I want you to take me through the process of coming up with a product idea for Ahmedabad. It should be something very novel. You should describe the end-to-end plan to launch it

Ans:
<I asked some questions on user demographics; trying to frame the right problem statement but didn't receive much feedback and got frequent snubs. "Why are you asking us all the questions, it is you who needs to answer" retorts
So I assumed a problem statement, listed underlying assumptions, and proposed a solution to solve for the same>
Problem: Networking sessions/post-conferences break-out sessions in the IIM-A campus are inefficient; <more granular inefficiencies listed out>
Solution: App-based (cliched here)
Follow up questions on my revenue model, how I would convince organisers to update participant list + speaker list, marketing ideas
<interviewer seemed quite satisfied with this line of thinking>

Q13: Which book are you reading
Ans: Poor Economics

Q14: Who are the authors
Ans: Esther Duflo

Q15: Is that the only author?
Ans: No, also Abhijit Banerjee

_____

Q16: What's their profession
Ans: Economists?

Q17: Any other book?
Ans: Sapiens by Yuval Noah Harari

Q18: What drew you to Sapiens?
Ans: Every airport bookstore says it's a best-seller, so I blindly bought it.

Q17: You can leave
<Me bit stunned that I spent 15k INR on a ticket for such an abrupt goodbye and no offer for toffee; shuffled out of the room dejected>

Verdict: Converted
CASE 25
2 young male profs were analysts.

P1(going through my application form) You are from BITS Pilani right? And working also for ABG. What is this affinity for birlas yaar?

Me:(smiling) Yes sir. You can say I am part of the Birla Family since last 5 years.

P1: What do you know about the Birla family?

Me: They are one of the premier business houses of the country. They started from Pilani but have immigrated to various parts of the country like Kolkata. Then talked about ABG and its companies like hindalco, idea, retail and fashion.

P1: Retail is under which company?

Me: Textiles business under grasim. Retail and fashion has its own division. Pantaloons is our retail chain.

P1: it's part of big Bazaar right?

Me: Big Bazaar belongs to future group. Pantaloons belongs to ABG.

P1: Oh. Didn't know that.

So what do you think about these groups like Birla, tata, goenka etc. Are they doing any good for India.

Me: Talked about their economic value, employment to people and gave example of how tatas and birlas have developed area around their factories citing the example of Jamshedpur and the part of odisha I am working currently. Also mentioned how they are now putting their foot prints all over the world increasing reputation of our country. Gave example of jaguar land Rover acquisition.

P1: You mentioned only the positive parts. Are they not coming in news for wrong reasons?

Me: Mentioned tata nano plant singur issue.

_____

P1: Do you think the issue was justified?

Me: Told about the difference between Gujarat and West Bengal. Gujarat already had land pool available for Industries while in bengal govt had to acquire land from poor farmers, so there was controversy. In the end told the issue was justified.

P2: I see in your transcript your cgpa hasn't been good. In one semester you got 10 and in the other you got 5.5. How did you get 10?

Me: Talked about how we have to spend one semester as intern as part of our curriculum. Talked about my internship in tata motors Pune.

P2: We're they very happy with you that the gave you full marks?

Me: Talked about my project in details.

P2: Ok. And why 5.5 in the last semester? What courses did you have?

Me: Gandhian thoughts and number theory.

P2: How is Gandhian thoughts related to mechanical engineering?

Me: Told how it was a humanity elective I took. When asked the reason for taking the course I told to be honest it was taken because of the Prof taking the course. I had taken another elective under him and liked it very much so took another course under him.

P2: What did you study in this course?

Me: Talked about how Gandhi is considered a mystic figure in India. We call him Mahatma or great soup but how in our course we looked at all his actions as a human. We covered both positive and negative aspects of him. Talked about satyagraha, his autobiography my experiments with truth, etc.

P2: What are the negative aspects which you covered?

Me: Talked about how his idealism was not always right. Gave example of calling off non cooperation movement after chauri chaura incident. Also said how he had agreed himself that he didn't treat kasturbha Gandhi well in initial years of their marriage.

P2: What courses did you have in mechanical engineering?

Me: Told about IC engines, electives like quality control assurance reliability.

P2: What is reliability?

Me: To have confidence on the process over a long period of time. It's not okay to have the process correct one day but it is important to maintain it over a long period of time.

P2: What are the parameters to judge reliability?

Me: For example in a manufacturing company like ours we can check reliability by physical specifications of the product if it lies within tolerance level always or not. Internal and costumer rejection is another parameter to judge reliability of our process.

P2: How does AC work?

Me: Told the working but messed up one part saying refrigerant enters the room.

Some cross questioning followed. They asked if temperature of the outside surroundings decreases a lot. Will ac work or not? I couldn't answer properly. Tried to answer but at the end I am not able to answer at that point of time.

P1: (reading my AWT)Did your caching institute teach you to write that data is not given whatever the question be in AWT.

Me: No Sir. I am an analytical person and personally I wasn't convinced with the author's reasoning. That's why I mentioned there's should have been data involved.

Then some cross questioning. P1 tried to stress by giving an analogy which I thought was wrong so I explained my view point giving counter examples and at the end said this is what I meant. Maybe I should have been more clear.

P1: You mentioned primary aluminium as product of your Company? What is that? Is it pure aluminum.

Me: Told about purity grades of aluminium. Told how different customers have different requirement. On an avg 99.85% purity of aluminium from our plant. Explained how purity is measured in terms of ppm of constituents.

P1: what is ore of aluminum. How we get aluminum?

Me: Bauxite is the ore.

Told about alumina and its different types based on regional variation. Explained electrolysis, anode and cathode, cryolite etc of aluminium electrolysis. After electrolysis we convert the molten aluminium into different shapes like ingots etc for our customers.

P1: What do you do at your job?

Me: Talked about being a maintenance engineer. And also currently I have been alloted a short term project and I will be coordinating with auditors from E&Y for that.

P1: That will be all. Thank you.

Verdict: Wl 6. Hoping to convert in the end

Update 1: My profile:

10th- 95% (cbse)

12th-93.4% (cbse)

Grad- 75.52% (BITS Pilani B.E mechanical engineering)

10 months work ex in Hindalco Industries Pvt Ltd. Under Aditya Birla Group.

CAT17- 99.99%ile (228.57 scaled score)