

What are some key points that one should keep in mind while preparing for UPSC Civil Services? (Minal Karanwal, AIR 35, CSE 2018)

Here are some key points that should be kept in mind while preparing for UPSC:

1. Hardwork is more important than having genius: In my opinion if you could put in disciplined and targeted hardwork, with basic comprehension and analytical skills, it would fetch more return than merely relying on your genius.
2. Discipline: without daily, weekly, monthly targets, you are venturing in an endless dark tunnel. Never sit aimlessly with a book or concept. Finish portions in the time space set by you. Have a fixed time of sleep because your mind needs to be disciplined for this exam.
3. Work expands to fill time, hence finish your prelims and mains course atleast 1 month before the actual examination. If every child is given 15 more days to study for prelims, they'd be in a better position to crack it.
4. Study in the first half hour of waking up. If you don't do this, your mind will forcibly push you towards negative thoughts.
5. Practice, practice and practice: whether it be prelims mock papers or mains answer writing, if you don't test yourself, you'll fail even before UPSC fails you. Find about [Xaam's Prelims Online test series here](#)

6. Be true to yourself: self assessment should be your biggest weapon because people will lie, both about your positives and negatives. You need to assess the waters before you continue to venture towards the shore you are seeking.
7. Make notes: short/keyword oriented note making is important. It helps you to organise knowledge better and makes revision faster and easier. For example, under Mauryan empire, sources, polity, society, economy can be categorised to make memorising easier.
8. Revision: this in my opinion is the key to clearing the examination, in direct proportion to your chances at clearing it. Revise standard books atleast 10 times and notes another ten times, such that your subconscious dictates you even under stress and anxiety.
9. Ban on social media and reduced phone usage: this may differ from people to people. IMO it helped me distract less from the frivolous outside world and helped me maintain my focus.
10. Enjoy!: To have a sense of joy and to find out one day in a week where you can watch a movie or relax with friends or family is important as it prevents your brain from wearing out. Till the time you find 'padhai' as a burden, it'd remain so.

Hence, the crux is to have a single minded focus on the examination and then by virtue of this develop within oneself all the capabilities that are required for clearing it.

Cheers!

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Prelims 2018 cut off for General was 98 out of 200. Considering the cutoff ,Prelims 2018 paper was one of the toughest. Those who missed by few marks, remember that more than knowledge, a calm mind and belief in yourself is required to sail through in such situations. Only difference between you and any successful candidate is that ,they did not panic and solved the paper with calm mind. They practiced for this situation. Practice is the key to secure your spot this year. Join

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