

IAS Success Stories of winning candidates Vinod K. Jacob

Vinod K. Jacob, IAS Topper 2000 (5th Rank)

A civil servant is one of the most balanced and normal personalities in a country. He/she need not be an expert, a genius or a super-specialist, he/she has to be an average man/woman of pleasing nature and personality with a flair for leadership and administration. This dictum should guide every IAS aspirant throughout the 3 stages-Prelims, Mains and Interview. A 10 to 14 months programme is a must for this Exam. One should not attempt the first Prelims as a trial. T

He first attempt ought to be the best attempt. Preparation should be focussed on the Mains 3 months solely devoted to Prelims. Choice of Optional should be the first step the choice should rest solely on aptitude and bent of mind. The study should begin with understanding of the first principles and the basics. One should refer only to the standard text-books and noted classics in the concerned subjects. Preparation for Mains should not be on the basis of past years Questions papers only. First, complete the syllabus and then one month preceding the Mains, practise with the help previous years papers. I feel that it is the performance in General Studies paper that tilts the scales.

My observation has been that he candidates are extremely thorough with their Optionals and level of knowledge is improving s the years pass by. Hence General Studies alone makes or mars one's chances. Likewise, one has to practise writing good essays. Writing and presentation skills count for much. English paper and Language paper are no easy sailing affairs. I could not succeed in my first attempt (1998) because I failed in Hindi compulsory paper. So it is always advisable to brush up one's grammar and vocabulary. Making notes, keeping paper cuttings, regular map reading and group discussions are a must. Keeping focussed is often a tall exercise but with the help of our family and few reliable friends we can always recharge our batteries and stay on course.

Prelims: A three-month exclusive preparation for Prelims is a must. For the subject paper, the whole syllabus should be thoroughly studied, revise, re-revised and mastered. No part can be afforded to be overlooked. No part can be afforded to be overlooked. For General Studies, one has to go through [NCERT books](#) and the Hindu and Frontline. Many of the questions can be answered through intelligent guesses. Remember, first complete al mental ability questions and then go onto the rest.

Target: 95/120 to 115/120 (Subject); 90 to 100/150 (G. S).

P S: The subject is more important than G S hence, spend more time on the subject. **Mains:** On an average atleast 6 to 8 hours of study a day is a must. I used to take off and Sundays but used

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to spend 2 hours reading the Hindu even Sundays. All papers should be prepared simultaneously. Equal importance should be given to all papers. One should always stick to the word limit. In case of long answers, do not write more than 500 words. Never take an aggressive stand while attempting your Essay papers. Explain all the differing and opposing schools of thought and with logical reasoning explain your viewpoint.

Target: 1150 to 1250/2000. General Studies, I believe, makes or mars your chances.

Interview: A civil servant is not born. But he is not made one overnight. Hence, one should aim at projection an optimistic outlook. Humility is a quality that has no peers. Our arguments should not resemble rhetoric but should be persuasive. Taking part in debates and extempores is a must. I even took classes in Law in my M. L. One should spend atleast 2 hours a day in reading the newspapers. One should be prepared for analysing any issue of current importance. But, we should never try to give ad. Hoc or quick. Fix solutions. Remember, stalling for time is a very good way of overcoming a problem. In Civil Services Examination, Emotional Quotient (E. Q.) is as important as I. Q. Hence, you should stay focussed, calm, patient and in a proper frame of mind. Remember, he who rules the mind is greater than he who rules the city.

Courtesy: Geocities

Sail through IAS Mains and Prelims: Fully-explained Prelims (Both GS & Aptitude) problems with detailed solutions. Notes & detailed answers for Mains GS, Essay, and Complulsory (Hindi and English) papers and optionals.