

MANTRAS FOR CRACKING CAT



Unlike many who think that getting high CAT percentile requires very hard work, I strongly recommend strategic smart work rather than very hard work. In fact, cracking CAT with high percentile does not require you to be a book-worm spending 16 to 17 hours study a day. What it requires is focused preparation with a strategic approach. Several of my students who got 99-100 CAT percentile were not studious but of course they were intelligent, planned, and above all, they were focused and smart. They chose the smart way of preparation instead of hard way of preparation.

The right CAT preparation strategy involves three stages of preparation; a) self-analysis for filling up the knowledge-skill gaps, 2) preliminary stage with wide extensive study followed by 3) time-bound focused and intensive preparation with regular and structured practice sessions.

Self-analysis for filling up the knowledge-skill gaps

The first stage of CAT preparation must involve a good self-analysis to find out one's areas of strengths and weaknesses. It is essential for all the potential CAT candidates to prepare and

plan their preparation strategy keeping in mind their areas of weaknesses and strengths. This is important as you cannot go ahead without understanding your current knowledge and skill levels in all the components of CAT. You may be strong in some component while you may have clear gaps in some other areas.

So, remember that you can identify and maximise your potential only if you are aware of your strong areas and use

them in the best possible manner. At the same time you need to identify your weaknesses. This will provide you the first line of preparation. Prepare and practice to fill in the knowledge-skill gaps.

Preliminary stage with wide extensive study

The second stage of preparation needs planning and persistence. It involves your effort to increase your knowledge and skill base in a generalized fashion. Read newspapers and magazines extensively to improve your verbal ability and reading comprehension skills. Also read articles and books related to all the components of CAT. Maximize and strengthen your recall skills as multiple choice questions test your recall

ability. You need to practice extensively with all kinds of possible questions in a given time frame. This stage of preparation will give you self-confidence and success assurance which you desperately need in a competitive examination like CAT, which is not only challenging test but is also a relative competitive examination.

Time-bound focused and intensive preparation with regular and structured practice sessions.

This is the most important stage of CAT preparation because you intensify your preparation at this stage. This requires you to make section wise preparation strategy based on your self-analysis. You need to distribute your preparation time as per the needed focus for each test section. Make a weekly preparation time management strategy. You need to divide your preparation into three segments 1) Reading and note-taking, 2) Revision, and 3) Practice.

Reading relevant material is significant for CAT preparation because VARC requires you to a fast, efficient, and competent reader. A poor reader will never get high scores in VARC. You need to apply different strategies to increase your reading speed. You need to read diverse kinds of materials but never loss track of your reading objectives. Reading will strengthen your basics in all sections of CAT. Having a sound basics particularly in areas like VARC and QA is essential for a good CAT performance. A strong basics will enable you to envisage different types of questions in all the sections. You need to strengthen your basics by intensive reading. To strengthen your basics, you may begin with relevant NCRERT text books followed by large number of off-line and online resources available.

Moreover, reading will also help you improve your domain knowledge of various fields.. It is important that you understand and appreciate wide-ranging business scenarios today because CAT has recently moved on to very real-world situations in its questions, particularly in LRDI. You can use different online as well off line resources for reading. Apart from helping you immensely in VARC, reading will help you in other sections such as LRDI. However, keep it in mind that you can not waste your time in reading everything as it will not yield in the desired result. So plan the amount of time you would like to spend in reading.

Revision needs to be an integral part of CAT preparation. It is required for all the sections. However, the most important section where revision will play a significant role is QA. You have the potential to increase your score in CAT through excellent performance in QA section. Revising simple mathematical tricks and strategies will strengthen your mathematical skills and you will be able to solve all kinds of questions easily.

Finally, practice is the most important aspect of CAT preparation. You have to invest lot of time in doing practice questions and giving different kind of tests such as reading tests, practice tests, and mock tests. Please remember that giving different kinds of test will give you confidence and speed. You need to be ready for all kinds of questions because CAT always challenges students with new kinds of questions in each section. That is why you need to solve all kinds of questions and develop your own strategy to solve similar questions with accuracy and speed.

Joining a good coaching institute for CAT may also help you in your preparation. Best of luck.