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Degrees without borders

Bridging the gap between online education and employment requires employers, educators, and policymakers to work together to redefine what makes a degree valuable

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Vasanth Gopal

The COVID-19 pandemic may have fast-tracked India's digital learning revolution, but the job market hasn't quite caught up. Despite the University Grants Commission (UGC) formally recognising online degrees from accredited institutions, employers remain hesitant. A 2023 report by Aspiring Minds found that just 18% of recruiters consider online degrees equivalent to traditional ones; a sobering statistic in a country where online enrolments have nearly tripled from 1.4 million in 2020 to 4.1 million in 2023.

Fault line

This disconnect between education and employment reveals a deeper fault line in India's evolving learning ecosystem. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisions a future where hybrid and online learning are integral to higher education. But, for many job-seekers, that vision remains aspirational.

Employer scepticism is rooted in perception and policy. A 2024 Shine.com survey found that 72% of job postings still explicitly require "regular degrees", even for roles that could be performed by online graduates. The wage gap is equally telling. Online degree-holders earn 15-20% less than their offline peers in similar roles, according to the Indian Labour Market Report (2023).

Sectoral differences further complicate the picture. While IT and IT-enabled services (ITES) firms are relatively open – 34% reportedly hire online graduates – traditional sectors such as banking and government remain resistant, with acceptance rates below 5%.

Concerns about academic integrity and skill development continue to fuel employer distrust. A 2023 study by Delhi Tech University found that 41% of online students admitted to malpractice during exams.

Compounding this is the limited use of AI-based proctoring. Only 60% of UGC-recognised online programmes currently employ such tools, leaving room for fraud and undermining credibility.

Intangible benefits

Beyond technical skills, employers also value the intangible benefits of in-person education – communication, collaboration, and critical thinking – often nurtured in physical classrooms. Hybrid models, while promising, still struggle to replicate these experiences effectively. Cultural perceptions add another layer of resistance. A CSDS-Lokniti survey (2023) revealed that 68% of Indian parents distrust online degrees, reinforcing the belief that offline education is inherently more rigorous and prestigious.

The NEP's push for hybrid learning faces practical challenges. While 45% of universities now offer online programmes, only 12% of Fortune 500 companies in India have updated their hiring policies to accommodate them. Infrastructure gaps persist; just 30% of rural colleges have access to reliable digital tools, according to AICTE (2024). Faculty resistance is another barrier: over half the professors surveyed by the Education Ministry in 2023 opposed hybrid teaching, citing increased workloads and lack of training.

Yet, there are glimmers of hope. IIT-Madras's online BS programme, for instance, boasts a 92% placement rate, thanks to strong industry partnerships with firms like Tata Consultancy Services. Amity University's hybrid MBA programme uses blockchain technology to secure certificates, addressing concerns around forgery and authenticity. These examples show that when quality, transparency, and employer engagement align, online education can deliver results.

Bridging the gap between online education and employment will require more than regulatory tweaks. It demands a cultural shift, one where employers, educators, and policymakers work together to redefine what makes a degree valuable. Co-designed curricula, robust assessments, and transparent credentialing can help build trust.

The UGC is already moving in this direction, mandating stricter proctoring and standardised evaluations. But for the NEP's vision to truly take root, employers must evolve alongside the education system. In a digital age, learning can no longer be confined to classrooms. What matters most is not where a student studied, but what they can do.

The writer is Associate Professor and Head of Department of Visual Communication, Dwaraka Doss Goverdhan Doss Vaishnav College (Autonomous), Chennai

SCHOLARSHIPS

Nagaland State Research Scholarship
An initiative of the Directorate of Higher Education, Government of Nagaland.
Eligibility: Open to Scheduled Tribe (ST) and indigenous students of Nagaland in the first year of M.Phil., Ph,D., or D.Litt. course from a recognised Indian university.
Rewards: Variable
Application: Scholarship Section, Directorate of Higher Education Below New Secretariat Complex, Kohima 797001
Deadline: September 30
www.b4s.in/edge/RNSS3

Reliance Foundation Postgraduate Scholarships
An initiative of Reliance Foundation
Eligibility: Resident Indian citizens who secured between 550 and 1000 in GATE or have scored 7.5 or above CGPA in UG and are in the first year of a postgraduate programme in Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence, Maths and Computing, Electrical/or Electronics Engineering., Chemical Engineering., Mechanical Engineering., Renewable and New Energy, Material, Science and Engineering, and Life Sciences.
Rewards: Up to ₹ 600,000
Application: Online
Deadline: October 4
www.b4s.in/edge/RFS12

Reliance Foundation Undergraduate Scholarships
An initiative of the Reliance Foundation
Eligibility: Resident Indian citizens who have passed Class 12 with minimum 60% and are currently enrolled in the first year of a regular full-time degree course in any stream and have an annual family income of less than ₹250,000.
Rewards: Up to ₹ 200,000
Application: Online
Deadline: October 4
www.b4s.in/edge/RFS13

Courtesy: Buddy4study.com

TEDxGateway Youth

The Museum of Solutions (MuSo), Mumbai, is hosting TEDxGateway Youth on the theme Build Our Tomorrow.

The event aims to showcase young visionaries from around the world, share breakthrough ideas and solutions to today's most critical socio-environmental challenges, and spotlight the next generation of change-makers who are shaping a more sustainable and compassionate world.

Dates: September 18 and 19

For details, visit rb.gy/qmzkv8

OFF THE EDGE
Nandini Raman

Define what you want

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This column may help

I'm a B.Com student under the FYUGP system. I have always been interested in English and was wondering if there are any courses (short- or long-term) that I can do after UG to qualify as an English major and eventually become a professor of the same. Aliya

Dear Aliya,

Many universities in India and abroad accept students from non-English backgrounds for an M.A. in English if they have a genuine interest, meet the basic eligibility requirements, and pass entrance tests (if applicable). You can pursue an M.A. in English (Literature, Language, or Applied English) from DU, JNU, EFLU (Hyderabad), or any Central University (CUET-PG) or State University.

After the PG, take the UGC-NET (and JRF if possible) to qualify for Assistant Professor roles in universities and colleges. Qualifying in the JRF will support research with a stipend. A Ph.D. in English, while not mandatory for an Assistant Professor, is becoming increasingly valuable for academic roles.

To strengthen your profile, here are some short-term certifications you can do right away. British Council has programmes in Creative Writing, Academic English, Communication Skills. From Coursera, look up The Modern and the Postmodern (Wesleyan University), The Emergence of the Modern Middle East (for contextual literary studies), English for Academic Purposes (UC Irvine). India's Swayam portal has free courses such as Indian Fiction in English, Literary Criticism, Introduction to Linguistics. FutureLearn, edX, IGNOU and others have courses on literature, creative writing and linguistics.

I completed B.Sc. in 2022 and joined IIT Gandhinagar for an M.Sc. but had to drop out due to personal reasons. I am preparing for the government job exams, but my interest is fading. I am now confused about whether to continue, switch to a corporate job, or pursue further education. Anand

Dear Anand,

An unexpected academic break and rigorous prep for government jobs with no success can make you feel like this. But you can rebuild! Introspect on why your interest in government jobs is fading. Are you bored with the syllabus or disillusioned by the uncertainty, competition, and job roles? Why did you choose to prepare for these exams? What is your plan B if you don't succeed?

Higher studies is an option if you enjoy academics and research. You can also pivot to new fields such as Data Science, Analytics, Environmental Science, Public Policy and so on as they will open new doors. For some immediate income and skill building, look for corporate jobs. With a B.Sc. you can apply for roles such as data analyst, operations or process executive in private sector banks, insurance and market research companies, healthcare analytics. Upskill with short-term certifications in data analytics, digital marketing and business analytics to improve your prospects.

I did BBA Hospital Management and am now a non-tech associate in an MNC. I'm wondering whether to do an MBA or develop skills in Power BI or SAP. Also, is an online MBA good or should I do one on-campus? Arkadipta

Dear Arkadipta,

Your choice will depend on your long-term goals, availability of time, and financial strength. Work on a cost-benefit analysis of MBA versus skill development. Identify goals, the time it will take, costs, placement support job roles, salary options for each option. See what makes better sense to you. If you want to upgrade quickly, upskilling is better.

An online MBA is good if you are already working and want a degree to move into management, leadership, or higher roles within your current industry. Check out online/executive programmes at IIM-Kozhikode, IIM-Ahmedabad, ISB, XLRI, NMIMS, Symbiosis Online. However, remember that they do not offer campus placements. Growth depends on how you leverage your degree in the current company or switch to improve your profile.

A full-time MBA is better if you want a complete career shift into consulting, product management, high-level strategy roles and can afford to pause work for two years. Aim for the IIMs, ISB, XLRI, SP Jain, MDI, NMIMS, which have solid campus placements.

I wanted to do MBBS after Class 12, but my marks in NEET-UG were not enough. So I did a four-year Bachelor's in Fisheries Science. I'm preparing for the CAT because I haven't found a good job. I'm confused about what's happening to me. Will I ever be able to do the things I want? Aromal

Dear Aromal,

Yes, you can do the things you want! But what do you want to do? See a career counsellor and get clarity on your goals and purpose. What you are experiencing is the discomfort of redirection. What is causing this confusion? Are you grieving the fact that you could have been a doctor by now and unable to accept where you are now? Did you enjoy your Fisheries Science programme? What do you want to achieve by doing an MBA?

Do you still want to be in healthcare via the management route (like hospital administration, public health, pharma management)? Or do you feel drawn to business, finance, consulting, analytics, strategy? If you crack the CAT, you could do an MBA in General Management, Marketing, Operations, Finance, Analytics, Consulting, or even Healthcare Management. You can reboot your career completely. Roles will open up in MNCs, FMCGs, start-ups, banks, consulting firms, and even impact sectors (NGOs and development banks).

Your degree is NOT your identity. Focus and move forward. Meet people in the industry that you see yourself in and talk to them about their experience, and use that information to reach a final decision.

Disclaimer: This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com with the subject line Off the Edge

Do better, not more

Why generic 'extracurriculars' are no longer enough in competitive global admissions

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Arya Diwase

For many years, Indian students aspiring to study at top global universities were advised to participate in as many activities as possible. Play a sport, join a debate club, volunteer ... show you're "well-rounded." However, admissions to the world's best schools do not work like that any more. Competition is fiercer and applicant pools are brimming with talent, so simply listing random activities risks diluting a student's true potential. Now, what matters is real depth, genuine passion, meaningful leadership, and impact you can see.

This shift owes much to a broader change in how leading institutions teach. At several top U.S. universities, undergraduates are encouraged to dive into hands-on, project-based learning from day one. Early access to innovation labs and entrepreneurship centres helps students discover their true interests and develop real-world skills, long before they write their first application.

Personal impact

Admissions teams aren't counting activities or hours. They ask what those experiences meant to you, where you took initiative, and what impact you achieved. Starting a project or sustaining commitment in one or two areas shows growth, responsibility, and deeper learning. For instance, a student who volunteers weekly at a local health clinic or spearheads a community coding workshop over several years stands out far more than one who joins dozens of clubs briefly. Admissions panels also value roles that connect to academic passions: high-school research, interdisciplinary projects, or efforts that earn external recognition, such as awards or publications. These elements of initiative, depth, impact, and intellectual engagement form the core of a stand-out profile.

Yet as the drive to impress grows, many students fall into the trap of crafting "over-calculated" profiles: strategically stacking activities to tick admissions office boxes. In rare cases, it can work but, more often, it backfires; inauthentic narratives are easily spotted and seldom compelling. Moreover, students who chase trending topics without genuine interest end up with disjointed stories that undermine academic focus. Instead, honest reflection on personal passions should inform every choice, transforming participation into memorable narratives grounded in real challenges and achievements.

Generic advice about "doing more" often misfires. A laundry list of clubs and short-term volunteering say little without leadership or measurable outcomes. While admirable, brief involvement cannot convey the problem-solving depth gained from tackling complex issues over months or years. Without proper guidance, opportunities to elevate simple activities into impactful, story-worthy projects are lost.

Begin early

A more strategic approach begins early and focuses on authentic interests. Identify causes or problems that resonate personally, then choose one or two areas for long-term commitment, taking on greater responsibility as you progress. Seek mentored experiences, structured projects, or internships with expert guidance to gain practical skills and produce concrete results. Guidance from educators, industry experts, or research supervisors is invaluable to refine projects and maximise impact. Document obstacles, solutions found, skills learned, and outcomes, which will fuel confident essays and interviews and show exactly how real-world work ties into academic goals. For example, a mentored robotics internship that culminates in a working prototype can demonstrate abilities far more vividly than a dozen brief club entries.

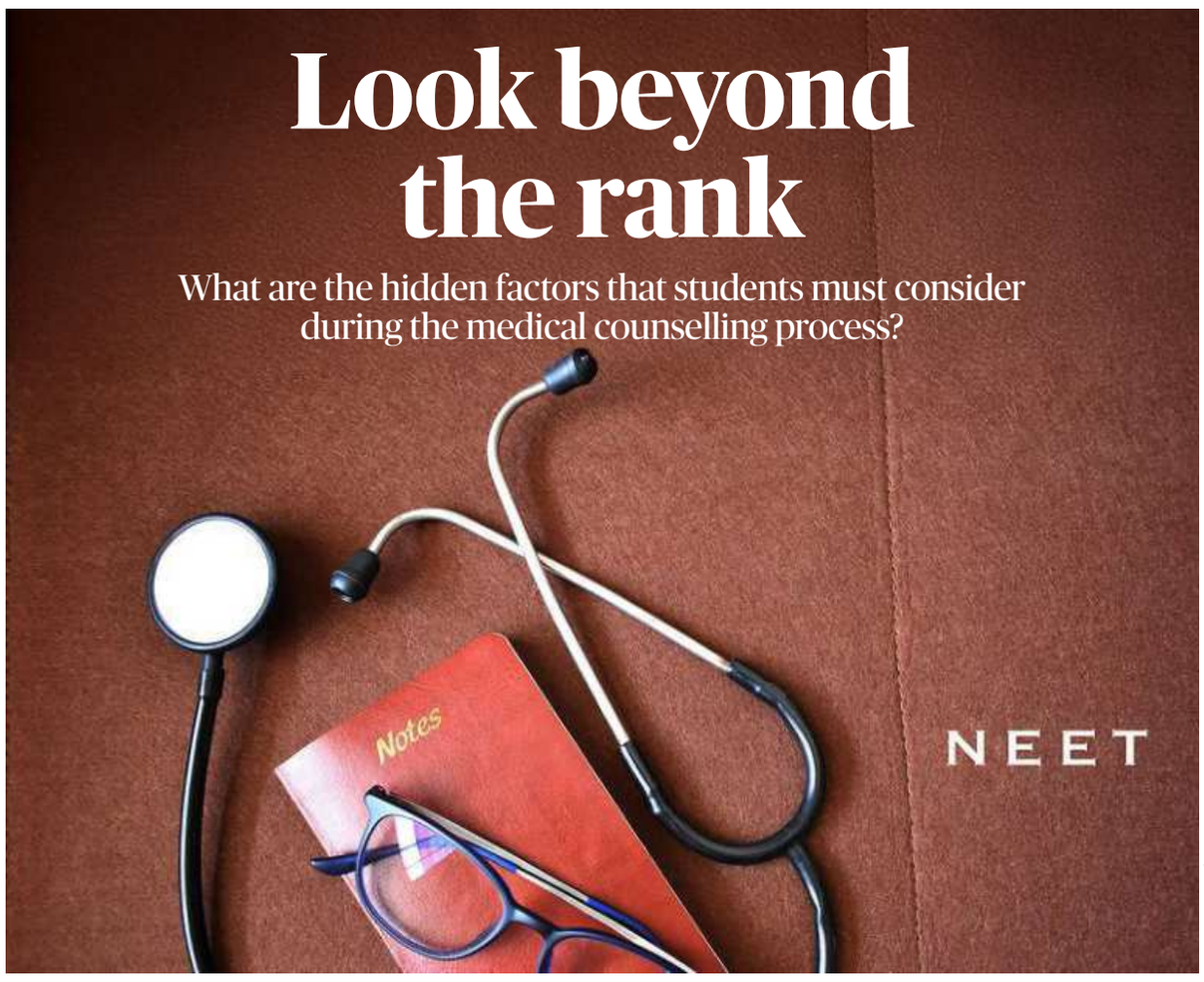
Data from recent application cycles reinforces this model. Over 70% students admitted to their first- or second-choice universities demonstrated sustained involvement of 2-3 years more in a single passion or project. Across disciplines, STEM, humanities, and arts, this pattern holds: depth beats breadth. Those who could point to clear results or recognition saw acceptance rates nearly double compared to peers with more scattered résumés.

Gaining entry to leading global universities today requires a thoughtful, focused strategy highlighting genuine commitment, leadership, measurable impact, and authentic passion. Admissions committees will remember those with a clear vision and proven dedication, as such applicants bring bring curiosity, resilience, and a track record of real-world problem solving. This reflective, passion-driven approach is no longer optional. It's essential.

The writer is co-founder and CEO, Application Ally and BuildUp.

Look beyond the rank

What are the hidden factors that students must consider during the medical counselling process?



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Gaurav Tyagi

Each year, thousands of NEET hopefuls make life-defining choices based on their rank in the exam. Although the rank matters, letting it be the sole criterion for selecting a medical college or course is not correct. There are several factors that should be taken into account to make more informed, well-rounded choices. Here are some of the points to keep in mind

State Quotas: This is one of the most under-utilised factors in counselling. Most students only consider the All India Rank (AIR) without looking at how domicile status affects their chances. State counselling sessions tend to have lower cut-off ranks than All India Quota (AIQ), particularly in states with fewer applicants or newer institutions. If a student it eligible according to a specific state's domicile conditions, it can considerably enhance chances of admission.

Bond and service obligations: Some government colleges, particularly those in rural or underserved regions, have a mandatory service requirement that will require the student to work at a government hospital for a specific period, with substantial penalties if he/she defaults. Therefore, before signing up for a college, the student has to review the bond term, service location and penalty charges. A good seat may have long-term restrictions that the student may not be ready for.

Infrastructure and quality: A college that takes students with high ranks does not mean it offers world-class facilities or faculty. Consult current students, search for NMC inspection reports, or read third-party reviews to know the reality before considering a college.

Fees and living costs: Tuition fees can be high in private and recognised universities. Many students also fail to factor in the costs of living in a city like Bengaluru or Mumbai. The total cost – tuition, hostel, and other fees, food, transport, and other living expenses – must be calculated in total before deciding on a college. A government college in a smaller city may be a wiser decision over an expensive private college in a big town.

Clinical exposure: This is the building block of medical studies and institutions affiliated with well-known hospitals provide greater exposure to learning diagnostic and patient management skills. Choose institutions where students have daily exposure to patients, high patient inflow, and exposure to varied cases.

Opportunities for future specialisation: Some colleges are known to foster research, PG preparation, or for specialities like surgery, paediatrics, or psychiatry. So, consider long-term goals in making a decision. Those aiming for a PG in a competitive field should look for a college with a strong academic culture and good support. Talk to mentors or alumni to know which colleges have excelled in PG exams such as NEET PG or INI-CET.

Language and culture: Being in a state without knowing the local language can be challenging, not just in terms of academics but also while doing clinical postings and interacting with patients. If you're considering a college in a state other than your own, ensure you are willing to learn the local language quickly.

Remember, the NEET rank is an admission ticket, not the whole story. Selecting a good college involves academic, financial, social, and career considerations. So, construct a customised counselling plan that takes into account hidden but significant variables.

The writer is the founder of CareerXpert.

A fresh formula

Seven popular fields that don't require Science subjects but still lead to strong STEM careers

CAREER CUES
Richa Dwivedi Saklani

Is Science the only route to getting into high-growth careers these days? Contrary to popular belief, it is not. The world isn't divided into Science vs. everything else any more. From apps that track climate change to the psychology behind user-friendly design, today's problems need minds that are creative, analytical, and tech-aware, regardless of whether they studied Physics or not.

Fields like Engineering and Medicine still require a strong foundation in core sciences. But many new fields are now open to students with backgrounds in Business, Psychology, Maths, Economics, or Visual Art. Here are seven popular fields that don't require Physics, Chemistry, or Biology but still lead to strong STEM careers.

Data Science and Business Analytics: If you're good with numbers, enjoy spotting patterns, and like solving real-world problems, this field could be for you. It involves using data to make smarter decisions in business, sports, marketing, healthcare, and more.

You'll learn:
- How to work with spreadsheets, data visualisation tools, and statistics
- Basics of coding and storytelling with data
- Strategic thinking in business contexts

Careers: Data analyst, market insights specialist, business intelligence consultant

Information Systems and Technology Strategy: Not every tech role requires hard coding. This field focuses on how businesses use technology to improve efficiency – from project tracking software to customer databases.

You'll learn:
- How systems are designed and managed
- Basics of digital transformation
- Project management and technology planning

Careers: Business systems analyst, IT strategist, operations technology manager

UX/UI and Human-centred Design: If you love design, psychology, or understanding how people interact with technology, this might be your path. This field focuses on creating user-friendly websites, apps, and interfaces.

You'll learn:
- Interface design and layout
- Research methods for understanding users
- How to prototype and test digital products

Careers: UX designer, product designer, digital experience strategist

Cognitive Science: Ever wondered how people learn, make decisions, or interact with machines? Cognitive science combines psychology, linguistics, and computer science to explore these questions.

You'll learn:
- How the brain processes information
- The science of memory, attention, and decision-making
- The foundations of AI and human-computer interaction

Careers: Behavioural researcher, AI interface designer, UX researcher

Sustainability and Environmental Studies: If you're passionate about climate, urban life, or policy-making, this field explores how human behaviour intersects with the environment – no lab work required.

You'll learn:
- Environmental planning and policy
- Systems thinking and sustainability models
- Urban development and public behaviour

Careers: Sustainability consultant, urban planner, environmental project coordinator

Game Design and Interactive Media: A dream path for creative students who also love tech, this field is all about crafting immersive experiences – from mobile games to VR worlds.

You'll learn:
- Game mechanics, storytelling, and animation
- How to build interactive environments
- Introduction to visual programming and design tools

Careers: Game designer, AR/VR content developer, digital media producer

Applied Maths and Statistics: If you took Maths in high school but didn't opt for Physics or Chemistry, some liberal arts universities will still allow you to major in Maths, Data Modelling, or Quantitative Economics.

You'll learn:
- Logical reasoning, algebra, calculus, and statistics
- Real-world applications like financial forecasting and risk modelling

Careers: Statistician, data consultant, financial analyst

Don't let your subject choices in high school limit your vision for the future. As education evolves, universities are opening up STEM opportunities that balance logic with creativity, and data with design. There's space for your interests within STEM, even if you didn't take the traditional science route.

With inputs from Kritika Malhotra

The writer is founder-CEO, Inomi Learning, a Gurugram- based career and college guidance firm. Email: info@inomi.in

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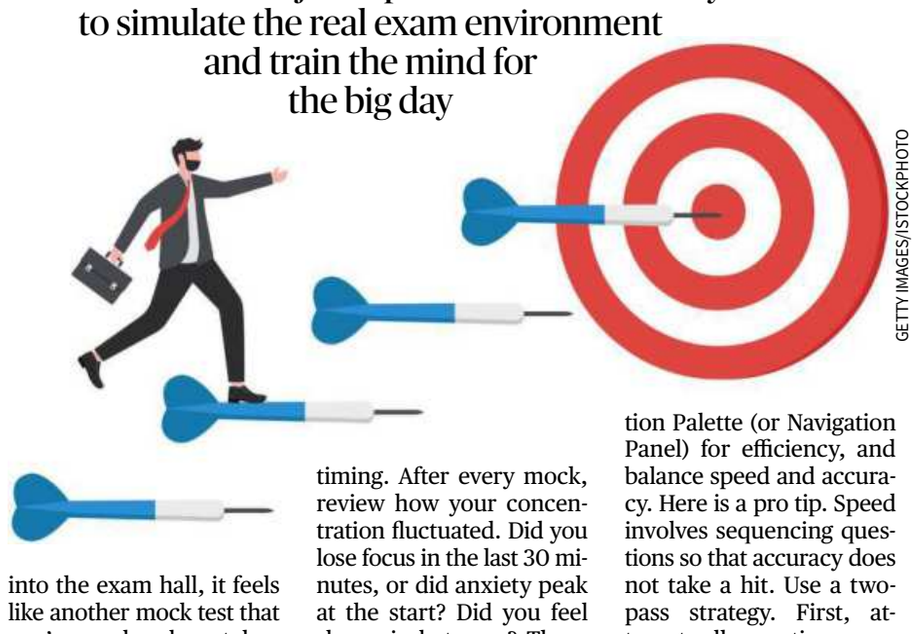
It's a dress rehearsal

Mock tests are not just a practice tool but a way to simulate the real exam environment and train the mind for the big day



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Karan Mehta

A serious CAT aspirant knows the syllabus, most practice questions, and many even revise and give mock tests diligently. Yet, when the exam day comes, only a handful perform to their true potential. Why? Because cracking CAT is not only about concepts; it's equally about how you perform under pressure, manage your time, and sustain focus across two intense hours. This is where mock tests come in, not just as a practice tool but as a way to simulate the real exam environment and train your mind for the big day. If you learn to use mocks the right way, the actual management entrance tests will feel like just another mock you've already taken. So here are some tips that will help:

Maximise performance: Treat mocks like the actual exam. Sit at a desk in a quiet room, without any interruptions. Time your test exactly like the real exam. Avoid using your phone, looking up answers, or even taking unnecessary breaks. By building these habits, your brain gets conditioned to the actual test-day discipline. So, when you walk into the exam hall, it feels like another mock test that you've already taken before.

Build mental endurance: Most MBA entrance exams last for about two hours but the mental energy required is equivalent to running a marathon. If you don't build stamina beforehand, fatigue will creep in. Practice giving mocks at the same time slot as your actual exam (morning, afternoon, or late afternoon). This helps your body align with your test timing. After every mock, review how your concentration fluctuated. Did you lose focus in the last 30 minutes, or did anxiety peak at the start? Did you feel sleepy in between? These observations will help you train your mind for consistency.

Time and section management: Time is your biggest competitor in these exams. Students often panic when they realise they are behind schedule. By taking mocks under strict time limits, you learn how to distribute time within sections, decide when to skip a question, how to use the Question Palette (or Navigation Panel) for efficiency, and balance speed and accuracy. Here is a pro tip. Speed involves sequencing questions so that accuracy does not take a hit. Use a two-pass strategy. First, attempt all questions you can solve in under 90 seconds, then return to the marked ones for controlled risk-taking.

Experience pressure safely: Mocks are the safest way to practise failing and learning from it. Maybe you panic in a mock and end up making silly mistakes. Or you waste too much time on one tricky question. These situations, when experienced during mocks, give you valuable lessons without costing you your real exam performance. After each mock, analyse your feelings and write down, when you felt anxious, your reaction when you saw there were just 10 minutes left and after you realised you made a mistake.

Strategic adaptability: No two exams are alike. Sometimes one section may feel tougher than others. Mock tests help you simulate these scenarios and build adaptability. For example, If one section seems tough, stay calm and focus on accuracy. If something feels easy, use it to boost your confidence. This will help reduce panics in the actual exam room.

Rigorous reviews: The real value lies in what you do after the mock: the review. Check not just what went wrong, but why. Identify whether errors came from a lack of knowledge, misreading the question, or stress-induced rushing. Revise your strategy after every mock and apply it in the next one. This cycle of test-review-refine is the key to using mocks as a genuine pressure-simulation tool.

The writer is CXO and co-founder Supergrads by Toprankers

Beyond the keyboard

Cybersecurity is no longer a one-size-fits-all profession. It is a dynamic field that thrives on diverse perspectives

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Uma Pendyala

In an increasingly interconnected world, where every transaction, conversation, and operation is digitised, the importance of cybersecurity has grown exponentially. Once synonymous with coding, ethical hacking, and system audits, the domain naturally attracted Computer Science and IT graduates. Their familiarity with systems architecture, programming languages, and network protocols gave them a solid foundation for roles like security analysts, penetration testers, and incident responders. However, as cyber threats have become more dynamic, including elements of behavioural manipulation, legal complexity, and infrastructure vulnerability, the field has evolved into a multidisciplinary one requiring experts from Engineering, Law, Psychology, and even Statistics.

Other disciplines

Engineering graduates, particularly those from Electronics, Electrical, and Mechanical backgrounds, are well-positioned to enter cybersecurity through the industrial and operational security track. With the emergence of smart factories, connected infrastructure, and Internet of Things (IoT) devices, securing physical systems that interface with digital platforms has become a major priority. So many pursue additional certifications in areas like industrial control systems security and vulnerability assessment to bridge the technical gap.

Another group with immense untapped potential is Maths and Statistics graduates. Their ability to work with data, recognise patterns, and create predictive models aligns perfectly with the growing emphasis on analytics-driven security. They are especially crucial in areas like cryptography, threat intelligence, and AI-powered risk assessments, as they can build, interpret, and optimise the algorithms that power next-generation defence mechanisms.

Then there are those with a background in Psychology and Behavioural Sciences. Today, cyberattacks often begin not with a technical exploit but with a well-crafted phishing email or a social engineering tactic. Understanding human behaviour, motivation, and cognitive biases is essential to building defences against these psychologically driven attacks. Behavioural scientists contribute to designing security awareness programmes, detecting insider threats, and analysing user behaviour to identify anomalies. Their work is crucial in shaping the "human firewall" that organisations so desperately need.

Cybersecurity is also deeply intertwined with law and public policy. As regulatory frameworks evolve around data privacy, digital transactions, and national cyber defence, legal professionals help translate complex cyber laws into practical policies, handle digital forensics, and advise organisations on risk governance. With governments and international agencies pushing stricter regulations, the demand for professionals who understand both cybersecurity and legal frameworks is rising rapidly.

Continuous learning

Regardless of academic background, a common denominator is continuous learning. Whether you are an engineer moving into vulnerability analysis, a psychologist entering threat modelling, or a lawyer handling compliance frameworks, courses like CompTIA Security+, Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH), Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), and Certified Information Privacy Professional (CIPP) help develop a structured understanding of cybersecurity principles, frameworks, and tools.

Cybersecurity also intersects with broader strategic concerns, particularly when it comes to cloud adoption and protecting national infrastructure. As organisations increasingly rely on public and hybrid cloud platforms, robust cloud security policies must be established and regularly reviewed. Compliance with standards like the Cloud Security Alliance STAR framework helps build stronger governance structures. Meanwhile, national critical infrastructure must be continuously monitored for risks using advanced solutions like attack surface management, business continuity tools, and supply chain risk evaluations.

One of the greatest challenges today is not just in securing infrastructure or data but in educating people. Most cyber incidents originate from human error such as clicking on a malicious link, using weak passwords, or falling for a scam. That is why continuous cybersecurity awareness is essential. Ultimately, cybersecurity is no longer a one-size-fits-all profession. It is a dynamic, interdisciplinary field that thrives on diverse perspectives. The key is to stay curious, certified, and ahead of the curve.

The writer is Head-Business Ops at SecurEyes