

IAS 2016



SAHIL DIGRA

"Do not lose your hope and do not stop until you arrive at your destination. Persistence always pays."

CSC: What were the basic mantras of your success?

Sahil: Repeated revisions and smart work were the basic mantras of my success.

CSC: When did you start preparation for IAS Examination? When should one ideally begin thinking about preparing for this exam?

Sahil: I started my preparation for the IAS Examination during third year of my Graduation. I think it is great idea to start preparation as soon as possible. College days should be used for preparation.

CSC: How did you start your preparation for the IAS Examination?

Sahil: I started with basic NCERT books. First, I finished Optional subject and then moved to General Studies preparation.

CSC: What was your optional subject? What were the basis of selecting this particular optional subject?

Sahil: 'History' was my optional subject. I selected it as my optional subject because it covers a major part of syllabus of compulsory papers of General Studies and Essay. Good performance of 'History' optional over last few years was another reason behind selecting it.

CSC: Tell us something about preparation of 'Essay' paper.

Sahil: I wrote many Essays for practice to get command and expertise.

CSC: How did you manage your time in both Prelims and Mains examinations?

Sahil: I focussed on extensive coverage of topics for Prelims examination. For Mains examination, I studied deeply with limited coverage of topics.

CSC: What should be best strategy to tackle negative marking in Prelims Examination?

Sahil: One should practice as much as possible. Last years' UPSC question papers of Prelims examination should be solved properly. I did not guess much to avoid negatives in Prelims Examination.

CSC: Did you prepare notes? How helpful are the notes? What is your advice on notes-making?

Sahil: I did not make separate notes. I relied on class notes which were dictated by S. Baliyan Sir and other teachers in Class. Notes are extremely valuable for last minute revision at the time of exam.

CSC: Did you attend any coaching institute? How helpful are the coaching institutes? What is your overall opinion about the coaching institutes?

Sahil: I attended INSIGHT IAS ACADEMY of S. BALIYAN Sir at Delhi. The classes were just awesome. I could get selected only because of personal guidance, constant support and motivation provided by S. BALIYAN Sir.

CSC: What are your suggestions for freshers who want to join coaching institutes for preparation?

Sahil: Coaching classes are necessary but one should join only good coaching institute. Joining any institute randomly just by looking at the advertisement could be disastrous.

CSC: What was your style of writing in Mains examination? How was it distinct from the general writing style? How did you develop this writing style?

Sahil: I wrote point-wise in Mains examination to ensure that I do not exceed word limit. I learnt it during test practices at the time of preparation.

CSC: How helpful is one's academic background in his/her success in Civil Services Examination.

Sahil: I believe that one's academic background does not play much role in this examination. Anybody having determination and dedication can succeed in Civil Services Examination.

CSC: Does this exam provide a level playing field for the rural and economically poor background candidates?

Sahil: Yes. This exam demands persistence and focused effort. Rural students do not lack these qualities in any way. The questions being asked by UPSC do not discriminate between the urban and rural candidates. Anybody can succeed in this competition with good guidance and hard work.

CSC: How did you prepare for interview?

Sahil: I took a lot of mock interviews to get rhythm and confidence. I practiced every dimension of DAF (Detailed Application Form).

CSC: Which types of questions were asked in the interview? Did you answer them all?

Sahil: Questions in interview were purely analytical and I answered only 60% of the questions.

CSC: Was there any specific area they emphasized upon?

Sahil: My subjects of graduation were main focus area. Many questions were asked from graduation subjects.

CSC: Before getting down to actual preparation, what kind of reading should one do to improve one's suitability for this exam? What is the outside reading one should do?

Sahil: One should be aware of general happenings around him/her. Habit of reading newspapers should be cultivated to gain awareness of national and international affairs. One can also read good magazines like Frontline and Civil Services Chronicle to have an in-depth understanding of current affairs.

CSC: To whom would you give credit for your success?

Sahil: My family, teachers, friends and God.

CSC: What is your advice to the freshers who are going to appear in this exam?

Sahil: They should study regularly and smartly. Understand the syllabus and nature of questions being asked by UPSC to anticipate correctly. Read one thing ten times rather than ten things one time.

CSC: What is your advice to the candidates who have failed in this exam?

Sahil: Do not lose your hope and do not stop until you arrive at your destination. Persistence always pays.

CSC: Had you thought of any other alternative apart from the Civil Services?

Sahil: No. I was confident that I will crack it.

CSC: Since when have you begun reading Civil Services Chronicle magazine? What are your suggestions to make it more useful for civil services aspirants?

Sahil: Civil Services Chronicle is a very good magazine though I could not read it much. I got to know about it during my coaching classes. I think it is a complete magazine for IAS examination preparation.

CSC: Mr. Sahil, thanks a lot for giving your valuable time and sharing your insight on Civil Services Examination.

Sahil: Thank you very much.