Subject Wise Typical Errors Committed By Students in Examination

Accounting

- Most of the students go for selective study at the time of preparation. Consequently, they are not able to gain confidence on the subject and also the surety to fare well in the exam.
- In practical papers, students do not focus on theoretical / conceptual understanding of the topic. Theory questions are generally skipped at the time of preparation. Any twist in the question dumps them in the state of confusion which ultimately is reflected in their solutions/answers.
- Practical / numerical questions require written practice without referring the solution in the first go. However, many students solve practical questions orally on calculator. By doing this they do not apply their mind fully rather they simply endorse the solution given in the material. For development of analytical skill, and proper understanding of the concept, it is essential that students do written practice of each and every question by hand. This will also help them in time management and gaining speed.
- In practical question, lots of computations are required. Students apply correct concepts/ knowledge but many a times err in the calculation. These calculation mistakes may occur either due to consideration of wrong figures or error in addition in place of subtraction and vice versa.
- Students sometimes arrive at correct calculation but falter at the time of copying it in their answer sheet i.e. they unconsciously interchange the digit places of the amount, for example ₹ 1025 written as ₹ 1052.
- One of the common errors committed by the students is wrong carry forward of the amounts from one page to another. This results into mistake in all the further computations, wherever that amount is used, and loss of marks.
- In Accounts, formats play an important role in the presentation of the financial statements. It is observed that students solve the questions correctly but do not prepare their financial statements in the applicable formats especially in Paper 5 : Advanced Accounting at Intermediate (IPC) level (with respect to Corporate entities, Banking and Insurance companies) and in Paper 1 : Financial Reporting at Final level for corporate entities.
- Students give irrelevant details even for small question thereby spending unnecessary time on the question which is not required. It is advised that students should restrict their answers according to the marks allotted to that question.
- It is observed that all the parts of the question are not answered in continuity. Also each answer was not started from a fresh page by many students.
- Working Notes form part of the solution and carry marks. However, it is found that students directly calculate the amounts on the calculator and write the same in the main solution without substantiating it with the help of the necessary working notes. This is one of the main reasons of losing vital marks.
- In theory questions or on accounting standard based questions, students do not read the requirements of the question properly and present vague answers without sufficient explanation and reason. For example, question requires to 'the treatment of the transaction' and students calculate the amount and end the answer without substantiating the same with the relevant provisions of the accounting standards and the presentation in the financial statements. Though they calculate correct figure, still they will score less or no marks.
- At many places, assumptions are required to be mentioned in the solution since it is the base on which your solution is derived. Students overlook this and though solve the question by taking assumption but fail to mention the same in the solution thereby losing marks.
- Students sometimes mention wrong Accounting Standard name and number or the para numbers in their solution. It is advised, if they are not sure, then they should avoid mentioning it. Wrong quoting of AS name and number may lead to deduction of marks.

Law

- **Lack of comprehensive study:** Students preference for selective study by referring examination papers of last 5-6 attempts, affects the understanding and performance of the students during the examination. A comprehensive study covering the entire syllabus of the subject are overlooked by the majority.
- **Lack of conceptual study:** Students' fail to emphasize their focus on the major legal provisions, case laws, (if any) and understand their practical implications. Besides, students ignore on the terms/definitions used in Act at various places, so they are usually confused whenever question based on the definitions is asked in the examination.
- **Lack to meet the expectation of the examiner:** By and large, students are not aware of the level of

knowledge prescribed for the paper. So they are not able to meet the expectation as required from the Students during the examination.

- **Ignorance to Bare Act:** Further, students have no habit of reading the Bare Acts. It is necessary for better understanding of the provisions contained in various statutes and the way the legal provisions are given. This will increase their performances while representing their answers with the better drafting of the answer in the legal manner.
- **Lack of preparation of brief notes:** The preparation of brief notes helps to recapitulate the main concept during the examination. Normally, students refrain from preparation of brief Notes. Brief notes act as a capsule during the examination.
- **Lack of practice in examination conditions:** Students do not attempt the past year examination question paper/ Mock Test Papers under examination conditions and do not assess their preparation. They merely do an audit of these questions rather than practicing them in examination conditions.
- **No planning:** Students fail to plan their time during examination. Even some time, no time is left for the revision. And many a times, students fail to attempt full paper and do all questions. So, it is important that students must finish each question within allocated time. And some time must be saved for the revision of the paper in the end.
- **Requirement of the question not correctly understood:** Students are required to read and to understand very clearly as to what is required by the paper-setter. Sometimes, students are negligent while reading the question and this is reflected in their answer as they sometimes are not able to understand the simplest of issues or the questions that have been picked from the illustrations of the study material/ practice manual/ revision test papers.

  Also, many a times, students start a particular question and then leave it in the middle, which is another instance where they have not read the question correctly and have not well thought about the answer to the question and hence they leave the question amidst.
- **Word limit is ignored:** Students preferably write more than required to show that they know a lot about the said concept. This affects adversely on their performance (which will adversely affect performance of other questions due to limited availability of time). So marks allotted and time required for attempting the question must be kept in mind. Always be concise and write to the point and do not try to fill pages unnecessarily.
- **Lack of logical reasoning or assumption is missing where there is an ambiguity in the question:** In case where a question is not clear, one may state his assumptions and then answer the question. A proper logical expression must be there in the answer. However, the students fail at this front also.
- **Weak representation of answer:** Most of the students' answers are so disorganised and are so untidy that it affects the scoring of marks. Students should emphasize on the representation of the answer to make it more legible and appealing to catch the examiner's eye.
- **Lack of knowledge of the significant amendments:** Last but not the least, students are not updated with the recent relevant amendments for the examination. So the question based on the recent developments is left untouched by the large number of the students.

Auditing

- Students do not elaborate concept due to lack of conceptual clarity. They do the capsule learning i.e. not going through the bare Standards/ provisions of the Acts which restrain them from proper learning and understanding of the concepts.
- Students are unable to correlate the applicable Standards or provisions to the given question due to lack of proper learning and revisions.
- Sometimes students do not understand the question and its requirements properly thereby giving wrong answer.
- Students write the same points in active/passive form or breaking one point into 2-3 points to increase the number of points in the answer which is not correct.
- Failure to arrive at the conclusion as required in the question.
- Important points are skipped while answering the question and attempt in very general manner.
- Students write irrelevant extra material not asked in the question thinking that they would fetch more marks.
- Failure to establish relationship between topics where required.

Taxation

Direct Tax

- **Lack of conceptual clarity:** The students' answers reflect lack of conceptual clarity as well as lack of requisite application skills which reflect inadequate preparation for the examination.
- **Lack of knowledge of the recent amendments relevant for examination:** Many a times, students may have studied the subject for an earlier attempt and not qualified. Thereafter, for the next attempt, the amendments made by the successive Finance Act would become applicable. However, students are not aware of these amendments and answer the questions based on the earlier position of law.
- **Requirement of the question not correctly**

understood: Sometimes, the students are not able to understand the exact requirement of the question, probably because they do not read the question properly, and therefore, their answer is not appropriate having regard to the question asked.

- **Answers not supported with proper reasoning:** The students, sometimes, do not substantiate their conclusion/answers with proper reasoning based on the relevant provisions of law. Particularly, in computation based problems, the answers are not supported with proper working notes/explanatory notes.
- **Assumptions/Views not clearly stated:** Since tax laws are prone to different interpretations, it is possible to have two or more views on a particular aspect. Therefore, it is very essential to state the assumption/view based on which the answer is given. However, it is noted that students do not clearly state their views/assumptions in their answers.
- **Manner of answering case law based questions not appropriate:** Quite often, students are not aware of the relevant judicial decisions to be applied while answering such questions. Also, the students who are aware of the judicial decisions seem to be under the wrong impression that merely by giving the name of the parties involved in the judgments, they could secure sufficient marks. Students should take care to write the answer to such questions by identifying the issue involved, discussing the relevant provision of law, explaining the rationale of the relevant court ruling and applying the same to the case on hand and stating the proper conclusion, which would make their answer complete and help them score good marks. Mentioning the name of the parties involved would certainly add value to the answer but that alone is not sufficient to score good marks.
- **Poor writing and communication skills:** Students answers also reflect poor writing and communication skills.They are not able to effectively communicate their point of view in their answers.

Indirect Tax

- Students do not provide working/explanatory notes for the numerical problems asked in the examination. Such notes carry marks and are an integral part of any computation question. Students end up losing crucial marks by not substantiating their computations with appropriate notes even though they might have arrived at a numerically correct answer. Also, wherever notes are written by students, they are vague, based on general idea, incomplete and not backed by statutory provisions.
- In most of the cases, computational questions specifically require the students to state their assumptions. However, students overlook this important aspect and fail to state the assumption on the basis of which they answer the question. For example, while computing service tax liability, students do not clearly write their assumption with regard to assessee's eligibility for exemption available to small service providers.
- For the questions requiring the students to answer in terms of "True/ False" along with reasons thereof, students merely state "True/ False" and do not give valid reasons. Reasons also carry marks. Therefore, students lose marks by not writing reasons for such questions
- In case law based questions, students reproduce the facts of the case in their answer and thus end up losing precious time during examination. Students directly write the decision of the Court without elucidating the relevant statutory provisions and/or observations of the Court on the basis of which the conclusion has been arrived at.
- In case of questions involving common topics relating to procedural law in excise/ custom/service tax, many a time students wrongly answer the question with reference to a different statute than the one specified in the question.
- In theoretical questions, students merely mention the conclusion or write general answers based on guess work without adducing relevant statutory provisions. Further, the communication and writing skills of the students are also found to be extremely poor. They need to improve their writing skills as even if they are aware of the provisions, they are not able to present their views coherently.
- Students quote wrong section numbers and wrong name of party and Courts in their answers. It is advised not to quote than to misquote a section number/ case law as misquoting will certainly lead to loss of marks.
- Students should not resort to selective studies. They should take up in-depth study of the subject and keep themselves updated with the relevant amendments so as to fare well in the examination.

Strategic Financial Management

- Lack of conceptual knowledge
- Start attempting the question without going through the facts given in the question due to Selective Study Approach
- Ignoring theoretical aspect of the paper resulting in lack of conceptual knowledge and sketchy answers in examination.
- Wrong calculation of related cash flows in Capital Budgeting and Leasing Questions.
- Application of wrong model in the Dividend Decision questions.
- Lack of knowledge of concepts such as Swaps, Forward Rate of Agreements and other Derivative products.

- Application of wrong formula in Portfolio Management questions.
- The difference between Recourse and Non Recourse Factoring is not clear to many students.
- Error in Calculation of NAV especially Bonus units
- Confusion in computation of Bid, Ask and Cross Rates of Foreign Exchange.
- Confusion in determination of whether any foreign currency is at premium or discount.
- Lack of knowledge of Hedging techniques of foreign exchange risk.
- Lack of knowledge of provisions related to Cancellation/ Extension of Forward Contracts in Foreign Exchange

Advanced Management Accounting

- **Conceptual error:** Students lack in conceptual clarity and struggle in applying knowledge, particularly when the language or requirements in a question is not conventional.
- **Copying incorrect data:** Sometimes students copy the data given in the question paper incorrectly in the numerical questions.
- **Usage of wrong formula:** Usage of wrong formula, particularly in topics like Standard Costing.
- **Misinterpreting a question:** Students provide answers which are not as per the requirement of the questions.
- **Vague answers to theoretical questions:** Students provide vague answers to theoretical questions, depicting less weightage to theoretical and conceptual part in their planning.
- **Poor presentation skills:** Lack of sequential presentation of answers & their sub parts and writing skills.
- **Time mismanagement:** Time management is crucial. Some students spend more than the required time on a particular question.

Cost Accounting and Financial Management

- **Conceptual error:** Students lack in conceptual clarity and struggle in applying knowledge, particularly when the language or requirements in a question is not conventional.
- **Computational error:** Computational error leads to wrong answers in subsequent parts specially where the requirements are interlinked; for example, CVP analysis in marginal costing and discounting of cash flows in Investment Decisions.
- **Usage of wrong formula:** Usage of wrong formula, particularly in topics like Material, Labour, Standard Costing Marginal Costing, Time value of money, Cost of capital, Ratio Analysis etc.
- **Miscomprehension of question:** Students provide answers which are not as per the requirement of the questions.
- **Inappropriate answers:** Students provide incomplete/ inappropriate answers to questions particularly when they are asked to give suggestion/ comment.
- **Vague answers to theoretical questions:** Students provide vague (sketchy) answers to theoretical questions, depicting less weightage to theoretical and conceptual part in their planning.
- **Poor presentation:** Poor and illegible presentation of the answers which indicates lack of clarity of thoughts.

Information Technology

- **Lack of conceptual clarity:** Due to lack of clarity, candidates fail to comprehend the technical essence of the question and provide a generalized answer, that leads to losing of the marks. They tend to provide general or vague answers that do not cater to the requirement of the question. They write what they know about the topic rather than providing what has been asked in the question.
- **Disproportionate answers:** Instead of providing specific and to-the-point answers, candidates at times write the answers that are not commensurate with the marks allotted to the questions.
- **Poor presentation skills:** Candidates exhibit the inability to form correct complete sentences and commit various grammatical and spelling mistakes.
- **Emphasize on headings only:** Candidates seem to mainly emphasize on the headings pertaining to the topics and fail to express appropriately in the examination.
- **Handwriting illegible:** Candidates at times do not fetch marks due to their illegible handwriting.

Strategic Management

- Lack of conceptual clarity. It appears that many students are doing selective studies and not devoting enough time to the subject.
- Providing general, vague and irrelevant answers. Answering what the students know instead of what has been asked in the question paper.
- Grammatical and spelling mistakes. Inability to form correct sentences. There are often issues in vocabulary, language and presentation of the answers.
- Writing illegibly.
- Inability to express. Provide right arguments to substantiate the views. For example, in the questions of type correct/incorrect, often students are able to correctly identify the correctness of sentences but are not able to give the reasons. ■