DAY MINUS · DAY 0

"Tell me about yourself."

Why TISS?

Why HR?

SIPping Tea



Straight from the interview room

Summer Internship Interview Transcript Repository

Any questions for us?

Editorial Committee

HRM & LR

Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

RE-IMAGINING FUTURES

TISS

Scripting HR Stories!

Contents

28 companies · 34 transcripts, arranged alphabetically. Click a company name to jump to its transcript.

01 Accenture (TAP) 4

02 Aditya Birla Group Leadership Program (ABGLP) 6

03 Airtel 8

↳ Transcript 1 8

↳ Transcript 2 10

04 AM/NS India 11

05 Bajaj Auto Limited 12

↳ Transcript 1 12

↳ Transcript 2 14

06 Barclays 15

↳ Transcript 1 15

↳ Transcript 2 17

07 BlackRock 19

08 Citibank 21

09 D. E. Shaw 22

10 FedEx 24

↳ Transcript 1 24

↳ Transcript 2 27

11 Godrej Consumer Products Limited (GCPL) 29

12 Godrej Properties Limited 31

13 HCCB 33

14 Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) 35

↳ Transcript 1 35

↳ Transcript 2 38

15 Höganäs 40

16 Kotak Mahindra Bank 41
17 Kwality Wall's 43
18 MetLife 46
19 Mondelēz International 48
20 Nestlé 53
21 Pidilite Industries Limited 56
22 Procter & Gamble 58
23 Reliance 60
24 TAS 62
25 Tata Steel 65
↳ Transcript 1 65
↳ Transcript 2 67
26 TCS SLP 70
27 Texas Instruments 72
28 Vodafone Idea 74

Accenture (TAP)

CANDIDATE BACKGROUND
B.Arch

PLACEMENT PROCESS

Candidates were shortlisted on the basis of their CVs, followed by two rounds of personal interviews.

SHORTLISTING

There was no test or case round before the interviews. The company shortlisted candidates purely on the basis of their CVs.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The process consisted of two interview rounds. Round 1 covered background and transition questions, personal interests, handling of ambiguity, a conflict-resolution case and questions on the JD. Round 2 repeated the transition question and followed up on it, and was dominated by HR case discussions.

Round 1

- Why did you make a transition from Architecture to HR?
- What parallels do you find between both of the fields?
- Questions on flute playing and how it affects your personality.
- How did you handle ambiguities in your graduation projects (mentioned earlier in the interview)?
- **Case:** There is tension between two senior colleagues on your team, and it is beginning to affect collaboration. With an important presentation due in just two days, how would you handle the conflict while ensuring the team stays focused and the presentation is completed on time? (Some follow-up questions were asked on the case.)
- What do you know about the JD and working with Accenture?

Round 2

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why did you make a transition from Architecture to HR?

↳ *Follow-up*: What is interesting about HR? (The candidate had earlier mentioned the dynamic nature of HR and its ambiguity.)

- **Case 1:** Incorporating AI in HR Talent Acquisition.
- **Case 2:** Controlling attrition because Gen Z employees are leaving.
- **Case 3:** [Could not be recalled]

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Since shortlisting was done on the basis of CVs alone, the CV deserves careful attention. Interviewers drew directly from it, picking up on the candidate's hobbies and graduation projects, and the candidate was expected to be able to speak in depth about anything mentioned there.
- Candidates from non-HR backgrounds should expect to be asked about their transition in both rounds, and the answer should stay consistent. Panels may also follow up on specific words used earlier in the interview, such as "dynamic" or "ambiguity", so it helps to be able to back up such claims with examples.
- The cases in these rounds were not numbers-driven. The conflict case tested prioritisation and people handling under a tight deadline, while the Round 2 cases (AI in talent acquisition, Gen Z attrition) covered current HR themes. It is advisable to structure the answer, state assumptions and think aloud rather than rush to a solution. Candidates should also come prepared with a working understanding of the JD and of Accenture as a company.

Aditya Birla Group Leadership Program (ABGLP)

PLACEMENT PROCESS

The process was extensive, consisting of a psychometric test, an assessment round, a Group Discussion (GD), and two rounds of personal interviews.

APTITUDE TEST

The screening began with an Aon psychometric test assessing empathy, leadership, teamwork, and individual motivations. This was followed by an assessment round comprising data interpretation, logical reasoning, quantitative aptitude, and gamified puzzles (such as a maze-routing game to collect points).

GROUP DISCUSSION

- **Topic:** Hiring Strategy for Birla Opus (Cost vs. Growth).
- **Context:** The case study framed Birla Opus as a startup within ABG on a tight budget. The panel of six had to debate the trade-offs of hiring experienced, high-cost industry professionals versus bringing in young, lower-cost minds from premier institutes to generate maximum growth.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

- **Round 1:** A brief 10-12 minute discussion immediately following the GD, focusing entirely on the candidate's GD performance, points missed, and new ideas.
- **Round 2:** A 25-30 minute stress interview. It began with behavioral and deep family background questions, transitioned into a detailed CV walkthrough emphasizing conflict resolution, and ended with heavy grilling regarding the candidate's willingness to work in a remote plant role.

Interview Questions

1. Introduce yourself.
2. Why do you want to pursue HR, and why specifically join the Aditya Birla Group?
3. What are your key strengths and weaknesses?
4. Tell us about your family background and what your parents do.
5. Walk us through the extracurricular activities and positions of responsibility mentioned on your CV.
6. Describe a situation from your past where you successfully resolved a conflict.

7. **Case Study:** In a manufacturing plant, upper management refuses to listen to or train young recruits out of fear of being replaced, resulting in a severe lack of trust. How would you solve this industrial relations issue?
8. Why are you willing to relocate to a Tier-3 or Tier-4 village for a plant role?
9. Do you have any questions for the panel?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Comprehensive Assessment Prep:** The initial screening goes beyond traditional cognitive tests, utilizing behavioral psychometrics and unconventional gamified assessments. Candidates must be prepared for varied testing formats.
- **The GD Extension Interview:** The first interview round acts as a direct extension of the GD. Candidates must remain engaged after the GD concludes, reflecting on their own points and preparing new, unspoken ideas to present to the panel.
- **Connecting Past to Present:** Interviewers will ask candidates to map personal, seemingly simple past experiences (like a middle-school sports conflict) to complex corporate or industrial relations issues. Storytelling and drawing parallels are crucial.
- **Stress Testing and Conviction:** Expect heavy, intentional grilling on location preferences and demanding roles (like plant HR in remote areas). The panel is looking for genuine conviction and resilience, not just rehearsed, compliant answers.
- **Deep Behavioral Probing:** Unlike many other processes, the panel may dive deeply into personal and family backgrounds. Candidates should ensure they have authentic, well-thought-out narratives ready for these areas.

Airtel

TRANSCRIPT 1

PLACEMENT PROCESS

The process consisted of a Group Discussion (GD) round followed by a personal interview.

APTITUDE TEST

There was a Psychometric test for shortlisting candidates.

GROUP DISCUSSION

- **Topic:** Diversity Hiring vs. Business Revenue Crunches.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The personal interview was highly conversational and engaging. It began with lighthearted ice-breaker questions about the weather, transitioning into an introduction that strictly excluded anything listed on the CV. The conversation explored travel history, rationale behind college and stream selection, a detailed narrative on choosing HR, a blue-sky leadership case study, geographical posting preferences, and a detailed verification of hobbies listed on the resume.

1. How are you doing, and how are you finding the weather here compared to your hometown?
2. Introduce yourself in a way that does not mention anything already written in your CV.
3. You mentioned traveling extensively across India; tell us about your most recent trip.
4. Which colleges did you convert during the admission cycle, and why did you choose to pursue HR over other programs?
5. Why do you want to pursue HR as a career?
6. If you were appointed the CEO of Airtel with unlimited resources, budget, and no restrictions, what are three changes or initiatives you would implement?
7. Given your openness to traveling, where would you prefer to work if selected?
8. You have mentioned reading self-help books as a hobby; what are three key books you have read, their authors, and the distinct learnings you took from each?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Off-CV Introductions:** Panels often challenge candidates to introduce themselves without repeating points from their resumes. Preparing an engaging personal narrative centered on life experiences, personal milestones, and unique hobbies is essential.
- **Structured Rationale for 'Why HR':** Building a chronological, fact-backed case—connecting high school coursework, undergraduate leadership in policy-making, high GPAs in relevant subjects, and internships—creates a credible justification for entering HR.
- **Grounding Unconstrained Case Scenarios:** When asked what you would do as CEO with unlimited resources, avoid purely idealistic answers. Proposing practical operational initiatives—such as sourcing ground-level insights from contractual field workers and deploying internal AI platforms for employee query resolution—demonstrates strategic maturity.
- **Thorough Preparation on Hobbies:** Any hobby listed on the resume is fair game. If self-help literature is listed, be ready with exact titles, authors, and concrete examples of how those principles have helped overcome personal habits like procrastination or improved concise thinking.
- **Tone and Conversational Ease:** Keeping the dialogue natural, candid, and conversational helps build strong rapport with the panel throughout the interview.

Airtel

TRANSCRIPT 2

PLACEMENT PROCESS

The process consisted of a Group Discussion (GD) round followed by a personal interview.

APTITUDE TEST

There was a Psychometric test for shortlisting candidates.

GROUP DISCUSSION

- **Topic:** Diversity Hiring vs. Business Revenue Crunches.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

There were 2 panelists, same as GD:

- How are you? TMAY.
- Why Airtel? (Follow up question: what about the organization structure amazed you, what difference did you find in Airtel's business model when compared to other competitors, and some questions about the latest product of Airtel and it worked on what principle.)
- What did you learn at your previous organization? The most important learning.
- Situational question: 3 changes which you would bring about as the CHRO of Airtel.
- Do you have any questions for us?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Be thorough with BQs, especially why HR.
- Read about the company: its business, organization structure, products; it will help you bring points in both GD and interview.
- Keep in mind the values of Airtel at every stage of the process.

AM/NS India

INTERVIEW PROCESS

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Can you elaborate on the “3 C’s” you mentioned in your introduction?
3. Why did you choose HR despite having a Finance background?
4. How has your experience at TISS and in Mumbai been so far?
5. Academically, how are you finding TISS?
6. What subjects are you studying? Which is your favourite subject, and why?
7. What have you learned in Organizational Behaviour (OB)?
8. Explain Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory.
9. Do you agree with Maslow’s theory? Where can you see its application in real life?
10. Where would you place yourself in Maslow’s hierarchy, and why?
11. What have you learned in Labour Laws?
12. What are the four Labour Codes?
13. Which Labour Code do you know in detail?
14. What do you mean by retrenchment?
15. What is a layoff?
16. What is the procedure/steps involved in a layoff?
17. How is layoff compensation calculated?
18. If you encounter a conflict in a plant, which OB theories or concepts would you use to handle it?
19. What do you know about AM/NS India?
20. Do you have any questions for the panel?

Bajaj Auto Limited

TRANSCRIPT 1

PLACEMENT PROCESS

There were three rounds of an assessment in the form of a case competition. Selected candidates were formed into groups and they were asked to create PPTs. Followed by Personal Interviews.

APTITUDE TEST

The assessment was entirely in Excel, where we had to make recruitment decisions based on candidate details and company requirements. We were given about one hour for that, if I remember correctly. After that, they screened several candidates, and the rest advanced to the second round. In the second round, we had to repeat the same process, but the instructions had changed: it was a team-based activity in which we had to form teams of three and create a PPT. It went for 2 hours. After that, people were given the opportunity to interview based on their resumes. And a few people whose resumes were good but did not reach the second round were also called for interviews. The interviews happened on the second day. The top four or five teams were called in to present their PPT first before the PI. The top two teams were given cash prizes for the case competition.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

Now, coming to the interview, I had three rounds.

- **1st Round:** It was a general interview, during which they asked about my family, my native place, and my resume. Some statistical questions were asked, but not too in-depth (p-value, significance testing and confidence interval). It was hardly 20 minutes. They asked me why Bajaj, and about my hobbies.
- **2nd Round:** It was quite long, approximately 40 minutes for me. And it went in-depth on my work experience because I had one year of experience. They created specific scenarios in my field of work and asked me how I would go about it, what kind of test, why not this one, and so on, since I worked in market research. There were some basic questions in the second round as well such as strengths and weaknesses, why HRM specifically etc. People who did not have work experience were given cases to solve, or they had specific questions from HR as the subject. Some were also asked questions about their solutions to the assessment.
- **3rd Round:** It was more of a cultural fit for me. There were questions about what I wanted from a career, what I was looking to do in the next 5 years, whether I had any concerns, and why I left my job. There were also specific questions about my undergrad and academics, but more from an application perspective, with a focus on current affairs. The third round was also short, maybe 10-15 minutes maximum.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Have in-depth clarity on your undergrad, work experience and basic questions, not just theory but the applied parts of it. Pay attention during the field visit and leadership talks and reference them during the interview to stand out. Ask good questions at the end, they seemed genuinely interested in addressing my concerns.

Bajaj Auto Limited

TRANSCRIPT 2

PLACEMENT PROCESS

Psychometric assessment, excel based case study assessment (individual and then team rounds), 2 interviews.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

- **1st Interview (Technical):**
  1. Tell me about yourself.
  2. Probing on my extracurriculars.
  3. Questions on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
  4. Questions and probing on my undergrad dissertation.
  5. Questions related to a project at my job and a long discussion on that where my decisions were questioned and I had to justify them.
  6. Questions related to their leadership talk and my opinion on it.
- **Interview 2 (Behavioural):**
  1. Introduction.
  2. Questions related to my job.
  3. Questions related to psychology (my undergrad) including Viktor Frankl, symbols, psychological assessments.
  4. Intersection of psychology and HRM.
  5. Strengths and weaknesses.
  6. One time I convinced someone.
  7. What do I hate in others and when was the last time I exhibited that behaviour.
  8. Books that I read and like, recommendations.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Both interviews were conversational and focused on assessing clarity on my undergrad, job, and extracurriculars, along with my current knowledge and understanding of self.

Barclays

TRANSCRIPT 1

PROGRAMME DETAILS

PROGRAMME	Basetters@Barclays
PLACEMENT PROCESS	Case competition, presentation round, assessment and personal interview.
MODE	Both the presentation and the interview were conducted online.
INTERVIEW DURATION	Approximately 30-35 minutes

CASE COMPETITION

The first round was a case competition. The top two teams advanced to the subsequent rounds, beginning with the presentation.

The candidate expected many teams to use AI-generated ideas and suggested three ways to make a submission stand out:

1. Use AI efficiently. Focus on how effectively the tool is used to develop the submission.
2. Make the presentation visually appealing. Give attention to how the solution is presented.
3. Make the structure clear at a glance. Organise the solution so that reviewers can follow it quickly, as they may spend limited time reviewing the PPT.

PRESENTATION ROUND

The candidate recommended preparing a detailed solution in seven to eight slides and rehearsing the presentation to avoid running out of time.

The jury asked two questions at the end of the candidate's presentation. The candidate also advised knowing the PPT thoroughly, since questions could be drawn from the slides.

ASSESSMENT ROUND

The next round consisted mainly of logical reasoning questions, which the candidate described as somewhat different from CAT-style questions.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

There were five candidates across the top two teams from the candidate's college, of whom three progressed to the interview.

The candidate described the interview as moderately challenging. The discussion covered HR motivation, course subjects, current developments, organisational behaviour and workplace issues.

Interview Questions

The candidate recalled the following questions and topics:

1. Why HR?
2. What is your favourite subject?
3. Follow-up questions on Organisational Behaviour (OB), after the candidate named it as their favourite subject.
4. Discuss a recent news development through an OB lens.
5. Recent news related to TISS.
6. What do you find interesting about digital arrest?
7. Questions about organisational conflict.
8. Questions about employee feedback.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Prepare your HR subjects thoroughly. The candidate particularly highlighted OB and OTD. Be ready for follow-up questions on any subject you identify as a favourite.
- Follow recent news through an HR lens. The interview included current developments, their connection to OB, and news about TISS. The candidate felt they had been less prepared on this front.
- Know the company. The candidate advised preparing information about Barclays before the interview.
- Prepare background and motivation questions. Give particular attention to explaining why you want to pursue HR.
- Show thoughtful, original reasoning. The candidate emphasised taking a brief pause to form a considered answer and bringing an individual perspective to the discussion. Their advice was to demonstrate the ability to think differently through the substance of the response.

Barclays

TRANSCRIPT 2

PLACEMENT STAGE
Personal interview

INTERVIEW OPENING

Immediately after joining the meeting, the candidate was asked four or five questions in quick succession. They gave a continuous response lasting approximately five to ten minutes. The opening questions covered:

1. Tell us about yourself and your life journey.
2. What led you to TISS, and why do you want to pursue HR?
3. What are your long-term goals and aspirations?
4. What are your strengths and weaknesses?

The candidate considered the "why HR" question particularly important. They also advised remembering every part of a multi-part opening question so that none of the points is missed when responding.

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS

The interviewers asked which subjects the candidate liked and followed up with questions on the subjects named. The candidate advised preparing for deeper questions on any subject they mention.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND HR

The discussion then turned to the importance of artificial intelligence today. The candidate recalled questions about what AI can do in HR areas such as learning and development and talent acquisition, as well as its limitations.

Because the candidate had a computer science background, the interviewers probed further into AI concepts and asked how that background could help them in HRM.

SITUATIONAL QUESTION

The candidate described a short case for which they were given one to two minutes to think before explaining a solution or approach. They recalled the scenario as involving feedback from colleagues and how it might inform performance review. The exact wording of the case was not recalled.

WORKING IN GROUPS

The candidate estimated that roughly 30-40% of the interview focused on how they performed in group settings. The questions and themes they recalled included:

1. Describe a time when a group suffered because of something you did. What action did you take?
2. Describe working with data in a group setting.
3. Describe a conflict you faced while working in a group.

They recalled two or three additional questions on similar themes, without the exact wording. The candidate thought this focus might have come from their experience co-founding and managing a club during undergraduate studies.

INTERVIEW EXPERIENCE

The candidate found the interview demanding, with extensive follow-up questions. The interviewer showed little visible reaction, which made it difficult for the candidate to judge how their answers were being received. This was the candidate's experience of their own interview.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Prepare your background questions and CV thoroughly. The candidate emphasised knowing their experiences and being ready for detailed follow-ups on anything they had said or listed on the resume.

Practise multi-part opening questions. Several questions may be asked together; listen carefully, remember each part and organise the response before speaking.

Revise favourite subjects and AI applications. Be ready to explain both HR uses and limitations of AI, and to connect a technical background to HR where relevant.

Prepare examples of group work. The candidate faced several questions about responsibility for a group outcome, working with data and handling conflict.

Stay composed during probing. The interviewer's neutral expression did not indicate whether an answer was satisfactory, so the candidate recommended being prepared for a demanding discussion.

BlackRock

PLACEMENT PROCESS

There were two rounds of personal interviews. The first was an in-person interview, followed by an online interview.

APTITUDE TEST

N/A

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The first round was a 30-minute in-person interview focusing heavily on the candidate's CV, work experience, family background, and unexpected behavioral and situational questions. The second round was a 20-25 minute online interview focusing on role expectations (L&D and Center of Excellence), sector alignment, and location preferences.

1. Why do you want to pursue HR?
2. Walk me through your work experience and the applications you have worked on.
3. Describe a scenario where you handled data, either during your work experience or in college.
4. Tell me about your family background. Who is in your family, and what have you learned from them?
5. What is your long-term goal in life, and what are your core beliefs?
6. Based on a CV mention of reading biographies, what is one thing you did not like about a specific famous tech entrepreneur?
7. What are your thoughts on a specific political leader and the current law and order situation in your home state?
8. Are you comfortable with field work, and do you have any specific location preferences?
9. In which specific sectors do you want to build your career?
10. Where do you want to settle down or stay in India?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Candidates must be prepared to defend every detail on their CV, including hobbies like reading. Questions can branch out into specific discussions, such as analyzing the negative traits of public figures, requiring well-reasoned and confident answers.
- Interviews can occasionally touch on unconventional or political topics to gauge reasoning under pressure. When answering such questions, grounding perspectives in real-life, personal examples (such as family business experiences regarding law and order) provides a strong, justifiable foundation that prevents the answer from sounding superficial.
- Sector alignment is critical during company-specific interviews. When interviewing for a finance firm, it is crucial to align career interests with the finance sector early on, rather than leading with unrelated preferences, which can create friction in the interview.
- Having clear, logical reasons for location preferences—such as preferring a specific major city for its meritocracy and hustle culture—demonstrates clarity of thought, self-awareness, and a strong drive to succeed. At the end of the interview, asking an insightful question about the company's future tech-based operations leaves a strong final impression.

Citibank

PLACEMENT PROCESS

Profile based shortlist + 2 rounds of interviews.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Everyone had a different experience in the interviews for Citi. I personally was asked profile-based questions and questions about me. Be thorough and clear with your answers and all your 'Why HR/ Why TISS/ Why Citi' answers. Align your answers with the job description and role if provided, and with the company's values. Know the company's ins and outs, its latest developments, organisational restructuring, etc. Have basic details about BFSI, Citi's day to day activities etc. Be confident, defend your answers and your choices and decisions well. Know your profile and every single thing on it very well, does not matter if it's from class 10th or undergrad.

D.E.Shaw

PLACEMENT PROCESS

The process began with a group discussion (GD) round, and candidates were shortlisted for interviews based on their performance in it. This was followed by three interview rounds: a personal interview, a work simulation, and a technical interview focused on AI.

GROUP DISCUSSION

All candidates were made to sit through a GD round, which served as the shortlisting stage prior to the interviews.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The interview process had three rounds. The first was a conversational personal interview based on the candidate's profile and the job description (JD), which had been shared beforehand and discussed in detail during the pre-placement talk (PPT). The second was a 20-minute simulation, and the third was an in-depth technical interview on AI.

Round 1: Personal Interview

- Introduce yourself. (The panelists introduced themselves first.)
- Follow-up questions on your work as a sports journalist (picked up from points mentioned in the introduction).
- How did you incorporate AI in your work?
- Questions about organising MUN conferences and the whole process behind it.
- Have you ever handled large datasets?
  - ↳ *Follow-up questions* to test your knowledge of the tools mentioned (Excel and Google Analytics).
- Do you remember which role we are here to recruit for?
- Which area would you like to work in, and how will you manage it?

Round 2: Simulation

A 20-minute simulation of the work done as a sports journalist. The panel tested the candidate's use of AI, prompt generation, and related skills.

Round 3: Technical Interview

A technical interview dedicated entirely to testing knowledge of AI. It was wholly conversational and very in-depth, and lasted just under an hour.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The GD round is the first filter, and interviews were offered only to those shortlisted from it. Candidates should treat it as a real elimination stage rather than a formality.
- The first-round interview is driven largely by what the candidate says in their own introduction. Points mentioned early were picked up and probed further, so it is advisable to deliberately include topics you are comfortable discussing in depth, and to be ready to defend every claim made on the CV.
- Candidates should read the JD carefully and be able to recall the role being recruited for. The panel asked about it directly. In this case, the candidate brought a notebook with details from the PPT and JD, and the panel allowed them to refer to it and appeared impressed by the thoroughness. Taking detailed notes during the PPT is therefore worth doing.
- Where AI is relevant to the role, candidates should expect to be tested on practical use rather than awareness alone. This included how AI was used in past work, a live simulation involving prompt generation, and a nearly hour-long technical conversation. Candidates should be prepared to explain and demonstrate their actual usage of AI tools.
- Claims about data skills are followed up with questions. Candidates who mention tools such as Excel or Google Analytics should be ready for probing questions on how they have used them.

FedEx

TRANSCRIPT 1

INTERVIEW PANEL
Three Interviewers

INTERVIEWER 1 Good morning. Let us begin by introducing ourselves.

(All three panelists introduced themselves and briefly spoke about their professional backgrounds.)

INTERVIEWER 1 Tell us about yourself. Give us a brief introduction, including your strengths, weaknesses, family background, and what got you interested in Human Resources.

CANDIDATE I gave my prepared introduction, discussing my academic background, the kind of family environment I grew up in, my strengths and weaknesses, and the experiences that sparked my interest in Human Resources.

INTERVIEWER 2 Are you currently undertaking your fieldwork internship?

CANDIDATE Yes, I am currently doing my fieldwork internship at VVF.

INTERVIEWER 2 What project are you working on there?

CANDIDATE I explained that I am working on a Learning and Development (L&D) project at VVF. I briefly discussed the LMS initiative, my responsibilities, and the work I am undertaking to understand and improve employee adoption of the learning management system.

INTERVIEWER 1 Which particular function of HR would you like to pursue?

CANDIDATE I explained that I am currently looking forward to exploring different functions of HR before deciding which particular function I would eventually like to specialise in.

INTERVIEWER 1 Since you are currently working in L&D at VVF, would you be interested in exploring a different function during your summer internship?

CANDIDATE Yes, I would definitely be interested in exploring a different function.

INTERVIEWER 1 Suppose we have an L&D project available for you during the summer internship. Would you be willing to work on that?

CANDIDATE I explained that I am not rigid about the function I want to work in. If I get an L&D project, I would already have a foundation in the function through my current internship at VVF. I emphasised that I am open to different kinds of assign-

ments and responsibilities, and that I consider myself adaptable and a quick learner. I also mentioned my two case competition wins on campus as examples of my ability to adapt and work on unfamiliar challenges.

INTERVIEWER 2 Tell us more about these case competitions. What were the cases about, and what problems did you have to solve?

CANDIDATE I discussed both case competitions, explaining the problems presented to us, the approach my team adopted, and how we worked towards developing solutions.

INTERVIEWER 3 Are you comfortable working with Excel and other tools used for analysis?

CANDIDATE Yes, I am comfortable working with Excel, Power BI, and other analytical tools.

INTERVIEWER 3 How have you acquired these skills?

CANDIDATE I explained that these tools are covered as part of our academic curriculum, particularly through the Quantitative Research component of our programme, where we are required to learn and apply these tools.

INTERVIEWER 3 Are you well-equipped with technology? Do you use AI tools?

CANDIDATE I explained that I am comfortable using various AI tools available online and believe that AI can significantly improve productivity. I also mentioned that the use of AI is encouraged at our B-school, particularly for research and academic work.

INTERVIEWER 1 What are your interests and hobbies?

CANDIDATE I spoke about my interest in Hindi poetry.

INTERVIEWER 1 Who is your favourite Hindi poet?

CANDIDATE I mentioned Vinod Kumar Shukla and Naresh Saxena.

INTERVIEWER 1 What do you particularly like about their poetry?

CANDIDATE I briefly discussed the writing styles and literary qualities of both poets and explained what I particularly appreciate about their work. I also recited one of Vinod Kumar Shukla's poems during the interview.

INTERVIEWER 1 Do you have any questions for us about FedEx?

CANDIDATE Yes. I wanted to understand more about FedEx's People-Service-Profit (PSP) philosophy and its emphasis on putting employees first. FedEx operates across approximately 220 countries and territories and has a workforce of over five lakh employees. Given its extensive geographical presence and diverse workforce, I asked how the organisation ensures that this employee-first philosophy and PSP culture are consistently implemented across different countries and regions. I also asked whether the organisation faces any operational challenges in maintaining this culture across such a large and diverse workforce.

INTERVIEW PANEL All three panelists participated in the discussion. They explained that the PSP philosophy is deeply embedded in FedEx's organisational DNA and is not merely a stated corporate value. One of the panelists elaborated on how the organisation integrates this philosophy into its functioning and ensures that employees remain central to its operations. The panel also discussed some of the operational challenges associated with implementing and maintaining this culture across different geographies.

The discussion continued for approximately two minutes, with all three panelists sharing their perspectives.

The interview concluded after this discussion.

FedEx

TRANSCRIPT 2

It was a three-person panel. There were two ladies, one male.

1st 3 questions were basic. They had combined 3 questions into one TMAY, Why HR and Why FedEx.

My advice is that if you need to handle the question of "Why us" for a company which uh, like it's a shipping company, so they must be looking at technological change in HR. A general pattern I felt is that if the company has factories and all, then they look for the traditional IR aspect in you.

And if they don't, then you can frame the "why" of that company in such a way that almost every company that doesn't have industrial relations or those factory roles, they are looking at technological change in HR. So you can frame your "why that company" in that way.

Then they were asking about fieldwork, that what, what is your fieldwork, which company, where you are, what is your project in it.

I explained these things to them.

Then they asked what challenges and exciting things I had experienced in my fieldwork.

One defining question of theirs was, which field you want to go into, like which domain of HR? So I generally used to say Learning and Development, because my "why HR" aligns with that, and I say this in interviews too.

So they asked, that suppose there is a university with whom we are wanting to design a Learning and Development program, so what is the first thought you are having?

So, I told that my first line of thought is that I will not go to any traditional university or college. I think that at this time in India, there are a lot of universities which, who have their curriculum which is very practical and very much inclined with corporate needs, and they have very much less friction with corporate needs and the curriculum they are teaching. Like, they're very up to date and very modern in that sense. I gave some examples (named some universities). And while giving the answer, I felt this was not what the interviewer expected, but it was a very good insight from what I could sense.

Another panelist asked:

Your profile says that you have won a case competition and then also won a PPSI, like pre-placement summer interview through it.

So I said yes, and, uh, then he said, "Can you walk me through the case comp in a very short manner?" And then I explained that. And then he also asked about the solution and all. I gave him a concise answer.

In the end they asked me “Do you have any questions?” So I asked the same thing, that what technological changes are coming in HR, what are you seeing.

Before ending the interview they asked me “Do you know how to use Power BI?”

I said yes.

LEARNINGS

Read the JD and focus a little that you understand the DNA of the organization. If the organization wants technology optimization, and if you keep saying “industrial relations, industrial relations”, they will not take you. So keep in mind what they are looking for and try to show that side of yours.

Godrej Consumer Products Limited (GCPL)

PLACEMENT PROCESS

Candidates first completed an online simulation and were shortlisted on that basis for a group discussion (GD) round on the same case. Shortlisted candidates then went through a personal interview.

ONLINE SIMULATION AND GD

The online simulation was conducted beforehand and served as the first shortlisting stage. Those shortlisted took part in a GD round based on the same case, after which candidates moved to the interview stage.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The personal interview began with questions drawn from the candidate's CV, followed by HR-oriented and personal questions. It was fairly short and ended after the final personal question.

- Questions on a forex management course completed at IIFT. This discussion lasted about 15 minutes, was largely technical, and included discussion of GCPL's Nigerian business.
- Why HR?
- How would your mother, girlfriend, best friend, etc. describe you?
- Why TISS?
- What is the wildest thing you have ever done?
- What is the best feeling you have ever experienced?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The online simulation and the case-based GD both act as screening stages. Since the GD is on the same case as the simulation, it is worth understanding the case thoroughly during the online round, as it is likely to be discussed again.
- Every item on the CV is open to questioning, including courses that may seem peripheral to HR. In this case, a single course led to a lengthy and technical discussion, including its application to the company's own business in a specific market. Candidates should be able to explain what they learned and connect it to the company's operations, and it helps to read up on the company's markets in advance.
- The standard "Why HR?" and "Why TISS?" questions still appear even in a short interview, so clear and specific answers should be prepared.
- Some questions test self-awareness and personality rather than knowledge, such as being described through the eyes of different people close to you, or being asked about the wildest thing you have done and the best feeling you have experienced. There is no fixed correct answer to these. Candidates should reflect on real experiences beforehand so that they can respond honestly and naturally rather than improvising.

Godrej Properties Limited

PLACEMENT PROCESS

The formal selection process consisted of a Group Discussion followed by personal interviews. However, having won the case competition at Godrej Gurukul, I was directly shortlisted for the personal interview round, bypassing the Group Discussion stage.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The personal interview was conducted in two rounds — the first was held offline, and the second was conducted online.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want to pursue HR?
3. Describe Tanmay's personality.
4. Now describe it again, but from a different perspective/approach.
5. What are the various HR initiatives at Godrej Properties Limited?
6. Why do you want to join Godrej Properties?
7. Tell me about your hobbies.
8. Walk me through how you arrived at the idea of Rakshak Cabin for the case competition at Godrej Gurukul. Why this idea, and not one of the other ideas that most other participants were proposing?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Since this was a direct interview secured through winning the case competition, a considerable part of the conversation revolved around the competition itself. Candidates should be prepared to defend not just their final idea, but the entire process — why alternative, more "obvious" ideas were rejected, and what made their approach more viable or original.
- Being asked to describe someone else's personality, and then asked to repeat it from a different perspective, suggests the panel is testing observational skills, self-awareness in how one frames others, and comfort with being asked to think on one's feet rather than rely on a single rehearsed answer.
- Company-specific questions on HR initiatives and reasons for wanting to join Godrej Properties indicate that some prior research on the organisation is expected, even in a day-minus, direct-interview scenario.
- As the process spanned an offline and an online round, candidates should be prepared to maintain the same energy, clarity, and consistency of answers across both formats, since panels may compare notes between rounds.
- Overall, clarity of thought, the ability to justify one's choices with sound reasoning, and genuine self-reflection continue to matter more than a polished or rehearsed response.

HCCB

PANEL

Two panelists—one female and one male.

PANELIST 1 (F) Tell me about yourself.

PANELIST 2 (M) A few basic follow-up questions based on my introduction.

- ↳ What is your favourite subject? (I mentioned Labour Law.)
- ↳ Which part of Labour Law are you comfortable with? (I said I was comfortable with all four new labour codes.)
- ↳ Questions on gratuity: The discussion on gratuity went on for around 5–10 minutes. Most questions were situation-based. For example, if an employee had worked for a certain period, would they be eligible for gratuity under the new labour code?
- ↳ Do the recent changes in labour laws benefit employees more or employers? (I explained that there is a constant push and pull between giving employers more freedom to run their businesses and protecting workers' interests. The government has to balance these two needs.)

PANELIST 1 (F) What type of HR role would you prefer, a factory HR role or a corporate HR role?

A FEW TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

- Be confident. Though it sounds clichéd, it really does make a difference. Walk into the interview room with confidence and carry that through the conversation.
- In my view, interviewers often focus on your personality, your academic knowledge or a mix of both.
- When the questions focus on your personality, the panel tries to understand you as a person and assess your fit with the organisation. Preparing the BQs well helps here.
- For interviews focused on academics, go through the SIP preparation document thoroughly. Pick a favourite subject and prepare it well, as the panel may ask detailed follow up questions. If you are a fresher, also prepare a favourite subject from your undergraduate course.
- Read about the company's values and try to reflect them naturally in your answers where relevant. Avoid forcing them into every response.
- Understand the company's business and read recent news about it. This helps you give informed answers and shows that you have done your groundwork.
- Best of luck!

Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL)

TRANSCRIPT 1

INTERVIEW DETAILS

INTERVIEW DURATION	Approximately 45 minutes
INTERVIEW PROCESS	A personal interview followed by a sales HR case and a role-play with the interviewer.

PERSONAL INTERVIEW

1. **Tell us about yourself.**

   > The introduction led to a discussion about the candidate being a first-generation graduate. The interviewers picked up this detail and explored the candidate's family background and upbringing.

2. **Tell us about your family background and upbringing.**

   > Follow-up questions covered where the family was originally from, who the family members were, their occupational backgrounds, what growing up had been like, and whether any experiences from the family or upbringing had deeply influenced the candidate. The candidate shared that the family was originally from Western Uttar Pradesh.

3. **What content do you create on your social media page?**

   > The page, mentioned on the CV, had around 10,000 followers and explored social, spiritual and cultural issues. The candidate discussed recent videos that had performed well, including a video critiquing Yudhishthir as a leader and his treatment of people.

4. **A company may require you to limit your creative pursuits. Would you be comfortable with restrictions on your content?**

   > The candidate acknowledged the need for professional boundaries when representing an employer. They would discuss the content with their manager and HR to ensure that it did not violate company policies or disclosure clauses, while continuing their creative work within those boundaries. The candidate felt that the interviewers were satisfied with this answer.

5. **Why did you choose psychology for your undergraduate studies? What did you learn, and how would you apply it in HR?**
6. **What were one or two things you liked and disliked about studying in an all-girls college?**
7. **What are your strengths and weaknesses?**

> The interviewers probed the responses in depth. For the weakness, the candidate described a tendency to work in high-intensity bursts instead of maintaining a steady pace across a project, recognising this as procrastination.
> The interviewer asked when this pattern had begun and how long the candidate had been aware of it. The candidate had noticed it since school, but strong academic performance had initially masked its impact. Its practical consequences became clearer in college, when managing multiple projects and responsibilities. The candidate also explained the steps being taken to improve and the evidence that those steps were working.

CASE INTERVIEW

The candidate was asked to act as the HR lead or HR Business Partner for sales. The sales team faced two issues:

1. **Attrition among top performers:** High-performing field sales employees were leaving for competitors that offered better or more attractive-sounding roles, even though the pay was almost the same.
2. **Declining target achievement:** Sales employees who had previously been meeting their targets had struggled to achieve them over the preceding two to three months.

The sales manager proposed increasing variable pay and sales incentives, believing this would resolve the attrition problem.

TASK AND ROLE PLAY

The candidate had to diagnose both issues and role-play a discussion with the interviewer acting as the sales manager. They had to challenge the assumption that higher incentives would solve the problem and persuade the manager to consider their diagnosis and proposed approach. The interviewer remained persistent and dismissive during the role-play.

CANDIDATE APPROACH

The candidate first separated the attrition of top performers from the difficulties in meeting targets. They began with the attrition issue and asked clarifying questions about changes in the sales team structure, the distribution network, and what feedback surveys indicated about relationships with managers.

When the candidate struggled to identify possible explanations, the interviewer offered prompts to consider recognition and rewards management. The candidate incorporated those prompts, presented a diagnosis for both issues, and then proposed solutions.

INTERVIEWER FEEDBACK AND CANDIDATE REFLECTION

The interviewer's feedback was that the structure and diagnosis were good, but the solutions needed more work. The candidate agreed and felt that their limited preparation in HR had affected the sophistication of the proposed solutions.

QUESTIONS ASKED BY THE CANDIDATE

1. Given my background in psychology, would I have opportunities to work on projects related to employee well-being?
2. From your own managerial experience at HUL, how do HR professionals weigh data against their judgement and instinct about people?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Know your introduction and CV in depth. The first-generation graduate background and social media page both led to detailed follow-up questions.
- Reflect on weaknesses with evidence. Prepare to discuss when a pattern began, its impact, steps taken to improve, and evidence of progress.
- Separate the issues before proposing solutions. The candidate distinguished attrition from declining target achievement; the structure and diagnosis received positive feedback.
- Strengthen practical solutions and persuasion. The solutions needed more work, and the role-play required explaining an alternative approach to a resistant manager.

Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL)

TRANSCRIPT 2

PLACEMENT PROCESS

Psychometric assessment, situational assessment and personal interview.

PSYCHOMETRIC ASSESSMENT

The first round involved personality-related statements that the candidate had to rate on a scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Examples included:

1. "I like to spend my free time alone."
2. "Other people's problems affect me."

SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT

In the next round, the candidate was placed in the role of a member of a college fest organising committee. They had to respond to situations in which things went wrong, including sponsors withdrawing from the fest and other committees needing venues that had already been booked.

The candidate had to make appropriate decisions and, for many of them, explain the rationale and justify the chosen response.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The interview began with questions about the candidate's background and hobbies, followed by a discussion of their work experience. It then moved to a business simulation involving a competing music streaming app.

1. **Tell us about yourself, your background and your hobbies.**
2. **Tell us about your work experience, your role and the organisation.**

   > The interviewers asked whether the candidate's startup had an HR function. The candidate initially said that the startup did not have HR. The interviewers clarified that the founders were performing HR responsibilities in that situation.

3. **Design an app that competes with Spotify and localise it to the Indian context. How would you differentiate it?**

   > The candidate proposed hiring Artists and Repertoire (A&R) executives and operating like a music label alongside the app. The A&R executives would identify upcoming talent and bring artists to the company.
   > The candidate's reasoning was that a major share of Spotify's revenue goes to music labels

> and rights holders, which affects profitability. Signing artists directly and obtaining licensing rights would, in the candidate's proposed model, reduce payments to third parties. The artists would receive marketing and promotional support from the company.

4. **How would you compete with the higher salaries offered by bigger names in the industry?**

> The candidate proposed non-monetary incentives, including work-from-home options and regular opportunities to upskill.

5. **If the company were in serious difficulty and many employees were considering leaving, how would you persuade them to stay?**

> Since the company could not offer higher salaries, the candidate returned to non-monetary benefits such as flexible working hours and opportunities to upskill.

6. **How would you structure this company?**

> Drawing on their experience in a startup, the candidate proposed a lean organisational structure with a strong focus on marketing and talent acquisition. The interview ended after this discussion.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The candidate shared the following advice for juniors:

- Acknowledge when you do not know an answer. Be honest about gaps in your knowledge instead of trying to invent an answer.
- Prepare your favourite subjects from the course. Read up on them and connect what you have learned to the answers you give in the interview.
- Keep your responses consistent across the process. The candidate advised ensuring that answers in the psychometric assessment align with responses to situational and interview questions.
- Understand business basics beyond HR. Based on this experience, the candidate highlighted the value of preparing for situational questions and business simulations, including basic decisions involved in running a company.
- Present your strengths confidently. The candidate cautioned against underselling abilities in an effort to appear humble. Know your strengths and, where possible, guide the conversation towards experiences that demonstrate them.

Höganäs

Interview experience: Mostly a structured conversational interview which started off with me answering the case (Diversity Hiring DEI) related questions- what was the rationale behind choosing your answer, some cross questioning to counter my opinions and answers. Pretty straight forward back to back cross questioning related to your answers for the case.

Then questions from my CV.

To check how well you can expand and explain your 1 line pointers.

A recurring question asked to almost all candidates was how did you overcame your biggest setback? What do you do in your day to day life to mitigate it?

Then after that it became very conversational and finally was asked if I had questions for the panel. And that's it.

Approx 30 min interview

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The interviewer wants to understand the rationale behind the decisions you take or opinion you give during a case study or the interview, your answers should be grounded, based on reality rather than some abstract theory which haven't been proven. A balanced approach to answers along with being aware of their shortcomings and your bias can portray someone as being realistic and mature enough to know your limitations.

Kotak Mahindra Bank

PLACEMENT PROCESS

There was no Group Discussion for this company. The selection process consisted of two rounds of personal interviews.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The process comprised two rounds of personal interviews.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want to pursue HR?
3. Why have you joined TISS?
4. You mentioned the Godrej Gurukul case competition — can you walk me through your thought process behind the particular improvement you proposed for the security guard cabin on campus?
5. Are you an introvert or an extrovert? Justify your answer.
6. How can your research paper on Explainable AI be of relevance/use to Kotak Mahindra Bank?
7. You have to design a compensation plan for a particular group of employees. How would you go about approaching this problem?
8. There is a conflict between two individuals that is escalating. What actions would you take to resolve the conflict between them?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Since the interview repeatedly drew on specific items from the CV — TISS admission, the Godrej Gurukul case competition, and the research paper on Explainable AI — candidates should be prepared to discuss every line of their CV in depth and, where possible, to connect it back to the hiring organisation's context, as was asked with the research paper and Kotak Mahindra Bank.
- Self-assessment questions such as introvert versus extrovert should be answered with a clear stance backed by specific examples, rather than a hedged or non-committal response, since the follow-up ask for justification tests the reasoning as much as the answer itself.
- Applied HR problems — such as designing a compensation plan or resolving an escalating interpersonal conflict — are best approached by first laying out a structured framework (for instance, identifying the affected group, relevant benchmarks, and constraints for a compensation plan, or the stakeholders and root cause for a conflict) before jumping to a specific solution.
- With two rounds of interviews and no Group Discussion, candidates should expect a deeper, more conversational probing of their background and ideas across both rounds, rather than a single high-level screening conversation.
- As with the other companies, clarity of thought, structured reasoning, and the ability to justify one's choices continue to matter more than a rehearsed or generic answer.

Kwality Wall's

PLACEMENT DETAILS

SHORTLISTING	Seven candidates were shortlisted for the interviews.
INTERVIEW MODE	Online
INTERVIEW DURATION	Approximately 15-20 minutes

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The interview was conversational, moving between the candidate's work experience, motivation for HRM and TISS, hypothetical workplace situations, knowledge of the organisation, Junior Placement Committee experience and career preferences.

1. **Which other interviews have you given?**

   > The candidate recalled being asked about previous interviews near the start of the conversation. They replied, "I'm not sure if I can disclose that information." The interviewer clarified that he was simply "trying to pull my leg," and the conversation moved to the candidate's motivation for HRM and TISS.

2. **Why do you want to pursue HRM, and why did you choose TISS?**

   > The candidate drew on their experience as an Operations Representative at Concentrix, where their daily work involved handling customers and resolving issues.
   > A recurring problem involved calls intended for physical branches in the United States. When those branches did not answer, calls were rerouted to the candidate's team. Customers were frustrated because they could not reach the branch they needed, while representatives were frustrated because the calls fell outside their intended scope of work.
   > Despite this, the candidate would stay on the call and make additional efforts to connect customers with the appropriate branch. The experience prompted them to think beyond resolving individual calls and consider how the underlying organisational process could be improved.
   > They wanted to speak with employees facing similar problems, understand their concerns, and help create policies and processes that prevented recurring issues. Their interest in HRM centred on building effective channels for employees to raise problems, ensuring concerns were acted upon, and creating an environment where speaking up was encouraged. They had not found an avenue to contribute in this way in their previous organisation.

3. **How would you respond to a stakeholder who questions your ability because you are a young HR Business Partner?**

> The interviewer asked the candidate to imagine a stakeholder saying, "You are way too young to handle this situation. How can I trust you with all these responsibilities? How can you be accountable?"
> Initially, the candidate focused on communicating their capability, explaining the changes they had been making in themselves and how they would apply those learnings professionally. The interviewer did not seem convinced.
> The candidate then shifted to a practical response: demonstrate capability through performance, decisions and accountability, allowing actions to establish credibility. The candidate felt that the interviewer was convinced by this revised approach and agreed with it.

4. **What do you know about Kwality Wall's?**

> The candidate discussed the organisation's facilities and locations, mentioning plants across India, including Shivsinnar and Nalagarh in Himachal Pradesh. They also referred to the GCC office in Mumbai, the R&D centre in Bengaluru and an office in Pune.
> They mentioned brands and products including Cornetto, Ben & Jerry's, Klondike, Popsicle and Magnum, and discussed the organisation's revenue share across different continents to demonstrate awareness of its international presence.

5. **Why did you join the Junior Placement Committee, and how did you stand out during selection?**

> The candidate felt they had conveyed how seriously they approached the role. They highlighted discipline and communication as strengths, while recognising that there was still much to learn.
> Joining the committee was a deliberate choice to use existing strengths while developing new skills. The candidate wanted to move beyond their comfort zone and enter an environment that required learning, adaptation and growth. They explained that their experience in the Junior Placement Committee was helping them do exactly that.

6. **Would you choose a rapidly changing organisation with substantial learning opportunities or a stable, predictable organisation?**

> The interviewer presented two options: an organisation with constant change, considerable chaos and opportunities for learning and growth; or one with a more stable and predictable environment.
> The candidate chose the first. They connected this preference to their decisions to pursue HRM and join the Junior Placement Committee, both of which had introduced significant change and pushed them beyond their comfort zone. They wanted to continue that trajectory of learning and growth.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Connect your motivation for HRM to a specific experience. The candidate used a recurring problem at Concentrix to explain their interest in employee voice, organisational processes and mechanisms for resolving concerns.
- Demonstrate credibility through action. In the young HRBP situation, the revised response focused on performance, decisions and accountability rather than verbal reassurance alone.
- Prepare to discuss the organisation beyond its name. The company discussion covered facilities, locations, brands and international presence.
- Explain your choices using your experiences. The candidate linked their committee role and preference for a dynamic workplace to a willingness to learn and step outside their comfort zone.

MetLife

INTERVIEW TYPE
HR, functional and case-based interview

INTERVIEW EXPERIENCE

The interview was conversational, with a significant focus on my background, motivation for pursuing HR, preferred HR domains and understanding of the company.

- **Q1. Tell me about yourself.**

  > I introduced myself by discussing my educational background, computer engineering degree, NGO experience, fieldwork experience and personal interests. We spent some time discussing various aspects of my introduction.

- **Q2. Why did you choose HR after pursuing Computer Engineering?**

  > I explained how my experience as a Workshop Coordinator at an NGO developed my interest in people management. I also discussed how working on an HR-based software project during my engineering helped me develop an interest in HR. We had a detailed discussion about my transition from engineering to HR.

- **Q3. Which domain of HR are you interested in?**

  > I mentioned Learning and Development (L&D) as my preferred domain. I explained my interest in employee development, learning and capability building, relating it to my previous experiences. We spent a considerable amount of time discussing this domain.

- **Q4. Case-based question: Suppose you have developed an L&D model that you want to popularise across the organisation, but most employees are ignoring it. How would you tackle this situation?**

  > The interviewer presented this scenario to assess my practical understanding of L&D, employee engagement and challenges associated with encouraging participation in learning initiatives.

- **Q5. Apart from L&D, which other HR domain would you prefer and why?**

  > I mentioned Talent Acquisition as my second preference. The interviewer further asked me to explain my interest in the domain and my understanding of Talent Acquisition.

- **Q6. What is Talent Management?**

  > I explained the concept of Talent Management and how it involves attracting, developing, engaging and retaining employees to meet organisational objectives.

- **Q7. Why MetLife? What do you know about the company?**

  > I explained my reasons for wanting to join MetLife and shared my understanding of the company and its business.

- **Q8. Do you have any questions for me?**

  > Towards the end of the interview, the interviewer gave me an opportunity to ask questions, which I utilised to interact further with her.

LESSONS LEARNT AND PREPARATION TIPS

- **Understand the fundamentals of HR:** Have a basic understanding of all major HR domains, even those outside your preferred area of interest.
- **Prepare your introduction thoroughly:** Be comfortable with your Tell Me About Yourself (TMAY) answer, as it can influence the direction of the interview.
- **Prepare a convincing Why HR answer:** Be clear about your motivation for pursuing HR, particularly if you come from a non-HR educational background.
- **Study your preferred HR domains:** Be prepared for technical, conceptual and practical scenario-based questions related to your preferred domains.
- **Research the company:** Have a good understanding of the organisation, its business, values and operations before appearing for the interview.
- **Prepare questions for the interviewer:** Have a few meaningful questions ready to ask towards the end of the interview.

Mondelēz International

PLACEMENT PROCESS

There was a pre-placement talk, followed by a GD round, and then interviews of people who got through the GD.

GROUP DISCUSSION

There were 8 people in the GD.

- **Topic:** An FMCG had to deal with a conflict in existing competency frameworks versus upcoming digital upskilling, and how to decide which framework would be good for selecting employees for designated roles.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

I was the fourth person to get interviewed. The interview was mostly conversational, around my BQs and a few situational questions. There were three people in the panel, but only two asked questions:

Panelist 1 (Female)

- **Q. How would you rate your performance in the GD?**

  > I think it was good, but it could have been better. In my opinion, we progressed too fast and didn't discuss the problem for long enough before we reached the solution. And then our deliberations were mostly around the solution. So, I think my performance was decent, but I could have come up with better points during the discussion.

- **Q. Are you surprised that you got selected for the interview?**

  > A little bit, yes. I was hoping for it, because some people in the GD didn't really speak much, and my performance did seem better than theirs, but it is always a different kind of feeling when it does happen.

- **Q. Tell us about yourself, your family, where you've lived and so on.**

  > My name is Pooja Sahoo. I'm an only child. I was born and brought up in Bhubaneswar, post which I lived in Cuttack for 14 years due to my father's job. I completed my 10th, 12th and undergraduate degree in Cuttack. And now I'm here in Mumbai for my post-graduation, which the first time I've been outside the state for so long without my family.

↳ *Follow up:* **How are you liking Mumbai so far?**

> It's been a hectic time, with the academic commitments and other things about living in a shared accommodation which is very different from what I was used to, but it's fun, and I have been able to explore the city a little bit too. The unpredictable rains will take a bit more time to get used to.

- **Q. Why did you decide to go into HR after law?**

> I've studied subjects like conflict resolution and labor laws in my undergraduate degree, and I was curious when I saw the cases that reached the stage of legal dispute resolution. A company has multiple internal policies for dealing with workplace conflicts, but some cannot be resolved and have to seek external help to be dealt with. Being a lawyer allowed me to see only those cases which left the company, but as an HR professional I would be able to see all those issues and to see how things got to a point where the internal practices could not solve the issues anymore, and perhaps help execute them in a way where these problems could be taken care of before they escalated to the stage of needing legal counsel.

- **Q. What is something that you have done in your life that you are very proud of?**

> It is already mentioned in my CV, but the achievement that I'm most proud of is the co-authorship that I have in the global report which is published on Amazon. It was a very unexpected opportunity, and I was very happy that I got to be a part of such a project.

↳ *Follow up:* **So how did you come about this opportunity?**

> It was my first internship in law school, and it was online. I was supposed to work only for one month. But at the end of the tenure, they reached out to me and asked me if I would like to work on this project because they were impressed with the quality of the work I was putting out. I agreed because for a first-year student, this would give me the chance to learn a lot of different things and create something meaningful.

↳ *Follow up:* **Did you get any money/profit-sharing for this?**

> No, I did not. But at that moment, the exposure, the learning and the work that I was able to do were all amazing opportunities. I was in my first year of law school, and I had no experience. To have the chance to put my name on an international report was more than enough for me at that point.

- **Q. Tell me a strength and a weakness that you have.**

> For my strength, I'd like to say my legal training as a whole, because it allowed me to learn how to handle multiple stakeholders, look at different perspectives when trying to understand a situation and to take in a lot of information, in order to make a well-informed decision whenever possible. It also gives me a clarity of thought when I approach a problem to identify the core of it.
> A weakness was pointed out me recently in one of the workshops held at TISS very early after we'd joined campus, that I have a lack of visibility, where even if I have good ideas, I hesitate to point them out and tend to wait until other people have presented their thoughts.

↳ *Follow up:* **Do you resonate with this weakness?**

> To a certain extent, yes. When I first came here, I was kind of intimidated by the people here who had much better profiles than mine, in terms of their work experience or their marks, and I felt that I might be judged if I pointed out something too simple or obvious. But over the course of the three months that I've spent here, I've actively tried to break that habit, and tried to be among the first people to answer questions and participate in class.

- **Q. Where would you rank yourself amongst your peers?**

> I'd rank myself somewhere in the middle, where there are people who have more experience than me, as I am a fresher and there are people with 3, 4, 5 years of work experience, and with better grades than I do too. But at the same time, I wouldn't put myself too low on the scale as I believe I have a decent academic profile (9/9/7), and I have completed my UG from a national level university, which is an advantage in my opinion.

- **Q. How would you handle a project if it is handed over to you during your internship, since you mentioned you have no corporate exposure?**

> I would approach the guide/mentor who would be allotted to me to understand the goal of the project assigned. Then I would look for similar projects or frameworks that might exist in the company. If they exist, then it is great for me as it gives me a starting point, if not, I would approach my mentor again, and ask what my first priority should be when I am starting my work. Following this, I'd regularly check in with my guide and see if I'm progressing in the required way so that I can course correct myself before I invest too much time in the wrong direction.

- **Q. What are some extracurricular activities that you have done after coming to college?**

> College has been kind of hectic, with us having 8 subjects this semester, and events sometimes coinciding with classes, so I haven't been able to participate in too many events, but I did apply for the Editorial Committee.

↳ *Follow up:* **Yes, that is very evident from your CV, as you have journalism/writing experience. They get a win-win situation, but you don't learn much beyond what you already know.**

> I understand what you are saying, and I got to the same conclusion, which is why I ended up withdrawing from the process.

↳ *Follow up:* **But don't you think you should step out of your comfort zone?**

> I have been an introvert for most of my life, and I didn't really interact a lot with my peers in my UG either. But after coming here, I think I've changed that and I have made connections with almost my whole batch, so I'm trying to change my habits and do things differently.

↳ *Follow up:* **Okay, but this is your cohort, and relatively a small one, of just 60 people, of course you will make connections. Take this as a suggestion, and do things which aren't already a part of your CV. Participate in events, just diversify your CV, it will give you an edge.**

> I will definitely try to do as you've suggested, whenever opportunities come up.

Panelist 2 (Male)

- **Q. What is something in your legal training that would help you during your career and something that you should unlearn?**

  > Something that would help me is my ability to take all stakeholders into account. Legal thinking by its very essence needs a person to be able to have a 360-degree view of the situation. As an HR professional, it is imperative that whenever I make, amend or execute policies, I do it in a way such that no person involved in the process is affected negatively, to the best of my abilities.
  > And something that I should unlearn is to wait too long to have all pieces of information before I start working. As I've mentioned previously, I have 8 subjects this semester, and they all come with their own challenges and deadlines. If I waited till I had perfect knowledge about what I was supposed to do for each of their assignments, I would never be able to catch up to deadlines in real time. So, I would like to just start on what is needed to be done instead of waiting the situation to be perfect.

- **Q. Sometimes in HR, some decisions are just hard execution, where there is not much room for thought, and some are extremely contemplation heavy, and there will also be some which will need a balance of both. How will you approach each of these situations?**

  > In situations where execution is the most important, I would just do it, I don't think there is much else to do there. But in situations where depth of thought or a balance is required, I think I would still start the work first, because each project or situation will have its own timeline to follow. And I believe I have enough presence of mind to be able to utilize and incorporate new information fruitfully whenever it comes up, and still be able to complete the task as required.

- **Q. Your CV mentions reading Greek and Egyptian mythology as a hobby, how did you get into this?**

  > When I was a child, my father went for a work trip, and when he came back, he had brought back the set of Percy Jackson books with him. That started my interest in mythology.

  ↳ ***Follow up:*** **So why do you like about Greek mythology?**

  > I think it is because of how different is from Hindu mythology, where Gods are seen as holy and can do nothing wrong-

  ↳ ***Follow up (Interrupted by Panelist 1):*** **You just like it because it's different then?**

  > Not exactly. In Hindu mythology we see our idols as literal idols, as beings who are always right and have the values that we should try to imbibe in ourselves and be virtuous. But in Greek mythology, their Gods are lessons. They commit numerous mistakes, and it teaches us how not be and what not to do. You strive to become better because you see what the wrongs are.

- **Q. Who is your favorite character (God) in Greek mythology?**

  > It is hard to pick one because there are so many aspects about each that I am interested in. But if I had to choose, I'd go with Hades, the God of the Underworld.

↳ ***Follow up:*** **And why is that?**

> The Greek Gods have a council which has 12 gods, and Hades, despite being one of the oldest three wasn't given a place in the council and was sent to the Underworld by his two brothers, Zeus and Poseidon. However, even after all this, he is considered, relatively, as the most virtuous amongst the three of them.

Panelist 1 concluded the interview. She wished me luck and gave me a remark: "*Whether you get into Mondelēz or not, your interview went well.*"

✦ KEY TAKEAWAYS

I don't think I can say much about the process in terms of advice for someone who appears for the interview next time, because that depends entirely on the panel and what sort of questions they ask.

However, if I was to say something which I have generally applied across all my interviews, including this one, is that one should have absolute confidence in whatever you are saying.

Technical questions, either based on subjects taught at TISS or during UG (especially for freshers) are very important, yes, but you can be wrong in those and it won't matter as much. However, you should be very confident when answering questions about yourself.

Also, an obvious but overlooked thing I've observed is that interviewers know how to catch you off guard. In those situations where the question is something for which you have no answer, or no example, it's much easier to acknowledge and accept your shortcomings, while offering something as a reason to why you haven't done it. Don't try to faff your way through it. Interviewers notice, and it may end up costing you the opportunity.

This is all purely my experience though, and it definitely won't be universally applicable, so the most important thing I can say is use your own mind. I think whoever made it to the interview seat is more than capable of using common sense, and that will carry you through the interview much better than any rehearsed answer.

Nestlé

CANDIDATE BACKGROUND

3 years of work experience at TCS (Automation Test Engineer)

PLACEMENT PROCESS

The company first conducted a personality assessment test and shortlisted candidates on the basis. This was followed by a case round, where candidates had to solve an HR-related case. Candidates were then called for a personal interview based on their performance in the case round.

PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT TEST

The personality assessment test served as the first shortlisting stage. Only candidates who cleared it moved on to the case round.

CASE ROUND

Candidates had to solve an HR-related case. Performance in this round determined who was invited for the personal interview.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The personal interview was held in the evening with a panel of three interviewers (1 male, 2 female). It opened with light conversation and a self-introduction, then moved to the candidate's hobbies and work experience, with detailed follow-ups on projects and technical concepts. It continued with a discussion on AI and its impact on the industry, the motivation for choosing HR, and OB concepts from the MBA curriculum. It ended with a question on flexibility and travel, and the candidate's questions for the panel.

Questions Asked

- How was your day? What classes did you attend today?
- Introduce yourself.
- You mentioned figurative painting as a hobby. What is that?
- You have 3 years of work experience at TCS. Explain in detail what you did and which projects you worked on.
- Tell me the types of testing.
- Tell me what your bank (client) does. (Follow-up: Explain the consultant part again.)
- How is AI affecting your industry? What is your observation from your own experience?
- Where do you think we would require fewer humans: Development, Testing or Support?

- Tell me what changes you proposed in your company or project. (Followed by further questions on the same.)
- Why HR?
- Or is it because HR is easy?
- Tell me your favourite subject.
- What have you studied in OB?
- Explain what you studied in self-concept.
- What is neuroticism?
- Would you be fine with working in a factory one day, then in corporate the next, then with the sales team on another, with a lot of travel?
- Any questions for us?

Questions the Candidate Asked

- How does the CEO build confidence that sourcing is being done ethically and is verified, all the way down to grassroots-level farmers, given that the CEO cannot personally check every relationship?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The interview was conversational, and the panel drew heavily from the candidate's resume. Hobbies and past work were explored in depth, so everything on the CV should be explained simply and confidently, as if to someone outside your domain. When the candidate began a textbook answer on the types of testing, the interviewer cut in to say he already knew it, so keep technical answers short and move quickly to the part the panel does not know.
- Panels may test your understanding of your industry beyond your own tasks. Questions such as what the bank does, and a repeated request to explain the consultant side, checked whether the candidate could explain the business clearly. The AI questions asked for a reasoned opinion backed by observation and examples, not a generic answer.
- The "Why HR?" question was followed by "Or is it because HR is easy?", a deliberate probe on motivation. Candidates, especially those from a technical background, should have a clear, experience-backed reason for choosing HR, and should stay calm and firm in answering it.
- Be ready to explain the OB and HR concepts you list as favourites, down to definitions. The panel went from "favourite subject" to the course content, then to self-concept, and then to a specific term (neuroticism). Know the basic definition of every concept you mention, and use a case or example from class to show application.
- Expect a flexibility question around the nature of the role, covering plant visits, corporate and sales exposure, and frequent travel. A confident yes backed by a short personal example works well.
- Finally, prepare a thoughtful question for the panel. The candidate asked about trust and ethical sourcing at the grassroots level and linked it to Nestlé's work with farmers in Moga, which showed they had researched the company. Questions tied to the company's actual operations leave a stronger impression than generic ones.

Pidilite Industries Limited

PLACEMENT PROCESS

There was a psychometric assessment following a personal interview.

APTITUDE TEST

The assessment was psychometric in nature. Only a few people were selected for the interview round. At first, it looked like they were selecting people on the basis of psychometric but I think it was mostly through CV. They intended to have two rounds of interviews, but I got selected after my first interview.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

There were two panellists, one male and one female in their 50s. The female was a TISS alumna. The whole interview was very conversational and it lasted around 20 mins.

- They started with TMAY, long-term and short-term goals, Strengths and weaknesses and why HR.
- What subjects are there in your Sem 1?
- Who is teaching you Labour Law this time?
- What are your favourite subjects?
- So, explain to me what attribution is with examples.
- Is this somehow related to self-serving bias? If yes then how.
- How comfortable are you with using AI tools?
- What is your take on AI in the HR field?
- What differences do you see in the TISS campus and your undergrad campus?
- As I mentioned that I am in animal feeding group they asked me how many cats and dogs were there in both campuses?
- How many people are there in your family?
- How has your experience in Mumbai been so far?
- Where are you from?
- How comfortable are you with going to big cities like Delhi and Mumbai?
- Do you have any questions for us?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The panel were very sweet and welcoming. They were smiling throughout the interview. I would recommend being confident, smiling, and not making any extreme/contradicting statements. Know your subjects well and don't be nervous.

Procter & Gamble

PLACEMENT PROCESS

There was an aptitude test conducted in the classroom, followed by a personal interview at the company site.

APTITUDE TEST

The aptitude test was conducted in a classroom setting and served as the shortlisting round prior to the personal interview.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The personal interview was conducted at the company site and covered background questions (BQs), ethical dilemmas, and a situational problem-solving question.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why do you want to pursue HR?
3. Was there any time when you have breached the trust of someone, and what have you done about it?
4. Tell me a situation where you did something unethical.
5. There is a cargo ship at the dock that has been forfeited. There is one unofficial channel which has been used by many of the companies. It is asking for 25 lakh to release those ships. That ship has 5 crore worth of goods. How would you go about solving this situation?
6. Tell me a time when you have helped someone.
7. What are your strengths?
8. Tell me about your weakness.
9. How would you go about making a welfare plan for workers in a company?
10. Tell me a time when something seemed impossible yet you achieved it.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The aptitude test is a screening stage, but it should not be treated as a formality. A reasonable level of preparation on quantitative, logical, and verbal reasoning sections is advisable, since a weak performance here can prevent an otherwise strong candidate from reaching the interview stage.
- The personal interview places considerable emphasis on integrity and ethical judgment, as seen in the questions on breach of trust and unethical conduct. Candidates should have genuine, well-thought-out examples ready for such questions rather than attempting to construct one on the spot, as panels are generally able to tell the difference.
- The situational question involving the cargo ship is designed to test structured thinking under ambiguity rather than to elicit a single correct answer. It is advisable to think aloud, lay out the stakeholders involved, weigh the trade-offs between the unofficial payment and the legal and reputational risks, and arrive at a reasoned recommendation, rather than rushing to a conclusion.
- Questions on strengths, weaknesses, and past experiences of helping others or overcoming difficult situations are fairly standard, but should still be answered with specific, real examples rather than generic statements, as this is what tends to differentiate one candidate from another.
- As with most HR interviews, clarity of thought and honesty in one's responses are valued more than a rehearsed or overly polished answer. Candidates are encouraged to reflect on their own experiences in advance so that they can respond to such questions with genuine examples rather than improvising on the spot.

Reliance

PLACEMENT PROCESS

The process consisted of an extensive personal interview conducted by a panel of senior HR professionals.

APTITUDE TEST

N/A

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The personal interview was an in-depth, multi-faceted discussion led by a panel. It covered prior entrepreneurial and business experience, strategic HR leadership scenarios (evaluating decisions from a CHRO perspective), core HR functions, practical recruitment frameworks, domain-specific labour legislation, exposure to data analytics, hands-on applications of AI tools, and family background.

1. Walk us through your previous business experience and strategies, and explain why you decided not to continue running that business.
2. If you are appointed as the CHRO of an organization establishing 7–8 new manufacturing plants, what comprehensive HR policies and frameworks would you put in place?
3. How do you distinguish the mindset and responsibilities of a CHRO from that of an operational HR Business Partner (HRBP) in large-scale plant setups?
4. What are the fundamental functions and responsibilities of HR within an enterprise, and why is it critical for HR professionals to possess a deep understanding of the business side of the organization?
5. Assume a higher-education institution is opening a new campus and needs to recruit 150 faculty members. As the CHRO, what recruitment strategy and screening channels would you deploy?
6. Would you use the same recruitment strategy for hiring Research Assistants, or would your approach differ?
7. Do you have any formal background, certifications, or course training in data analytics?
8. Given your inclination toward Labour Law, what are the primary structural changes introduced in the new Labour Codes?
9. Do you know AI prompting, and how have you applied prompt engineering or AI agents to resolve HR, research, or legal case studies?
10. Tell us about your family background and what each member does.

11. What is the specific principle change in the new Labour Codes regarding the classification and definition of supervisors versus workers?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Strategic vs. Operational Perspective:** When posed with leadership prompts (such as acting as a CHRO), candidates must avoid narrowing their responses to day-to-day administrative tasks. Panelists look for high-level governance, unified policy design, compliance standardization, and workforce motivation across units.
- **Commercial and Business Acumen:** Demonstrating that HR must integrate with business operations is essential. Explicitly articulating how HR decisions impact bottom-line operations and business performance signals maturity and differentiates strong candidates.
- **Depth in Claimed Interests (Labour Law):** Expressing an interest in a specific domain invites rigorous questioning. Candidates must be prepared to discuss exact statutory updates, such as the nuances, definitions, and classifications under the new Labour Codes, with precision.
- **Tailored Problem Solving:** In situational hiring problems (such as recruiting faculty vs. research assistants), showing flexibility rather than applying a rigid, one-size-fits-all formula demonstrates an understanding of organizational hierarchies and stakeholder empowerment.
- **Practical Tech and AI Adoption:** Panels appreciate candidates who leverage modern AI tools practically—such as persona-based prompting and agent workflows for problem analysis—rather than just possessing superficial awareness of generative AI.

TAS

PLACEMENT PROCESS

The process involved a detailed application form, a gamified online assessment, a unique Chairman Group Discussion (GD), and a personal interview.

APPLICATION & FORM FILLING

Candidates had to fill out a detailed form covering academics and work experience, which prominently included a Statement of Purpose (SOP). It is critical to draft a genuine, self-written SOP, as interviewers will ask questions based directly on this statement.

APTITUDE TEST (ONLINE ASSESSMENT)

The assessment consisted of four distinct, gamified rounds designed to test memory, reasoning, and calculation speed:

- **Round 1:** Tested calculation speed.
- **Round 2:** A memory and sequencing game where 5-6 numbers appeared on an 8x8 or 6x6 grid for 3-4 seconds before disappearing, requiring candidates to recall and arrange them in ascending or descending order.
- **Rounds 3 & 4:** Rapid puzzle-decoding and memory-based reasoning assessments.

GROUP DISCUSSION (CHAIRMAN GD)

The GD phase consisted of 8-9 continuous discussions, allowing each group member to act as the "Chairperson" once. The Chairperson picks a situational topic (e.g., an ice cream company with declining revenues getting a collaboration offer from a pizza brand requiring a stake sale) and introduces it to the group. As the Chairperson, the candidate must guide the discussion with limited speaking time (1-2 entries, max 30 seconds each) and deliver a firm final decision or conclusion at the end, after which no further points can be added. As a regular member, candidates are expected to make 2-3 brief entries (max 30 seconds each) per GD, bringing original points rather than repeating others. Speaking in every GD is mandatory.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The interview started with a comprehensive introduction and shifted into a deep dive of the candidate's past work experience, specifically regarding their role as a cloud engineer and handling a promotion. The panel also presented behavioral scenarios to assess problem-solving skills and explored the candidate's personal interests, specifically Hindi literature and its influence. The interview concluded with questions assessing the candidate's understanding of HR roles and the company's CSR initiatives.

1. Introduce yourself.
2. Can you detail your work experience and what you used to do as a cloud engineer?
3. How did you deal with your juniors after being promoted as a Subject Matter Expert (SME), and what exactly did you do in this role?
4. **Scenario:** If your manager is not supporting you, what would you have done?
5. I see you read Hindi novels. Tell me your favorite Hindi authors.
6. Tell me a line from ‘Krishn Ki Aatmakatha’ and explain why Krishna inspires you so much.
7. Why do you want to be an HR?
8. While being an HR, will you work for the organization or the employees?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **SOP Defense:** Ensure your Statement of Purpose is authentic and defendable, as it forms a core part of the evaluation.
- **Chairperson GD Strategy:** Success in the Chairman GD requires brevity and structure; whether as the Chair or a member, limit entries to 30 seconds and focus on delivering original pros and cons rather than repeating points.
- **Gamified Assessment Prep:** Traditional aptitude preparation must be supplemented with practice for memory-based, rapid-fire gamified simulations.
- **Comprehensive Introductions Matter:** A well-rounded introduction that covers background, education, work experience, and personal interests (like NGO work) sets a strong foundation for the interview and can guide the panel's subsequent questions.
- **Deep Dive into Work Experience:** Candidates should be prepared to explain their past roles in detail, especially technical roles or transitions (like a promotion to SME). Panels are interested in both technical responsibilities and interpersonal dynamics, such as managing juniors.
- **Scenario-Based Questions:** Expect situational questions to test your conflict resolution and problem-solving skills. Acknowledging a supportive past manager while also providing a clear, hypothetical action plan for an unsupportive one demonstrates maturity.
- **Defending Hobbies and Interests:** Hobbies mentioned in introductions or resumes (like reading Hindi literature) are fair game for deep exploration. Candidates must be able to discuss specific authors, genres, and even quote lines or explain the philosophical impact of their reading.
- **Understanding HR's Role:** Questions about working for the organization vs. employees require a nuanced understanding of HR's dual mandate. Aligning the answer with the specific company's ethos—such as Tata's known commitment to both business and society—is highly effective.
- **Company Knowledge and CSR:** Demonstrating deep knowledge of the company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities, complete with specific data points (e.g., female mortality rates) and project names/locations, strongly reinforces a candidate's genuine interest in the organization.

Tata Steel

TRANSCRIPT 1

PLACEMENT PROCESS

Profile Shortlist and Online PI.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

- **Duration:** 30-35 minutes
- **Panel:** 3 members

P1 Good Morning, How are you today?

ME Hi, Good afternoon, everyone. I am doing good.

P1 So P2 will be taking over.

P2 So, Tell us about you.

ME Gave prepared answer.

P2 How did you get into HR?

ME Again gave my prepared answer.

P2 What all subjects do you have in your current semester?

ME Named all the subjects and told them I am comfortable talking about Labour Law and OB.

P2 Okay, can you name the recently enacted labour codes? Tell us what all acts were subsumed in the Code on Wages? Why were these 4 labour codes needed, things were going fine for all these years what was the requirement?

ME Yes things were working but the new codes have not replaced earlier laws, they have consolidated them into 4 code earlier provisions with latest requirement have been added, main agenda was uniformity, formalisation, avoid confusion with different state specific laws.

P2 But things were working, why do this big exercise?

ME I believe provisions for both employer and employee have been added to fulfil today's requirements, like an increase in the threshold for permission for retrenchment from 100 to 300. (He wanted to listen to the management side and kept on pressing me.)

P2 What are Trade Unions? What is Strike? What is Lockout? What are pre conditions of Strikes? What is an illegal strike?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Have in-depth clarity on your undergrad, work experience and basic questions, not just theory but the applied parts of it. Pay attention during the field visit and leadership talks and reference them during the interview to stand out. Ask good questions at the end, they seemed genuinely interested in addressing my concerns.

Tata Steel

TRANSCRIPT 2

PLACEMENT PROCESS

Profile Shortlist and Online PI.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

- **Duration:** 30-35 minutes
- **Panel:** 3 members

I1 Good Morning, how are you today?

ME Hi, Good Afternoon everyone. I am doing good.

I1 So i2 will be taking over.

I2 So, tell us about you.

ME Gave prepared answer.

I2 How did you get into HR?

ME Again prepared answer.

I2 What all subjects do you have in your current semester?

ME Named all the subjects and told them I am comfortable talking about Labour laws and OB.

I2 Ok, can you name the recently enacted labour codes?

ME Yes, definitely — Code on Wages 2019, IR Code 2020, Social Security Code, OSHW Code.

I2 Tell us what all acts were subsumed in Code on Wages.

ME Yes Sir, Code on Wages subsumed 4 acts, Minimum Wage Act, Payment of Wages Act, Payment of Bonus Act and Equal Remuneration Act.

I2 Ok, why were these 4 labour codes needed, things were going fine for all these years what was the requirement?

ME Yes sir things were working but the new codes have not replaced earlier laws, they have consolidated them into 4 codes earlier provisions with latest requirement have been added, main agenda was uniformity, formalization, avoid confusion with different state specific laws.

I2 Yes but things were working why do this large exercise?

ME sir I believe the provisions for both employer and employee have been added to fulfill today's requirements like increase in threshold for permission for retrenchment from 100 to 300. (he wanted to listen managements side and kept on pressing me)

I2 What are trade unions?

I2 What is strike?

I2 What is lockout?

I2 What are pre conditions of strike?

I2 What is an illegal strike?

I2 What is conciliation? — I couldn't answer this, told them I am unable to recollect at the moment.

I2 What is negotiating union?

I2 What is negotiating council?

I2 What is FTE?

I2 What is layoff?

I2 What is composition of IC in POSH?

I2 So you were working in Bank Infra Management team, tell me what's the first thing required for setting up a branch?

ME Answer was Shops and Establishment Certificate, I started with banking licenses but he wanted to hear Shops and Establishment.

I2 Tell us about a difficult situation at work.

ME Gave a prepared answer.

I2 What all compliances did you have to follow at work, what were all the stakeholders?

I2 Okay now i3 will take over.

I3 Asad, I'll ask you something about geopolitics. What are the consequences of currency depreciation against the other currencies?

ME It affects both imports and exports, makes imports expensive and exports cheaper.

I3 A few similar questions, I wasn't very comfortable with them but tackled them he didn't ask many just 2-3.

I1 Thank you that will be all, do you have any questions for us?

ME Yes Sir, in a manufacturing heavy company like Tata Steel, are you able to integrate AI at a speed that other sectors are doing?

I2 i2 gave a very detailed answer.

ME One more question sir, I read that Tata Steel is heavily unionized with large workforce under unions, does it not create a problem for the HR?

I2 i2 gave a very good and informative answer.

NOTE

In total I wasn't able to answer 3 questions, I told them I am unable to recollect at the moment. Panel was supportive, I wasn't at my best that day but I was able to answer most questions, labour law PPT shared by seniors turned out to be my saviour.

TCS SLP

PLACEMENT PROCESS

The process consisted of a single personal interview with a panel of five members.

APTITUDE TEST

N/A

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The interview lasted roughly 15-20 minutes, with the candidate being the last in the order. There were five panelists: two asking questions and three observing body language and taking notes. The interview focused on the candidate's introduction, transition from engineering to HR, technical skills, and two situational case studies regarding employee retention and work-from-home policies.

1. Introduce yourself, including your educational background, previous internship experiences, and hobbies.
2. Why do you want to be an HR professional after studying engineering? Why this change of field?
3. **Case Study 1:** A very hard-working talent is getting a better CTC offer from another company. How would you prevent them from switching?
4. **Case Study 2:** Employees are resisting returning to the office after a work-from-home stint. How would you handle this situation?
5. What is your personal preference: work from home or work from the office?
6. Are you willing to relocate, travel, or work in any part of India or different environments?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Defending Career Transitions:** Candidates switching from technical fields to HR must articulate a clear, logical reason for the pivot. Highlighting how modern HR relies on data analytics, algorithms, and technical tools (like Python or Excel) builds a strong narrative.
- **Handling Case Studies Pragmatically:** When dealing with retention scenarios where matching CTC is not possible, focusing on non-monetary benefits and engagement strategies is key. For return-to-office resistance, suggesting a hybrid, phased rollout shows strategic thinking and empathy for workforce efficiency.
- **Integrating Technical Jargon:** Leveraging modern, AI-based jargon and data-centric terminology appropriately during the interview can significantly reinforce a candidate's tech-savvy profile and alignment with contemporary HR practices.
- **Readiness for Flexibility:** Questions about relocation and travel are strong indicators that the company is assessing long-term fit and adaptability for various operational roles across different geographies.

Texas Instruments

PLACEMENT DETAILS

DURATION	FORMAT
~1 hour	Online interview (conducted via Zoom)

INTRODUCTION

The interview opened with a request for a brief self-introduction — a basic overview of who I am.

CV-BASED / BACKGROUND DISCUSSION

The panel had my CV in front of them and picked out one point: a committee I was part of during my undergraduate years. They asked me to elaborate — what the committee was, what my role involved, and the activities I took part in.

- *Note on panel pattern:* Since I was a fresher, this was asked in place of a work-experience question. Other candidates on the panel who had prior work experience were instead asked about their organization and the work they did there. So the underlying question was consistent across candidates — "what organization were you part of, and what did you do there" — just adapted to fresher vs. experienced backgrounds.

BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS

Two behavioral questions followed, both tied back to the committee discussed above:

- Conflict handling: Describe one conflict I handled within that organization.
- **Mistake & reflection: Describe an instance where I made a mistake, and how I reflected on it afterward.**

> These were the only two behavioral questions asked.

CASE STUDIES

- **Case Study 1 — New Graduate Attrition:**
  - ↳ *Scenario*: A tech company hires new college graduates. A pattern has emerged where heavy attrition occurs around the 2–5 year mark after joining. How would you resolve this? What factors would you look at?
- **Case Study 2 — Salary Negotiation:**
  - ↳ *Scenario*: There's a candidate you want to hire with 10 years of experience for a specialized technical role. He checks all the boxes and is the best candidate currently available. You're offering him 30% more than his previous pay, and the offer is also competitively bench-

marked against the market. However, he's asking for 20% more on top of that. How would you negotiate with him?

Process for Case Questions

- Case-solving is interactive — you ask clarifying questions, state assumptions, and build the case step by step rather than answering all at once.
- You present ideas; the panel cross-questions them.
- Multiple solutions are expected, not just one.
- If the question isn't understood, you're expected to ask for clarification.
- If the panel wants more solutions, they'll explicitly ask for more.
- If you get stuck, the interviewers will nudge you toward an answer.

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

At the end, I was asked if I had any questions for the panel.

KEY TAKEAWAYS / LEARNINGS

- **General Interview Approach:** Case questions reward structure over instinct — clarify the problem, state assumptions out loud, and work toward multiple solutions rather than jumping to a single answer.
- **Behavioral Questions Scale with Experience Level:** Freshers get asked about committee involvement in the same way experienced hires get asked about work history. Worth prepping a committee/project story with the same depth as a work story.
- **The STAR Method:** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) is a natural structure for both the conflict-handling and mistake-reflection questions — it keeps answers concrete instead of abstract.
- **A Note for Anyone Prepping With This Transcript:** Before answering Case Study 1 (Attrition), take a moment to recall any Organizational Behavior (OB) or HRM frameworks you know that relate to employee retention, motivation, or the employee lifecycle — and work one into your answer where it fits naturally. Before answering Case Study 2 (Negotiation), do the same for frameworks related to negotiation, compensation, or fairness/equity in pay. Naming a relevant framework (even briefly, in your own words) tends to add structure and credibility to a case answer — but the specific framework should come from what you recall, not from a pre-written list.

Vodafone Idea

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. TMAY (include something which is not in your resume).
2. I had prepared for UPSC for 3 years, so they asked what did you learn from that journey and how am I using that learnings in my current course.
3. Why didn't you sit for final placements in your college and what was the motivation behind going for UPSC prep.
4. How is life at TISS and why HR at TISS after UPSC prep.
5. Do you have done any analytics related projects and if not are you willing to go in that field, as in if I would be given a project in my SIP would I be able to learn and deliver.
6. As we can see on your resume you are a part of Junior HRM LR Forum, what does this committee do and why did you join it.

The interview went around 12-15 minutes.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Be aware about your BQ's and have a holistic understanding about why you are in HR and what have you learnt from your past experiences.

(PS. Just a tip never say VI in interview as in V I separately, instead say we(vi), this will give a good impression as they prefer to call it we instead of V I separately)