

Qasim Ali

33rd Common, (PSP)

SSP (Administration)



Please throw light on your education and achievements.

I did Master's in Political Science at Peshawar University in 2000. After doing masters, I appeared in PCS exams and was selected as a lecturer of Political Science and posted at Govt. College Noshehra.

Then in 2004, I appeared in the CSS examination and secured the 39th position in Pakistan and the 5th in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. I was allocated to Police Service of Pakistan and my dreams were fulfilled.

What are the general steps needed for the preparation of CSS in your opinion?

I believe that the first step is to overcome the fear associated with the CSS examination because for most of the people, it is like a demon. It should be taken as an ordinary exam.

Secondly, one must have consistency of mission and clarity in mind that what is one's goal and what one is going to do for it. That's why self-confidence is a basic requirement for the CSS examination.

The third step, as far as my experience is concerned, command on English language both in written and spoken is compulsory for the CSS because English is one's major weapon by which one has to win this battle of CSS. It will help the candidates in getting through their first day and if their first day goes well then ultimately all days will go well. But if one falls on the first day then it would be hard to achieve the goal. That's why written expression is more important than spoken.

Then the fourth step should be a focused study because most of the candidates especially beginners start study with too many books even dozen for one subject. It is totally wrong approach because it distracts the candidate from focused study.

I believe that two books are enough for one subject if thoroughly studied but these books must be recommended by those who have already qualified the CSS examination. Another thing that must be remembered that during preparation the students have to study continuously without any break because break means they have to start from scratch again.

In brief, students' study must be focused and continuous.

Should the students join academies for the preparation of CSS or these are the tools of making money?

I will not say that students should not join academies but before joining any academy, candidates must have a critical approach on the quality and standard maintained by the academies. Because there are many academies and most of them are made for commercial purposes. So, the candidates should look up the faculty of an academy because it can help us a lot if the retired or serving civil servants are at the panel of academy.

I had also joined academy but only for one subject that is English essay paper because there was only one teacher who impressed me there but rest of the faculty was not up to the mark.

Why are some subjects considered scoring and some non-scoring?

I think if one loves a subject, one can excel in it because there have been students who scored up to 80% marks in history subject or even in languages which are normally considered to be non-scoring. But again, I will say there are certain subjects which are traditionally high scoring.

Similarly, the trend varies time to time, sometimes it is Indian History, sometimes it is Islamic History. For instance, toppers of CSS 2008-09 had both subjects and they got very good marks including many other qualified candidates.

So I believe one should be very much careful and conscious about selection of the subjects because half of the success is determined by the balanced subject combination. For subject selection, look for your liking of the subject plus be careful while choosing a subject whether it can fetch high scores for you or not.

In a nutshell, choice for subject selection must be based on personal interest as well as it would be much better if your subject is from the current scoring list.

What sort of written presentation an examiner wants to see and how can one get higher marks in written?

I think examiner is impressed by the difference. He always wants to see something new out of the box. I will quote you an example here, there was a candidate who wrote an essay on Quaid-e-Azam.

He began the essay with a fictional passage. He started like that: Two persons were sitting in a bar room in London and one person asked Pakistani: why are you worried, you don't have to worry because you have Quaid-e-Azam." Actually it has never been quoted in any book of history but it is very impressive rather attractive.

It always depends upon creation and how the candidate impresses the examiner. Same is the case with 20 marks question. It is the material and the style of writing which brings good score for you. If the substance is strong but expression is dry it means you lost one mark and one mark per question means five marks per paper.

It is beautiful expression which can fetch you 50 to 60 marks in the whole exam. In brief, relevant material and creative expression are the key to get high marks in the written.

What should be the strategy during psychological test and interview?

In psychological test, one has to be natural and clear and be realistic. Candidates do not have to be artificial and do not try to hide their weakness. They must throw out whatever they have in their inner self and they should not hide it.

In interview, again, your confidence, expression and most important thing is the way that how you substantiate your argument. Your strong argument in support of your statement can bring good marks for you.

For instance, I will quote my own example: 60% of my interview was based on how to frame or design an ideal paper for CSS candidates in order to ensure that all the books mentioned in the syllabus must be studied by the candidates.

We know there is a long list of books recommended by FPSC and normally we do not study those books. The chairman asked me what we should do to compel candidates to read those books. So this was the theme of my interview and it apparently looked to be a non-scoring type question but I was sure my entire interview result was based on this question.

Why do candidates always fail in essay and how they should prepare for essay and composition?

In my opinion, major cause of their failure in English essay is fear attached to this paper because most of the candidates are frightened from English language and secondly, candidates do not understand the difference between an essay and a normal paper.

Moreover, they just keep reading English books and English essays but they do not practise it. I think essay is a written exercise and practice is the only key to success in essay as well as in composition.

The short essay or expansion of idea question must be practised by the candidates because it will enable them to write a good essay.

What are the general problems faced by the CSS candidates?

First of all, the candidates consult too many people for guidance then they try to follow each of them which results in complete confusion and it also breaks the self-confidence of a candidate.

The second problem is spending too much time to search books for optional subjects. They consult too many books for a subject then what happens neither they get through the whole syllabus nor they are able to solve past papers which, in fact, is highly essential to pass the subject.

The third problem is improper time management in both during preparation as well as in the paper which always leads towards failure because time management is very crucial.

The fourth problem is that most of the candidates cannot control their nerves. Candidates must be able to control their emotions. To avoid emotional imbalance, I would like to share my experience although my approach was much weaker but it worked well with me rather it was just a formula not an approach.

I said to myself, "Look I am just an average or below average type candidate so I should not make great expectations from myself. Let's try what happens." That proved I had no stakes and when there are no stakes involved then you are not under pressure.

In brief, everyone should drive his own strategy according to his temperament and earlier performance.

Any message

I wish everyone of you a brilliant result. Although all of the candidates may not get through yet the result must be encouraging one. Again I will advise all of the upcoming candidates to practise English essay daily if it is possible otherwise as much as one can practise because to me English is the major armoury of a candidate by which a candidate can snatch success. I wish good luck to all. Thank You!