

Contents

Preface: The Origin Story	xi
Introduction: CAT and Cricket Are Two Sides of the Same Coin	xiii
How to Use This Book	xvii
Part I: MBA, Not CAT	1
What's the Plan?	3
1. Why Do You Want to Crack One of the Toughest Exams in the World?	5
2. You Need to Choose Your Specialization RIGHT NOW!	8
3. How to Choose the Right Specialization	10
Profile Matters	13
1. The Elements of a Profile	15
2. What Makes a 'Great' Profile?	18
3. How to Build Your Profile for an MBA	23
Choosing the Programme That Is Right for You	
1. A-B-C or Nothing: Possibly the Worst Goal Ever!	29
2. How Should You Choose Which Colleges to Apply To?	31
3. Should You Consider an International MBA or MIM Programme?	33
4. How to Choose Between a One-Year or Two-Year MBA	36

viii Contents

Part II: Learning to Learn	39
What Is the Prep Plan?	41
1. How Many Hours of Prep Are Required to Crack the CAT?	43
2. Should I Quit My Job to Prepare for the CAT?	46
3. How to Manage Work and CAT Prep at the Same Time	53
Learning to Learn	57
1. Natural Talent or Hard Work?	59
2. Wipe the Slate Clean	63
3. Seven Skills to Crack the CAT and Enter an IIM	68
Part III: The Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VA-RC) Section	69
1. How To Measure Your Effective Reading Speed	71
2. How to Improve Reading Speed and Comprehension at the Same Time	75
3. The Five Pauses Technique: How to Read and Solve an RC Passage	78
4. Becoming an Expert Critical Reader	92
5. The RC Question Types	96
6. The Paragraph to Questions Approach: An Alternative Reading Strategy	102
7. Notes on the Paragraph to Questions Approach	122
8. Notes on Reading Comprehension	124
9. Verbal Ability: The Summary Question	127
10. Verbal Ability: The Jumbled Paragraph	142
11. Verbal Ability: The Missing Sentence in Paragraph	153
12. Verbal Ability: The Incorrect Sentence in Context	159
Part IV: The QA Section	171
1. How to Solve Any Maths Question	173
2. Learning to Learn Maths	175
3. How to Increase Your Speed: The T20 Skills Required for CAT Quant	177
4. The Elegant Solution: Think Without Ink	182
5. How to Increase Your Accuracy on QA	185
Part V: The Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DI-LR) Section	189
1. Why Is DI-LR the Toughest Section on the CAT?	191
2. Developing Your Core Reasoning Strength	193
3. How to Solve a DI-LR Set	201

•





	Contents	ix
4.	The Key Mathematical Reasoning Concepts You Need to Know	209
5.	Notes on Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning	211
Part VI	: Test-Taking Strategy	215
1.	Do Not Wait for Your Prep to Be over Before Taking the First Mock	217
2.	All About CAT Scores and Percentiles	220
3.	Why Test-Taking Strategy Is More Important than Conceptual Clarity	222
4.	CAT Test-Taking Strategy: Now, Later, Never	224
5.	Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension: Test-Taking Strategy	226
6.	Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning: Test-Taking Strategy	235
7.	Quantitative Ability: Test-Taking Strategy	239
8.	How to Analyse a Test	242
9.	Setting the Right Targets on Your Way to the 99th Percentile and Above	246
10.	Test-Taking Blues: The Reason Why Your QA Scores Are Below Par	249
11.	Test-Taking Blues: Why Your Skills Might Not Be as Good as You Think They Are	253
12.	The Last Leg: Score Improvement, Attempts versus Accuracy, Prep Planning	256
Part VI	I: Mind over Matter: Mental Conditioning	261
1.	The Cat Is Really Not as Tough as You Think: In Reality You Do Not Need a 99.5	263
2.	How to Manage Your Energy, Stress and Anxiety	265
3.	One of the Many Ways	266
4.	What Do You See Yourself Doing on D-Day?	269
5.	Are You Ready for a Real Test?	273
6.	Zen and the Art of Test-Taking	276
7.	Getting Ready for D-Day	277
Part VI	II: Preparing for WAT-GD-PI	281
1.	How to Prepare for WAT and GD	283
2.	How to Prepare for the Personal Interview	286
3.	Why Everyone Should Write the IIM Bangalore SOP	289
	How to Approach the Indian B-School Personal Interview	296
	Believing in Yourself	300
Part IX	: Plan B	301





303

307

309

312

1. What to Do after a Horrible CAT

4. How to Prepare for a CAT Retake

2. To Retake or Not to Retake the CAT

3. Resetting Your Mind Before You Retake the CAT $\,$



x Contents

Part X: The Better Problems to Have	
1. How to Choose Between the IIMs and Other Premier MBA Programmes	317
2. How to Choose Between an HR Programme and a Regular MBA	321
3. How to Make the Most of Your MBA Programme	324
Epilogue	
1. What I Learnt from Working Out	327
2. Motivation Is a Myth	329
3. Finding Your Centre: A Way of Life	331
Acknowledgements	333



