IIM Lucknow PGP and ABM Interview Transcripts

PGP Transcripts

Transcript 1

Bengaluru ITC Hotel | 1st Shift | 06 Feb
Profile: 8/8/8 | Mechanical Background
Work Experience: 35 months

WAT Topic: College degree is overhyped in the Indian education system

Interview Panel: 2 Panelists (Both Male)

P1: You were the last candidate on the list. What were you thinking outside?
Ans: I said I was thinking about my hometown (because I was expecting current affairs-related questions on Dhanbad and Jharkhand).

P1: Type of coal mines? You must have seen in your district.
Ans: I said 2 types - open mines and closed mines, then defined both of them.

P1: Are you sure?
Ans: Yes sir, based on my knowledge.

P1: What's your company doing and your role in this?
Ans: Explained briefly about the company and my role.

Then some counter questions about why we are doing this, elaboration with examples, and explanations of the terminology used.

P1: How long have you been there in this company?
Ans: From the last 6 months. Earlier, I was in the construction sector.

P1: Tell me about the construction of the Howrah Bridge. (Further explained: I want to know the type of beam.)
Ans: I got confused, then replied that it could be a combination of two cantilever beams from both ends fixed, or it could be an overhanging beam.

P1: Draw the diagram and explain why?
Ans: I drew on the paper and then said it is an overhanging bridge and explained why. (After a Google search, I found out it is a suspension-type balanced cantilever bridge.)

P1: How will you identify the defects inside the metal body?
Ans: I started answering that we can check the strength of the material. If the values lie within the standard range, then it's defect-free. Similarly, for other methods, we can perform tests like ultrasonic wave testing and...

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P1: (Interrupted in the middle and explained the 2 methods: destructive and non-destructive tests with examples.)

P2: Your CGPA is very close to 8 in every semester. What does that mean? Are you stagnant or consistent?
Ans: I said it shows my consistency over the years while participating in other extracurricular activities.

P2: Write on the paper - "I am eager to learn."
Ans: I wrote the sentence.

P2: Then why have you written "I m eager to learn" in SOP?
Ans: Sorry sir, it could be a typo. (Later, I realized it was "I'm." Due to the print quality, it was illegible.)

P2: Okay, one last question. What would you prefer in case of a dilemma—your ethics or your morality?
Ans: I answered in favor of my ethics and gave a reason, but it wasn't structured well. I kept making the same point repeatedly.

Then both panelists said, "Okay, you can take some toffee and enjoy the rest of the day."

Transcript 2

Background: Non-Engineer
Graduation: Life Sciences
Panel: 1 Male [M] & 1 Female [F] (Both in their 50s)

M- So, why do you want to do an MBA and specifically from IIM-Lucknow?
I gave my answer, and it appeared that they were satisfied.

M- So, you have done your graduation in life sciences. Tell us about your subjects.
Named all of them.

M- Explain the medical diagnostics subject you mentioned.
Explained intricacies about it.

M- So, what are the various types of blood groups, and what makes them different?
Answered.

F- What is the total number of leukocytes in the human body?
As I didn't know the accurate figure, I asked if I could make an educated guess.

F- What about 15000 leukocytes?
No, Ma'am, it is much below the actual figure. (Looked a little satisfied)

M- Why did you leave UPSC? Have your attempts been exhausted?
I answered NO and stated my purpose for leaving UPSC preparation.

M- What did you want to become after UPSC?
Answered.

M- Your father was in Delhi Police. What is his current position in the department?
Answered and explained more or less all aspects of my father's profession.

M- Is it possible for two different types of roses to be present on one stem?
Answered that I had never seen such a thing. When they asked me to take a stand, I said, "I don't think so, Sir."

M- It is possible. Many gardeners use this technique. Where have you seen a wide variety of plants?
Answered that during my childhood in Mughal Garden (Now, Amrit Udyan).

M- So, can potatoes and tomatoes be grown on the same plant?
I confidently answered that it is not possible as one is a shoot crop and the other is a root crop.

M- So, 10 people were present in this room with you during WAT. How many of them wore spectacles?
As I didn't know the exact number, I guessed 4 or 5.

M- So, how many of them were wearing a tie?
The female panelist stopped the male panelist, and both giggled a little.

M- So, we have observed that Quant is not significantly present in your background. In an MBA, you will have to handle a lot of math. How will you deal with it?
I explained my preparation for Quant in UPSC (CSAT) and CAT and assured them I would bridge any remaining gaps.

M- Okay, so tell me, how will you calculate the volume of this room?
Sir, this room is a cuboid, so volume will be calculated as Length × Breadth × Height.

M- So, what is the height of this room?
Sir, maybe 4 to 5 meters.

M- 4-5 meters! No, Priyanshu, that is too much.
Sorry Sir, but I thought this range was correct.

M- No, it is not. STAND UP. Now, measure the height of this room.
Sir, my height is 6 feet. (Stopped by M)

M- So, what is the height of this room in meters?
(I didn't know the feet-to-meter conversion.) Sorry Sir, but I don't know this conversion.

M- Strange, you don't know the conversion?
(Then, I suddenly remembered an actor's height from Wikipedia, which was 6 feet or 1.2 meters.) I said,

"Sir, I think my height is 1.2 meters."

M- You said you didn't know the conversion. Now you are giving a figure.
I explained how I recalled it from Wikipedia. (They both laughed.) Ma'am then said, "Priyanshu, your height is 1.8 meters."

So, I calculated 1.8 × 2 = 3.6 meters as the room's height. They looked satisfied and laughed again.

M- So, have you ever stood under a rotating fan?
(Answered with a little smile) Yes, Sir, a lot.

M- So, when you turn on this fan, in which direction will it rotate?
Sir, if I make a guess— (Stopped by panel)

M- You don't know this too?
Sorry Sir, I have never noticed this. So, Sir, I think this fan will rotate clockwise.

M- Go and turn on the fan.
Sir, which is the switch? (As there were multiple switches on the board.)

M- Which one could be the fan switch? It is obviously the one adjacent to the regulator. (They both laughed.)

I turned on the fan, and it rotated in the opposite direction of my answer. (First time a non-living object annoyed me. 😤)

M- You were given two chances, and you failed both. (Said while laughing.)
Sorry Sir, I never noticed such things, but now I will never forget this.

M- Is it possible to rotate it in the opposite direction?
Yes, Sir, we can do it manually.

M- And electronically?
Sir, I think it is not possible at this stage. We would need to modify its motor.

M- So, which other calls do you have?
I mentioned that apart from ABCKS, I have all the calls.

M- So, which one will you join if you convert all?
(I tried to answer diplomatically.) First of all, Sir, it will be a great moment for me if I convert all and— (Stopped by panel)

M- Take a stand.
Sir, at this moment, it is a tough decision. I will be more comfortable deciding later, and it would be an honor— (Stopped again)

M- Take a stand.
Sir, I will join IIM-Lucknow.

M- Wow, in Amritsar, you would have said Amritsar. In Rohtak, you would have said Rohtak. Isn't it?
No Sir, this is not the case. In my Rohtak PI, this question was not asked. In my Amritsar PI, I told them about Lucknow only. (Now, they looked a little satisfied.)

M- Did you have breakfast? (Both were in a jolly mood.)
Yes Sir, fruits. (Both laughed.)

M- So, have some biscuits. That's all from our side. You may leave now.
I declined the biscuits, but in hindsight, I should have accepted them. No, thanks, Sir.

I greeted both panelists and softly exited the room. The PI lasted approximately 20-25 minutes or maybe a little more.

Transcript 3

Date: 22nd Feb
Venue: IIM L Noida Campus
Panel No: 5

GD Topic: Should agricultural subsidies be stopped?

Details: We were given a total of 15 minutes to write, with a word limit of 300.

There were two professors—one was very friendly, while the other was eating cashews throughout the interview.

I entered, greeted them, and they asked me for my personal interview form and graduation marksheet.

P1: What all calls do you have?
Ans: I mentioned baby IIMs. The follow-up was about what baby IIMs are, so I said they are 3rd generation IIMs.

P1: Name all the baby IIMs.
Ans: I listed 4-5, then he completed my list.

P2: Do you have statistics for your graduation?
Ans: I don't remember that, sir.

P2: What all subjects did you study?
Ans: I mentioned 3-4 subjects.

P2: You seem to not like physics, your marks aren't good in it.
Ans: I nodded.

P2: How many tickets should be made if we have 15 stations and we have to travel to any of them?
Ans: I answered 225 initially but then corrected myself to 210.

He kept asking if it was correct. I said, "Yes sir, as far as I know."

P2: What is the rank of a matrix?
Ans: I don't have an idea, sir.

P1: What is the probability that the fan running will fall on us?
Ans: I said, "Is it 1/2?" He smiled and asked, "Are you telling or asking?" I said, "I am asking, sir." He said, "No."

P1: Condition to multiply two matrices?
Ans: Told.

P1: Your role in work experience?
Ans: Told.

P1: Major obstacle in your job?
Ans: Told.

P1: That's it from our side. Would you like to ask anything?
Ans: I asked about things I should learn before joining an MBA college.

They recommended some books and calculus, saying that being good in math will help in all subjects.

I greeted them and left.

Transcript 4

Location: Bangalore

WAT (15 min) - How much more wait for ESG implementation?
(Our panel did not explain what ESG meant, but some panels did explain the middle of the WAT Session)

Panel- 1, 2M (both 30-40)
10th - 10CGPA
12th - 95.4%
Graduation - 7.46CGPA (B.Tech)
Work Experience - 4 years 7 months

P1- Explain to us your emotional journey from the moment the WAT topic was revealed, to when you finally realised the meaning & started writing to now, since your WAT seems appropriate for the topic.
Me- Explained the emotional turmoil, then the realisation and how just wanted to just write something meaningful and not completely off the topic.

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P2: {Was having a look at all my certificates.}

P1- What was your specialization in your graduation?
Me- Told him it was Metallurgical and Materials Engineering.

P1- What is Corrosion?
Me- Explained to him in simpler terms.

P1- Not in simple terms.
Me- Told him I didn't remember the definition as it had been 4 years (joked about how I can remember counting when it was taught much before) and went on to explain it with examples.

P1- Can it be cured?
Me- Explained that it can be prevented but cure is tough as a layer needs to be sacrificed, continued with the explain of Statue of Liberty and why curing it is not possible.

P1- You are doing fairly well for yourself, why do you want to do an MBA?
Me- Gave the prepared answer about gaining cross-functional business exposure.

P1- Well nobody knows anything even in IIML, like you did so well in your college but don't remember anything it's the same, they just get placed that's it. Then why? Also, you can apply for 1 year course why waste 2 years?
Me- Tried to defend why business education is necessary. Then explained I would be eligible for a 1-year course next year and also explained that I want the college experience hence more interested in this course.

P2: {Pointing out I hadn't done well in differential equations and economics in my graduation, the 2 subjects that are needed in MBA}

P1- The emotional reason makes more sense, had you given that as your first reason I would have better accepted.
Me- Explained why that is not my first reason, cause it a big decision to do an MBA considering the amount of time and money I needed to invest. Coming from a middle-class family we spend very frugally, also didn't want to burden my family with a large loan etc.

P1- But isn't planning to save and then apply a big gamble when student loans are so easily available?
Me- Explained that is not the case, didn't get calls from college I liked earlier hence am waiting till now. Also, told him that this is my first call from IIML, had expected in the past and called the office to enquire as well but was not selected due to the normalisation of 12th marks.

P1- You must have calls from other IIMs, what is your order of priority?
Me- Told him I haven't decided, could be lucky to convert any and will decide afterwards because it is not just the general perspective that governs an individual's choices. Gave an example of how IIMK has a better NIRF rank than IIML, but I'd prefer IIML cause uncle lives nearby and can help me if required.

P2- Is the general perspective close to the ranking of institutes?
Me- Explained that yes it is, because most people look at the average package and curriculum to decide a college but I also look into other personal reasons. Gave them an example of how I chose a

lower-ranked college for graduation cause it was nearer to my hometown.

P2: {Tried convincing me to reveal a priority order of my calls}

P1- So if you get selected in IIMI, then later IIML and then IIMB. Would you stick to IIMI?
Me- I don't want to be a liar here and say yes. But, I definitely haven't thought of a proper order yet.

P1- That's all from our end.

P2: {Handed back my files and asked me if I had any questions for them}

Me- Asked a basic question about how hectic the curriculum is and if a semester abroad is allowed.

P1- Told me that the curriculum was slightly heavier due to more hours of classes, but it's manageable and semester abroad is allowed.

Overall the panelists were nice and helped me ease out. The questions though aimed at grilling me, were asked in a jovial manner and the interview seemed very lighthearted. Though, I am not sure as to how I performed because of the weirdness of the interview.

Transcript 5

Location: Bangalore

WAT Topic (15 min): Should India stop arms export to brand itself as a peace-loving nation?

Panel: 2 Male (both in their 30s)
CAT Score: 99.3%
Graduation: 8.8 CGPA (Mechanical)
Job: IT

P1: How is the situation outside and what did others tell you about our panel?
Ans: Briefed about the general situation of different students and mentioned that I heard our panel is chill.

P1: How do you feel about the interview?
Ans: A little nervous but very excited, as I graduated during COVID, this is my first real offline interview.

P2: How did our society change after COVID?
Ans: Talked about WFH, companies like Blinkit, and concluded by saying we are changing back to pre-COVID times, but it won't be exactly the same.

P1: *Of course.* (smiles)

P2: Why is your pay raised so much compared to the first month? *(submitted salary slip as proof)*
Ans: I only worked 13 days in that month, so I was not eligible for full pay.

P2: Tell us about your native place and its specialty.
Ans: Shared different aspects, and it became a casual conversation among P1, P2, and me for a few minutes. We also talked about different areas around.

P1: Why do you have a beard? And later, asked about the suit.
Ans: Explained how I feel confident and presentable with a beard. (Became a conversation for a few minutes.)

P1: *Nahh… You guys only have beards because of the Indian Cricket team.*
(I just gave a smile, and the topic ended.)

(I have a publication in progress in the Mechanical field.)

P2: Tell us about the professor you worked under and why you shifted from Mechanical to IT and now to MBA.
Ans: Gave a confident answer.

P2: But people like you should stay in engineering for good research and progress.
Ans: Explained my perspective. *(This conversation continued for a few minutes—not grilling but more of a serious discussion.)*

P1: Do you have a girlfriend?
Ans: No, sir. I have a crush on a girl. *(Made a few jokes, and all of us laughed.)*

P2: Take chocolate.

There were a few more questions in between, but they revolved around these topics. The panel was very chill, and I heard that most of the other panels had the same vibe.

Transcript 6

CAT: 99.74
10th: 91.2
12th: 95.7
Graduation: 7.86
Work Experience: 7 months as of CAT

WAT Topic: The placements in B-Schools are more employment-oriented than employability-oriented, thus IIMs should stop the compulsory placements.

Two Panelists: One male and one female

M: So, Srinivas, what are you doing currently?
Me: Working as an Implementation Consultant in XYZ company.

M: So, I see in your form you have switched to this company, and you mentioned the reason being health issues. What happened?
Me: Was working in Vedanta, a mining company, and related stuff.

M: You only worked in that company for 5 months and have been idle for 5 months. Why?
Me: Explained what I did, worked on a product case study, and explained what I did after they asked me to elaborate.

F: But Srinivas, how did you make this jump into your current company after being idle for 5 months, and you get double the monthly salary than the previous company & it's more than any good MBA graduate gets? How did you manage to do this? And why do you need an MBA?
Me: Explained.

F: So the product case study you worked on, did you send it to YouTube & did they use this?
Me: Explained it was for educational purposes and got it validated by different product managers in different companies and also Gen Z people.

M: So what are the roles and responsibilities in your current company?
Me: Explained what the company is and where I fit in.

M: (Cuts in) But Srinivas, you are a mining engineer. How do you understand all this AI, Blockchain, and Machine Learning?
Me: Explained that I am a gamer and love to learn new things about how games are created and what goes behind the graphical interface. Told them that if I see something exciting, I just Google the stuff and learn from there.

F: You start from Google and you have learned this much? (They laughed)

M: But you know that IIM Lucknow has a very rigorous schedule. Then how will you manage your interests?
Me: Answered.

F: So, do you know any recent crypto which has tanked?
Me: Told about Terra Luna, FTX.

F: Explain Blockchain in layman's terms and do you think it is good to be unregulated?
Me: Explained.

F: What are all the other calls you have?
Me: Told.

Panel: You can now leave. All the best.

The interview was chill and more of a casual conversation. They wanted to know about the decisions I took and how I executed them.

All the best, everyone.

Transcript 7

Interview Location: Bangalore

WAT (15 min) - Should India stop arms export to brand itself as a peace-loving nation?

Panel: 2 Male (both in their 30s)

Profile: 99.3%, Grad: 8.8 (Mechanical), Job: IT

P1: How is the situation outside and what others told you about our panel?
Me: Briefed about the general situation of different students and told - I heard our panel is chill.

P1: How do you feel about the interview?
Me: A little nervous but very excited as I graduated during Covid. This is my first real offline interview.

P2: How did our society change after Covid?
Me: Told about WFH, companies like Blinkit, and concluded by saying we are changing back to the situation before Covid, but it won't be the same.

P1: Of course (smiles).

P2: Why is your pay raised very much compared to the first month? (Submitted salary slip as proof)
Me: I only worked 13 days in that month, so I was not eligible for full pay.

P2: Asked about my native place and its specialty.
Told them different things. It became a normal conversation between P1, P2 & me for a few minutes. We also talked about different areas around.

P1: Why do you have a beard? And later asked about the suit.
Me: Told how I feel confident and presentable with a beard. (Became a conversation for a few minutes)

P1: Nahh.. You guys are only having beards because of the Indian Cricket Team. (I just gave a smile & topic ended)

(I have a publication in progress, in the Mechanical field.)

P2: Asked me about my professor I worked under and why I changed from Mechanical to IT, now to MBA.
Me: Gave a confident answer.

P2: But people like you should be in engineering so we can have good research and development.
Me: Again told them my perspective. *(This conversation continued for a few minutes - Not grilling, but*

more like a serious conversation.)

P1: Do you have a girlfriend?
Me: No sir, I have a crush on a girl. *(Made a few jokes, and all of us laughed.)*

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P2: Take chocolate.

There were a few more questions in between, but they revolved around these topics. The panel was very chill. I also heard most of the other panels had the same vibes.

Transcript 9

11:00 AM | P1 (Male) | P2 (Female)

P1: Tell me about yourself.
Me: Told

P1: You used acronyms - SEO/SMM. What do they mean?
Me: Told the full form and explained the basics of it with an example

P1: What is a conglomerate? (Mentioned in TMAY)
Me: Company which is present in several industries. Gave example of Mahindra Group for which I work

P1: So L&T is a group or a conglomerate?
Me: I think it is better to call it a conglomerate as it is present in several domains like finance, IT, and construction.

P1: All groups are conglomerates, but all conglomerates are not groups. What do you say about that?
Me: Thought a bit. Said that all conglomerates will be groups, but not all groups can have the necessary amount of diversification to be called a conglomerate.

P1: What is your opinion on the impact of GST in logistics?
Me: Tried to talk about accountability, unified system.

P1: No, don't say all that, just tell me from an economic point of view. Is it moving faster or slower?
Me: I didn't work in the industry pre-GST, so I am not exactly aware of how it was, but I know its benefits.

P1: No, but give me an intelligent call about the situation.
Me: I would say it has been good because the unification has made it more seamless and hassle-free.

P1: That's all good. But in terms of economic benefits, like movement of goods, inventory movement, how is it impacting?
Me: Before GST, there was more prevalence of unaccounted and flawed paperwork. Unbilled movement was higher. Then gave an example of how not billing things helped in selling items for cheaper because of not having to pay taxes, giving an example of one of my friend's glass business. Said that it was cheaper for him to sell without GST.

P1: What is the transport rate in India? How much distance does a truck cover every day?
Me: Around 300 km per day.

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P1: So initially it was 200 km, but now it is 300 km. That's a 50% increase and that is great, think about that. Ok, talk about a recent news about transportation.
Me: I haven't heard, sir.

P1: There was a huge shipment of wheat between two cities. Can you tell me about the river and cities?
Me: Sir, I am not aware, but I will make an educated guess. Considering that the shipment was big, it would have been Waterway 1, using the Ganga River. Eastern states do not produce wheat, so it must have come from an upstream state. I will say it was from Uttar Pradesh to West Bengal.

P1: You almost got there. It's from the neighboring states, Bihar and Assam. Look it up.
Me: Sure, I will.

(Over to P2)

P2: What was taught in your course?
Me: Told

P2: Did they teach you optimization?
Me: Yes, SCM and modeling.

P2: What is a balanced transportation?
Me: I haven't heard of the term.

P2: What is the difference between transportation and transshipment problems?
Me: Explained.

P2: Alright. That will be all. Thank you, Omar.
Me: Thank you, ma'am. Thank you, sir.

Review: I wasn't very aware of the GST implications and could not figure out what the professor exactly wanted to know. The interviewers were friendly, and the rest of the interview went smoothly.

Transcript 10

Morning Slot
Hospitality Management Graduate | 10 Months Work Experience
Panel: 13 | Two Male Professors (M1, M2)

M1: (Cleared his doubt about my college and course.)

M2: What was your course about?
Me: Defined in terms of my subjects.

M1: You have already done a management course, why MBA then?
(This came with many cross-questions.)

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M1: You can easily get a job in this industry. Why are you going for an MBA?

M2: So, are you still working?
Me: Cleared this as well, explained that I left the job after 10 months and gave the reason for leaving.

M1: In which profile do you see yourself after doing an MBA? What type of companies can hire you?
Me: Answered. Since I am not sure about my specialization yet, I framed my answer in terms of my personality and soft skills.

M1: If you wanted to do marketing, why did you do hotel management?
(They grilled me over this question, but I remained calm and prepared since this is one of the soft skills I mentioned earlier.)

M1: (Asked some basic marketing questions.) If one product is selling at a higher cost and its alternative is available at a lower cost, what will the customer choose and why?

M1: How is a brand created? What is a brand?

M1: If a company is investing heavily in advertising and marketing, is it fruitful, or are they fooling customers?

M2: (Helped me a little with this question.)

M1: (With a really bad expression) So, you will promote fooling customers? (Then started smiling)

M2: (Savior moment) Changed the topic and asked about my hobbies.
(We talked about this a little. Painting is one of my hobbies.)

M2: Today, everybody is painting. What's so special about you?
(They asked the wrong person! I said, "I have my paintings, can I show you?" He said yes.)

(After that, they were so happy. I explained different aspects of painting with the help of my creations.)

M1 & M2: (Smiling) You can sell your paintings and earn millions, but yes, for that, you have to create a brand first!

M1: What other calls do you have?
Me: I was honest and said, "This is my best call, but I have all the other IIM calls as well."

Final Thoughts:
A bit of grilling on my academic choices and career direction, but I handled it calmly. The panel was friendly, and the conversation around my paintings turned the interview in my favor.

Transcript 11

WAT Topic: *Work from Home: Boon or Bane for Employees?* (15 mins, Max 300 words)
WAT Duration: 12 minutes

Panelists: M1 (Statistics) & M2 (ABM), both middle-aged

Interview Questions & Responses

M1: What are you doing these days?
Me: Answered accordingly.

M1: What is your favorite subject?
Me: Financial Management.

M1: Do you know about investments?
Me: Yes, I can try.

M1: Imagine I have 100 bucks and have to invest in two mutual funds, X and Y. Which one should I invest in?
Me: Asked him about his risk profile.

A discussion followed on different types of mutual funds and returns over the past five years.

M1: My time horizon is 10 years.
Me: Recommended a fund that diversifies investments in both debt and equity to reduce risk and ensure capital safety.

M1: How do we measure risk?
A discussion followed on Standard Deviation, Sharpe Ratio, etc.

M1: Differentiate between Variation and Standard Deviation.
Me: Did not answer well.

M1: What if the Standard Deviation of a dataset is 0?
Me: Answered correctly.

M1 exchanged a long look with M2.

M1: What is a better measure of risk—Standard Deviation or Coefficient of Variation?
Me: Explained and answered.

M2: Do you know about Binary Variables?
Me: Had never heard the term.

M1 and M2 seemed shocked. M1 explained with an example.

M2: What is a Dummy Variable?

Me: Said it is used in mathematical equations.

M1: (Interrupts) No, it is used in statistical equations. Anyway, what is regression?
Me: Mentioned that statistics was not part of my undergraduate curriculum, so I wasn't familiar with these concepts.

M1: You come from a top UG college and expect me to believe they do not teach statistics in finance?
Me: Explained that basic math was used but not statistics in such detail.

M1: (Did not believe me) Show me your graduation marksheet.
M1 looked at the marksheet.

M1: See, you have studied Business Mathematics. (Half-threw the marksheet back at me.)
Me: Explained that the syllabus covered calculus, Linear Programming Problems (LPP), and matrices, but not statistics.

M1: Okay. (Nods with an indifferent expression.)

M2: You have studied economics. What is inflation?
Me: Explained.

M2: What is the benchmark inflation index in India? Difference between CPI and Food Inflation?
Me: Answered to the best of my knowledge.

M2: What is the Wage-Price Spiral? What is the Law of Diminishing Marginal Returns?
Me: Could not recall either.

M2 gave an expression of disappointment.

M2: What do you do apart from academics?
Me: Talked about my hobbies.

M2: A cricket match ended this morning. What happened, and what was special about it?
Me: Discussed the England vs. New Zealand match.

A discussion followed with M1 regarding the 2001 Kolkata Test.

M1 & M2: You may leave. Thank you!

Verdict: Converted

ABM Transcripts

Transcript 1

IIM L ABM interview exp
Profile - 99.26 CAT, 6 months workex in ZS Associates, GEM

WAT: Women in csuite leadership and the associated challenges

- Talked about how India used to have only around 500 startups, now has 7.5k.
- We have leadership demand in corporate but the challenge remains of maintaining a gender balance to fill in the void.
- Highlighted disparity in women literacy rates, entrepreneurship.
- But suggested that India is making progress (beti bachao, reservation in technical education and extra points in management courses to bring the supply gap).
- Although the road is long...

Interview:
2 Male panelists (P1, P2)

P1: Introduce yourself
Me: Gave the usual prepped answer, mentioned my brief stay in Assam and other rural regions too

P1: Workex related questions. A weird question on how to manage a breakdown in a pharma manufacturing unit
Me: Highlighted that my role is around sales and market consulting and not manufacturing. However, I feel that by increasing machine hours/using backups, such a situation can be overcome

P1: But how do you manage inventory shortage?
Me: Gave the example of the semiconductor crisis which comes during the global EV surge.. (Cut in between)

P1: OK. What is your core subject?
Me: Answered analog and control systems

P1: Explain a closed-loop system.
Me: Did, was satisfied

(Over to P2)

P2: How will an Instrumentation engineer solve the agri problems?
Me: Gave 1 situation that I saw in Assam where the tea produce is declining year on year due to overuse of fertilizers. Proposed that I will develop an economical solution whereby the farmer will be able to measure the pH level etc of the soil and use fertilizers accordingly in a sustainable way

P1: I believe such a solution already exists.
Me: Told that yes, it does. But if it would have been economical, the problem I mentioned wouldn't have existed at the first place

Sir nodded and asked for another solution which I couldn't come up with

They thanked me and informed that the interview was over

Overall exp - Great WAT. Some not-so-conventional questions in PI. I tried my best

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Transcript 2

CAT - 98.6 percentile (all sectionals above 95)
Panel 11
BSc Biology (2020) fresher General
Lasted for 10-12 minutes

There were 2 male senior professors. Greeted and asked me about my introduction and then GAP year as I graduated in 2020.

What calls do I have?
Told.

Why ABM?
Explained my reasons.

Then academic questions:

- **Mitochondria**
- **DNA structure**
- **Vaccines and their working**
- **Difference between T and B cells**

Then said that you do not come from a maths background. Will you become comfortable with the concepts in 1st year?
I gave my response.

Ended.

Transcript 3

Time: 10 AM
Panel: 10
Panelists: 1 male professor, 1 senior female professor

P- Why did you opt for ABM? Why not SM?

Explained that although I don't have a background or work experience in ABM, I want to dive deeper into the problems faced by the agriculture sector, which has the highest percentage of the labor force in the economy but contributes a meager percentage to it. SM has less knowledge and awareness, so let it go.

P- You are a bright student. How did you manage things at college?

Briefed them about time management and balancing between hard work and smart work.

P- Your two experiences in your organization.

Spoke about capacity studies and plant union negotiations.

P- You are not happy with your organization even though you graduated from an NIT?

Clarified that's not the case and explained my reasons for pursuing an MBA.

P- Recent business happenings and their impact on India?

Discussed the Russia-Ukraine conflict and related thoughts.

P- Strengths and weaknesses.

Shared my response.

Transcript 4

Time: 2:30 - 3:30 PM
Panelists: 2 Male Panelists
CAT Percentile: 97.73 (90.4/92/78.2)

Interview Questions & Responses

M1: Please introduce yourself.
Me: Gave a prepared introduction.

M1: What is your role and responsibilities in your work?
Me: Explained in detail.

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M1: Advanced zoology and biotechnology don't seem to align well with an MBA. Can you explain your reasoning?
Me: Shared my aspirations of starting an aquaculture firm and how an MBA will equip me with the necessary knowledge and skills.

M1: Hope that serves you well.

M2: What subjects did you study throughout your semesters?
Me: Listed all subjects.

M2: Biotechnology is not a first-choice career for many in India. Why do you think that is?
M1 sneaked in a comment— "Har koi pharma company me kaam nahi karna chahta hai na?"—and laughed.
Me: Explained that career options in biotech are limited, mainly to research or academia. While I respect those professions, I did not see myself in them. My passion lies in fisheries, and I want to pursue that.
M2 seemed satisfied.

M2: Your CV shows you graduated in 2018. Please be honest—what were you doing during this gap?
Me: Explained my previous attempts at MBA entrance exams and how I balanced work and studies.

M2: Tell me about your final-year project.
Me: Explained in detail.

M1 had enough stories and stepped in.

M1: I am going to ask you the easiest question I have never asked an IIM Lucknow candidate. Be thankful for that. You either know it, or you Google it. Did you study math in 11th and 12th?
Me: Yes.

M1: What is the differentiation of log(x)?
Me: Was completely blank.

M2: You do not want us to go that path, do you?
Me: Tried writing something, but nothing came to mind. Thought a lot and blurted out 0.

M1 and M2 laughed while I struggled.

M1: You know Lucknow is a quant-heavy college. How do you think you will cope?
Me: Sir, CAT tests a candidate's quantitative skills, and since I cleared it, I believe I am capable of sustaining at IIM Lucknow. That being said, learning is a continuous process, and I will always keep improving.

M1 & M2: Do you have any questions for us?
Me: No.

M2: What all calls do you have?
Me: Told them.

M2: So IIM Lucknow is your best call?
Me: Yes.

M2: Okay, your interview is over. You may log off.

Conclusion:

No grilling on current affairs or academics, but the math question was a disaster. Hopefully, it does not cost me the interview.

Transcript 5

Venue: IIM L Noida Campus
Date: 24/01/2024
WAT Topic: A victor is never by chance

Profile

- **Undergrad:** B.Sc. (H) Mathematics (2023 Graduate)
- **Work Experience:** Fresher
- **Shortlist:** ABM (Agribusiness Management)

Interview Panel & Duration

- **Panel 7**
- **P1:** Male, ~35+ years
- **P2:** Male, ~50+ years
- **Duration:** 15 minutes

Interview Questions & Responses

P1: Please hand over your documents. *(P2 started reviewing them.)*

P1: So, you have received only the ABM shortlist?
Me: Yes, sir.

P1: Tell me about yourself. *(After going through my personal data form.)*
Me: Gave a well-rehearsed answer in 50-60 seconds.

P1: Why MBA now? Why not gain work experience first?
Me: Answered.

P1: Tell me about your previous internship.
Me: Answered.

P1: You are from Delhi. Name the neighboring states.
Me: Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

P1: Not Punjab?
Me: No, sir.

P1: Tell us about Enactus.
Me: Gave a prepared answer.

P1: But isn't it obvious that weeds can be used to make manure? What's new in your project?
Me: Explained the innovation and unique aspects of the project.

(P2, who was reviewing my file till now, started asking questions.)

P2: You specialized in Mathematics?
Me: Yes, sir.

P2: You got only the ABM shortlist because you didn't clear the QA cutoff?
Me: Yes, sir.

P2: What is the share of agriculture in the Indian economy?
Me: Answered.

P2: Did your interest in ABM develop only after seeing your CAT score, or was it a prior aspiration?
Me: Disagreed with him and explained my interest and how it was independent of the CAT results.

P2: Why not PGP instead of ABM?
Me: Answered.

P2: What do you know about ABM? Have you gone through the website?
Me: Answered.

P2: What other calls do you have?
Me: Answered.

P2: If you convert IIMK PGP and IIML ABM, which one would you choose?
Me: Answered.

P2: Don't you think you are overconfident?
Me: Thought he was referring to my personal data form and explained that we are required to highlight achievements in the form.

P2: No, I wasn't referring to that. Guess why I said this?
Me: Maybe because I disagreed with your point about agribusiness?

(P1 and P2 burst into laughter, and I joined in too.)

P2: You have specialized in Mathematics but scored low in CAT Quant. People with strong subject backgrounds often neglect their specialization. Your VARC and DILR are good, though.
Me: Justified that undergraduate mathematics is more theoretical, whereas CAT QA focuses on applied problem-solving.

P1: Okay, that's all from our side. Thank you!

Overall Experience

A mix of grilling and light moments. The panel tested both domain knowledge and personality but ended on a positive note.

Transcript 6

Profile
Academics: 8/9/9
CAT Percentile: 99.28%ile
Undergrad: B.Com (Hons.)
Work Experience: 4.5 months (as of CAT)

WAT Topic
No victor believes in chance

Interview Panel & Duration

Panelists: 1 Professor (P1), 1 Alumni (P2)

Interview Questions & Responses

P1: Introduce yourself.
Me: Gave a structured introduction.

P1: Why ABM? You have selected both PGP & PGP-ABM.
Me: Explained my interest in agribusiness and how it aligns with my career goals.

P1: Will you actually go to a village and work with farmers?
Me: Answered by emphasizing my willingness to engage in on-ground challenges and contribute meaningfully.

P1: Why do you want to contribute to farmers?
Me: Discussed the importance of agriculture in India and my motivation to work in this sector.

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P1: Does anyone in your family pursue farming?
Me: Answered honestly.

P1: Work Experience - What brand strategies have you devised for various brands?
Me: Provided examples of my contributions to branding strategies.

P1: What is the difference between Brand Reach and Brand Awareness?
Me: Explained the key differences with examples.

(Over to P2)

P2: What all calls do you have?
Me: Answered.

P2: What will be your preference in terms of calls?
Me: Answered diplomatically, mentioning a preference for learning and growth.

P2: What other subjects would you like to pursue during MBA apart from Marketing?
Me: Mentioned Finance, Strategy, and Operations with reasons.

P2: What will be your preference between PGP and PGP-ABM?
Me: Gave a balanced answer, highlighting my interest in both but aligning it with career aspirations.

Overall Experience

A structured interview with a mix of work-related, career aspiration, and domain-specific questions.

We'll be adding more transcripts here soon. Stay tuned!