

TIPS FOR WRITING AN ESSAY

One is required to write an essay for three hours duration. This length of duration is enough. There is no standard word limit for writing an essay.

Remember to divide an essay into three parts (i) Introduction (ii) Main body and (iii) Conclusion.

The choice of topic on which the essay is to be written after careful thought. While selecting a topic, the knowledge base of the topic i.e how much you know about the subject is of crucial importance. If you have data or statistics at your fingertips to back some statements, all the more better.

The introduction is of crucial importance. Remember well begun is half done. This applies to an essay all the more. One could begin with a saying or a quotation. Quotations make the essay interesting to read.

If you cannot mentally arrange the points to be covered in the essay, jot down the points on a rough sheet of paper. Try to expand one point in its entirety in one paragraph and then move on to the next point. Do not keep returning back to one point after you have started another point. It makes the essay repetitive and boring to read. If possible, try to maintain a link between the points by a connecting sentence at the end of the paragraph covering a given point.

Keep your sentences short. Longer sentences not only lead to complex sentences, but also point to complexity in thought process. Use minimum number of conjunctions. Finish off a sentence as quickly as possible and start a new sentence.

In an essay, try to point out the problem areas and also suggest solutions to solve them.

Conclusion is as important as an introduction. It gives an insight into your analyzing powers. Try to give a brief overview in the form of a gist of the essay in the conclusion.

TIPS FOR PERSONALITY TEST

Basic:

The interview is nowadays known as a Personality Test. The reason being that it is not a test of knowledge, but of the overall personality of the candidate/aspirant.

Interview is more of a psychological test that is just content-based. Along with good communicative skills and self-confidence, good knowledge base no doubt gives you an upper hand. However, it has to

be borne in mind that nearly all the aspirants/candidates in the Personality Test start more or less as equals in the sphere of knowledge base.

The most important thing to know about an interview is that it is not always a question-answer session and that the Board members are looking for different aspects of one's personality.

One is not expected to know everything under the sun. If you do not know the answer to a particular question, do not hesitate to say I don't know, Sir/Ma'm. However, even I don't know Sir/Ma'm should be said confidently and with a reasonable amount of cheerfulness. Remember your knowledge levels have been thoroughly checked during the earlier stages of the CSE viz Prelims and Mains.

Always remember that the interview is not a cross examination, but a natural, purposeful conversation.

Personality is a life-long asset and a thing, which evolves and changes every day.

Keep a photocopy of the form filled for the Mains examination handy. Most of the initial questions viz the meaning of your name, educational background, professional experience, hobbies etc will be based on this form only. Try to prepare on your bio-data; roughly 70% questions are based on bio-data, 20% questions are based on your subject and 10% are based on current affairs.

Aspirants to CSE should take an intelligent interest not only in areas of their specialization, but also in what is happening around them both within and outside the country.

Be well informed about your interests and hobbies as there will be a few questions probing your levels of knowledge as regards your hobbies and interests.

Prepare thoroughly about your hometown & home state. If you hail from a place of historical importance or tourist interest, prepare well on it.

Know yourself. Prepare brief answers to choice of your subjects, family background, meaning of your name. You should try to take the lead by answering questions based on your bio-data.

One of the secrets of success is to prepare for the Personality Test along with the written test.

If a person gives the impression of being a bookworm, the chances of his/her selection are reduced. The candidate must exhibit an all-round personality, which indicates that the aspirant possesses a complete personality. MOCK /PRACTICE.

One should form a group of 4-5 people, as the preparation for Personality Test cannot be done in isolation. Try holding as many mock interviews as possible.

No training institute can develop/transform your personality in a few days. However, some of the tips may help in ironing out some weaknesses/grey areas and can provide an avenue for a well-planned preparation and group discussions.

Take mock interviews. In the mock interview, ask your friends to grill you so that you can face pressure from the Board easily.

Discuss a lot with your friends. This not only helps in you assimilating different points of view, but also enhances knowledge levels.

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Dressing up:

Dress sense is of crucial importance. The choice of dress should be according to the weather conditions. Try not to wear newly stitched clothes, as they might make you uneasy. Light colours should be preferred. White colour is a good choice.

Wear comfortable clothes. Men need to wear light coloured shirt and a dark trouser with a tie (if weather permits). Women appear best in a saree or salwar/kameez.

Pay attention to the details, ironed dress, polished shoes, hair accessories, trimmed nails etc. Polish your footwear meticulously. Use convenient footwear like black or brown leather shoes.

Women candidates should take care to avoid the hair falling over the face as it could annoy both you and the interviewer.

Do not wear anything that connects you with a religious or political group.

Do not use heavy perfume/deodorants.

In case you have a running nose or have caught a cold, carry a handkerchief, or sufficient stock of tissue paper. Tissue paper is preferable.

Some candidates take medicine to relax on the previous night of the interview; this should be avoided as the effect of medicine may decrease your alertness during the interview.

What and how you eat is also important. Have a light meal on the day of the Personality Test. Do not go for the interview on an empty stomach. However, also avoid over-eating, or having a heavy meal.

First impression is often the best impression. So create a positive, good impression within the first few minutes of the interview.

Entry:

Arrive 20-30 minutes early. Prepare a route map and arrive well in time. This will give you enough time to relax

While waiting for your turn in the waiting area, read a newspaper or a magazine and try to remain focused without thinking too much of what will happen in the interview. Try not to presuppose situations.

Do not get nervous when you are waiting for your turn for the Personality Test. When waiting for your turn, try relaxing with closed eyes and practice deep breathing. It really relaxes you. Do not try to presuppose situations in the Personality Test.

Take a final, deep breath before entering the boardroom.

Do not forget to knock at the door before entering, as it indicates basic courtesy.

On entering the room, greet all the members cordially and do not sit down on the seat without being asked to.

If there is a lady member in the interview board, greet her first.

Be conscious of your body language when you are seated.

Men should keep the feet flat on the floor during the interview, knees at waist level, and hands on your thighs and place your elbows on the armchair. Avoid locking hands.

Women, cross your ankles or legs, but keep the bottom leg straight down and do not swing it over the top leg and keep your elbows positioned on the arms of the chair.

When the Board members thank you at the end of the Personality test, do not forget to thank the members one last time and keep your body posture straight at the time of leaving the room.

Remember that interview is a two-way process.

Be cool. Be yourself during the Interview.

Your aim should be to make the board members feel comfortable in your presence.

Be truthful, transparent and Predictable.

The object of the interview is to assess the suitability of the aspirant/candidate for a career in public service.

Most of the questions posed in the Personality Test are opinion-based.

Don't expect any expression on the faces of board members, even if your answer is very good. During Interview

In a personality test, what is of importance is how you say what you say. It is the style of presentation that matters.

Your personality is, on an average, assessed in 25-30 minutes, it is your responsibility to bring out your very best in front of the board.

Be attentive and listen to each question carefully. Try not to jump into an answer before the complete question has been posed as you will end up wasting time on answering a question that you were not actually asked. If you are not sure of what was asked, you can always politely seek a clarification.

Do not try to answer the question as soon as it is posed. Think over the question, take your time and organize the broad outline of the answer before airing it. Pause a while before answering, even if you know the answer.

At times, you will be given situations wherein you will be required to take a decision. In such situations, the board is testing your ability to comprehend issues and use reason and good judgment logically, precisely and arrive at a balanced decision.

Maintain a gentle smile off and on during the Personality Test without overdoing it. It displays a sense of ease and confidence. Wherever possible use your sense of humour judiciously.

General Do's and Don'ts for the personality test:

The board members are usually very senior and learned people, so give utmost respect to the board.

Don't go by any stories/rumors spread by others. Avoid unnecessary details.

Don't ask the previous candidate about his/her interview.

The board has no biases towards anyone.

Never make any sweeping statements/generalized descriptions.

Accept your mistakes boldly.

Speak honestly, truthfully and modestly.

Do not give a hasty reply.

Answer in an orderly and logical fashion and always maintain eye contact with the Board members while answering.

Be polite and courteous.

Don't try to be too argumentative.

Be consistent in your views. Don't change your views just because the Board differs in its opinion from your opinion.

Never make an attempt to present a made-up appearance or politically correct answers.

If you are taking an extreme view, you should also be able to justify the same.

Take tea or coffee, if any member offers the same to you. This will show you are relaxed and it will also help in lightening and relaxing further proceedings and give them an informal touch.

Avoid chewing gums and other munching items as it gives a negative and a careless image.

Try holding mock interviews in front of a mirror. Look out for unwarranted actions/emotions and try to rectify any shortcomings. If possible record your own answers and play them again for finding out errors.

Don't criticize any government policies or even individuals.

Take a good night sleep. A good, sound sleep will keep you refreshed, cheerful and relaxed. Otherwise you will have a fuzzy head and you will betray a confused personality. You will neither be able to grasp questions correctly, nor be able to think clearly.

Do not speak rapidly. Speak slowly and clearly so that the Board members grasp what you are saying and do not have to interrupt you or ask you to repeat your views.

The Board will check you for certain traits such as honest and integrity, logical exposition, balance of opinion, leadership skills, mental alertness, variety and depth of interest, social cohesion, moral integrity, acumen, your response to a peculiar situation, your views on varied topics.

At times, the Board members might pile pressure upon you. Do not panic it is a strategy aimed at gauging the point till which you can maintain your cool under pressure and can think originally even in pressure cooker situations. Try to resemble tea leaves show your true colours when in hot waters.

Form your views on subjects in a logical and rational manner supported by data whenever necessary.

To be in touch with the latest happenings/events nationally and internationally, candidates should read magazines and newspapers (at least two for interview), watch current affairs-based television programmes.

Assume that all questions are asked with a good reason and answer them accordingly.

Keep a file/folder to keep your certificates and documents in an organized manner. They are verified before you enter the interview room. (You don't have to carry file/folder inside board room)