

# TIPTOP Make an impression

It is vital for the MBA aspirants to crack the group discussion and personal interview rounds. AMOL GAWANDE tells you few tips and tricks that will help students in the long run

Once you are done with your MBA entrance exam, it's common that you will be called for the next rounds — group discussion and personal interview. These rounds are designed to assess your interpersonal skills, mental aptitude, and your ability to communicate your thoughts clearly.

Here are a few tips that can help you make an impression during your group discussion:

■ **Improve your general and current affairs knowledge:** Most of the topics you'll be asked to speak about during your group discussion will surround a current national or international situation. To avoid being dumbstruck during the group discussion, it's necessary that you are aware of all the current events happening around you and in the world.

■ **Take the lead:** The panel evaluating the group discussion remembers the first person who speaks. Be that person. Introduce yourself, other people in your team, and then assert your point of view. However, don't take an initiative if you aren't well versed with the topic. If you aren't confident and familiarised with the topic, the panel will pick up on your lack of awareness.

■ **Be open to listening:** If some-



one else presents a fair point, you must agree with them. Remember, it's not about having the most to say; it's about showcasing your leadership skills. A good leader is someone who is open to listening to others and does not hesitate to modify their views when required. You must bear in mind that others in your GD team are just as competent as you are, if not more.

■ **Dress suitably:** Avoid dressing in casuals during your group discussion round. Dressing up casually gives the perception that you are not earnest about being a part of the business school.

■ **Read a lot:** While you are preparing for your group discussion and subsequent rounds,

assure that you read as much as possible. Read the newspaper every day and learn about current issues in the world. This will help you stay prepared and updated for the group discussion.

Now, let's take a look at how you can ace your personal interview. The most important thing to prepare for is how you will deliver your answers. Here are a few common questions that you may be asked during your interview.

■ **Tell us about yourself.**

This question isn't an opening for you to share your entire education and life history. It's an opportunity to talk briefly about your relevant background, expe-

rience, accomplishments, and anything else that is important and relevant to the school or program you have applied for. Remember to limit your answer to only two to three minutes.

■ **Why do you desire to pursue an MBA?**

This question is the perfect opportunity to explain your motivations behind seeking an MBA degree and how this degree can benefit your career. You can highlight the skills you want to gain during the two-year MBA programme.

■ **Why are you drawn to this programme?**

Summarise all the reasons behind why you think a particular business school is fitting for you and your aspirations. Talk about other important factors like location, faculty, culture, curriculum, industry exposure, and placements. You can also specify any additional aspect of the institution and program that makes it an ideal fit for your career goals.

In conclusion, it is important you remember that group discussions and personal interviews are intended to showcase your managerial skills. Stay composed, confident and honest.

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