

2015 Guide For CAMPUS PLACEMENT

Specially Made For New Chartered Accountants

The campus placements season will start in the next few weeks and I hope all the eligible CA's have chalked out a plan to prepare for the placements.

This placements season is going to be a bit tighter than the previous seasons given the current economic situations and the general slow-down in hiring. The result has been quite generous which means more people competing for limited jobs. Only the best of the best will have the chance at grabbing the jobs and that means, the ones who start preparing earlier will be ahead of the competition.

I decided to jot down the general PREPARATION TIPS & TRICKS that will help you crack the 2015 placements season.

The preparation will START WITH SOME SURVEY:

1. WHICH COMPANIES will come for placements?
2. What are the RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES for each of the companies?
3. What is the GENERAL INTAKE? For example, recruitments for back-office, KPO's and Banks far exceed the intake by Big 4! This will help you decide the level of competition you're likely to face.
4. What is the ELIGIBILITY criteria? This is very important because it will help you eliminate the companies you should be preparing for. So check for:
 - Year of Clearance of Final Examination of Chartered Accountancy Course
 - Month of Completion of Articleship/GMCS Course
5. What is the procedure to REGISTER for the campus placement programme?

With all of the above information at your disposal, you may start your entire prepwork in following manner –

1. Preparation BEFORE The Interview

2. Preparation DURING The Interview

3. What To Do AFTER The Interview

(A) PREPARATION BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

1. What Should I Wear?

BOYS: Honestly, for all roles, be a consulting firm or a bank or a creative firm or a startup or a KPO/BPO – a dark suit, white/light blue shirt, preferably plain with a tie and perfectly shined shoes will do. Make sure your outfit is clean and ironed. You can also wear a full sleeved shirt with a tie. The colour of the socks should match with the colour of the trousers.

GIRLS: Cotton Saree/ Business Suit/ Suit with perfectly shined bellies/sandals.

2. What Should I Bring?

Apart from the documents required by Campus placement team, bring ten copies of your resume, twenty passport-size photographs, a notepad and pen, a reference list. All held in a classy padfolio or bag!

3. What Should I Prepare?

Divide preparations in two parts – BASIC & TECHNICAL questions. Practice looking in the mirror and answering them out loud. This prep work will help you clarify your thoughts and make you much more comfortable during the interview.

BASIC INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Practice talking about basic interview questions mentioned below.

(a) Tell me ABOUT YOURSELF

REFER: "Tell Me About Yourself"- Simple Ways To Answer The Most Dreaded Interview Question
<http://nimishgoel.com/tell-me-about-yourself-interview-question-simple-ways-to-answer-the-most-dreaded-question/>

(b) What can you OFFER this employer?

REFER: Why Do You Want This Job
<https://magic.piktochart.com/output/3108591-untitled-infographic#.VLHupRTFUno.wordpress>

(c) Identify your STRENGTHS

REFER: How To Answer The Question - What Are Your Strengths
<http://nimishgoel.com/how-to-answer-the-interview-question-what-are-your-strengths/>

(d) Identify your WEAKNESSES

(e) Why you're INTERESTED in this particular role and company.

(f) Brush up the details mentioned in your RESUME.

(g) If you have done articleship in Audit and are interested to move in Tax, you might be asked – "Why do you want to shift to tax".

(h) If you have done articleship in taxation and want to leave your firm, you might be asked – "Why do you want to leave your firm and join us"

TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

(a) You should be thorough in all the work and areas mentioned in your Resume. If you are not comfortable talking about any assignment then please don't write it in the Resume.

(b) Generally, if you are from an audit background and appearing for an interview in taxation, the technical questions asked are not many and not too complex. That's because the interviewer understands you are not a taxation person. However, what they see is your communication, presentability, work done in articleship and overall demeanour.

(c) Subject knowledge gained over the last 3–4 years,

(d) Pick up your favourite subject and prepare few questions related to it. If you haven't already decided, it'd be worth going back to all the topics and find out the one which you found the most interesting.

(e) Major Work done and clients handled during Articleship. Training during articleship showcases your skills and exposure that you had. But in the course of interview you can not describe it all, so it's better to make a brief list of the major points you would like to highlight.

(f) You might also be asked questions relating to economy, both India and global including what's happening, i.e. current affairs. Lot of times the interviewer wants to judge your general awareness as well, because that helps him identify if you are a book worm or not.

4. How Much Research About the Company Should I Do?

As much as possible. Review the company website or have a quick conversation with a current/past employee to learn enough to sound like you've been following the company for a while. Being aware of the latest news and developments related to the company, you can easily ace the interviewer's interest.

If you know the person who is going to take your interview, read about him/her on LinkedIn so that you are fairly familiar with his/her background. That helps.

5. Should I Prepare for the Group Discussion?

In campus interviews, companies basically take a first round of Group Discussion, to spot the initiators with leadership skills. Having screened from there, Personal Interviews are taken to more precisely evaluate the candidate's skills. So you will have to prepare well for both separately.

6. What Time Should I Get There?

Early! Reach 30 minutes early. Take time to collect yourself, visit the restroom, and have a quick look in the mirror to make sure nothing is stuck in between your teeth. Then you can sit in the lobby and relax.

Also, don't schedule anything immediately after the interview. If the interview takes longer than you expect, you will get stressed if you are worried about another appointment.

7. What Do I Do if I Know I'm Going to Be Late?

Make a note of the concerned person who is the in-charge for campus placements. This information should be gathered by you well in advance of the interview date. There can be situations when you may need to inform the co-ordinator about your not coming/ late coming.

And if you still arrive late, try to take a moment to gather your thoughts and regain your calm before meeting the interviewer, then apologize sincerely—once— don't bring it up again. Try to shift the focus as quickly as possible from your faux pas to your strengths and skills.



(B) DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. Who should extend his hand first for a Handshake: interviewer or me?

Its perfectly fine to reach out first but make sure you are shaking the right way. Make sure it's a full handshake. Don't just use your fingers hold other person's hand. Your palm should make contact with interviewer's palm, with your fingers wrapped firmly, but not too firmly, around the hand. Ensure your palms are not wet with sweat.

Smile and exchange pleasantries while you shake hands, such as expressing your pleasure in having the opportunity to interview for the position. If you are being interviewed by more than one person, shake every person's hand in the room.

REFER: How To Get The Perfect Handshake

<https://magic.piktochart.com/output/6591096-interview-handshake#.VXITOuah8Rs.wordpress>

2. What should I do When another interviewer arrives after my interview has begun?

Please stand and greet the other interviewer with a smile and firm handshake as you are introduced to each other.

3. When Should I Sit in the interview room ?

Once the handshake part is over, stand behind a chair until you are invited to sit down. When you take your seat at an interview table, do not place your cell phone, laptop bag or handbag on the table. Place your belongings under your chair or on a chair beside you (with cell phone in your bag – silenced/switched off and not on the vibrator)

4. How Should I Sit during an interview?

Sit up straight, but not too stiffly in your chair. Lean forward a little bit, which shows you are both interested and engaged in the conversation. Leaning back makes you appear too casual. Plant your feet on the floor or cross your legs. Keep your hands away from your face. Don't cross your arms or hide your hands beneath the table. Rest an arm on the arm of your chair or on the table.

5. Should I Take a Glass of Water or Cup of Tea or Coffee if Offered?

YES. There are a number of good reasons to do this.

- Drinking water will surely help you feel relaxed
- If you are asked a difficult question , taking a sip of water will give you few seconds to think and articulate an answer.
- Finally, it's a polite way to start off the interview.

6. How Friendly Should I Be during an interview?

A healthy blend of both. It's OK to smile, laugh, and act like you're enjoying the conversation. But do take a cue from your interviewers—if they're stone-faced interrogators, keep it professional; if they're all laughing and joking, inject a bit more fun into your answers.

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7. How Should I Answer The Question “Why Do You Want To Leave The Firm From Where You Did Your Articleship?”

You will not gain anything by being negative about your past employer. So keep things positive. Answer in a way that shows that you are eager to take on new opportunities and that the role and the organization you are interviewing for is a better fit for you than your current position.

Preferably stick your answers on job profile and exposure rather than money. Asking for a raise is not bad, but you shouldn't look like a person hungry for money. If you are good, you anyways would get it.

8. If my current firm (from where I did my articleship) did not offer me a job, should I Tell that?

NO, if you are not asked about it. Definitely YES if asked but keep it simple. You don't have to share all the details. Instead talk about what you learned there and then get back to the business of showcasing your strengths as a candidate for that position.

9. What Should I Do if I Am Asked An Unexpected Question?

Use a glass of water. Yes, you read it right. Taking a sip of water will give you a few seconds to think and formulate an answer.

10. Should I Bring Up My Personal Life?

That depends on the rapport and the flow of conversation you have with the interviewer. There is no harm, but keep it short and simple. A lot of interviewers do ask about your personal life including your family and siblings.

11. Is it OK To Take Notes During An Interview?

YES but not at the expense of normal conversation. Jotting down some things you want to ask about or remember later can show that you are thoughtful and excited about the role.

12. How Many Questions Should I Ask The Interviewer?

Totally depends on who you're meeting with and the length of the interview, but remember again that the interview should be a back-and-forth conversation that feels natural.

You should prepare a list of questions that you want answered beforehand, but don't save them all for the end—weave your questions in naturally, as the topics come up.

REFER: What Questions Should I Ask In A Job Interview

<http://nimishgoel.com/what-questions-should-i-ask-in-a-job-interview/>

www.nimishgoel.com

13. Is there anything I should not say to the interviewer?

YES , there are few things you should never ever say to your interviewer.

REFER: Dont Say These Things To Hiring Manager

<https://magic.piktochart.com/output/3056319-never-ever-say-to-hiring-manager#.VM8CCm9Jrdc.wordpress>

14. Can I Ask About Next Steps?

Ofcourse YES but at the end of the interview. By asking this question, you show the interviewer that you are really interested in the job and that you are excited to move forward.

15. Should I Ask About Salary?

Until an offer has been extended, don't ask about salary or benefits just yet. It's best to avoid any question that sounds like you assume you already have the position—unless, of course, your interviewer brings it up first.

16. Should I Shake Interviewer's Hand After an Interview?

YES – A handshake at the end of your interview is a sign of professional courtesy.

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(C) AFTER THE INTERVIEW

1. What do I do if I get an offer letter from company A but is quite hopeful of getting it from company B as well which is a better brand.

Although its a good situation to be in because you finally have an offer letter in hand, but what if that's not your dream company. Your dream company is yet to take the interview and you are not sure if you would get a job there. I think the most practical solution is to accept the offer and move along with it. Unless you feel that the profile they have offered is something you don't want to do at all, then you should reject it and move ahead for the interview with the other company.

However, if you are confident you will surely crack the interview with the other company, then take a chance. In my personal opinion, sometimes taking a chance in your life is wonderful. Beware, chances should be calculated because its the matter of your career.

REFER: Salary, Brand or Job Profile - What Is More Important?
(<http://nimishgoel.com/salary-brand-or-job-profile-what-is-more-important/>)

2. Given a choice, should I go for better salary , brand or job profile.

In my personal opinion, opting for the job profile is always important because if you get your dream profile, you will eventually do very well in the long run. Even if the brand is not the best of the brands but you are getting offered profile that you had always dreamt of, just go ahead and take it. I can assure you if you do well in that profile, sooner or later you shall surely get a break with the branded company.

3. What Should I Do if I Don't Get the Job?

Incase you have the email id/visiting card of the hiring manager, send a nice note thanking him or her for the opportunity and asking the company to keep your resume on file for any open positions in the future. Even if this job didn't work out, there might be a perfect one for you six months from now—in which case, putting your best foot forward even in the face of bad news will only serve you.

MORE ON INTERVIEW PREPARATION

MORE ON INTERVIEW PREPARATION

1. Salary, Brand Or Job Profile – What Is More Important?

<https://magic.piktochart.com/output/7211826-salary-brand-or-job-profile#.VcA2ikvel0A.wordpress>

2. All You Need To Know Before An Interview

<http://nimishgoel.com/interview-tips-series-all-you-need-to-know-before-an-interview/>

3. What Questions Should I Ask In Job Interview

<http://nimishgoel.com/what-questions-should-i-ask-in-a-job-interview/>

5. Job Application Checklist

<http://nimishgoel.com/job-application-checklist/>

6. Interview Handshake

<http://nimishgoel.com/interview-tips-series-the-handshake/>

7. 8 Ways To Fail An Interview Before You Sit Down

<http://nimishgoel.com/8-ways-to-fail-an-interview-before-you-sit-down/>

8. How To Answer Interview Question – "Tell Me About Yourself"

<http://nimishgoel.com/tell-me-about-yourself-interview-question-simple-ways-to-answer-the-most-dreaded-question/>

9. What Is More Important – Salary, Brand Or Job Profile

<http://nimishgoel.com/what-is-more-important-salary-brand-or-job-profile/>

10. 8 Ways To Hide Interview Nervousness

<http://nimishgoel.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/8-Ways-to-Hide-Nervous-Behaviour.pdf>

11. Never Ever Say These To HR Manager

<https://magic.piktochart.com/output/3056319-never-ever-say-to-hiring-manager#.VM8CCm9Jrdc.wordpress>

12. Three Steps For Answering Interview Question – "Why Do You Want This Job"

<http://nimishgoel.com/3-steps-for-answering-why-do-you-want-this-job-piktochart-infographic-editor/>

13. Results Are Out – Are You Ready For You First Job

<http://nimishgoel.com/exams-ready-first-job/>

14. How To Answer Interview Question – "What Are Your Strengths"

<http://nimishgoel.com/how-to-answer-the-interview-question-what-are-your-strengths/>

15. Ways To End A Job Interview

<http://nimishgoel.com/ways-to-end-a-job-interview-4/>

16. Three Things Never Ever Say To Hiring Manager

<http://nimishgoel.com/three-things-never-ever-say-to-the-recruiting-manager/>

17. How To Answer The Last Interview Question – "Do You Have Any Questions"

<http://nimishgoel.com/page/8/>

I wish each one of you the very best in this placement season. May you do very well in life. If you wish to ask any further questions on how to prepare and behave in the interview, feel free to write to me at nimishgoel.blog@gmail.com

