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[TopTalent.in] Interview with Sujeet Gholap, placed in Microsoft, Google, Samsung, Goldman Sachs & Tower Research

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It\xe2\x80\x99s not every day that you come across a person who has achieved so much in life at a very young age which others can only dream of achieving in their entire lifetime. His simplicity and positive attitude speak volumes for his recent success after facing some tough times. This is the story of Sujeet Gholap, a IIT Madras grad who received record breaking 6 offers from some of the best companies in the world namely Google, Microsoft, Samsung (US), Samsung (IN), Goldman Sachs and Tower Research. We at\xc2\xa0TopTalent.in\xc2\xa0had a chance to interact with Sujeet about his success, preparation, interviews and some hardships. This interview is an excellent example of how a small town boy can achieve greatness and how you can do it too.

Also, Sujeet has agreed to share his stellar resume with our users which can help you with your resume and preparation. So, don\xe2\x80\x99t forget to\xc2\xa0download\xc2\xa0his resume by logging in.

Team TopTalent: Can you tell us a bit about your background before joining IIT Madras?

Sujeet:\xc2\xa0 Sure. I hail from a small town called Kallam from Osmanabad district of Maharashtra. I studied in a local school in Marathi medium till 10th standard. I always thought people from cities would do much better than me as I studied every subject in Marathi. My mom and dad teach at a local college there. I am currently pursuing my B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering at IIT Madras. In IITJEE 2009, I secured an all India rank of 184

Team TopTalent: Can you give us a brief account of your interview experience for these companies?

Sujeet:\xc2\xa0 All my interviews (except a couple) were technical interviews. Almost in each one, I had to tell what I did during my internships at Yahoo! and Facebook, what projects I have worked on. Many questions followed a similar monotone : arrays of integers, do something with them, biased coins and their tosses, trees and recursive algorithms, writing code on paper and explaining it to the interviewer, solving mathematical and logical puzzles etc. Interviews varied from very easy to very challenging. Some interviewers were impressed by JEE rank and CGPA while some did not give it even a second glance. Some interviewers were interested in the projects I did and asked detailed questions about it, while some were just interested in whether I can solve the problem they have given me.

Team TopTalent: So, how did it feel when you landed six massive offers on that day?

Sujeet:\xc2\xa0 It felt nice and gave an ego boost when people referred to me as \xe2\x80\x9cthe guy with six offers\xe2\x80\x9d. People I barely knew, smiling at me and congratulating me! I was on an all-time-high. Jumping around and laughing all the time. It was such a kick that the next day, although it was a normal and fine day, as it was down compared to previous day\xe2\x80\x99s high,

I was actually a bit gloomy!

Team TopTalent: What was going through your mind when you had to choose one out of those 6 offers?\xc2\xa0

Sujeet:\xc2\xa0I was supposed to finalize on a company by afternoon and I was in the state of utter confusion. Whether to take Google, which is the dream job of most of the programmers or to take Samsung, whose software division is nascent and where my contribution and impact would be much larger, visible and maybe even play a key part in company\xe2\x80\x99s direction or to take Goldman Sachs, the challenging job which I always wanted to get a taste of or to go with Tower Research, the highest paying Indian job (twice as high as the second highest) which also involves inviting challenges and lots of programming. I was realizing that it wasn\xe2\x80\x99t really a good idea after all to go for so many options. I was wondering whether I would have been better off without a choice, as all these companies were such that I would have accepted the offer without giving it any thought at all had it been the only offer. I finally decided to go with Google.

(Wasn\xe2\x80\x99t\xc2\xa0really a surprise for us. Google seems to be the\xc2\xa0[first choice]\xc2\xa0for most Indian programmers)

Team TopTalent: How did you prepare for these interviews? What suggestions can you give to our users who might have similar interviews lined up?

Sujeet:\xc2\xa0I was lucky that I had discussed about similar questions before, and hence was able to make it through the interviews. I was quite attentive in class which really helped me a lot. Any questions which were not algorithm intensive questions and were more or less straight knowledge based, I could just recall the answer straight from the class when the professor taught that particular topic! Being friends with the right people and forming a peer group with a common interest is something which was critical to my success. I used to solve coding challenges with Arijit who had a very good Topcoder Rank. I would think about how I would solve those problem, if I get it, I would call him up and discuss the answer and ask for more.

In terms of suggestions, I would say be an active member of topcoder, keep solving programming problems in other places too if you want like spoj, usaco. I wish I had taken these things seriously and honed my algorithmic programming skills. Be thorough with Introduction to Algorithms by CLRS and do problems on one of the above mentioned sites.

[All Practice Problems for Samsung] !

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