

# Here is CAT 2018 decoded for you

Contrary to the popular belief, CAT is an easy exam to crack with the right preparation, writes **Gautam Bawa**

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Every year the Common Admission Test (CAT) draws roughly 2-2.3 lakh registrations; the highest for an Indian MBA entrance exam. CAT is a prerequisite if you wish to pursue a management course in India from the IIMs or few other premier B-Schools.



To prepare for the exam efficiently, one needs to understand that CAT is an aptitude exam that checks application of common sense/logic and concepts in addition to the speed and accuracy of candidates. To score well in an exam like CAT one needs to play to their strengths. Keeping the basic understanding of the exam in mind, the mantra for cracking CAT lies in solidifying funda-

mentals, writing numerous mocks, their in-depth analysis, and a fine-tuned strategy.

## HOW SHOULD ONE PREPARE FOR EACH SECTION?

CAT comprises of three sections: Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC), Data Interpretation and Logical Reasoning (DILR) and Quantitative Ability.

## VERBAL ABILITY AND READING COMPREHENSION (VARC)

For the VARC section major emphasis needs to be given to RCs since roughly 24 out of the 34 questions are from RCs. It is important that you start reading articles/passages from various genres. You can also pick a few novels to supplement your reading. This will help you improve your reading speed and improve your comfort level with various genres,

which will enable a logical understanding of the passages. As a result, you should be able to score well in the paper. For verbal logic, the focus should be on odd sentence parajumbles and para summary.

The way I would attempt this section is by aiming to attempt all 34 questions with an accuracy of 70%+. Spend about 40 minutes across the 5 RCs and give yourself 20 minutes for the Verbal logic questions. Do not waste too much time on the TITA (Type in the answer) Parajumble questions. A raw score of 65 should fetch 95+percentile.

## DATA INTERPRETATION AND LOGICAL REASONING (DILR)

It has been the most difficult section of CAT for the last two years. The trend in this section has been reasoning based DI sets. The focus here needs to be on learning from the past. It's clear, basis the last couple of years that a raw score of 27-30 would fetch a 90 percentile whereas that around 42-45 would fetch a 99 percentile. Thus, focus needs to be



on accuracy. Aim to attempt 9-10 questions with 100% accuracy and that should suffice in obtaining a 90 percentile. The same with 14-15 questions should fetch an aspirant 99 percentile. You should target solving two LR and two DI sets daily – while focusing on prioritising the order in which you want to solve the sets since that is one area students falter.

## QUANTITATIVE APTITUDE (QA)

The plan should be to first solidify the

areas with higher weightage such as Arithmetic and Algebra — over the last few years these two areas have together comprised 65-70% of the paper. This should be then followed by one of Number Systems or Geometry basis your comfort level. With the addition of this third area you should be able to attempt 85% of the paper. Focus should be on both high attempts and accuracy. For those who find this section difficult, focus on the three areas mentioned above and

attempt at least 15 questions of Quant daily. 22-24 attempts with 85% accuracy should fetch you a 90+ percentile. For those who are looking at maximising this section look at attempting 28-30 questions with 95%+ accuracy.

## 99%ILE IN CAT 2018?

The CAT paper pattern hasn't undergone any changes this year. Therefore, one should focus on the obtaining the following raw scores assuming the same level of difficulty, to fetch a 99 percentile in CAT 2018

Contrary to the popular assumption, remember, CAT is an easy exam to crack. It seems difficult because of the competition and not the level of difficulty of the paper. The overall section-wise focus should be on attempts, accuracy and attempts and accuracy for the three sections—VARC, DILR and QA respectively. Follow the process shared above, remain consistent with your preparation, and you should be able to score well. Put your best foot forward.

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