

MBA Admission 2015: PI the most important round; your native place- source of many questions; Update yourself

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IIMs, SPJIMR, XLRI, MDI and other top rated B schools have shortlisted the candidates for the Personal Interview (PI) round 2015 beginning shortly hereafter. MBA aspirants have also devoted themselves to a great length of preparation so that they may not miss the admission bus 2015 in these top rated B schools.

No doubt you are asked many questions in PI round on your academic profile and work experience which are specific to your domain and which can be prepared well with the depth of your subject knowledge and day to day working experience. Apart from these, generic questions are also placed to know your personality how keen you are to keep yourself updated about your surroundings.

Your city: expect a series of questions

One of the areas on which generic questions are asked in PI round is your city or your native place. These generic questions appear very simple but answering them needs your ability to analyse the past with present and your future vision. There could be number of questions on your city which you should prepare well before going to PI round. Prof S K Agarwal, Verbal

Ability Expert and mentor on CAT/XAT preparation shares the ingredients and key tips on how to respond to these questions

It may not be necessary that you are still living in your native city. You might have shifted to some other city for your higher education or work but it is expected that you are well aware of the past and present of your native place and know the key facts of future plans related to your city.

Model Questions: How to answer

When you come before the interview board, it is expected that you must have prepared well about your surroundings. Every city, town, village has some story to tell. There are not only great people in your city but the products, places of interest also exist. Anything related to your city must be known to you.

Suppose your native place is Agra. You should know well that it is a historical city and why it is famous. What are the important historical monuments like TajMahal on the bank of Yamuna river, Fatehpur Sikri, Akbar's Tomb known as Sikandara; and about other monuments.

Prepare well about the education there and important education centres. Infrastructure of the city and the development process going on should also be known. Population- volume, ratio, mix should be known to you. USPs of population like social bonds & mix, Cost of living, Quality and cost of food available must be known.

Probable PI questions

Why do you like your city?

- a. Give the positive points of your city – as – it is large or small; it has so and so monuments; good picnic places; people are peaceful and loving; lesser crime; you were born there; famous products; Socio-economic activities – traditional and modern; cost of living; think of some memorable events.
- b. Present the negative points with positive vision – like situation of frequent power shutdowns, bad or congested roads is being improved. Education imparted to illiterate, hence the future appears good enough and past has been worth appreciating except the time in between which may be termed as a transition phase.

What's the most important need of your city?

Need of the city – An International airport is required, why? Tourists coming from all over the world have to come to Delhi and reach Agra either by road or by Train. Lot of time wasted. Airport will help to give a boost to tourism industry . Present inflow of tourists (National and international) appx. 30 to 40 lacs per year. Peak season is from October to March.

Please ensure you must know each and everything you speak about your city as it might generate more questions out of the answer presented by you.

Tell us about some great personality of your city (Live or dead).

Share about the great personalities who ever lived in the City like Ghalib, Babu Gulab Rai. Also tell something which you think the interview board members may not be aware of – like- The first President of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad studied at Agra.

If you do not know much about such personalities or any particular person, please do not try to bluff the interviewers. Instead say politely that you do not know much about him/them except... (say whatever you know) If you know nothing please admit that too. Be straight

Tell us about the economy of your city

On economic front you are supposed to have good knowledge on the Volume of tourists; tourism as an industry there and earning from it. Major industries like Handicraft goods, Petha, Dalmoth, shoe manufacturing with some statistical data must be known.

Since Agra has been declared Taj Trapezium zone – uninterrupted power supply has been ordered by Hon'ble Supreme Court; More greenery is being ensured surrounding the city. A lower middle class family can happily live there.

Observe the following; when you answer

Experts suggest following important tips to observe while responding to the questions in PI round

Avoid the negativity

Even if you have all the negative thoughts about some action, policy matters – present them in a balanced manner with a positive thinking for future. Do not criticize too much the policies of the Government, B-schools, Corporate bodies. If you have some suggestion for their betterment, you can put them forth in brief, if required.

Avoid unwarranted grilling: Be brief

Do not go on speaking simply because you find a long pause after you have finished answering a question. It might give an opportunity to the interviewers to grill you on something you have inadvertently spoken. Remember Brevity is the soul of wit. So be brief and to the point.

Please do not beat about the bush. Never try to mislead the interviewers by guessing and concocting an answer. You will be caught in your own web and will lose whatever credit you earned earlier.