

Making a point

kamalika bhattacharya gets an expert's views on how to secure IIM admission

EIGHT engineers scored a perfect 100 per cent in the Cat-2010 — the gateway to pursuing an MBA in the Indian Institutes of Management and other prestigious Business Schools in India. Securing such admission is no easy feat, what with the cutoff percentiles announced by the IIMs being higher in comparison with previous years.

IIM, Ranchi last year announced the highest cutoff of 99.65 per cent among all the IIMs and for the 1011-12 batch this will be 99.66 per cent. The cutoff at IIM, Calcutta, which is IIM, Ranchi's mentoring institute, is 99.59.

IIM, Ahmedabad has announced that around 540 students securing an overall percentile higher than 99 and more than 94 per cent in each individual section would be called for personal interviews.

IIM, Lucknow has increased the weightage allotted to candidates' Cat scores. Instead of the regular 30 per cent, the weightage now allotted would be 37.5 per cent for the next batch. It has also increased its fee from Rs 8 lakh to Rs 12 lakh.

Many IIMs are now working on admitting more women and non-engineering students as it would

increase diversity. IIM, Ranchi, IIM, Rohtak and IIM, Raipur, along with IIM, Trichy, have planned a joint admission process this year. This initiative will encompass common group discussions and personal interviews of around 3,000



Rahul Reddy

successful Cat candidates.

MBA aspirants who have received calls from B-schools across the country will have to appear for the next round of the admission process — Group Discussions, Personal Interviews and Essay Writing. The first step (GD) is usually not an elimination procedure. You are evaluated on skills like communicating in a group, leadership skill, assertiveness and, most importantly, listening.

The following are tips by Rahul Reddy, course director, Triumph Institute of Management Education, Kolkata, on Essay Writing and Personal Interviews:

A written assessment or essay has become a very important component of the selection process. Most IIMs last year had only an essay and interview and no Group Discussion. IIM, Lucknow had an essay plus GD on the same topic. XLRI has for some time now used the written essay as a part of the selection process.

For the essay: The structure is more important, not the length. Spend a few minutes to recollect ideas and plan the structure. Do not try to include too much — three to four ideas with an explanation and examples are enough. Make sure the introduction and conclusion are good.

For the interview: It is a discussion, not an interrogation. Be prepared to expand your answers and to squeeze in some new ideas. Most interviews are very pleasant, so there is no need to be tense. Have some clarity on career goals. Ask yourself why management is an important question.

Your answers will invite further questions, so make sure yours hold up. Make eye contact and show confidence. If you do not know, say so. It is always better to tell the truth rather than provide a dubious answer. Do not just state facts, have an opinion on each issue.

Most importantly, just be confident.