

GATE 2016 topper reveals success mantra to crack the exam: Read to know Khantesh Mohanbhai Agrawal's inspirational story

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The results of the Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE'16) were recently announced. From Delhi, Khantesh Mohanbhai Agrawal secured All India Rank (AIR) 12 in chemical engineering stream. This final year student of BITS Pilani with his determined and single-minded approach was able to score well in GATE 2016.

Excerpts from the interview he gave India Today Education:

"I focused on both concepts and problems, because the GATE exam requires command over both of them. I studied from the standard books and NPTEL rather than following shortcuts. I used to discuss problems and doubts with friends who were also appearing for GATE or Core Job placements".

Q. Where have you done your engineering from and in which branch?

Khantesh: I am in the final year of BE Chemical Engineering in BITS Pilani.

Q. What was the reason behind appearing for GATE 2016? PSUs or further studies?



Khantesh: While appearing for GATE 2016, my main motive was to strengthen the basics of Chemical Engineering to the best level I could so as to be a good engineer. I was more inclined towards a PSU job since it involves large practical application of Chemical Engineering, but I decided to take the final decision after the GATE exam and focused on the preparation.

Q. What is your GATE score and how many marks did you secure out of 100 in GATE paper?

Khantesh: I secured 72.67/100 marks and 867/1000 normalized score in GATE 2016 CH paper.

Q. What was your strategy and how did you manage?

Khantesh: I planned to appear for GATE in January, 2015. I started preparing for this exam from the sixth semester itself. I accelerated my preparation from September, taking the seventh semester of college exam lightly. I tried to complete the syllabus by the end of December, 2015, and left January, 2016, for revision. I was never hard on myself during preparation and followed my interests simultaneously.

Q. Did you take any coaching classes? Are they important for preparations?

Khantesh: Yes, I did enroll for GATEFORUM Distance Learning Program (DLP) and EII online Test Series, but I hardly used any of them since the major chunk of my preparation was self-study, solving problems from www.unitoperation.com and discussing doubts with friends. Joining coaching classes is a subjective question and varies from person to person and his prior knowledge in subjects. If you have studied decently during your graduation, there is not much need of coaching, although a test series may help you to manage time. However, there are no good test series available in Chemical Engineering.

Q. Any message that you would like to give to future GATE aspirants?

Khantesh: Don't fear this exam just because the paper is set by the IITs; this exam is not as tough as IIT JEE. Don't crack this exam just because it will help improve your financial status (unless your family needs it badly!). Focus on clarity of concepts and avoid selective studying. Practice questions simultaneously while preparation. Use online resources wisely for preparation. Revision will be very helpful since you have to cover almost 15 subjects. I found group study to be the most efficient way for this exam preparation. Lastly, do the best you can and leave the rest to God.

Q. In what ways did your family support you during GATE preparation?

Khantesh: My family has provided me with a strong mental support in my ups and downs. They never forced me to prepare for exams, which other people in general do. Rather, they provided me with the freedom to pursue my interests. My parents and sister have missed me a lot during some of the family occasions, where I could not be present due to preparation for this exam; but they never forced me to attend them so that I could focus on my studies. It is their support only, which has brought good results.