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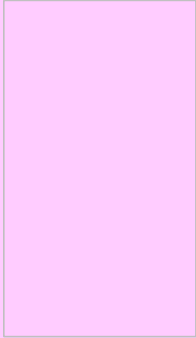# [TopTalent.in] Rushabh Agrawal from BITS Pilani talks about his Google interview experience

- Difficulty Level :\nHard
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Google is consistently chosen as the best workplace in the world and engineers all around the world would simply love to be a part of this amazing and innovative organization. Rushabh Agrawal, a\xc2\xa0Computer Science graduate from BITS Pilani, recently got recruited by this dream organization in Mountain View, California Office and we, at\xc2\xa0TopTalent.in\xc2\xa0got an opportunity to talk to him. He speaks about his personal reactions (read jubilation), the recruitment process and gives out useful tips & suggestions for all aspirants.

First question that anybody would ask \xe2\x80\x93 How did it all happen?

The campus placement season at BITS Pilani kicked off with the Google written test on 10th August. He had almost forgotten about it because nobody heard from them for quite some time. But on August 28th, five of the numerous applicants got calls for interviews at the Bengaluru office of Google. And by 6th September they were in India\xe2\x80\x99s silicon city for their interviews. I\xe2\x80\x99m sure he would agree with me when I say it was all worth it. After all, 2 of the 5 lucky candidates (Rushabh Agrawal and Kunal Lad) actually got selected for Google\xe2\x80\x99s Mountain View office.

When asked about his reaction to the good news, he clearly demonstrated the fact that it will remain an unforgettable day for him. \xe2\x80\x9cIt was in the afternoon and I had just come back from lunch in the hostel mess; still hungry, given the food that day.\xe2\x80\x9d And that was when he saw an email informing him of his selection. He remembers the moment clearly, \xe2\x80\x9cI spent the next 10 minutes going through the email trying to come to terms with what was written in the email.\xe2\x80\x9d Within 10 minutes he received a call from the Google HR person to personally inform him about his selection and that was when the joyous feeling finally seeped in. While she went on to describe the package details and terms of joining, Rushabh was too jubilant to care about all that she was saying! His friends and \xe2\x80\x98wingies\xe2\x80\x99 were already shouting and cheering around him within minutes \xe2\x80\x93 all this while the HR lady was speaking to him. He declares that the feeling still remains like a too-good-to-be-true thing.

On whether the selection process is different from the usual campus placement processes.

We\xe2\x80\x99ve heard of those brain teasers and super-tough questions from Google\xe2\x80\x99s interview. Rushabh disagrees and says the process is more or less similar to companies like Microsoft, Amazon etc. Only difference was in length of the placement process. Usually, when companies come for campus placement, the process gets over within a day, on the campus itself. But Google almost took a month.

There was an initial screening test followed by a series of interviews. All interviews they had at Google were technical and each interviewer tested a different domain of knowledge and thinking. There was an open ended discussion as well, in one of the rounds. Rushabh also had a couple of publications in his kitty and a couple of interviewers discussed about them as well. A very interesting point is that during the complete interview process, there were no eliminations after each interview. All of them went through the same number of interviews. During the interview, the interviewers constantly took down observations/opinions. In his opinion, at the end of the entire process, all the points are tallied to select the candidates. He cheerfully tells us that apart from the interview they got to enjoy the lunch at Google and were put up in a really awesome place for the night.

On the kind of skill-set companies like Google, are looking for in candidates.

He informs us an in a matter-of-fact way that knowledge of Data Structures and Algorithms are a must, along with decent coding skills. In addition, knowledge of Computer Networks and Object Oriented Programming (OOP) can come in handy as well. Knowing anything else is a bonus. Like in anything else, practice (solving problems in this case) helps a lot. Interviewers generally evaluate a candidate based on his/her response (thinking process, approach) to unknown problems. So they look for problem solving skills as well, in addition to experience. It is a fact that companies like Google look for highly intelligent people. And the resume, along with the interview process, gives them ample opportunities to evaluate a candidate\xe2\x80\x99s intelligence.

On how to create a perfect technical resume which would stand out.

Companies like Google don\xe2\x80\x99t care about the candidates\xe2\x80\x99 non-technical achievements. So don\xe2\x80\x99t clutter your resume by mentioning those. Keep your resume short and crisp. No point explaining everything as they do not \xe2\x80\x9cstudy\xe2\x80\x9d your resume (His was a 1 page document). During the interview, the interviewer may glance through it and on finding something interesting, would like to talk about it. This will start a discussion and the conversation, which is now in your hands, offers a good chance to impress the interviewer. Write your resume accordingly (such that it evokes enough curiosity in the mind of the interviewer). Also, you\xe2\x80\x99ll obviously want to talk about some of your projects/publications more than the rest. So highlight your work accordingly. Now there\xe2\x80\x99s some really specific and useful advice, right?

Interested people would obviously want to know how much preparation goes into winning such great offers. He gives an honest response and says \xe2\x80\x9cI\xc2\xa0didn\xe2\x80\x99t\xc2\xa0prepare for Google specifically apart from going through some of the Google interview questions available online, a couple of days before the interview.\xe2\x80\x9d According to him, the questions in general are similar to what one would encounter in interviews for Microsoft, Amazon or any other similar company.

\xe2\x80\x9cPreparing for placements in general over the summers, worked out good enough for me\xe2\x80\x9d, he says (practice is the key, evidently) This type of preparation is only to channelize one\xe2\x80\x99s thought process for the problems posed during interviews, which are different in nature to what one would otherwise encounter. An important point to note is that the range of questions asked in interviews is not very broad. So the preparation basically familiarizes you with common tricks and stuff that would come into use frequently. Knowing them won\xe2\x80\x99t necessarily impress the interviewer but not knowing them would take you a notch below the rest of your competitors. Beyond that, whatever you have done so far \xe2\x80\x93 publications, projects, coding experience, etc will come into play. You basically use all the knowledge gained and skills acquired in the past few years.

To conclude we asked Rushabh to give some advice to all the students out there who\xe2\x80\x99re aspiring for similar job offers. To start with, he clarifies that that the interviews at Google are not very different from those at Microsoft or Amazon, contrary to popular opinion. He, personally, did not

find them \xe2\x80\x9cextra difficult\xe2\x80\x9d (and he says this on behalf of all 5 who gave the interviews from BPPC)

Also, during the interview, you are not judged by simply your success in reaching the most optimal solution. You are judged on your thought process and failure to reach the final solution is not the end of it, which is important.

For the 1st and 2nd year students, (and many of them have asked him \xe2\x80\x9cthe recipe\xe2\x80\x9d to get a job at Google), a lot coding practice and a very good knowledge of Data-structures and Algorithms to get a job like this is a good way to go forward but not the only way. He, himself,\xc2\xa0didn\xe2\x80\x99t\xc2\xa0possess a great coding profile but his profile was based more on projects and publications, in things like Machine Learning, rather than algorithms. \xe2\x80\x9cWhat I feel is that you must try to gain as much knowledge and skills as you can. You never know what will come handy.\xe2\x80\x9d The candidate\xe2\x80\x99s intelligence and problem solving ability would take care of the rest. You basically pursue whatever interests you or excites you. There is no long term preparation for getting a particular job and thinking in terms of that would not only restrict you but, also, is too short-sighted an aim to have.

Of course, every aspirant has to spend small amounts of time preparing explicitly for interviews. It\xe2\x80\x99s just a great exercise to streamline the thought process. Like any other interview process, a lot depends on factors beyond one\xe2\x80\x99s control. As they say, the rest depends on the day.

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