

# Insight'12

THE PLACEMENT MANTRA



From the student's desk,



**Student's Placement Office**

# FOREWARD

-----Dr. Vimal Kumar



As we take giant strides on the path towards a more stable and developed world with India at the forefront of developing nations, there is an unprecedented need of hardworking intelligent people with a scientific bent of mind. IIT Kanpur takes immense pride in its holistic environment that over the years has proven to be adept in producing individuals of great calibre who have gone on to lead the society in its various endeavours.

The hallmark of IIT Kanpur since the very beginning has been a relentless strive towards excellence and perfection. Our students build a strong foundation in their respective subject areas. The curriculum at IIT Kanpur lays a strong emphasis on engineering sciences, basic sciences and humanities, besides the core courses in different streams that help produce not just competent engineers but also well rounded individuals. With the high quality education and training in interpersonal skills that they receive here at IIT Kanpur, our graduates over the years have stood out as leaders in their respective fields and proven priceless assets for their respective organisations.

The Students' Placement Office acts as a facilitator of interaction between the students of this institute and companies so as to help both parties be better informed and find the most suitable option for themselves. Our website is the starting point of our interaction with you. We welcome any query that you might have. We would also be happy to receive any suggestions from you that could help us improve our services here at the Students' Placement Office.

I congratulate the student volunteers and SPO staff for working for this Student Placement Guide. I would like to thank our Director, Deputy Director, DOSA and DRPG for providing the necessary funds and encouragement for transforming the raw idea into the present form.

I wish this guide helps our students and they become our feedback provider next year!

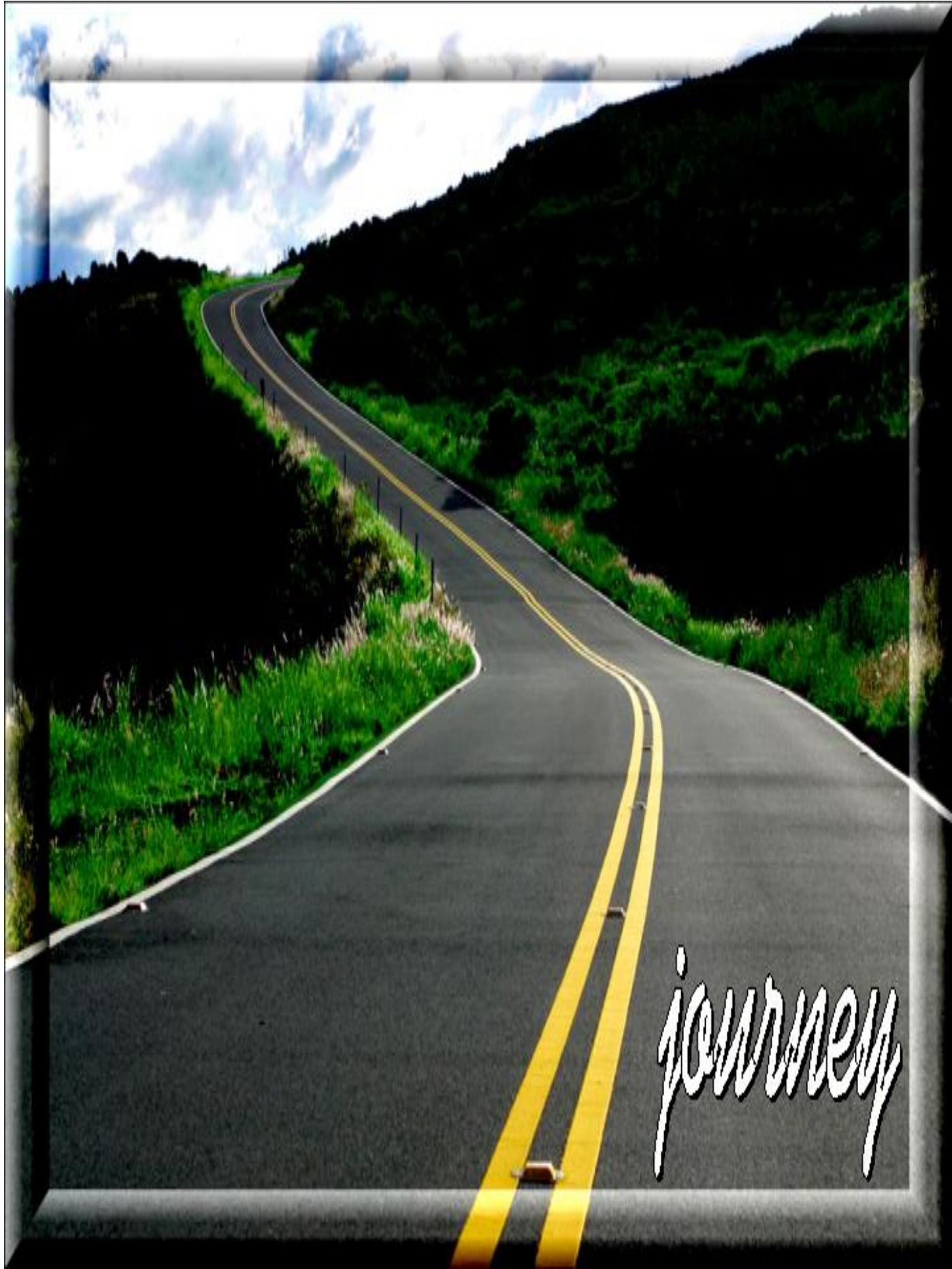
Vimal Kumar  
(Chairman, SPC)

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# ASHISH KUMAR BAJPAI, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

## HINDUSTAN UNILEVER LIMITED



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

I performed consistently in academics with a 9.3 CPI in B.Tech and 8.7 in M.Tech. I also received Academic Excellence Award and did my internship at University of Toronto. Apart from academics, I was constantly involved in robotics and Techkriti and won couple of prizes in the same. I served the Robotics club as Coordinator and Techkriti as Head Events.

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

Someone has rightly said, "Where there is a will, there is a way". And in this case, there are plenty of ways to end up in your dream job. The only thing is that you have to identify your will. Being a Mechanical engineer and having interest in operations, I always dreamt of working in FMCG sector and hence ITC and HUL were my dream companies from my third year itself. I talked to my seniors about the placement scenario and some very close seniors told me about the way it goes. Also, being a dual degree student, I saw my batch mates getting placed, and the frustration of not landing in the first week. Hence I was completely determined to do whatever it takes to get my dream job.

As you might have read till now, the first step is to identify your dream companies and your real companies based upon your potential and your profile. And believe me, it is one of the most difficult step. Once you identify this, you can put all your energy to pursue that but you have to be rationale enough to choose sectors of your interest. You don't want to be too much selective and finally targeting only two or three companies and not too much broad that you are appearing for every next company. So here it goes, you can do it in two ways, first find your area of interest and then select companies or if you can't do this, then look all the sectors and companies visiting the campus, find out if you are interested in a particular firm and then decide. Always attend the ppt of companies you are targeting (or go even if you are not sure about the company). I always hated finance and didn't like number crunching and back office job, so I simply didn't prepare for any finance or finance related company. Also I didn't want to work in foreign initially due to some reasons, which left some more good companies. I was also not very much interested in consulting and this left only FMCG(that too only ITC and HUL) and core. Core companies are always neglected because of their low package; hence ultimately I was stuck with only two choices. So to broaden my area and increase my chances, I decided to go for consulting too. Again you have to think about it and set your priorities according to your personality, your profile and your interest. Hence FMCG was my top choice followed by consulting and then core.

Next step is resume, and believe me it is again one of the most important step. It is always better if you start making it at an early stage, especially B.Tech guys. I reviewed some of the resumes of B.Tech junta and literally, they were too bad to get selected in any good company. So B.Tech guys, make a good use of your internship time and at least make a list of things that you are going to write in your resume. Dual guys always get plenty of time to prepare themselves but this is not true for B.Tech junta and I think this is one of the most important reasons of poor placement of 4-year people.



I started working on my resume in the starting of August and by mid September, I had a decent resume. Due to shortage of time, I could not get it reviews by many seniors, but I got positive response from those whom I gave it to review.

Application started during the starting of October and by the 4<sup>th</sup> week of the month, BCG's shortlist came and I don't know how, I got shortlisted (☺), I did put consulting in my preparation list but never started for it and also never thought of getting shortlisted in BCG, so two things happened, it did boost my confidence but on the other hand it also diverted my preparation. Till now I was preparing only for core and FMCG, and then case studies also came into the picture.

With one of my wingies, I started practicing case studies, but I was never good at it, and as a matter of fact I didn't take it seriously too. BCG, like IIT-Kanpur, has constant evaluation system (:P), it is said they monitor you with your each and every activity. They also organized a consulting workshop during mid-November and did mock-interview with each of us. I think this is the first stage where they do their hidden first short listing. I did badly in my mock interview and lost all hopes for consulting. By this time it was already 20<sup>th</sup> of November, The D-day was coming and I was not focused on any of my company (I couldn't even finish my courses completely). So finally I decided to give up in consulting and decided to completely focus at ITC and HUL. I talked to my friends in HUL and got the clue that PUMP is the most important thing for HUL apart from thermodynamics. So I dig up all the material on pumps available on internet and went through it thoroughly. I also started finishing thermodynamics, fluid mechanics and heat transfer. Meanwhile I talked to those guys who got selected for internship in HUL and some of them told me about questions in manufacturing too. Since I didn't want to leave any stone unturned, so I also went through manufacturing and TOM, and by 1<sup>st</sup> of December I was able to cover almost all the stuffs. Apart from technical questions, I wrote down answers for the HR questions and did mock interviews with my wing-mates at least 5-6 times. It helped me in getting fluent in my answers and avoid my stammering.

Another interesting thing happened on that day. Out of the blue, Diamond consulting, organized a lunch party for us at Landmark and asked us to attend the same. On the same day, we had our GDs for ITC and HUL and test for Citicorp and I also had to finish some part in Heat and Mass Transfer. My mind was completely filled with agony and targeting HUL I decided not to go anywhere and keep on revising my stuffs.

## **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

On -1 day (1<sup>st</sup> of December :P), GDs of ITC and HUL took place. I was a bit nervous in ITC GD which resulted in my loud voice and dominating nature. The case was one of the typical cases of ITC which I missed during preparation; as a matter of fact they haven't changed it since 3 or 4 years. It did not go that good but I was sure if 4 people would be selected from my group then I would be in. But by that time I was ready for HUL's GD. It was a fresh new case which I forgot by the way (:P). The group was big (12 students) and I gave some good ideas (I think so). The key is "never give up on quality, safety and ethics".

Well HUL is famous for taking only one or two guys, on top of that, rumor was that it would take only chemical guys, so I didn't had much hope with HUL, on the other hand, I was 100% sure to get through ITC (my profile and everything just matched with ITC and my friends also boosted me for the same). But I don't know what was in my fate, at around 10:00 PM, the results of ITC's GD came, and I was not shortlisted, all my hopes were shattered and everything turned into fume. They took only two students from my group and I was completely hopeless as I wasn't preparing for BCG, screwed up Diamond and ITC was gone. Only chance was in HUL (about which I was not sure) and Opera. I still remember that time, my wing mates helped me through that situation and boosted me a hell lot and soon I saw a ray of hope. 20 minutes later, HUL's result came out and I was shortlisted for the interview. I decided to prepare as much as I could for HUL and revised all my stuffs all the night. I had 4 interviews next day but I didn't sleep even after going through 2 GD's and 1 aptitude test. Finally the day came. I couldn't sleep last night, so as soon as clock struck 5, I took shower and headed for interview in Hall-2. In spite of the constant pain in my body, I decided to cherish each moment and give my

best. My first one was scheduled with Opera. I was taking it very lightly. The guy was from USA. I did my intern in Canada, so we did a little bit chit chat about that and we had a very nice conversation. He seemed happy with my attitude. He gave me a business case on Casino and after his some help, I finally solved the case and came up with the answer he was seeking.

The next interview was with BCG. The bad thing about BCG interviews is that they don't let you go anywhere else till their process is finished. So instead of going there, I first gave Diamond's interview and then HUL. Since you would have read a lot about Diamond and BCG interview, so let me come straight to HUL. The first interview was taken by a factory manager. First question was based on pump, he asked about types of pump, NPSH and other relevant things. Then couple of more questions related to thermodynamics. He asked about refrigeration cycle, LMTD, cooling tower, brayton cycle and some more questions. It lasted about 15-20 minutes. I did pretty well and asked about his experience at HUL. It went good and I was sure to get shortlisted for the next round.

After that I was called for second round which was a telephonic interview taken by General Manager of the company Yogesh and there was one more guy whose name I don't remember. He again asked the questions on pumps, use of pump in our daily life, NPSH, its determination, laws of thermodynamics, perpetual machines, use of second law in our daily life, principle of airplanes, Bernoulli theorem, what happens when you open the door of refrigerator, a heat transfer calculation (I don't remember exactly) and some more questions in thermodynamics.

Finally he asked some questions from my form. He was not satisfied with the answer I gave in one of the questions and he asked me to cite another example. He asked about my strategy on successful conduction of one of my events (Gearloose) and what made it best. Finally there were some formal questions like if I was ready to be posted anywhere and all.

I think I answered all the questions very confidently and to the point and elaborated where required. I was very much confident about pumps and cited as many examples as I could. I think this was the best part of my interview. Initially I was a bit nervous but then I contemplated and decided to take proper time to answer each question. I think I satisfied him with every question he asked and that's why I got selected in the company of which I used to dream since my 3<sup>rd</sup> year (☺).

Last but not least, I would like to say that you should know yourself and your shortcomings thoroughly and then do your best to overcome them. This is the single most time when you should devote yourself completely in the preparation (just like JEE time) if you want to get selected in your dream company. As in my case, though I did have good academic background and positions of responsibilities but I used to stammer and was not fluent in English. So I had to work a lot in these two areas in order to do decent in the interviews. I practiced in front of mirror and gave as many mock interviews as I could and that finally gave me result. Remember, nothing is impossible if you want to achieve that. You have to just work very very hard for that.

**OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWED WITH : BCG, Opera, Diamond**

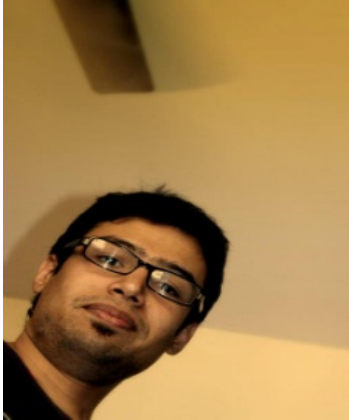
### **FINAL WORD OF ADVICE**

So that's all about my preparation and interview experience. Hope you guys will do great. If any more doubts, feel free to contact me and throw any questions you had at my email id: [ashishkb007@gmail.com](mailto:ashishkb007@gmail.com) .

All the best!!!

# HARSHIT KASHIV, ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING (DUAL)

HSBC



## **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

I have thoroughly enjoyed my stay of around 5 years here at IITK being involved in business club in the beginning to becoming the head PR in Techkriti'11. The only thing I miss is not learning any sport here (though I didn't even try hard for it which was a mistake too). Knowing people, all kinds of people has been my hobby and so I can tell one thing that people here come for different reasons. Some for its good academics, some for recognition and some just to get the exposure to a world class facility without any knowledge of how they are going to use it. I was the third kind. So I did all I could to maximize my experiences, good or bad and same was the case with my intern which I did in IIM Indore as it gave me the opportunity to work in the hinterlands of tribal districts of Madhya Pradesh for NREGA.

## **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

It was always finance for me as I had always felt that I had the entrepreneur genes in me and to be good at that one is required to have a good knowledge of finance. To prepare for it I used to read the basic books like liars poker, rich dad poor dad, The Quants and Life of a quant by Hermann Hess. Before 3 months from placement I also read John C Hull which deals with financial instruments. But what I encountered finally was totally different from what I expected. Getting a good finance job was mostly CPI and test driven (and all sorts of other things) and not on your interest in finance or your knowledge of finance. So in the end I prepared for tests and cracked the test for HSBC in which I would be joining soon.

## **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

### **1> Capital one**

There was test which was purely data analysis and calculator was allowed. So the procedure that they follow is that first they shortlist 50 people and a small case interview is followed. The case I was asked was to calculate the change in the cost of a grocery store if it has changed its model from cash on delivery with a physical store to an online portal which has cash on delivery option. As I had practiced it already I took some time to give structure and then gave 3-4 reasons for change in cost and then he gave me some numbers based on which I had to calculate the break even time period or amount. But I think he expected a little bit different approach or was searching for a different solution as I wasn't selected for the final interview sessions. I think 22 people were selected for the final interview session out of which 2 people were finally selected in Cap One.

### **2> Accenture**

This profile was basically open for only MBA but I they were keen on hiring some of the non MBA guys also. Selection was based on our resume and first round of interviews were resume based as well. This gave me a chance to defend my resume for the first time. Before this I felt like I would never get to an interview ☺. But the next round was tough, they asked me a case about estimation and did not give me



any supporting data. Then they started asking me puzzles and I started thinking that my case study would not have been proper that is why they are asking me these tough puzzles just to scare me away. But eventually I made it to the next round which was just HR round and the lady kept on asking why do u want to join us and I kept on telling the same thing I had prepared about how consulting is a way of life and how their firm would benefit me and all that.

Eventually I was their waitlist 1 and I never got through.

### 3> BMGI

I think it was day 3 or 4, I had not qualified for the citibank's test and that is why I did not have any interview on 2<sup>nd</sup> day. Here the first round was an English cum aptitude test. I got to the next level (40 something out of 200 or more) which was GD and our topic was "should we allow fdi in retail" and since I follow a lot of business news I was thorough with the topic and I even pulled some examples from my B Club days to support my arguments. Eventually out of 11 in GD, I was selected for the final round of interviews ☺ (I think 8 people were selected finally ☺). So we were clear on one thing, they are not here to hire big. Case cum resume based interview followed. But then worst thing happened to me, they started hitting personal questions to me without giving me any chance to answer like why did you take electrical here? After taking electrical why are you interested in consulting? Why do people in general in IITs do not go for higher studies? And eventually they told me that I had not done anything concrete and that they feel that I follow a herd mentality. I was seriously not prepared for this kind of grilling and I panicked. I could have given a fight but I sat listening to them and in the end I accepted some allegations and gave a counter for some but I knew I had taken a defeat.

I was not selected.

### 4> NI and HSBC

Both were on same day and had similar procedure. First cat like test then GD (topics were "corruption in india and anna hazare" and "zero" I am not sure about second one but it was something like this) and then interviews.

In HSBC they asked me a case in which I had to first guess the no of petrol pumps in Kanpur and then to device a criteria for finalizing a location for a petrol pump for my client.

Interview in NI was somewhat technical and I wasn't prepared for that (which happens most of the times so plzzz guys be prepared for all the basic courses like microelectronics, digital circuits from books like sedra n smith and all).

Eventually HSBC hired me.

## **OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWED WITH : Capital one, Accenture , BMGI , National Instruments**

### **FINAL WORD OF ADVICE**

Do not prepare for companies and what they want but for your own strength and weakness. If you are strong in core subjects, chances are you would be hired by a tech company only (don't go with exceptions like BCG, DB, Schlum nd Transocean, they hire very few). If you do not want a core job then also prepare for it just in case. At least people in CSE, EE, ME should prepare well for core as there is always a chance that you don't get your dream job and then you panic and don't think things through and get any random job that comes your way and regret in future but if you have a backup in core you can always pursue things in future without regret.

# NISHANT PALIWAL, ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING(DUAL)

## INTEL



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

**Area of Specialization:** Semiconductor Devices, Digital Design  
**Extra-Curricular:** Institute Volleyball Captain, Institute Volleyball team member for 4 years

**Internship:** At LG soft India (Developing a model for Speaker Identification)

**Projects and courses:** My projects were mostly focused towards VLSI area. Few of my key projects were:

- 1) Design and Implementation of 4 bit Wallace Tree Multiplier
- 2) Hopping Transport model and its validation in Dye synthesized solar cells
- 3) Si Ion Implant to subdue gate leakage current

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

I always intended to find a core job in semiconductor industry and for the same I planned my curriculum in accordance with it. I took all courses related to VLSI area EE dept has to offer which included digital, analog and devices. I learnt some architecture also with the help of my batch-mates who have done CSE architecture course. For those who are planning to get a core job my suggestions would be:

maintain a good CPI as it is the first criteria they will shortlist you, have good understanding of the subject, do study devices also as companies frequently ask questions based on devices and practice from yourself and don't rely on SPO as they will not be preparing you for core companies. Do get information from your seniors about the preparations. If you have done your courses sincerely then it will take about 1-2 months to complete the preparations. And prepare along with your batch-mates aiming for same area as it will help everyone. Don't try to go alone.

Books/notes to read: Rabaey for Digital, EE610 notes for Analog and if you can manage read Semiconductor device from Tsividis(Do cover short channel effect and capacitance curve)

### **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

- 1) Name of the company :Intel
- 2) Short listing Process: Based on Resume (Not very clear but major role players were CPI and Projects )
- 3) Number of Interviews : 2

Here I would like to say it loud, Do write your area of interest clearly and your major projects you are highlighting in your resume should be of that area, otherwise they might interview you for wrong area and you might miss out as few students did. So be clear about that. And don't think you can get away with casual or fuzzy answers. Interviewers are experienced so don't try to miss-Guide them.

1<sup>st</sup> interview was completely technical and 2<sup>nd</sup> one was HR.

- 4) Technical Questions asked : Technical Interview was related to the field they have shortlisted you. There were 3 panel for EE guys, 1 for shortlisted candidate for Analog Area, 1 for shortlisted candidate for Digital and 1 for Architecture. For me it was mixed of Analog and digital with some device also. Questions regarding Short channel effects were asked. Then Questions related to Diff-Amp were asked. Then there were questions on Digital logic, need of C-Mos , Charge sharing and distribution in C-mos devices. Capacitance curve and its region. And then there were questions on Timing Issues, skew, jitter

and some tricky question revolving around timing analysis. Questions regarding data transfer and propagation and read-write methodology were also asked. It was not about finding an answer it was finding how depth and clear knowledge a candidate has and what is his/her thinking process. If you get stuck somewhere while answering they will give you hints but don't seek hints for every answers.

- 5) HR questions asked: HR questions were the usual questions which are generally asked everywhere, revolving around judging my character. Few scenarios were given which conflicts between ethics and personal gains. Questions like give instance when you stood up for your belief and convinced others to go along with you, how did you stopped someone doing something that is not right.
- 6) What went well: Since I did courses of all areas of VLSI from devices to digital I was able to answer the wide range of questions put in front of me. I never tried to make a guess, I simply said that some things I forgot, but I was able to say that because most of the questions I was able to answer. Also I prepared HR questions beforehand and had some instances in my mind to quote when put under those scenario.
- 7) Probable reason for selection: Good CPI , Clarity about subject and wide range of topics I covered during my courses.
- 8) Any other thing you would want the juniors to know : Preparation is very important and most important is being clear what you are aiming for.

# VENKATESH RAMESH, MATERIAL SCIENCE ENGINEERING

## ZS ASSOCIATES



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

Head Events (Model United Nations), Antaragni'11

Qualified for the Final Round of ISB-YLP (2011)

Coordinator, Public Relations, Antaragni'10

Poster presentation, 4<sup>th</sup> Asian Particulate Technology Symposium (2009)

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

It is extremely important to gauge oneself and have a crystal clear opinion on what one wants and what he/she needs to do in order to get there. I was targeting the consulting firms backed by my above average communication skills and decent positions of responsibility. A genuine lack of interest towards the departmental courses lead to me being indifferent towards the dearth of good core firms.

Preparation, again, is sector specific. But in general, preparing aptitude and working out basic HR questions (along with a few case studies for Consulting) should keep one in good shape. Group discussions are best prepared by practicing in groups. The most important suggestion would be to DO what one plans. Most keep thinking of doing and end up being under prepared.

### **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

- 1) **Name of the company** : Capital One
- 2) **Short listing Process** : Written Test ( DI questions, each involving 2-3 plots)
- 3) **Interview Round No.:** 1
- 4) **Technical/Puzzles/Aptitude/Cases asked :**

Started with a "Tell me something about your-self question". I believe it was just to set the ball rolling and was not evaluated.

The interviewer then gave me a case question wherein I had to make a choice between a diesel and a petrol car. There were 3 parts to the question (some candidates were asked 1 / 2 as well). The first dealt with finding the breakeven point given the basic set of cost, fuel price and fuel consumption data. Next was to find breakeven considering the money was acquired at a certain rate of interest (bond/loan). Both these results involved basic calculation and I was comfortable with them. The final part was about calculating the breakeven, again, but this time considering depreciation. This is where I was caught off guard and though I did turn up with a figure, the interviewer was not completely satisfied.

- 5) **What went well/What went wrong :**

I was not hesitant and was reasonably confident while answering. What went wrong was perhaps the fact that I was caught unaware of how depreciation works and how it had to be included in the equation.

6) **Probable reason for selection/rejection :**

Rejection. Fumbling with the equation and puzzled as to where to include terms for depreciation etc.

7) **Any other thing you would want the juniors to know!**

Do get a basic background of the firm and also about terms in the related field.

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1) **Name of the company :** Indus Insights

2) **Short listing Process :** Test (Quant, Logical Reasoning)

3) **Interview Round No. and something about the interviewers :** 1 ; Neha Mantri (Partner)

4) **Technical/Puzzles/Aptitude/Cases asked :**

I was asked to calculate the number of tyres sold in India annually. I started out in an organized manner, categorizing the vehicles using tyres, narrowing down on the basis of usage of each in the urban and rural sector. I did come up with a reasonably accurate figure.

Thereafter, was also asked to list down the various sources of revenue for the airport authorities. At the end of the interview, the interviewer seemed quite satisfied.

5) **HR questions asked :**

Basic introduction of all that I had done during my stay at IITK

6) **What went well/What went wrong :**

Approach to the problem at hand and confident interaction with the interviewer. It was more like both of us solving the case together.

7) **Probable reason for selection/rejection :** Selected for Round 2; Structured problem solving

8) **Interview Round No. and something about the interviewers :** 2 ; Saurabh Sharma (Founder and CEO)

9) **Technical/Puzzles/Aptitude/Cases asked :**

To estimate the number of traffic lights in Delhi. This time I started out giving three different methods to solve the problem. The bad part was that I was not allowed to make use of any standard data (Population of Delhi/ Population density/Area etc). After all my approaches were considered non satisfactory, I tried plugging the loopholes but the interviewer was clearly not satisfied. What was worse, unlike round 1, my calculations were by and large rough and I was asked to submit my calculations.

10) **HR questions asked :** none

11) **What went well/What went wrong:** Nothing went right!

12) **Probable reason for selection/rejection:** Rejection. Was unable to satisfy my approach to solving the case to the interviewer.

13) **Any other thing you would want the juniors to know! :** At any point of time, be confident and ALWAYS have neat and clear calculations. You never know when you'd be asked to submit your calculations.

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1) **Name of the company :** Flipkart

2) **Short listing Process :** Test (Quant, Logical Reasoning, English, DI)

3) **Interview Round No. :** 1

4) **Technical/Puzzles/Aptitude/Cases asked :** I was asked to list out the factors that make an e-commerce venture successful. This was followed by "Why would e-commerce be successful in India?". My answers were elaborate and full of facts and data. I listed down the factors and discussed why each one of them was a vital component. Again, this was a two way discussion , with the interviewer giving his inputs wherever required. The interviewer seemed to be impressed and confirmed my selection for the next and final round.



- 5) **HR questions asked** : “ Tell me something about yourself!”
  - 6) **What went well/What went wrong** : My general awareness and knowledge about flipkart really helped in answering the questions posed.
  - 7) **Probable reason for selection/rejection**: Selected for Round 2. Confidence and involving the interviewer in the discussion.
  - 8) **Any other thing you would want the juniors to know!** : --
  - 9) **Interview Round No.:** 2
  - 10) **Technical/Puzzles/Aptitude/Cases asked** : None
  - 11) **HR questions asked** : “Tell me something about yourself?” , “Why do you want to join flipkart?” , “ Do you have any problems with frequent relocation and warehouse kind of work?”  
At the end , I was asked to ask questions to clarify my doubts, if any, about the firm and got elaborate answers from the interviewer.
  - 12) **What went well/What went wrong** : I think the interview was quite good.
  - 13) **Probable reason for selection/rejection** ☺ : Rejected. Maybe, the interviewer felt I was not a good match for the firm.
  - 14) **Any other thing you would want the juniors to know!** : --
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- 1) **Name of the company:** ZS Associates
- 2) **Short listing Process** : Test ( Quant, English, DI, Attention to detail) + Group discussion
- 3) **Interview Round No. and something about the interviewers** : 1 ; Gautam Rastogi, Consultant, ZS Associates
- 4) **Technical/Puzzles/Aptitude/Cases asked** :  
I was given a booklet describing a case involving a shoe manufacturer and his supply chain system. In addition there were a few other glitches in his profit generation. A total of 30 mins was allocated to solve the case, followed by an interview to discuss the case and suggest changes.
- 5) **What went well/What went wrong** : My calculations were neat and I invested more time in understanding the problem which made the Q/A session with the interviewer a cake walk.
- 6) **Probable reason for selection/rejection** ☺ : Crisp, to the point and correct answers ☺
- 7) **Any other thing you would want the juniors to know!** : Make sure you read the cases VERY carefully. I learnt that a couple of my fellow students messed up the understanding part.
- 8) **Interview Round No. and something about the interviewers:** 2 ; Abhay M., Manager , ZS Associates
- 9) **Technical/Puzzles/Aptitude/Cases asked** : A basic math puzzle involving the surface area and volume concepts of a cube.
- 10) **HR questions asked** : The interview was by and large about my experiences in campus and how I had responded to different situations. Questions like “3 instances wherein you worked in a disordered environment and came out with flying colours“ , “ What is the most important quality in a team leader and why” etc . The round lasted for around 40 mins.
- 11) **What went well/What went wrong** :  
I was relaxed during the entire conversation and was able to substantiate my answers with examples from my life experiences.
- 12) **Probable reason for selection/rejection** :  
Selected. This time because of elaborate answers. What was good is that I had apt examples to support my answers.
- 13) **Any other thing you would want the juniors to know!**  
Make sure you relate each and every significant achievement of yours to a particular quality or trait that defines you. This would help you answering HR questions effectively.
- 14) **Interview Round No. and something about the interviewers:** 3 ; Jude Konzelmann , Principal, ZS Associates

- 15) **Technical/Puzzles/Aptitude/Cases asked** : A role play wherein I was meeting a potential customer in an elevator and had 60 secs to inform him about what 'We at ZS' do. I lacked proper knowledge of the firm and had to do with limited information I had. I ensured I don't go wrong on the little information I knew.
- 16) **HR questions asked** : The interview was again primarily about my experiences in campus and how I had managed time etc. Questions like " Why ZS" , " 3 most valued principles of your life" etc were put forward. The round lasted for about 30 mins. At the end I was given time to ask questions and clarify my doubts about the kind of work, culture etc at the firm.
- 17) **What went well/What went wrong** :  
I was relaxed during the entire conversation and enjoyed the entire conversation.
- 18) **Probable reason for selection/rejection** :  
Selected. Perhaps, with time, I felt more comfortable answering questions at an interview ☺
- 19) **Any other thing you would want the juniors to know!**  
Be thorough with each and every line of your master resume. HR interviews are all about knowing yourself and what you have done so far in life. ☺

**OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWED WITH: Capital One, Indus Insights, Flipkart**

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# MANIK GARG, CIVIL ENGINEERING

## DEUTSCHE BANK



### HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY

- **Academics:** An average guy with B.Tech CPI 7.8 and M.Tech CPI 8.5
- **Positions of Responsibility:**
  1. Head, Marketing, Techkriti'11
  2. Core Team Member, SPO, Placement Season 2011-12
  3. Coordinator, Endeavour, Techkriti'09
  4. Active participant in Hall Festivals during first three years. 1<sup>st</sup> in Volleyball, Varchasva'09; 1<sup>st</sup> in Western Rock Band Competition, Galaxy'09
- **Internships:** VMS Consultants Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai (Through SPO)
- **Projects:** Won First Prize in Bridge Design Challenge (part of CE-222 Course)

### PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION

Talking about my career plans, I was totally interested in my department (Structural Engineering) till the 6<sup>th</sup> semester. Even, I had converted to dual for this very reason. But during my intern which was a core industrial intern and very much based on the work I liked in my department, I realized that I would not be satisfied much in a core job as the work there was mainly monotonous and also it did not pay much.

So, in the start of 4<sup>th</sup> year, when placement preparation began for my B.Tech batchmates, I analyzed this process carefully. I attended PPTs of companies and every session related to placements and soon realized that I wanted a non-core job. Here, I must say that watching my wingies placed in different companies was a very important lesson on how to go for placement preparation.

So after narrowing down to the non-core companies, I was mainly targeting Finance and Consulting Sector. Before the summers of 2011, there was not much preparation done on my part. But I had prepared my Resume during this period as I had applied in ISB-YLP Program. Most of my other batch-mates started making their resume after the summers. During summers, there were 2-3 half-hearted attempts to start placement preparation but all in vain. Even after summers, August passed chilling out and enjoying the 9<sup>th</sup> semester (with only one course :P). But September started, I applied for CAT and then our group started to worry about career. We started practicing for aptitude because it would help in aptitude tests of almost each and every company as well as CAT. For aptitude preparation, we formed a group of three and started going to library everyday from 9-11PM. One mistake we did initially was that we did not do time-bound practice and just focused on solving the questions. But soon, we realized that aptitude is all about solving fast because eventually each one of us will be able to solve any aptitude question existing on this earth :P:P. So, always keep in mind that time bound practice is the key for good preparation. The material which we followed for aptitude preparation was TIME. I did not join CL classes, but if you strongly aspire for belling the CAT, I suggest that one should at least attend their lectures on Verbal Section, aptitude preparation for CAT can be done on your own.

I also tried developing a habit of reading newspaper everyday and was able to read it 4-5 days in a week. Reading newspaper is important because it keeps you updated on the current affairs and improves your vocabulary as well. You get to know what's going on around the world, eg. Eurozone Crisis, Maruti Strike, RBI's steps to fight inflation etc.

For consulting preparation, first I went through the Wharton B-School Casebook. For case preparation, you should read 4-5 cases initially and then try to solve the other ones on your own. But the best way to prepare for case studies is to form groups of 3-4 people and keeping it as interactive as possible. The way this goes is that every person prepares one case which he/she will ask from someone else. This way what happens is that you get an experience of what is actually going to happen on the D-day and you learn to adapt in such situations. By this, you not only get to know your short-comings but also learn to drive the case study at your own pace/will. I was practicing cases till mid-October but once I got shortlisted for DB :D, I stopped it completely and also due to the reason that I was not shortlisted in any consulting company :-X.

One thing I would like to add here is that in consulting, I was targeting Tier-2 and Tier-3 consultancies which include Opera, i3, EXL, ZS, BMGI etc. I knew that there is very negligible chance(2-5%) of getting shortlisted in BCG and McK. I am telling this so that one should always make realistic targets, there were people in our batch who had done nothing in their 4 years and were hoping to get shortlisted in BCG. These people were then very much frustrated on not getting shortlisted. I do not intend to insult anyone here but try being realistic in your targets, this will only help saving your precious time. Take my case too, I was hoping to get shortlisted in every Tier-2 and Tier-3 consult(and somewhere in my heart for BCG too :P) but it did not happen.

In November when the shortlists came for almost every day-one company, I found myself giving only one interview i.e. for DB. Me, not being shortlisted in any consulting company was sort of a boon for me as I was able to put all my efforts in one single direction as compared to others. From November 5 onwards, it was all about cracking DB for me. I started with the puzzles first of all, then for Finance, I studied the first 6 chapters of Hull. For puzzle preparation specifically for DB, one can go through Techinterview. DB generally asks puzzles related to probability, one good site for the same is Braingle.com; it has a good collection of probability puzzles, one must go through all these puzzles. Knowledge of current affairs related to Finance is also mandatory for DB preparation. Another important thing is to have your resume on your tips, this point is valid for any company but DB specifically digs through every nook and corner of your resume during interviews. Site research is also a very important part of interview preparation. You get to know the Goals and Objectives of the company. I did a lot of research on DB, it does not take much time too, just 4-5 hours on net and you are done. But this site research helped me a lot in preparing questions like Why Finance?? Why DB?? etc.

### ***HR Questions Preparation:***

This is one part which everyone keeps avoiding till the D-day comes, but believe me HR Ques should be prepared by end October and should be on your tips. If someone asks you Why DB or Why Schlum? and you don't have a answer ready at your tips, it just reflects that you have not been sincere enough for the interview preparation. I again warn you to prepare HR ques well before the D-day because in my case, I prepared these ques on the last day and believe me, it just added to the already existing 100 atm. pressure on my body :D:D. Some common HR ques which should be at your tips are:

1. Why Finance(or any other sector)
2. Why Company Name??
3. Where do you see yourself three years down the line?
4. Tell me about yourself?
5. Strengths and Weakness
6. Why not MBA? Why not Research?
7. Biggest achievement? Biggest failure?
8. Example of your leadership skills?

There are many ways to answer HR Ques, the easiest one is to be as genuine as possible in answering these questions. I mean if you say you do not have any weakness, everybody knows you must be kidding; everyone has one or two weaknesses. So, please be as genuine as possible; the company people want to hear that only; don't just blurb out some bookish answers. Another way in which being genuine helps is that you are able to answer any cross-question if asked because you can relate to it easily.

<You can include stuff like how did you narrow down to your career plans, the sectors which you were targeting and the rationale behind choosing them, difference between your expectations from the placement process and what you encountered finally, what you did to prepare, what you missed out on, what you think should be done, about the tests and GDs that the companies took, your thoughts before the final placements, about CAT, GRE, GMAT etc. and other fun stuff ☺>

## **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

1. **Name of Company:** Deutsche Bank
2. Short listing Process: Aptitude Test in November first week. Around 40 people were short listed for interviews. Finally, they took 5(Markets Profile) + 1(Quant Profile) students.
3. **Interview Round 1:** My interview was scheduled at 7:30Am initially but they called me in at 6:45AM. The panel consisted of 3 members of which one of them was the Director of some division at DB. Just before the interview, I tried keeping my mind blank, not thinking of anything. I entered the room, had a handshake with the Director and wished Good Morning to everyone with a pleasant smile. The first question he asked was Tell me About yourself. Just a short note on the Director: He had been in UK for quite some time and had a totally videshi accent, as soon as he opened his mouth, I was not able to follow his words and just gathered "about yourself " in the end of his line :O. So, I assumed that the question he asked was "Tell me about yourself". So, be attentive when you enter the room, take a deep breath just before entering and your nerves should calm down. After the first question, they asked me something related to work done for SPO and asked me to name any 3-4 companies which I had successfully converted. Then, they also asked me about the bridge design challenge in which our team had won 1<sup>st</sup> prize. One of the interviewers, who I guess was a civil engineer asked some questions on structural analysis and his final question was to explain the difference between beam and truss. I told him something but it was not to the point. This, I guess was a weak point during my 1<sup>st</sup> interview. After this, they asked 5 hot news going on in the country which I was able to answer without any problem. Then, they also asked me some 2-3 puzzles on probability. I had done these puzzles before, so had no difficulty in answering them. NOTE: If you have heard the puzzle being asked to you, do not act smart by saying that you have already solved this puzzle, just give them a structured solution, that's what they are looking for.

**Interview Round 2:** Immediately after my first round, I was called for a second interview. This panel had 4 members, among them was Mr. Biswaroop whom everyone feared. He took me into the room, while doing so he told me that I am going to have one hell of a ride now. Mind you, these were his exact words, but then just to relax me he also added that I was wearing a pretty handsome suit :D:D. This gave me a lot of confidence. The round started with the usual Tell me about yourself. While answering this, they stopped me in between and asked me Why Finance as a career option and then why DB. I answered these questions to which one of the panelists replied sarcastically that this was the most strange answer he ever heard. I did not panic then, and just gave a pleasant smile. Then they asked me 2 puzzles, again pretty easy and probability based. After that, they asked whether I had done any course in probability and statistics. Luckily, CE guys have to do a compulsory course based on statistics in their 9<sup>th</sup> sem. They asked me questions related to kurtosis and least squares which I answered comfortably. During all this, Biswaroop was just watching me, then he broke his silence and asked me "Choose one from Forwards, Futures and Options". I chose Options, then he asked me some questions based on arbitrage opportunity in 2-3 cases. I was not able to answer them correctly but I did not go wrong in my concepts. This was a weak point here. After that Bis asked what all companies was I interviewing today. This was a tricky one to answer as you do not want to show that you have only 1 interview lined up in the whole day(which was my case). So, I replied by saying that I will be interviewing with Capital One in Slot-2 and no other company. This, I think was a nice answer because it shows that I just wanted to get into the finance sector and was quite sure about it. Had I answered some consulting company, cross questions would have definitely come up. Then, they asked me my strengths and weaknesses. This was the end of my second interview.

When I came out of the room, Bis followed me up and told me that he wanted to talk to me in about 10-15 minutes and asked to wait outside the room itself. I thought that I had performed well in te interview and



maybe he wanted to give me the final offer, so I was pretty excited. I waited, 15 minutes passed, he did not come out of the interview room, I waited more and kept my cool. Then, he came out after about 45 minutes, stared at me and went inside the other interview room. It looked as if he had forgotten my face and then suddenly all kinds of weird thoughts started coming in my mind. I asked 2-3 people from DB who were coordinating the process outside the rooms, they asked to keep waiting here. Realizing the fact that probably Bis wanted to have a look at all 40 students before finalizing the offers gave me some more strength to wait. Students kept coming and going, some were not interviewed for the second time while 3 students were given final offer after 2 rounds. Watching all this sent jitters down my stomach but I could do nothing but wait. There were instances when Bis passed by my side along with some prospective candidate telling him about the aura and charm of DB. Time was passing by and soon it was 12'o clock. I was feeling the heat now and began to think that I had been rejected/neglected. Soon, it was 12:45 and I sat down on a chair thinking what went wrong with me. I started preparing the question Why Citibank?? because it was scheduled in the next slot. At around 1:15 as far as I remember, my wait was finally over. Bis came to me and asked me what happened in the morning. He apologized sarcastically that he had kept me waiting for such a long time and told me that I will be having a 3<sup>rd</sup> round. Third round started immediately.

**Interview Round 3:** This round was more of a rapid fire round. There were 6 people present in the room, each one ready to shoot a question of his choice. There was that civil guy who had asked me in round 1 the difference between beam and truss. First question was to tell 3 strengths in 10 seconds. I answered immediately, next one was 2 weakness in 5 seconds. Again I answered without any delay. Then, they asked to describe the Manik I knew in 3 words, again in 10 seconds. Then, some cross questions were thrown at me which I defended quite easily. After this, the CE guy asked me, "Manik, you've had now about 5 hours, you had so much time to think, I come back to the same question, difference between beam and truss. And this time I want it to the point, no long stories." At once, I replied with the same answer to which he nodded his head. I realized he did not want to hear that same old answer, so I started looking towards the roof. Suddenly, it clicked to me and I gave him the correct answer. He gave me a big smile at that moment. At this moment, I thought that I had nailed the interview and became pretty confident of my chances. They asked some 2-3 more questions which I answered with confidence.

After about 7-20 minutes, Bis gave me the good news of my selection and this was it.

If anyone wants to contact me, drop me a mail at [manik18manik@gmail.com](mailto:manik18manik@gmail.com)/[manik.iitk@gmail.com](mailto:manik.iitk@gmail.com)

# VIBHAV AGARWAL, BIO-SCIENCES AND BIO-ENGINEERING

## FLIPKART



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

Departmental rank 1, General Proficiency medal, Head security SPICMACAY National Convention, student's nominee to different institute level committees

ACADEMICS: Finished with a CPI of 9.3, Recipient of Mitacs and SURGE scholarships, Academic Excellence Award

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: Participated in debate, declamation and hindi literary events in galaxy. Reporter for Vox Populi for 2 years,

INTERNSHIPS: During 3<sup>rd</sup> year summers I was selected for Mitacs and did my internship at University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

During 2<sup>nd</sup> year summers I was selected for SURGE at IITK and did a project under Dr Amitabha Bandyopadhyay of BSBE.

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

Learnt from seniors and alumni what companies from different sector (Consulting, finance, core etc) looks for and prepared my resume accordingly. This also helped me to realize that my profile was weak for finance sector which requires a lot of preparation and hence I was less focused on this sector. Next I started preparing for aptitude test and practiced with the Career Launcher CAT test material (any coaching institute material would suffice). Next I started preparing for case studies through various books listed on SPO's website. With the help of friends/wingmates I practiced different types of case studies in a proper interview like environment. Newspaper (economic times, hindu) reading were also an important part of my preparations, they kept me inform on various issues and they also gave me an idea of facts and figures essential for consulting firms. At the same time I also started preparing for HR interviews. After the results of various companies aptitude test were declared I fine tuned my preparations accordingly.

### **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

My first interview was with Indus Insights. They asked me a guessestimate and wanted to calculate number of tyres used in india annually. I wasn't comfortable with guestimates as my preparation was a bit weak in this area. I tried my level best to take into account various sectors using tyres. I also kept in mind the general rule of a case study to interact with the interviewee and explain my assumptions. I was quite happy with my interview. But to my surprise I wasn't selected for the next round. I solved that case study by myself after that and realized I missed an important point of replacement of tyres so my rejection was justified as you can't afford to do such a blunder.

My next interview was with I3 consulting. I was again faced with a guestimate in the interview, this time about coal consumption in india as my father is a businessman in the same field. I pretty much did everything right in

this interview as I knew the actual facts and figures too but I somehow I failed to appeal to the panel and they rejected me. Today also I am not sure what led to my rejection in this interview.

Next one was with flipkart. In this interview they asked me questions about how e-commerce works and how flipkart can strengthen its position in the market. The answers which I gave were very general with common sense coming into play. The interviewee was impressed my answers and selected me for the next round. The next interview was an HR one and the panel grilled me on my resume. He also asked me questions about my future goals, my strength and weaknesses etc. I was fully prepared for them and was very confident. Finally they offered me the job. The important point here was that one must be very much sure about the points written on his resume and should be to speak for 1-2 minutes about each sentence if asked for.

My last interview for the day was with BMGI, which is also a consultancy. The first round was a group discussion and failed at the first hurdle only. The topic was censorship; I knew that if a person starts a GD he gets a head start over others. So I started the topic and also chipped in a few times with some good points. Once the result was out I asked one of the panelists about the mistakes I committed. They told me that in a hurry to start you didn't understand the topic fully and wasn't holistic in your approach. As a consultant one needs to be exhaustive in his thinking which wasn't evident in my GD. The point to think about is initiating a GD is good but only if you 100% sure about the topic. If you have the slightest of doubt about the topic its better not to start and pitch in between with some strong points. This advice is limited to GD's for consulting firms only as companies like Schlumberger, ITC, HUL etc have a different criteria for GD's and they mayn't be looking for the same set of qualities as the consulting firms.

**OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWD WITH : Indus Insights, BMGI, I3 Consulting**

# KESHAV GOEL, ECONOMICS

## DEUTSCHE BANK



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

#### **Academics:**

Nothing much to speak of on the academic front at IIT Kanpur. A modest CPI. Attended an exchange program at Technische Universität München during my 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> semesters. Passed Level 1 of the CFA Program.

#### **Extra-Currics:**

Involved with Antaragni, Students' Senate and Alumni Contact Program till the end of my third year. Served as Student Guide for the Y8 batch.

#### **Internships:**

KPMG (Frankfurt and Munich offices): Spring-Summer 2011

Reserve Bank of India (New Delhi): Summer 2010

Reliance Money Ltd. (Chandigarh): Summer 2009

M.Sc. Project on 'Value Creation Drivers in Leveraged Buyouts'

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

Campus Placements can be an excruciating experience, but an in-depth analysis of your strengths and weaknesses beforehand can help you focus on your goals. I had an inclination towards Finance since the beginning of my program at IIT Kanpur, illustrated by the fact that I have done all my internships in related fields. Time spent in Munich strengthened my belief and I decided to pursue opportunities in Finance, both in-campus and off-campus. But as there are a significant number of consulting companies which visit our campus, I decided to undertake a 5-month internship at KPMG, which provided me with a flavor of both the worlds in an international setting.

#### **General Prep.:**

Being an economics student, the options have been neatly narrowed down for you. One can apply in companies which are only open for all the students; hence Finance, Consulting and Analytics (as they are known at IITK) were the fields where I had to concentrate upon. I started preparing solely for finance, with Deutsche Bank and Capital One topping the charts on my list. Preparations were focused on preparing for the aptitude tests taken by most of the companies. Reference materials comprised of the CAT preparatory material and a few websites for puzzles. Apart from that, constant feedback and review of the CV was an ongoing process. Appearing for some mock tests arranged for by the SPO was indeed helpful.

#### **Deutsche Bank:**

I was interested in DB, having done some research on the company in general and the profile they offered at IIT Kanpur in particular. DB conducted a white-paper challenge by the name of 'Ideatrics' during August-September. This provided me with an opportunity to visit CIB Centre, Mumbai in person. I feel that this experience motivated me further towards preparing for placements in general and DB in particular. Being selected as the campus winner proved to be an icing on the cake. I would advise you to actively take part in

such activities if time permits. Apart from the obvious brownie points which you earn on winning the competition, it gives you an insight on the day-to-day work which you may be doing if recruited.

### **Things to be done:**

I strongly recommend adequate preparation for the aptitude tests. Also, your CV should do a good job of reflecting who you are. Avoid Personality-CV mismatches, wherein you are pretty boastful while writing down the CV but don't live up to the expectation of the interviewer. Thoroughly prepare your CV. Do adequate research on the company AND the specific profile for which you are being recruited. Talk to seniors and attend PPTs and I believe that you will be in a good shape. Also, it is advisable to go for a 2-2-2 analysis, where you have 2 companies as your dream companies, 2 companies which fall in the 'most probably' list and 2 companies for the 'just-in-case' scenario. This would help you gain a better perspective and motivate you to prepare more thoroughly. Knowing your weaknesses and strengths is important in this case.

Also, as I was not in campus for my 4<sup>th</sup> Year, my extra-curricular activities didn't have

### **Things I missed out on:**

Rather than missing out on them, I consciously decided not to devote much time on case studies. This is ill-advised. Also, I did not appear for CAT or GMAT as I am interested in working for a few years before taking up any academic commitments. But it might be a good idea to appear for CAT if you want to.

## **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

### **Deutsche Bank:**

My first interview for the day was scheduled with Deutsche Bank. I had 2 interviews in all. DB had 3 panels interviewing students, one composed of IITK alumni and others composed of at least a Senior Executive and other interviewers.

**Round 1:** My first interview started off with a quick chat with a VP on Ideatics (which was indeed a confidence-booster, showing that they had done their homework). There were 2 other interviewers on the panel, one of which didn't pose any questions throughout the interview. Thereafter, a couple of quick questions were asked on cities which I enjoyed travelling to while I was in Europe. This was followed with a composition of a 30-second ad campaign for Tourism Barcelona. Hence, I was all softened up for the rigors ahead.

What followed was a barrage of puzzles from an IITK alumna, who fired approximately 10-12 puzzles in a 7-8 minutes span. She made sure to test most of the areas. Though I was able to do them, the time given to come up with a complete solution was pretty short. Hence, it was imperative to give a gist of the solution and explain the approach in a concise manner. One thing which was visible was that the puzzles had some variations or provided incomplete information (though I am not very sure that was intentional or not). So, you are required to ask questions which fill up the gaps. This also acts as a check to see whether the candidate is reproducing mugged up solutions or not. I was well prepared for this, hence this round passed off on a positive note despite its pace. With things such as current affairs and finance still untested, I was pretty upbeat.

**Round 2:** I waited a bit for my second round and interviewed with Opera in the meantime. The panel at DB this time comprised of 4 people, with another one who kept moving in and out. This round was on basic prob. and statistics, with questions on skewness and kurtosis, wherein I was asked to draw and compare their plots for securities with different characteristics. A couple of puzzles were asked as well, though there was nothing out of the blue regarding puzzles. A 4-person panel was indeed daunting, with constant challenges being raised on the solutions provided by me, probably to ruffle me up a bit. Again, working up from the basics helps in this case to illustrate the correctness of your solution.

After this round, I was slightly less confident. I was informed that I would not be having any more interviews and I approached to interview with Diamond.

One thing which bothered me was the fact that no questions were asked on current affairs, neither on economics nor on finance. This was my strongest point as I had done enormous amount of research on everything ranging from DB to markets in general. Even the CFA L1 material was hardly touched upon.

Before I was presented with the offer, I was asked some questions on my strengths and weaknesses and why I wanted to join DB. I was adequately able demonstrate my interest in DB and that was the end of it.

### **Opera Solutions:**



Opera was indeed a short and sweet journey. As I had not done many cases as part of my preparation, I was indeed less confident. Also, there was nothing about Opera (except for its location and its CTC) which motivated me; hence I was slightly less interested. This interview was just after my first-round interview with DB, making me all the more confident about my chances at DB. (This again should not have happened ideally! 😊)

I was asked some questions on my profile (which was more inclined towards Finance) with the central theme being “why would you want to join Opera?”. After laying out my reasons, which I was prepared with, I was presented with a case. It was about an eating-joint which wanted to expand in a city by opening up more stores and adding variety to its menu. With the help of data on customer preferences which was received from ongoing operations, strategies for profit maximization had to be presented. I went with a framework and presented the solutions. There were a couple of things which I missed out on, but was satisfied with the overall solution. Then I was presented with a commonly-asked puzzle and asked whether I heard of it. To this, I responded yes (thinking back, I feel my response to this could have been different). This puzzle was followed by a puzzle which was rather difficult. I presented a basic approach but couldn't go any further. I didn't appear for any further interviews with them.

#### **Diamond:**

Diamond was much more comfortable as I knew most of the people out there and they had a better on-campus presence, illustrated by their PPT (which was one of the finest!) and a pre-interview lunch before the interview day. That was a great opportunity to know about the company and its culture.

**Round 1:** My first interview was with an IITK alumnus. She asked me to walk her through my resume. Some questions were asked on my exchange and internships. A short case was asked (I am hazy on the details) but it was relatively simple. Thereafter, I asked her some questions on Diamond and her role, which took up the bulk of the time. This was a rather interesting discussion and the interview ended on a positive note.

**Round 2:** The second round was with a Partner who was working with the Insurance sector in the US. He gave me a gist of what he did and I felt more at home as this was something closer to my territory. He saw one of my internships wherein I had worked on Mutual Funds and gave me a case on which he had worked recently. It was on health insurance in the US and how the insurance company can better manage its risks associated with liabilities arising out of claims. He gave the details on data which was available. I could not think of a standard structure to fit the case in and asked him whether we should have a short brainstorming session. He was happy to hear that and asked me to proceed. I presented some ideas to him, some of them being extensions of what I had done at Reliance Money. He was more than happy with it and the interview ended on a strong note.

#### **OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWED WITH : Opera Solutions, Diamond**

# SANCHIT SINGHAL, MATERIAL SCIENCE ENGINEERING

## RIO TINTO



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

I did 2 internships. At Deloitte in my 2<sup>nd</sup> yr and NLC Nalco in my 3<sup>rd</sup> yr. I presented a poster in an international conference in Delhi. Two major involvements in campus. First in students' Gymkhana as Senator for 3 years and then President, Students' Gymkhana. Secondly in Business Club for 3 years.

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

Before the placements I could narrow down my preferences to 2 sectors. 1. Energy 2. Consulting Energy sector because I prefer a Techno-Managerial profile which few companies in this sector provide and I developed my interest in this sector after I worked on few projects in this sector at both of my internships. It's a high growth rate sector with huge scope in India and globally as well in future years.

I preferred consulting because of the diversity in work and huge amount of responsibilities it bestows on individuals. Consulting can make one work across diverse sectors on challenging projects which is one of the best experiences an individual can get at the start of his career.

My placement preparation comprised of essentially 2 things.

1. Interview Preparation. Energy sector companies(Rio Tinto, Schlumberger, Transocean) take GDs and Personnel Interview. I was comfortable in GDs and did a decent PI preparation. I prepared for interviews by giving mock interviews to few of my friends and few seniors outside campus. I did prepare a good no. of probable questions for PI, mostly resume and sector based.
2. Case Study Preparation- I practiced few case studies with friends using a casebook. It is strongly advised not to over-practice case studies as it kills your innovation and makes you to give standard solutions most of the times, which is not what interviewers look for in day one companies

### **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

- 1) Name of the company: Rio Tinto
- 2) Short listing Process- They have a long short listing process. Online aptitude test, 3 short essays etc but mostly, short listing is resume based. There is a telephonic round as well but questions for the same are known well in advance. Few keywords for short listing are 1 .Technical Skills 2. POR 3. Cross - Cultural Experience 4. You get bonus points if you have done some project related to energy, environment etc and have been exposed to an atmosphere where safety practices were critically followed.

3) Interview Rounds- I had 2 round of interviews. Few people had even more than 3 rounds. I was told that I am being given an offer during my 2<sup>nd</sup> round itself.

Round 1. – Interviewers- Three in no., 1 Australian, 2 Indians.

Round 2. Interviewers- Five in no.- Three Australian. 2 Indian( Don't know if anyone of them was an engineer. Mostly HR people.)

I am mentioning the questions I was asked in both the rounds. Not in any order

Q1. I was asked to tell something about myself. I focused on my Technical Skills( projects, BTP. Tried to present my interest in Energy sector and in technology in general), then my POR where I told about various initiatives and responsibilities I have been involved in my four years and then my outside IITK experiences, my interns and other experiences.

Q2 .What do I know about Rio and why do I want to join it.

Q3. About my technical skills

Q4. About my POR

Q5. About cross cultural experience

Q6. If I am given an offer from Schlum and Rio both, then what would I choose and why

Q7. If I liked any sports or art forms etc.

Q8. My 3<sup>rd</sup> yr internship project

Q9. My BTP

Q10. Why m I not going for higher studies rt away?

Q11. Have I done something ever which promoted safety awareness/practices around me( These people are too obsessed with safety)

Because few of the interviewers were Australians, it became all the more important that I spoke slow and it should be clear to everyone.

**What went well-** My interviews. They were good. Most of the questions I was asked were expected so I had already prepared for them.

**Probable reason for selection:** They look for certain traits in individuals. 1 .Technical Skills 2. POR (not necessarily in extra currics, even a good project management counts)3. Cross - Cultural Experience(Adaptability-because you are placed in Australia) 4. Confidence 5. Outgoing Nature6. Interest in energy/environment etc.

I could present that I have most of these traits.

I could not prepare well for aptitude during my placement preparation which I should have. I gave few aptitude test but did not get selected. I had some amount of bad luck in BCG and Diamond both in pre-interview process and during interview, but that is something which can happen so it is advisable to be mentally prepared for it and try and get shortlisted in as many companies as you can.

If you are targeting day one companies than you need to have certain spikes in your resume. These spikes can be academic, research based, internships, POR, extra currics etc. What most of us do not realize is that interview preparation in itself is a very good spike which can definitely get you shortlisted in more no. of companies and increase your chances of getting selected in each of them.

I would just suggest. Take good amount of time in deciding what you really want to do. If you decide that you want do a job after your education at IITK, then prepare well for it and earn it.

Best of luck.

**OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWD WITH : BCG, Diamond, Schlumberger**

# PRACHI MANTRI, ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING(DUAL)

## SCHLUMBERGER



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

On the academic front, I had a decent profile. Regarding extra-curricular activities, I tried a couple of them during my first two years. I was a part of the dance club, Vox Populi, Counselling Service and tennis. Finally, I realized that it was too much for me to handle. So then narrowed it down to tennis. In my third year, I became the president of the girl's hostel. Fourth year, partially was spent watching my batchmates prepare for their placements and partially in enjoying treats. Fifth year was the time when thoughts like 'what I want to do next-job, PhD, etc' , 'which sector to prepare for-core, consulting, FMCG, finance,etc' started appearing constantly. I talked to a few seniors working in different sectors, tried to find out the kind of lifestyle they have and matched it with what I would like the best.

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

I was sure that I do not want to go for higher studies just after IIT, but still gave GRE thinking that after 2 years I may apply. Because of the same reason, I ruled out the option for CAT and GMAT and chose to do a job. Now looking at the list I have mentioned in the companies I interviewed with, it becomes apparent that I did not decide which sector to go for. But it was not like that. I realized that it was not possible for me to try my hand at every option I had. So, I decided to prepare for core and consulting. Consulting because what I learnt from seniors I thought I would enjoy it and core because it was one area I thought I had a good grip on and was easier to prepare. For core, you can revise some of the basics of courses like EE 370, EE 610, C/C++, VHDL/Verilog (try to do it a little bit early as during the placement semester a lot of other things will take up your time). Also you should be thorough with your internship and thesis. You can easily impress the interviewer in these areas if you have a good hold on them. To prepare for consulting, I read a few cases by myself (a whole bunch of consulting guides are available on the SPO placement portal). Then attended the mock sessions organized by the consulting club. Also formed groups of three to practice more case studies. Because of inadequate reading I think I lacked a basic practical approach as compared to my peers. I was bad at guess estimates in particular and prayed till the last day that I may not face one ☺

Resume is also a very important aspect in your preparation. Prepare it well in advance, take feedback from a couple of seniors working in that particular sector and do incorporate those changes which you think will help improve its impact on the recruiter.

Practice is the only way out to crack GD's and tests. Don't do too much of it either. First and foremost try to find out what kind of a job you would want to do by gathering information by reading about it yourself, talking to people working in that industry, matching it with your priorities and your long term goals. It sounds difficult but trust me it's better to do some thinking now then to regret later.

### **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

#### **1> BCG**

#### **Resume Based Short Listing**

**First Interview:**

By Mr. Akshay. Chartered Accountant and was a Project Leader with BCG.

Asked resume based questions. I was a bit nervous as the interview began since this was the first one for the day, but the interviewer talked very casually and made me feel at ease.

**CASE STUDY :**

An office furniture company, suffering from decrement in revenues. I was supposed to analyze the reasons behind it and suggest methods for improvement.

I started with the regular profits = revenues-cost equation and analyzed all the aspects in the revenues side. After a while, I realized that I had forgotten about costs totally even though I had mentioned it earlier at the beginning of the case. So came back to cost analysis. The interviewer was helpful and provided all the needed information. The case went well and in the end on asking about the actual case he told me that my recommendation was close to what they had mentioned to the client.

**HR QUESTIONS:**

Why not higher studies? Are you interested in doing an MBA?

**Second Interview:**

No details about the interviewer since the interview began as a stress interview but in the end did not turn out that way. Asked two resume based questions.

**CASE STUDY:**

A wine company is experiencing decline in profitability for the past one year even though revenues have increased. They have hired you to provide ways to improve their profits.

After analyzing this, the interviewer mentioned that she would want me to analyze the distribution channels. I started, but due to lack of knowledge I was not able to answer this part satisfactorily even though I enlisted different possibilities. In the she gave a couple of hints, but I was not able to grasp them. But I answered whatever I could understand of the situation. Then due to lack of time she asked me to wrap it up quickly and provide recommendations.

**Third Interview:**

By Bajpai, IITK alumnus, Project leader with BCG.

**CASE STUDY:**

An Indian manufacturer of heavy metal castings for turbines is looking to expand by doubling its production in one to two years. They hire you to suggest them a plan to carry out this expansion.

The case went well. She agreed to most of my suggestions but there was a particular area she wanted me to analyze. So she kept asking me what else do you think can be done. At one point when I was stuck, I asked her that in what direction she wants me to think. When she told me, I took a minute to think about it and came up with the answer she was looking for to which she added more by herself. Then she told me to summarize and highlight my recommendations.

Then she asked me why am I interested to join BCG in particular. Also during my campus stay what is the one thing I like the best and what I did not like so much and why?

I was prepared for these questions so answered them comfortably.

**Fourth Interview:**

By Saurabh Tripathi, IITK alumnus. Partner with BCG.

**HR QUESTIONS:**

What do I want to do with my life eventually. Which activity on campus has allowed me to do it very closely.

What is my most significant achievement till date and why.

Asked about my family background. I was not prepared to answer this so I was speaking very randomly anything which was coming in my mind.

### **CASE STUDY:**

A small and simple bank has three products on the savings side, 1 year deposit, 2 year deposit and 5 year deposit with given x, y, z interest rates. Three products on the loan side similarly with different interest rates. Each product has 30 lakhs worth of circulation. The bank has to increase its profitability. How should it go about achieving higher profit?

During my preparations I realized that I am not good at finance and telecom sectors as compared to other sectors. So when this case of a bank came I became a little skeptical at the wrong point of time, still I started but whatever factors I mentioned the interviewer rejected them all at once. Then I took some more time to think but again whatever factors I came up with he said no to them as well. Then he gave me a hint but I did not take time out to think on that. Instead came out with whatever was coming to me instantly. Then in my final recommendation, I suggested quite an impractical approach. I think this went against me significantly. But at that point, I did not realize what blunder I had made.

## **2> OPERA**

### Resume based shortlisting

#### **First Interview:**

Started with the regular question like tell me something about yourself. Mention something you have not written in your resume. What are your favorite past times besides the extra-curricular you have mentioned.

#### **CASE STUDY: Guess estimates**

Estimate the total no. of people in air at a particular moment of time in say for example India.

I started by mentioning my approach to which he approved but the real problem came when I was supposed to make calculations. I asked for some nos. to which he asked me to make reasonable assumptions. I took a back seat now and became nervous thinking what if my assumptions are too skewed. Then I made a couple of errors and became less confident. I was not firm on my answer and changed it whenever he said "are you sure?"

## **3> SCHLUMBERGER**

#### **Group Discussion:**

Topic: "Crystal Ship"

I chipped in 3-4 times. My points were accepted by the group in general. Also I expressed my support and extended a point mentioned by another person in the group. It was a decent discussion with very little arguments or chaos.

Be patient. Listen to what others have to say. Make sure that whatever you say is relevant and adds value to the discussion, no matter how fewer words you speak.

#### **Group Activity:**

A group of 7 students were given 3 minutes to choose a design for a toy car. 7 minutes to implement it from memory and another 5 minutes to sell it to the invigilators.

#### **Interview:**

It started with tell me something about yourself. In my answer I mentioned that I want to do a field job from where the next series of questions came. Why a field job? Why not an office job? Why not higher studies? Why not MBA? How long do you plan to stay in the field? How do you think you will be able to do it after say 3 years when you plan to settle down? What has been your involvement in campus? Tell in brief 3 initiatives you took as the president of the hostel. Are you afraid of water? Do you swim? Do you have any relatives in the oil field? What companies did you interview with?



I answered the questions honestly. After 2-3 rounds of cross questioning, every time I was able to give them a reason for a particular choice I made.

### **OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWED WITH :**

**BCG, Opera, Diamond, DB, Rio Tinto**

### **FINAL WORD OF ADVICE:**

Prepare your resume well. Even if it is a small point in your resume be prepared to speak at least 2-3 meaningful sentences about it.

No matter however trivial it seems, please do not rush with whatever you are saying. First think and develop a strong argument to support your statement. Also please try to avoid any pre conceived notions you might have formed during preparation time to interfere with your attitude on the final day. Stay focused to answer the question asked to you then.

No matter what do not speak until you are sure, but once you are don't change your answer until and unless the interviewer points out the flaw in your assumption.

Be genuine and sound convincing. Once you take a stand, be firm on it no matter whatever extreme situations the interviewer throws on you.

: Start reading about whatever sector interests you. It's never too early to start. Prior knowledge will count a lot not only in your preparations but will also help you in making better decisions about what you want.

As it will happen, some interviews will go good some bad, don't get disheartened because no good will come out of it. Moreover, you will spoil the next interviews. Go with a smile in every interview and be yourself. Just think about doing well in this interview and nothing else.

Hope you make the most out of the time and resources you have and enjoy as well.

Good Luck 😊



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

1. A lot of PORs – Editor and Coordinator of NERD (two publications in international conferences with regards to NERD), about 6 PORs held in Techkriti during my campus stay including Head Marketing, First student Assistant Editor of DIRECTIONS (the research magazine of IIT Kanpur)
2. 2 publications in international conferences – based on the work done in NERD
3. Hobbies – Guitar (won prizes in various cultural events), swimming etc.
4. So so CPI, but fine academic achievements – recipient of Academic Excellence Award
5. **Particularly for EXL Service** – I and one of my friends were the campus winners of their case study competition – EXL Excellence Quotient 2011.

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

1. Case in Point
  2. 64 Interview Questions
- All of these can be found at Student Placement Office Website.

### **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

#### **1> DIAMOND**

##### **Interview:**

The interviewer was a B.Tech., CSE, IIT Delhi and had been in Diamond for quite long. Unlike the rest of the interviewers, he was a puzzle freak.

First, he asked me about the work done in my internship. After explaining everything to him about the internship in a concise but fine enough way, I think he was ticked off about the fact that I hadn't mentioned my BTP, no projects in my resume. Rather than the puzzles, he started asking me various data structure and database questions. I told him well beforehand that I hadn't taken any particular interest in my department at all, still he asked me the same kind of questions.

He was pissed off a little. He asked me - What do you do in your free time? What do you want to do in 3-4 years.

Then he asked me – What, if not consulting? I answered that I would definitely like to go for Sales/Marketing position in some company. He remarked that HUL was the company then. I told him that it wasn't open for CSE guys. Then there was some healthy discussion on the issue that why do companies don't open such positions for CSE department. After some discussion he made one positive comment – 'I would definitely ask the HUL guys to open a marketing position for you' and waved me off.

Only the HR questions went well. The last comment did make me stick around for quite a while. Ultimately I was told about my disqualification.

I think luck played a huge role. My interviewer was from the same department and therefore had some sort of affinity to ask me the questions related to my courses.

## 2> EXL SERVICE

### Interview 1:

Not much idea about the interviewer, but she was very cooperating and very friendly.

1. How was it participating in EXL Excellence Quotient 2011?
2. Tell me something about yourself.
3. Tell me about your interest in guitars.
4. Anything else you would like to ask me?

Asked me 2 puzzles:

1. No. of zeroes in 100!
2. There are 2 cubes. You have to put digits on both the cubes so that one can form all the numbers from 1 to 31.

Guesstimate case – Estimate the daily revenue of Delhi Metro Service.

My HR questions went pretty well. She seemed fairly impressed due to my enthusiasm about the competition and my passion about my PORs. My HR questions went pretty well. She seemed fairly impressed due to my enthusiasm about the competition and my passion about my PORs.

I was able to solve the puzzles. I think I was able to structure the guesstimate well although my final answer was way inaccurate :D

I paused for sometime during my puzzles, but she encouraged me a lot. I don't think anything else went wrong.

### Interview 2:

The interviewer was an IIT Kanpur alumnus. I was told afterwards that he was the senior most guy present in the interview panel. One of my friends didn't have a good experience with him in round 1, so I was pretty attentive and a little scared too.

1. There was some discussion about CSE Department in his days at IIT Kanpur.
2. There are so many CSE companies with great compensation package. Why aren't you going for them? – Infact I hadn't applied for any core company at all :D
3. Why did you choose him as your partner for EXL Excellence Quotient'11?
4. Give me 3 reasons why I should prefer you over your partner.
5. Would you like to tell me anything that's not in your resume?
6. Anything else you would like to ask me?

No puzzles this time.

Cases:

1. Estimate the market size for NERD Magazine.
2. What price would you set for your magazine?

He was fairly pleased with my case-solving in guesstimate. I didn't get a chance to play with numbers. I just structured the whole thing and he told me to stop me there and then.

As far as the second case is concerned I told him about all the competitors and what their revenue model is. I discussed at length about their pricing model. I then compared the USP of NERD magazine and was able to come up with a pricing strategy. I also added that rather than just the magazine I would like to organize some competitions which would be better source of revenue. Again, he told me to stop there and then.

Again, my HR questions went pretty well. This person seemed a little hard to impress. But he always said 'Good' or 'Very Good' after the questions. That gave me a lot of encouragement (I kept on remembering the bad experience of my friend with this interviewer and that gave me the boost that I was doing pretty well).

He asked me some questions like 'What you are saying is contradicting your previous statement' but I remained cool and composed and clarified everything.

After the cases, he waved me off. His smile told me that I had nailed the interview.

I don't think anything went wrong at all. The interview went great. I didn't have to go for 3<sup>rd</sup> round 😊

## **OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWED WITH :**

**Diamond**

### **FINAL WORD OF ADVICE**

Know your resume head to toe. If you are passionate about your PORs, you shouldn't have any problem with cracking cases based on your resume.

Never underestimate the power of HR questions. It was my enthusiasm, hand gestures and passion that she really appreciated. Solving the puzzles and guesstimate was icing on the cake.

Pray well before God that you get an interviewer with some common sense :P

# TARUN Kr. BARANWAL, ELECTRICAL ENGG. (DUAL)

## DEUTSCHE BANK (QUANT.)



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

Academics, Extra-Curriculars, Internships and Projects etc. etc.

Academics- 9.9/10

Internship- UBC, Vancouver (MITACS)

Projects- Boeing Team, Winter School

Extra-Curriculars- Fun with friends and magai 😊

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

Before starting, I want to clarify that this feedback is only an indicator of things which I believe about placements and have tried to do during placement session. It has helped me but you should choose it only if you feel that it is going to help you too.

You can include stuff like how did you narrow down to your career plans, the sectors which you were targeting and the rationale behind choosing them, difference between your expectations from the placement process and what you encountered finally, what you did to prepare, what you missed out on, what you think should be done, about the **tests** and **GDs** that the companies took, your thoughts before the final placements, about **CAT, GRE, GMAT** etc. and other fun stuff 😊

#### 1. Making Resume:

Your resume is, if not the most then, definitely one of the most important things to decide your future carrier. It doesn't only help companies to shortlist you but also help you to decide your future path, in preparation of HR interviews and knowing you better. If you have made your resume correctly, then it clears most of the doubts related to your carrier like whether you are made for job or research, if job then finance, consulting or core and if research, then which field. So, do devote a lot of time in making your resume. Proper way to make a good master resume is sit down alone for few hours, try to recall all the big, good or small (believe me even a small achievement can help you to get a good job or university as it has happened in my case in getting into Deutsche Bank) achievements of yourself and make a list of all those things in good words. Show this resume to your friends, seniors and incorporate their feedbacks. Give this iteration for at least 3-4 times.

If your master resume is made perfectly, then making the resume for company specific is very easy. One important thing which you should note is if you feel that you resume is overqualified for a company; try to cut a few points from your resume. I have seen that few of my friends have put the same resumes for companies of the first day to last day and even when they were selected for the first day company, they weren't even shortlisted for the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> day companies as companies felt that they were overqualified. Please try to avoid this mistake.

## 2. Attending PPTs:

Attending PPTs and workshops of companies help you make a decision about selecting the companies in which you want to go. Do attend PPTs of companies about which you have no idea or the companies you are aiming. As, in my case, attending PPTs helped me to reject few companies which I was aiming. Try to be attentive during PPTs and do take notes of some special characteristics of a particular company (like structure, compensation, work, seniors present in that company) as it will help you in some HR questions like why this company, why not others, where do you see yourself in this company after five years and it will also reflect your interest in the company to interviewer.

## 3. Selecting sectors or companies:

Your resume, work of a company and your interests help you decide the companies which you dream of and the companies which you feel that you are sure to get into. Try to make two list-first -of your dream companies and second-of companies which you think you have a chance given your profile, your CPI, your extra-currics, internships etc.. People generally try to prepare for their dream companies and not for other list of themselves. So, what happens is that if you are not getting into your dream company (Your dream company in most of the cases is going to be dream of about 80% of batch of IITK), you have also reduced the chance of getting into a company of your second list as you haven't prepared for that. Also, prepare for the worst. If you aren't getting into any company of both the list (which generally won't happen ☺), then what next (CAT, MS/PhD, IES, IAS or opening your band etc.).

In my case, it was clear to me that my dream job was getting into DB quant or GS. On rejection, try for IBM, Adobe, Qualcomm, Intel ( as a wireless and signal processing engineer, you don't have much choice even in core), Ericsson. On rejection even in these companies, try for MS or PhD in any university.

## 4. Talking to your seniors:

It is one of the sections in which IIT Kanpur lacks from other IITs. Try to contact seniors of the companies of your lists. Show them your resume, ask them how to prepare for the company, ask whether you are suitable for the job. They have experience of the company as you and also as an insider in the company and in some cases, they may recommend you for the job.

## 5. Written test:

Believe me even if you don't have good extra currics or a good CPI, even if you have done well in written tests of companies, you will be in the race of your dream company. This is one of the areas in which IIT Kanpur always lacks. I have seen few of my batch mates having higher CPI, good internships, good extra-currics but couldn't make into even shortlist because of written tests. Do prepare for it seriously.

Even if you aren't preparing for the CAT exams, try to practice time or CL's study materials, most importantly of Probability, Permutations and DI section. Some companies put direct questions from previous CAT exams. Remember one thing that most of the times, it isn't test of knowledge but of speed. Speed will come only on practice, not by only knowing things. Also, some consulting companies ask questions related to English Grammar, Vocabulary, so take a look at this section too from CAT study materials, if you feel that your English is weak.

## 6. Quant and Core Preparation:

If you are looking for quant companies, then you also need to revise your basic maths (like linear algebra, probability, some common distributions like uniform, normal, binomial), basic data structures and algorithms from DS and some puzzles from different websites and books (like of Pratik poddar, 40 puzzles in probability, CMU toad). If you aren't finding good study materials for maths or algorithms, use MIT OCW (it has helped me a lot). Make sure that you understand the basic concepts behind these things because

they may ask any type of questions related to these topics and you will be answer only if you know the concepts

For core companies, you need to revise some of basic core courses. For EE guys, if you are looking for VLSI, brush up EE 370 (most imp.) and EE 210. If you are looking for signal processing/communication profile, brush up basic DSP and communication concepts. Some questions were also asked from Kalman filter and wavelet transforms which I had no clue. So, be prepared for surprises☺. Also brush up C coding and basic data structures as it is generally asked in most of the EE core companies. Do note that you need to prepare seriously for your core companies too as after the interviews of first and second day's companies and their rejection, you don't have both time and mind to prepare for them.

Finally note that these tests are not tough. These are the students who make it tough. So, never panic in the tests and try to give your 100%.

#### 7. HR interview:

After being shortlisted into a company, Do not take HR questions lightly. You should prepare for some questions like tell me about yourself, why this, three strengths and weaknesses. Practice these questions with your wing mates and try to make proper eye contact while answering these questions.

## **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

Even before starting of the placement, I was sure that my dream is to get into a quant company. So, I started preparing seriously for that. I had known from the seniors that to get into the quant, you have to be good at algorithms or maths. As, my maths was more strong than algo and in algo, cse guys always had an advantage, I focused more on maths. It doesn't mean that you should also do that too if you are not in CSE. Believe me if you are good in algo, you have better chances to get into a quant company.

### **1> BCG, CAPITAL ONE**

First shortlisting was done by **BCG** based on resume. I knew that I won't be selected and even I wasn't looking for any consulting job, but that day's rejection was like hell. I was sad for that rejection for almost one week. After two days of that, first written test was taken by **Capital one** on DI only and I was pretty sure in 28 questions out of 30 questions asked, I don't know why but I wasn't shortlisted again. Two rejections within 3 days, one on resume basis and other on written test basis, made my condition pathetic. It was how my placement session started, literally with a blast ☺. But, somehow, I maintained my calmness and didn't lose my confidence

### **2> GOLDMAN SACHS**

Then, within that week, came tests of my dream companies, Deutsche Bank and GS both on the same day. First was of GS. I was so nervous and test was so tough, I screwed it completely ☺. CSE guys had some advantage here because two sections were from their course. May be you could feel my situation. I had started believing that I am not fit for job. But, I had to maintain myself for my another dream company's test.

### **3> DEUTSCHE BANK**

It was DB. They first took PPT in main Audi. Audi was completely filled with students and I was sitting on the last seats still thinking about my GS test. When they told in PPT that they had taken only 8 students last year, it made me realize that out of about 600 students currently present in Audi (I thought 600 was good estimate for students present in Audi), my chances are 0.01 % approx.. It made me shivered and I stopped thinking about anything even the job and became casual. This casualness worked. So, I suggest you to be normal and don't panic. Because, nervous is going to make your situation only worse. DB took two tests. First test was normal aptitude testing mainly your speed in which I had solved 22 questions out of 25 when people on an average had solved only 14-15 questions and even lesser. Second test was quant based test which had 6 questions-two from



probability, two from linear algebra, one from class 12 ( I don't why they gave this question 😊) and one from algo. Thanks to MIT OCW and Pratik poddar, I did very well in it and solved all of them. Only question which I did wrongly was of class 12 because of over confidence.

After that test, I regained my confidence and did well in all other written tests. Most of these tests were simple aptitude tests but with lesser time. So, you need to have good speed to solve these questions.

Finally on announcement of shortlisting results, I was shortlisted into both of my dream companies even after screwing In GS test. Moreover, I was one of the two guys in whole IITK , who was shortlisted for DB quant profile. It made my day. I talked to our seniors working at both these companies and started preparing for interview.

Even before the D-day of placement, my interviews began.

**First** one was on the phone by a DB guy on HR interviews. He asked me why not higher studies, why DB, if asked by both GS and DB, which one would you prefer and some others. Believe me if you are having a high CPI, you have to prepare for the question "why not higher research" definitely.

**Second** was on the skype. He asked me puzzles related to algorithms, probabilities for one and half hour. Again, thanks to Pratik poddar, Baswana sir and some hints from the interviewer, I did well in it. Whenever you have any problem, do ask for hints to interviewer.

On the D-day, I had been shortlisted into 4 companies in which two were DB and GS- my dream. First one was with DB and I had same interviewer from the skype. As, I had already met him, I became casual with him. He took my interviews for almost two and a half hour. Fortunately, it was my day. I solved all the problems with some hints from him. Then, came HR interview at DB. He asked about my family, parents, relatives, my childhood, my dream and some basic finance questions

After that, I went for GS interviews. As, I had already talked to one of the seniors working there, he helped me to schedule my interviews earlier. GS took two rounds of interviews. One was on maths and second one was on algo. Again, it was my day. I did well there too. I solved most of them except one. They had called me for 3<sup>rd</sup> round. But, Unlike DB, guys here were not helping to solve any problem.

In the meanwhile, thanks to SPO volunteer Saurav at DB (something happened which you need not know), I was called. I went there leaving my 3<sup>rd</sup> round of GS. Again, DB guys asked me few questions on exchange rate which I answered perfectly. Finally, they offered me the job😊. To be frank, I wanted DB job more than GS, but seniors suggested me to go to 3<sup>rd</sup> round of GS too. When I went there for my 3<sup>rd</sup> round, I donna why but they asked me to leave. Anyway I was happy as I had gotten job in one of my dream companies 😊.

## **OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWED WITH : BCG, Goldman Sachs, Capital One**

### **FINAL WORD OF ADVICE**

Overall I can say that you must hope for the best and prepare for the worst. So make sure that you are prepared on all counts. You never know what might go wrong (I have taken it from Abhinav Jain) and do try to make every single event of placement favorable to you. Who knows which event is going to make your day.

In case, you have any query related to DB or quant profile, you can ask Saurav Yashaswee, Y8 batch of Maths Dept.. He helped me a lot during preparation and undoubtedly, is one of the best persons to ask questions on quant profile and DB, who is going to be present in the campus during your placement session. In any case, you can contact me on facebook.



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

CGPA: 8.75,

Core team member of SPO

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

- 1) Should be clear about your M.Tech thesis, B.Tech project, summer training, Term papers. Understand their terminologies and concepts since almost all companies ask about it.
- 2) For aptitude preparation, solve the material available in preparation portal, can see for online aptitude tests and puzzles and along with that appear honestly in the mock tests organized by SPO. Aim on accuracy and speed.
- 3) For Programming preparation, revise basic concepts of C and DS, you can use book by Denis Ritche, Yeshwant Kanetkar. Solve online mock programming tests, so you get aware of standard questions and most common mistakes. Try to write some codes while preparing so that you will be confident writing in front of interviewer, especially of DS like linked list, trees, sorting, searching etc. I did not prepare for OS, but most of the software companies do ask questions on it. Galvin is the standard book for OS.
- 4) Technical: very vast field includes all the course and practical knowledge you have been studying. Basic concepts should be clear. Prepare Digital circuit design, Communication, Wireless Communication, DSP, Computer networks, and most importantly subjects of your interest 😊
- 5) Do prepare in groups, it will help you in clearing your doubts and also it will improve your interview skills. Mock interviews are also organized for your confidence building.

### **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

#### **1> QUALCOMM**

**Short listing Process:** Online test consists of 3 parts: 1) Aptitude 2) programming (C, DS) 3) Technical. No negative marking. Apti and programming parts were easy. There were three different technical sections for three different profiles: 1) Hardware 2) Communication/DSP 3) Software. I appeared for 2<sup>nd</sup> profile. In this, the technical section had question mostly from DSP, few from communication, analog circuits, digital circuits etc. Each section was given different amount of time. Time for the Technical section was less and I felt that this section was the deciding factor in short listing. There was a CGPA cutoff of 7.5

**Interview:** 3 rounds of interview out of which 2 were technical and 1 was HR round. Asked about thesis, term papers, trainings, and question on Digital logic circuits: to design FSM, designing simple logic circuits, delay & its calculation in the digital circuit, MOS etc. Few communication related questions, some puzzles and apti questions. In HR, they asked common HR questions like about yourself, Why qualcomm, training experience, any specific location preference etc. both the technical rounds were almost 40 minutes long and HR was 20 minutes.

# SHANTANU MISRA, CIVIL ENGINEERING (DUAL)

BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP



## **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

Dramatics, President - Hall 5, Galaxy and Debating (freshman year only), consistent academic record, SPIC MACAY internship

## **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

Between July 2007 (when I joined the institute) and May 2011, I had considered and pursued IAS, MBA and research as potential career options at various points of time. But in May '11, I decided that the safer thing to do would be to take up a job and think about the various existential questions later.

As far as my personal preferences go, I liked what I read about consulting. But being from a department where core companies are non-existent for all practical purposes; I was aiming for most of the non-core companies. I was conscious of one thing though, viz. I did not want to work for a company that was catering to overseas clients or to its own overseas office. The idea was that I did not want to join a company which was employing me just because I was cheaper than the Westerners. So, although after BCG, the second best choice for me in the first slot was Opera, I was not excited about it at all.

My entire preparation, especially the part related to resume and interview was done under the guidance of Ashwini Dikshit (career counsellor, IITK). I think what worked for me was that I was quite organized in my preparation. At no stage was I hurried into mistakes.

By September, I had prepared the final draft of my 1-page resume. If you think you have a good profile and you can get a shortlist, then you should devote a lot of time to your resume. I would suggest that resume preparation should be started in summers itself. It is also very important to take help and guidance because there is a certain way to make a resume which does not come naturally to most of us.

I prepared for aptitude tests by solving the CAT previous years' question papers. If you are preparing for non-core companies, one of the things which you should do is preparing for CAT. Most companies other than consulting firms and core companies, take an aptitude test (including the analytics-consulting firms) and contrary to the common notion, most of them ask English questions as well. Moreover, a good score in CAT will only open up options. I did not prepare for GD because out of all the companies that I was aiming for, very few had GD as a part of their process.

For case study preparation, I was a part of the Case Study Club of SPO which met around thrice in September-October period. Apart from that, I practised with my friends. Some good casebooks in decreasing order of their usefulness are Case in Point, Indian School of Business's casebook and Kellogg's casebook. It is highly advisable to get hold of various IIMs' casebooks if you can. While practising a case, the emphasis should be on what new

you learn from that particular case. So, more than the mock case study sessions themselves, the analysis that you do afterwards is important.

For the Personal Interview preparation, I had prepared the answers for most of the commonly asked questions and more importantly had given around 5 mock interviews before December. One should sit and right down the answers of the various commonly-asked questions and go through these answers again and again to hone them. If possible, get these answers checked by someone experienced in interview preparation. The idea is not to memorize the answers, but to have a fairly good idea about what points you are going to cover. As a thumb rule, all companies are looking for 'high energy' and 'low maintenance' guys. Make sure, you sound like one!

Apart from the above mentioned preparation, I read 'The Indian Express' and 'Economic Times' regularly (wasn't able to do it daily though) to get a feel of current and business affairs.

One final pointer as far as placement preparation is concerned, DO NOT WORRY and do not indulge in useless placement-related gossips. They only eat away your time and energy.

## **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

### **1> BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP**

BCG's process begins towards the end of October, when they release their shortlist of candidates. 20 people were shortlisted this time (2011). We were assigned a 'buddy', who was supposed to be the go-to person if we had any doubts or wanted any clarifications or tips. They also invited us for a dinner and 'Pre-Placement Talk' in Taj Vivanta, Lucknow. Here, we were given letters stating reasons as to why we had been shortlisted by BCG. Apart from this, a Case Study Workshop was also organized on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November. A lot of people are of the view that both the workshop as well as the 'buddy' process is evaluative. BCG, on its part, claims that this is not true.

The final process of BCG which takes place during the placement season consists of interviews that are a combination of case studies and PI questions. In the first round, 2 interviews are conducted. Selected candidates are interviewed further. My **First Interview** was scheduled at 6 AM.

The interviewer was Rohit Vohra, Partner and Director. The PI questions included:

- At what time did you wake up? What did you do after that?
- Roughly how many students in IITK end up working in non-core sectors? Do you think it is a problem for the society that a lot of students don't contribute to their core areas of engineering?
- Did you want to be a consultant from the very beginning?
- Tell me something about your life in IITK.

The **Case Study** was a 'Market Entry' problem.

An office-furniture company wanted to enter into home-furniture business. I had to evaluate whether it should do so or not.

I asked for some time to structure my answer. He was very helpful during the entire case study and guided me whenever I went in a direction where I wasn't supposed to go. I also asked a lot of questions. The entire interview lasted for about 40-45 minutes. The interviewer was very pleasant in his manner and the interview went off quite well. After about 10-15 minutes, I was sent for my second interview.

This interview was taken by Shweta Bajpai, Project Leader who was also the Recruitment Head. She was an IITK alumna. This interview took around 35-40 minutes. The PI questions included:

- Tell me something about yourself.
- Of the various positions of responsibility that you held, which one did you enjoy the most and which one the least?

The **Case Study** was a 'Growth Strategy' question.

A metal casing manufacturer wants to double her revenues over the next 5 years. What should she do? I began by asking a few pertinent questions about the company's product and customers. I then listed out a few growth strategies. She pointed out that she wanted more possible approaches. I pointed out a few but the general nature of our exchange was that the moment I would sum up a strategy, she would drop a hint for another. I would latch on to it and this process went on for about 2 or 3 times. She then asked me that in light of the initial question, which strategy would be best-suited for our client. I answered the same. I came out of the room thinking that I had messed up really badly because she had practically solved the entire case herself. I had a very strong inkling that that interview was my last with BCG. By this time, BCG people had started asking some of us to go if we had interviews with any other company which was a kind way of saying that you are not selected in BCG. I politely inquired one of the consultants whether I was supposed to stay or go. He checked with his colleagues and replied with a very warm smile that I was supposed to stay on.

A little while later I was asked to go for my **Third Interview**.

This interview was taken by Saurabh Tripathi, Partner and Director. He was also an IITK alumnus, the President Gold Medalist of his batch. He was the one who had given us the PPT at Taj. Moreover, I also had the opportunity of having a long conversation with him because we were seated at the same table during dinner. He began the interview by pointing out the same. He then asked some very tricky and pointed PI questions:

- Why did you give up debating after 2007? (Probably the most intelligent question that could have been asked from my resume)
- Why didn't you go for a company or university internship? Didn't you feel that this would reflect badly on your profile?
- Since you have done a lot of modelling in one of your projects, don't you think you are more suited for a career in finance?
- What are your long-term career plans?
- How long are you prepared to work for BCG?

The **Case Study** that followed was again one of its kind, to say the least.

It involved a hypothetical bank that had just 6 products: 3 kinds of fixed deposits (maturity period of 1 year, 2 years and 3 years) and 3 kinds of loans (again 1, 2 and 3 year maturity period). The rates of interests on the fixed deposits were 3, 4 and 5 % p.a. respectively and on loans were 5, 6 and 7 % p.a. respectively. The owner wanted to increase the bank's profitability. What should she do?

I would be paltering with the truth if I don't admit that I was a little taken aback by the question. I took some time and then asked him some questions to which he gave a very brief (though not curt at all) 'yes' or 'no' as an answer. In fact, during the entire case, he was busy on his Blackberry paying no attention to what I was doing. One of the first things that I asked was whether the objective was to increase 'profits' or 'profitability' because the technical definition of the two was different. He smiled (I think in appreciation) and replied that he wanted me to focus on 'profits'. After that, I gave a few recommendations. He complicated the case further by saying that the principal amount of 1-year products was same. This constraint was applicable for 2-year and 3-year products as well. That is, the principal amount of fixed deposit and loan of 1-year was same, and so on.

Again, I gave a few recommendations. After a while, he said that he was in a bit of a hurry and that that was all as far as the interview was concerned. I felt as if nothing concrete had come out as the solution to the case. I asked him how I had done in the case. As was his wont, he answered with a very brief - "Given the time available, you did fine".

I was a little confused after this interview. I had no idea about the last case study. However, I knew that the PI part went off well. After about 10 minutes, I was asked to go and meet Saurabh Tripathi again. I went into his interview room and he gave me a job offer!

I think what worked well for me in all the 3 interviews was that I was listening very attentively to what the interviewers were saying or asking. That meant that I was always answering the right questions and was also responding to the hints and clues which the interviewers were giving. In all the interviews, I had a good discussion with the interviewer. A lot of people say that a good interview is the one which is more of a discussion rather than a question-answer session. By that definition, my interviews went off well. As I had mentioned earlier, some people claim that the case study workshop which was held on November 16<sup>th</sup> was evaluative. If it was so, then I would have got some extra points since I was able to do well in the case that I was asked.



# SIDDHARTH GARG, CHEMICAL ENGINEERING (DUAL)

## TAIWAN SEMICONDUCTORS



### HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY

Academics, Extra-Curriculars, Internships and Projects etc. etc.

- 1) Departmental Rank First(1) in dual degree/ M.tech Batch Chemical engineering.
- 2) Electronics Club Coordinator
- 3) Student Guide

Internship in: Fluidyn Software and Consultancy PVT limited, Bengaluru

Projects-

Mtech Thesis

- 1) Made a programmable adhesive whose adhesion properties varied on changing the pressure in the subsurface circular channels embedded inside the adhesive made of polymer-POLYDIMETHYLSILOXANE. Have a Patent on the same
- 2) Made a Opt fluidic flow and air pressure sensor based on the bulging properties of the PDMS and the optical properties of light

Made a model in Matlab to find out pressure and gas moie fractions for given Liquid fraction and temperature for a binary mixture

### PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION

You can include stuff like how did you narrow down to your career plans, the sectors which you were targeting and the rationale behind choosing them, difference between your expectations from the placement process and what you encountered finally, what you did to prepare, what you missed out on, what you think should be done, about the **tests** and **GDs** that the companies took, your thoughts before the final placements, about **CAT, GRE, GMAT** etc. and other fun stuff 😊

I was first of all preparing for each and every sector including Core, Finance, Analytics, Consulting. But at the last month of preparation i.e. November I realized when I was not getting shortlisted in finance or consulting firms that I didn't had a profile for consulting, So I left the preparation and starting preparing only for analytics (basically doing some aptitude practice) and core preparation.

For gds every alternate days we department mates used to practice Gds in our reading room. This really gave me a good flavor for the GD.

I never expected the placement process to be very tough , But actually it is and maintaining cool throughout the process is quite a difficult job. Everyday there is a new dream company and according to me whichever company takes you is the best company for you 😊.

I also was preparing for CAT, so I already had a good flavor of the aptitude exams

## **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

### **1> TAIWAN SEMICONDUCTORS**

- 9) Name of the company: Taiwan Semiconductors
- 10) Short listing Process: CPI basis and research profile
- 11) 1 Interview round was there. They Didn't asked much. As I already had a descent Research profile. They only asked something about my thesis work. They were very impressed by my profile and my academics
- 12) No Technical questions or puzzles were asked, there was no HR interview.
- 13) The way I explained my Thesis work went really well.They said that one day surely I will become a professor :P
- 14) I think the probable reason for my selection was my research Profile and my Academics

## **OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWED WITH**

**Rio-Tinto**

## **FINAL WORD OF ADVICE**

Please Please always assess yourself. See your profile and interest, then only target for a particular sector. Targeting each and every sector is a very bad idea. Not every one can go in a consultancy firm. See your profile then only prepare for it. Preparation is a very very important thing for coming out big in the placement process. So prepare well.  
Always maintain your cool during your interviews.

# VIVEK GERA, CHEMICAL ENGINEERING

## RIO-TINTO



### **HIGHLIGHTS OF MY CAMPUS STAY**

Summer internship at Schlumberger, Semester exchange in Norway (Erasmus Mundus Fellowship), 2-Journal and 1-conference publications, Coordinator Business Club.

### **PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION**

*Contrary to the popular belief, getting a good job at IIT Kanpur placements is not an easy task.* Over the last 2-3 years, some really talented IITK people have been observed to end up at shit companies with less competitive people around, which can be attributed to lack of preparation or lack of opportunities or merely luck. I strongly believe that it's terribly important to be around good people who are at a same or above intellectual/cultural level. I would have chosen Civil engineering at IITK any day over CSE at a less competitive place just to be around good people who could contribute to push my abilities and getting the best out of my college education. In essence, what you do after your graduation is the next big step and no matter what you do, being around good people is extremely important to maintain the pace of personal and career growth. And that is why you should try to get a good first job (not necessarily high paying!) during the IITK placements.

Before I begin with my actual interview experiences let me share some wisdom (;)) that I gained during pre-placement preparation. Please understand that the suggestions I make throughout this feedback form are totally my personal opinions and might not be applicable to some of the readers and definitely not to those who live by their own rules. However I also believe that its better to learn from other peoples' mistakes as one cannot afford to make a lot of mistakes on his/her own in todays' highly competitive scenarios and then learn from them. So lets begin with a step-by-step pre placement procedure.

What are your KSFs (key selling/success factors)?

You can start asking yourself a question: what is it you are really good at. It can be anything:

- Do I have really good academic record?
- Am I really good at Math?
- Have I done some really good research work?
- Do I have a really good internship experience?
- Am I good at talking?
- Am I a natural leader?
- Am I a moderately beautiful girl? ;)

and so on. Do not restrict yourself adding any quality to this list. You need to know how to use each and every weapon available with you before you start the war. :D

(b) Which company/sector would I like to work in? What kind of skills does this company/sector demand?

Talking to a bunch of seniors and getting to know about the details of each sector would help you find out the

answers to these questions. One suggestion here would be to restrict it to 2 (or 3) sectors as your energy and time are supposed to be limited.

(c) Overcoming weaknesses: Once you answer (a) and (b), you know what is it that you are good at and, what is it that you need to be good at. Very often, unsurprisingly, you may not arrive at a good match. So next step is to overcome the weaknesses that might stop you to achieve your goals. One of the best ways to go about it, is to work hard (Big surprise, right. :D). I would also add that unflawed verbal communication skills are a must for people aiming at good non-core jobs (or even good core jobs in most departments).

(d) Have a plan B: You know that you are good at certain things. After overcoming certain weaknesses, you will definitely be able to get the kind of job and profile you want. But guess what, the amount of luck you need during placements is often greater than what is needed to win a casino game! Do have a plan B. As for my personal case, I was almost sure to spend next 6-7 months with a European research group.

(e) Preparation. Since I am sure this feedback guide will contain quality information on how to prepare for individual sector (including resume preparation), my sole suggestions here would be to find a preparation buddy with similar interests. I did most of my preparation (Mock interviews) with Sanchit (also Rio Tinto) since both of us had very similar companies/sectors in mind.

(f) Attend PPTs: It does help. During the riot into ppt, I got to know that the company needs to do a lot of work in process design so made it a point to highlight my process design skills during the interviews.

(g) Some companies might come up with really shocking shortlists so in case you don't make it to anywhere expected, do not loose your heart. Remember, *its not over, until it's over.*

(f) Finally for the dual degree junta who would be sitting in the placements next year: Keep your eyes open while your B Tech counterparts get placed. I missed it while I was on exchange. No regrets though as I was doing better things. :D

## **PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE**

### **1> RIO TINTO**

Short-listing Process:

Resume based shortlisting followed by a telephonic interview. Telephonic interview has some questions related to your interest in company, your leadership and team skills, strengths, safety and sustainability.

Interview 1:

Interviewer was a nice young lady. An HR personal most probably as the interview was mostly non-technical

No technical questions were asked.

In the HR interview it was quite a frank chit chat about my family background, my stay at IIT Kanpur, my interests apart from academics, what did I know about riot into, Was I excited to work at rio-tinto, what was Norway like, was it a good place to travel, was I interested in music/dance/acting, my roles in student leadership at iitk, how did I differentiate between a leader and a manager, how did I value safety, what did I think of sustainability for a company like riot into etc. Finally she asked me if I had any questions. I had become so comfortable during the interview that I ended up asking more than 5 questions.

This interview was quite unconventional and 45 minutes passed in the blink of an eye. I sensed that the interview was very open ended so kept on driving the interview towards the topics I was comfortable with. There were times when we were discussing about the cognitive capacity of a human brain and others when the discussion drifted towards the future of energy in developing countries. She seemed more than willing to hear about anything I wanted to speak on and that almost made me fall in love with her ;). As for what went wrong, clearly, I may have gotten carried away a little.

.Interview 2:

It was a group of 2 gentlemen most probably engineers as the interview was more of a technical one.

HR Interview:

- Tell me about yourself and your family?
- What was my internship at schlumberger like? What did I like/dislike about the internship?
- How would my experience at schlumberger help me perform well at rio tinto?
- My work related to process design at iit kanpur?
- 4-5 very specific questions related to chemical engineering (mostly process design).
- My work with the control group in Norway?
- My leadership experiences at iitk?
- What did I do differently from previous year team while I was the coordinator, B-club?
- An example of working in a team?
- And so on

I had prepared for almost all the questions asked in the interview so it was a quite a smooth one. Also, to my surprise, I was able to answer all the chemical engineering questions. As for what went wrong, I may have over-glorified my summer internship, as the interviewer seemed a little offended.

#### Interview 3:

It was a group of 6 people including both HR and technical people. It was my last interview of the day. This one lasted for 10-12 minutes.

No technical questions were asked.

#### HR Interview:

This interview was again a small chitchat. I was asked to introduce myself. Then, they told me about the work that I might be doing there, the culture of the company and weather in Australia. They asked me how could I be useful for the company if selected. Finally they asked me if I had any questions.

What went well/What went wrong: it was in their eyes that they wanted to make me an offer so I just had to avoid screwing up anything.

Guess I was able to make good conversations and did not screw up technical questions.

## **OTHER COMPANIES INTERVIEWED WITH :**

**Opera**

## **FINAL WORD OF ADVICE**

There are a couple of things that may help you during the interviews.

Display the highest level of 'Sincerity' while you answer the questions.

- "**Sincerity**, Sally. Once you learn to fake that, there'll be no stopping you" – *Alan Shore (Boston Legal)*.

Do **smile** throughout the whole interview. It works like magic.

- "Why so serious" - *Joker (Batman)*.

Feel free to contact me at [vivekgera942@gmail.com](mailto:vivekgera942@gmail.com) and I shall make it a point to reply as soon as possible. Good Luck!