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38th Common, (FSP)



Would you tell us about yourself, educational background and achievements.

I belong to a rural area i.e. Odero Lal station which is located in district Matiari, Sindh. I got primary education from my hometown. I received secondary education from a boarding school system. After graduation, I got third position in the inter-provincial scholarship from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi.

Then I did Masters in Sociology from Sindh University, Jamshoro. After this, I appeared in the CSS examination-2009 and got selected in Foreign Service of Pakistan (FSP). I think qualifying the CSS exam was my greatest achievement because I got allocated in my favourite group i.e. Foreign Service of Pakistan, (FSP).

Did you join any academy? If not, then how did you manage to qualify the CSS exam in the first attempt?

No, I did not study in any CSS coaching academy but there are a number of factors which brought this success for me. First of all, my brother and I opted for the same subjects. So, we became study partners which helped us to pass the exam in the first attempt. Moreover, my elder brother always encouraged me and the prayers of my mother also played a vital role in our success.

What should be the strategy for the preparation of the CSS exam?

It is clear that proper guidance and subject selection are the important prerequisites of the CSS exam, but as far as the strategy is concerned, it can be described in the words of our teacher Sir Idrees Bhutto -- 'extensive writing practice'. So, one has to develop one's capacity as well as quality of English writing because a candidate has to pass the written part of the exam first.

Moreover, I would say that consistency is important because any strategy for the CSS exam can only be successful when it is followed consistently. If there would be gaps then it would not deliver.

What sort of written presentation does an examiner require?

I think presentation of the paper is the most important element for getting higher marks. There are a number of techniques, but one must try to present oneself different from others. For the best presentation, I would suggest that:

1. Draw maps and charts, if needed
2. Do incorporate relevant data, facts, and figures in the answers
3. Do give brief outline answer with a marker
4. Do add as much quotations as possible and always write quotations with markers
5. One should not deviate from the statement of the question(what is asked)
6. Always write effective paragraphs

What sort of subject combination should the aspirants opt for?

I think one must choose subjects according to personal liking and academic background. Here, I would say that the candidates should not be confused with the phenomenon of scoring and non-scoring subjects. For instance, I and my brother opted for the same subjects according to our interests and aptitude. Similarly, we were fortunate to have good company of other candidates having similar subject combination.

What strategy should one adopt for the preparation of English essay and composition paper?

In my opinion for the paper of essay, one should select three areas of one's choice, such as current affairs, political or general and economics and make outlines of various topics which are falling in these three areas. After making the outline, one should collect relevant material for different topics and practice the essay. In fact, it is the introductory paragraph which compels the examiner to further read the essay, so it must be attractive and only practice can make it so for the examiner.

For composition paper, I would advise the candidates that their focus should be on précis writing, expansion of an idea and comprehension. This is because these three questions contain 65 marks and only continuous practice can bring quality and proficiency in these areas. Moreover, for good written expression, one must have grip on grammar and should also know the correct usage of different grammatical structures. On the whole, I would say that one should be very careful about this paper. Here, I would also like to suggest that

candidates should use ink pen in this paper, especially along with an ink remover.

What are the ways to get higher marks in the CSS interview?

I think the interview is another significant phase of the CSS exam, and for getting higher marks in the interview, one must take care of the following things:

1. Give reasonable and logical arguments.
2. Distinguish your arguments with data and facts and figures.
3. Be natural, cool and calm during the interview.
4. Be open and candid during conversation with the interview panel.
5. One should have good speaking skills in English.

Why did you opt for 'Foreign Service'?

Well! to me, it is not only an occupational group but also a unique style of life. In fact, foreign service is a realm where one can enjoy interaction with the world leaders and intellectuals. In addition, one can experience dynamism, understanding of different cultures and civilisations throughout one's career. Hence, these unique features of 'Foreign Service' fascinated me and I opted for it.

What are the general problems of a CSS candidate in Sindh?

Candidates are facing a number of problems in Sindh because proper guidance and favourable environment are not available there, especially in interior Sindh. The candidates of Sindh are talented but they lag behind due to rural background and lack of awareness.

Any message

"Readers are leaders" aspirants must develop their habit of extensive reading. They should read magazines, especially the, newspapers and books of eminent writers for the enhancement of their knowledge. The aspirants must improve their writing skills by putting their best efforts and then leaving the result to Almighty Allah and He will give you the best.