

CAT Myths Busted

When should I give CAT?

Candidates always have this query regarding the right time to give CAT - final year of undergraduation or post a few years of corporate work experience. People who are still in under graduation have one significant advantage: creating a 3 year preparation window for themselves. For example, for a candidate getting into his final year of under graduation in July, CAT in the November-December of the same year becomes a free first attempt – one does not really lose anything with this if he/she does not get through. One can put a plan in place fixing certain institutions as the prime target and then plan to give CAT for 3 years and continue the journey of getting those '7 questions extra' correct year on year in every section to secure the coveted 99 percentile. The best time to start preparation would be in the final year of college. Even better would be in the pre-final year of college when a candidate can spend enough time in improving basic aptitude & comprehension skills and then keep on focusing on getting those 7 more questions right in every section year on year. For example: 15 questions in year 1, to 21 questions in year 2, to 28 questions in year 3, which will ultimately secure the coveted 99 percentile. This approach will ensure the candidate also does not compromise on the choice of colleges

Are non-engineers at a disadvantage in CAT?

There is a myth that CAT is an exam tailor-made for engineers and people who are good in quant can easily crack the same. There is a counter myth as well, that being a male & an engineer you stand at a disadvantage in CAT. All of these are pure myths - irrespective of you are, if you score a 99 percentile, there is no stopping a candidate. Of course, your profile, work experience, and good academics count, but what matters really is the CAT percentile. IIMs as well try to maintain a diverse profile with additional points for women, non-engineers etc in the final admission criteria. There is space for everybody provided you have the requisite percentile.

Should I leave my job for CAT?

This is a critical question posed by CAT aspirants, who are working professionals. Once you decide to quit a job for CAT, your profile starts decaying the same moment and you have to be definitely looking at joining an MBA in the next academic year. Leaving a job should mean you are putting a more concerted attempt. By doing that, you are putting all your eggs in the same basket. Having a job gives you the liberty to be choosy about the institutes you want to go – even if you don't get through this year, you still have a job as a backup and can give another try next year without compromising on the quality of the institution. One critical point to be kept in mind is that irrespective of your work profile and time, all you need for preparation are 3 minute time frames with a question in front of you and you thinking about solving it, which can happen during your lunch break, your office commute, or any such small breaks and not essentially for 2 hours at a stretch every day.