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| 1. | How important is CPI for apping? |
| Ans. | In my opinion it depends on the university. For example, I think your CPI would matter to universities like MIT while it may not matter that much to maybe UT Austin (just guessing).  If you take my case, I had barely crossed 8 when I was apping. Your projects and recommendation matter a lot (along with your Statement of Purpose). |
| 2. | How to choose universities to app for? |
| Ans. | There are three things people generally do.  a> Consult the professors whom you are taking recommendations from (btw I am not saying that all your recommendations should be from professors or even vice-versa)  b> Rankings (generally QS rankings)  c> hearsay  A professor may have a good reputation in some universities and he'll probably suggest those with (maybe) a mix of good universities.  Students with high CPIs will probably apply for some, say 4 very good ranked universities and say 2 middle ranked universities while the medium CPI ones will apply in say 2 very good ranked, say 3 middle ranked and say 1 low ranked universities.  Some universities have a very good reputation from hearsay; however they may not be appropriate for you. It all depends on individual perception. For example, I extend the analogy (my personal opinion) of IIT Kanpur and IIT Bombay to MIT and UCB (respectively). (Note: I did not apply at MIT or UCB).  In my case I chose universities based on intuition, and opinions of close friends and my BTP advisor. I would personally suggest that you select a professor instead of the university. |
| 3. | What are the funding and scholarship options? |
| Ans. | I am not much experienced to say about this but I'll let you know my perceived notion. Scholarships (fellowships) are difficult to get and I think are mostly for the residents of the country (of that university).  A general notion is that chances of funding are more if you are applying for a PhD. However that sometimes does not hold for some departments and/or some universities.  You'll also have to look into how the industry is performing in your area. For example, UT Austin hasn't got any funding in X department. I haven't named the department because funding shouldn't be your primary concern. People are able to grab some grants or some sort of funding by the end of the first year. However, you shouldn't rely on this fact. It may get quite difficult sometimes. |
| 4. | What combination of recommendations are preferable? |
| Ans. | The most important thing is that your recommender should know you to some extent personally and have a fair idea about what work you did under him. Don't just go for reputed profs who don't know you that well. Also the opinions about you from these recommenders should be coherent. If possible try to have at least one from a professor of different field.  I do not have an idea how much value a recommendation from a project guide in company internship has; however I feel that it shouldn't matter much if you did an awesome job with the task/project assigned to you. |
| 5. | Do the GRE and TOEFL scores affect your chances of getting into a good college? |
| Ans. | I am not sure about this answer but I think once you clear the cut-off you are treated on par with others unless you are being considered for a Teaching Assistant or Assistant Instructor position.  These scores matter a lot for these two positions. |

**DISCLAIMER/NOTE:** All responses are only personal opinions formed from experience and by talking to others (who have gone through this process). So, I would suggest to also see what others have to say on a particular query.