

# Plugging the loopholes...

'Where there is a will, there is a way' - if there is a proverb that could sum up the placement journey of Mahesh Kasana, a final year student of the prestigious Army Institute of Technology, this would be it. Read on to find out how his efforts and perseverance paid rich dividends when he earned himself a placement with Com-mvault as a Junior Engineer at a whopping package of ₹14.5 lakh per annum, even though two major challenges stared him in the face when he joined college...

**By Namrata Gulati Sapra**

## Starting right from the scratch

The P-word is enough to run a shiver down the spine of final year students but the placement time can turn into a nightmare of sorts when you know you are at a disadvantage because of your background. "Frankly, I come from a Hindi speaking background. That said, I had no IT-related background and barely had any knowledge of it. Thus, I had my own set of doubts and fears about being able to get a placement." But Mahesh was too determined not to give up. Like most winners, his preparation began from day one, "I pulled up my socks right from the very first year of college. Thankfully, AIT provides a conducive enough environment to turn one's weaknesses into strengths. The faculty is approachable too," Mahesh says.

## The only answer: Practice

Practice makes a man perfect and that is exactly what it did to the man in question. Mahesh recalls, "My college has been a great support system throughout. In the first year, our communication skills are polished. In the second year, our concepts on data structures and other computer-related subjects are taken care of. In the year that followed, the mighty and the most challenging Operating System was made our focus." Mahesh, being well aware of his Achilles' heel worked day and night to overcome his vulnerabilities. He says, "In the first year of college, I attended all the mock sessions that replicated



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placement interviews with corporate professionals and underwent every bit of training I could in order to better my communication skills. That turned out to be a game changer for me as it upped my confidence considerably. In addition to that, I rigorously studied at an individual level for five to six hours everyday and worked harder on the IT subjects as I had already noticed that IT firms primarily visited our college to hire students. So I did not have an option but to study all by myself to make up for my shortcomings that could not have been overlooked.”

### Cracking a tough nut

Mahesh set his sights on an opportunity to work with Commvault as a Junior Engineer at package of ₹14.5 lakh per annum, but, it was not going to be an easy nut to crack. After all, this was an IT giant. The first round had 300 students appearing for a five-question test that was all about coding and data structure. And the challenge was to solve them in just 70 minutes! Never once did Mahesh lose his calm or patience. “All my hard work and hours and hours of practice gave me my confidence. The investment did not disappoint me as I knew all the answers. And guess what, I was even sure of making it to the second round in



### TRIED & TESTED

**Mahesh gives some tips that might come in handy when your placement time is round the corner!**

- Practice, practice and some more is the key to all your anxieties and worries. So is self-study, that too right from the time you join college.
- Understand your weaknesses and work hard to turn them into your strengths. Do not give up easily even if achieving this takes its own sweet time. And most likely, it will.
- No matter what, keep your cool and patience. Be confident. Your perseverance will yield results, sooner or later.

spite of having left a question and I was right! Later in the day, during afternoon hours, the results were declared. I was not surprised to find my name among the list of those who were to proceed to round two to compete further,” he remembers.

He added, “Among 300 students, 28 students were shortlisted for the second round, which entailed as many as nine hours of coding! Phew! Even though we were allowed breaks in between, nine hours is no joke as it exhausts you mentally and drains you out. But I was not willing to let this golden opportunity slip out of my hand. I was not willing for the thorough knowledge I had acquired in the last few years to go to waste. Nor was I going to let my practice be useless. I was determined to join this very organisation and that kept me going throughout my placement journey. I performed well in this tricky round too and grabbed myself this coveted golden opportunity to work with this IT giant at a great package!”

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### Sanitation woes in India

More than half of the India’s rural population (52.1 per cent), continue to defecate in the open, as per the most recent *Swachhta Status* report in 2015. The report by National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) notes that among households with sanitary toilet, 95.6 percent use these toilets. But, India fares poorly in comparison to data compiled by r.i.c.e - Sub-Saharan Africa had only about half of the rural open defecation compared to India.