

Muhammad Jawad Haider Shah (PAS) Topper of Written Exam

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Q: Kindly tell us about your educational background and achievements in detail?

Muhammad Jawad Haider Shah (MJHS): I belong to a small village in Jhang District. I completed my elementary education from there. I did Master's in Economics from Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad with distinction. In university, I remained Information & Media Secretary of QAU Debating & Literary Society. Prior to joining PAS, I have been working as an Assistant Director in NAB.

Q: What is the striking feature that distinguishes PAS from other occupational groups and you went for this?

MJHS: First of all, my father strongly desired to see me as an Assistant Commissioner. That's the first reason why I took PAS. There are many factors like variety of job, field work, rapid promotion and good service structure which place it at the top of occupational groups' list. Personal grooming and being a part of policy-making are other factors which distinct PAS from other groups. It's also very much in sync with my nature.

Q: Did you join any academy or prepared for the exam on your own?

MJHS: I have never been to any academy for CSS preparation. Academies, I believe, make you dependant. Nonetheless, I won't say that I prepared completely on my own as I owe a lot to my teachers especially Sir Rana Saghir, Sir Nadeem Shahid and Sir Razi Abdi for English, Sir Rasheed Bukhari for Persian, Sir Mian Shafique for EDS and Sir Babar for Psychology. They helped me a lot at every stage and I am really thankful to them.

Q: What would you prefer between books and notes for good preparation?

MJHS: Consulting quality books is indispensable to getting good marks in CSS. Notes are good when you prepare them yourself. Others' notes cannot substitute books. At the end of the day, only your own notes shall rescue you. I think, one should thoroughly read a single book on a subject and then, if there is extra time available, one may go for another book. Remember time management is the soul of CSS preparation. So, never waste your time!

Q: What strategy one should adopt to make a difference?

MJHS: One can create difference in written exam by good expression adorned with precision and clarity in thoughts. Live examples, facts and figures, and quotations may prove helpful but they must mix with your personal views in a balanced way. However, their excessive use can irritate the examiner. So, one should be careful that all the quoted material is relevant, and in balanced quantity too.

Similarly, presentation also plays a pivotal role. The attractive outlook of a paper also makes a difference which could be acquired through neat and legible handwriting.

Q: Most candidates fail English Essay, and English Composition papers. What steps would you suggest for these two crucial papers?

MJHS: English is considered the toughest in CSS, but actually, it's just psychological pressure which makes it so. One should keep in mind that all he needs is simple and lucid English with impressive sentence structure. Spelling mistakes and grammatical errors must be avoided. Continuous writing practice under the guidance of a good teacher may help one to improve one's English. Special focus should be on proper use of vocabulary as many aspirants just memorize words without knowing their correct usage.

Q: Who should opt for psychology? How far is it true that only those having science background can perform well in psychology? What, in your opinion, are some good books and tips to get good scores?

MJHS: I believe anyone can go for psychology. Although there are some chapters related to biology yet science background isn't essential. It is because these are relatively easy and the aspirants, even with social sciences background, can digest them without hurting their "stomachs". The key to high scores in this subject is quality material presented with proper use of diagrams, flowcharts and tables. Further, one should use books of foreign authors because they have elaborated theories of psychology in very good manner. "Psychology" by Sandra K. Ceccareli may be a good choice.

Q: What sort of guidance should the fresh aspirants seek for, and how do you see Jahangir's World Times (JWT) as far as CSS exam is concerned?

MJHS: Proper guidance is part and parcel of CSS preparation, especially for the selection of books and optional subjects, its importance cannot be overrated. A good mentor can drive one to success; nevertheless, the aspirants must work hard. Although guidance does play a critical role in CSS preparation yet hard work on ones' own part has no alternative. Truly said by a Persian poet:

Tarash az teesha-e-khud jada-e-khweesh

Be rah-e-deegran raftan azaab ast

(Carve your way through your own chisel; following others' path is curse)

JWT must be appreciated for its commendable services to the CSS community.

Q: Do you believe in luck-factor in CSS?

MJHS: I do believe in luck factor but, at the same time, main thing is how hard-working is

one. Luck only helps those who are committed to their work. I believe the reason for talented and scholarly students failing is that they mostly lose sight of syllabus and, in many cases, even don't bother to look at past papers. There are very few who fall prey to hard luck.

Q: Would you like to give any message for those who wish to join the CSP community?

MJHS: I would quote Audrey Hepburn here who says, "Nothing is impossible as the word itself says "I'm possible"." So, never give up, and try hard. Believe in yourself. CSS is not just an exam, it is the name of attitude and behavior. One should prepare oneself in such a way so that tomorrow he can help the nation. We direly need talented and honest officers. So polish your personality in such a manner that you can be a productive member of the society in the days to come.