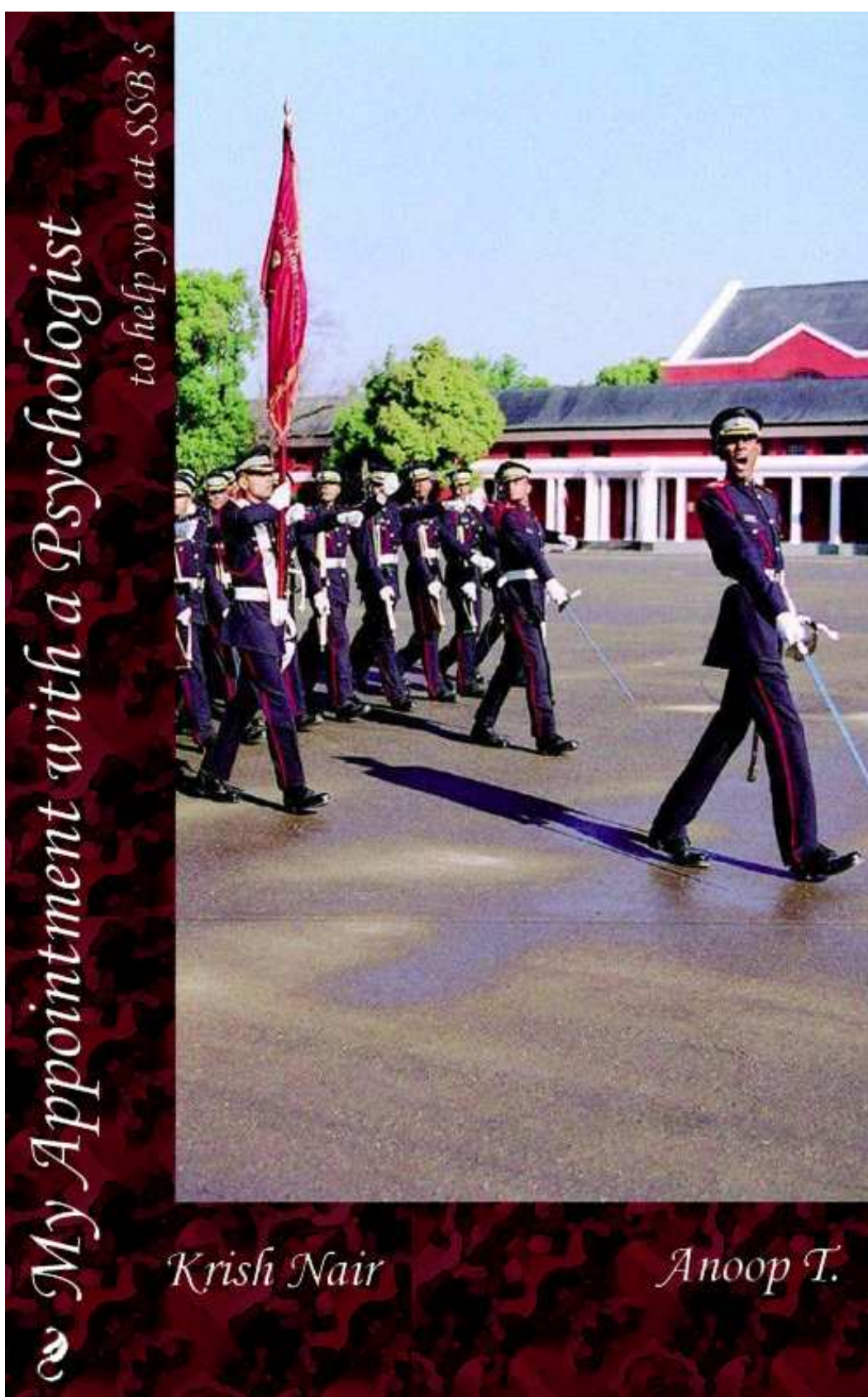


My Appointment with a Psychologist by Krish Nair & Anoop T.





My Appointment with a Psychologist

Why do we start the TAT story like 'Mohan was very intelligent and hardworking boy....?'

Why do we always try to 'Attack' and 'Capture' the gang of dacoits who have come to loot the bus....?

Why do we scream 'Three' points in GD when someone has just put forward his view....?

Why do we 'Stubbornly' whisk away the Phatta and Balli from our friends in the group tasks....?

Why do we 'Compete' unnecessarily in the group tasks....?

Why do we 'Change' our 'Natural Self' when we step into SSB's....?

Get your answers to these questions and many more....

About the Authors



Krish Nair has pursued his Bachelors in Engineering (Mech.), University of Pune and Anoop T. has pursued his Bachelors in Engineering (I.T), University of Mumbai. Both have worked as fellow researchers

in the subject of Inter-Personal Relationships and Human Behavioural Psychology. The book '

My Appointment with a Psychologist' is an outcome of their real experiences and observations at the SSB's.

They have also conducted workshops on counseling and grooming the aspirants who wish to see themselves in Uniform.

For Private Circulation Only

My Appointment with a Psychologist by Krish Nair & Anoop T.

*My
Appointment
With a
Psychologist
to help you at SSB's*

**Krish Nair
Anoop T.**

My Appointment with a Psychologist by Krish Nair & Anoop T.

My Appointment With a Psychologist

KRISH NAIR AND ANOOP T.

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My Appointment with a Psychologist by Krish Nair & Anoop T.

*To our Family
to whom we shall remain highly
indebted
for setting the foundation
on which this book is based*

My Appointment with a Psychologist by Krish Nair & Anoop T.

*“When you go home
Tell them of us and say
For your tomorrow
We gave our today”*

-A Soldier's Epitaph

My Appointment with a Psychologist by Krish Nair & Anoop T.

**This book is Gratefully Dedicated
By its Authors**

to

Sigmund Freud

whose genius contributed the most fruitful theory
on which this book is based.

to

Col. Shantanu

whose inputs were a hive of great
suggestiveness

to

Col. Jagdish Dagar

whose expositions of psychological approach
established a methodological standard

to

Brig. Ravinder Sharma VSM

whose suggestions and feedbacks
made a difference

to

Er. Praful Gangurde

whose support was priceless
at the time of need

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The Authors are also equally grateful to less tangible gifts :
The Serenity, Loyalty and Superior Competence of
All
those who did make their contributions count
though small or large
but from their bottom-hearts
to having help this book
see the light of the day

My Appointment with a Psychologist by Krish Nair & Anoop T.

*My
Appointment
With a
Psychologist*

A Word to the Readers

*When Heaven is about to confer a great Office on any man, it first
disciplines his mind with sufferings*

-George Philip Wilkins

In an organism, the passage of time is marked by rhythms of assimilation, differentiation and integration. Success and failure produce their effects. But, there is learning and there is maturation. Thus, new and previously precluded combinations come into being, and with the perishing of each moment the organism is left a different creature, never to repeat itself exactly. Neither moment, nor epoch is typical of whole. Life is an irreversible sequence of non-identical events. Some of these changes however occur in a predictable and lawful manner.

In one sense, this book is a personality development manual and a synergistic product of many minds. It has come as a result of compiling the true facts and wide experiences related to the SSB's. It is based on the nascent and valuable feedbacks from aspirants of the Armed Forces. It describes the tools you will need to groom your personality according to the requirements of the Armed Forces. It will also help you to construct an Insight into your existing self and changes that have to be incorporated.

One of the purposes of this book is to familiarize with the Selection Procedure and the essential know-how of the SSB's. It will also offer blue prints as to what it takes to lead the 'Men in War'.

DO YOU HAVE IT IN YOU?

How to read this Book?

Personality is a subject matter of psychology, the life history of a single man being a unit with which this discipline has to deal. It is not possible to study all human beings or all experiences of one human being. Human beings respond to stimulus. Every response is partially or fully determined by the after-effects of previous experiences.

The branch of psychology which principally concerns itself with the study of human lives and the factors that influence their course, which investigates individual differences and types of personality, may be termed 'Personology' instead of 'the Psychology of Personality', a clumsy and tautological expression. This book is entirely based on Personology.

Change in Personality cannot be sudden, alarming or abrupt. In case, if it has, it is only temporary and the person would revert back to his original self under stress. So, please don't expect to change your personality, all of the sudden. It is a gradual process and any thing that is gradual, is permanent. There is no doubt that human nature is such that, we go on improving if we have the required urge throughout our life.

Many words in this book have been highlighted and concepts been repeated. This is purposely done so as to get the message of this book into the *sub-conscious* mind of the reader. The readers are advised to stop upon the highlighted words, take time to get the meaning and gravity they convey and only then proceed ahead. Embarking a change in the mindset of the reader is the sole duty of this book. Having a respectable know-how of Behavioral Psychology and Inter-personal Relationships plus a qualified senior psychologist to assist me in my pursuit, I dare to quote that

"Repetition is the only way to Learn and Succeed".
Therefore, please go, go and go on for Repetition.

Repetitions and consistencies are due in part to fact that, impressions of situations leave enduring 'traces' in the organism, which may be reactivated by the appearance of situations that resemble them. And because of the connections of these evoked traces with particular reaction systems, the organism is apt to respond to new situations as it did to former ones. Some of the past is always alive in the present.

Please don't consider the contents of this book as tips and tricks. They are just an eye-opener to help reveal your true self. Neither should you expect to sail through the SSB's by just having a glance of this book. Read the concepts again and again, till you get what you want. Go to the depth and realm of the chapters included and analyse where you stand at present. Your self-awareness and attitude to incorporate *Change* will mean a lot, while this book is just a simple path-breaker to help you in your future endeavours.

Enjoy reading this book and let us assure you that *"What you aspire, shall you achieve"*. Persistence and consistence will assist you in your journey to the job that commands highest respect in the world- *An Officer in the Armed Forces!*

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THE SERVICES SELECTION BOARD (SSB)

An Introduction

It has been the privilege of the '**Noblesse Oblige**' to lead the men in the war. It was the duty of the 'Kshatriyas' to fight the wars. The setbacks and failures experienced during the First World War led to the concept of "*Right people for the Right job*". The selection of men based on psychology, which had no role to play earlier, was introduced. It was during the year 1917 that the U.S Army started making use of number of psychological tests for the selection of its recruits for various branches of its Army. Later, during 1927, it was the turn of the Germans to set up an exclusive department of Corps of Military Psychologists to assist in the process of selection of the men for the Army. Later, United Kingdom set up its first War Office Selection Board for the selection of the men for the military in 1942.

When the Far East became the major area of operations, there was a great expansion in the Armed Forces of India too. And it was during this time in February 1943, when War Office Selection Board (WOSB) came into being at Dehradun on an experimental basis for the purpose of selection of Officers with the help of psychological techniques. In 1948, the Government of India appointed the 'Ghosh Committee' to review the system of selection of Officers to the Armed Forces. On the basis of recommendations of the Committee of experts, the Psychological Research Wing (PRW) was set up on 29th August, 1949 under the Defence Science Organization. The main role envisaged for the PRW was to conduct research in personnel Selection Methods; to develop tools for selection of personnel at Services Selection Boards (SSB's); to maintain selection results and relevant statistics, to train the assessors for effective functioning at the SSB's. In 1962, PRW's scope was expanded and was re-designated as Defence Psychological Research (DPR) with the

establishment of Applied Psychological Laboratory (APL) on September 24, 1962, as its lower formation. Naval Psychological Research Institute (NPRU) at Kochi, which has been established in year 1956 under Defence Science Laboratory (DSL), which was made the part of APL in 1962. Later in 1963, an ideology group was constituted in DPR to study problems related Morale, Motivation and Operational Efficiency of the Armed Forces. APL and NPRU was merged into DPR on August 26, 1967, however the NPRU continued to function at Kochi. Subsequently, the DPR was constituted as an independent unit and designated as Defence Institute of Psychological Research in October, 1982.

Applications for NDA including 10+2, Navy, IMA, OTA, and AFA are called by UPSC twice a year. The exams are accordingly held in April and September each year. Applications of successful aspirants are sent for onward distributions to Selection Boards. For all other entries like 10+2 (Tech) Army and Navy, Ground Duties (Air Force), Graduate Technical Entry for Army, Navy and Air Force, the applications are called directly by the respective Service Headquarters. Short-listed applications are sent to the Selection Boards for personality assessment.

Under the current system, there are combined Services Selection Boards for screening Army and Navy entries. These boards have been grouped under different Selection Centres and are controlled by the Directorate of Recruiting under Adjutant Generals Branch. The Air Force Boards as separate entities are functionally administered by the Directorate of Personnel, Air Headquarters. The technical guidance to all the Boards and the training of the personnel employed on Selection duties is provided by the DIPR.

THE FUNCTIONING OF SSB's

Selecting right people for the jobs and placing them in right roles plays an important role in determining, whether they are giving their best to the organization. The methods of selection have fluctuated from brisk and arbitrary to elaborate and intricate. Through proper selection of the new entrants, it is possible to build a desirable culture and desirable norms in the organization in the Armed Forces.

A proper Selection System helps to achieve –

- A feeling of satisfaction amongst the employees, that their capabilities are being utilized by the organization and they are not wasting their talents. This feeling is likely to raise the morale of the employees and may result in higher ends of commitment and productivity.
- Supplying the right people to the organization.

One wrong person selected for a given job can cause a host of problems in an organization. Therefore, an organization should ensure that suitable people are recruited, even if it involves some investment. There is a difference between the selection system between the corporate / private enterprise and the Armed Forces. The selection at the entry level in the private world is done on 'as required basis' and has the '**best fit**' philosophy, meaning that the best of the lot is selected. The Armed Forces has a '**right fit**' philosophy, wherein the Selection Centres are not aware of the vacancies and they recommend aspirants for selection, whom they find fit for the services.

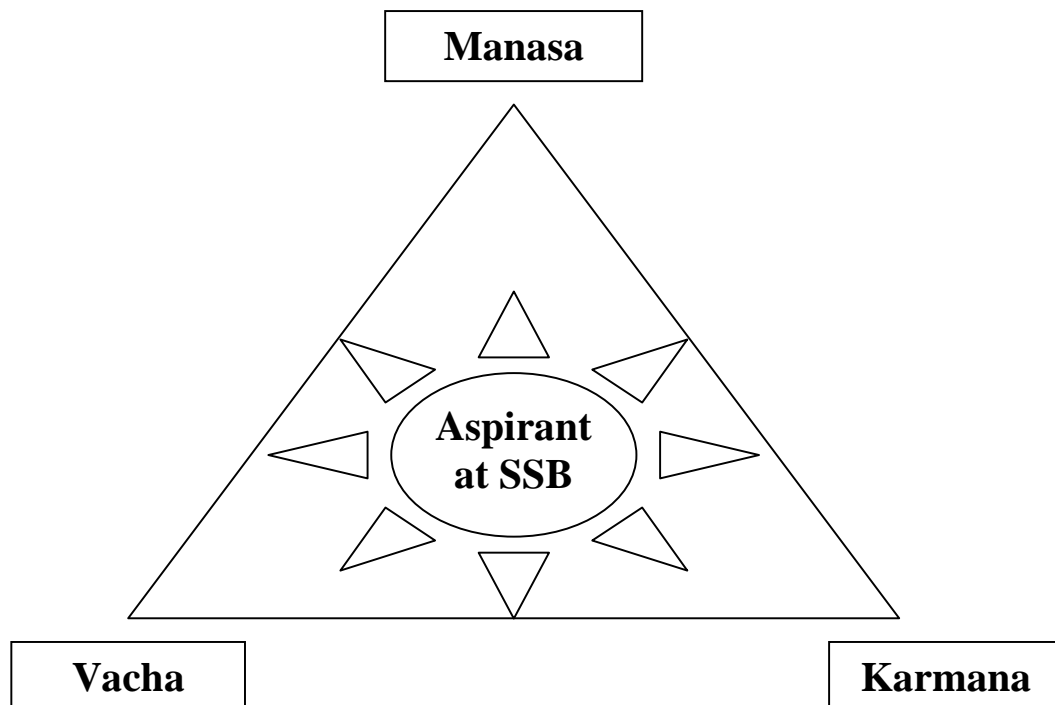
The process of selection varies from organization to organization. Here, at the SSB's, the story is entirely different as far as the selection procedures are concerned.

There are three techniques of assessing namely –

1. Psychological Testing.
2. Interview Testing.
3. Group Testing.

The basis for operation of these three techniques can be related to a very old concept of *understanding* people, according to which personality of an individual can be assessed by –

- a. Observing how one utilizes his Mental Faculties. (**Manasa**)
- b. Listening to his Conversation. (**Vacha**)
- c. Watching how he performs on the Ground. (**Karmana**)



Thus, precise observations of manifestations of these three aspects, namely Manasa, Vacha and Karmana provide sufficient information to assess an individual's personality. Information / data is procured through *Psychological Tests* (Manasa), *Interview* (Vacha) and *Group Testing* (Karmana). These three techniques thus present a *three dimensional picture* of the aspirant.

There is a two stage selection procedure. The first stage consists of

Stage I – Screening Process

The Screening process was started in October 1998 in the Army and Navy. The main purpose of this process was to screen out 40% to 60% candidates, who prima facie, do not possess in adequate measure, the required attributes. The

Stage I testing process (Day 1) consists of –

1. Intelligence Tests to assess the Officer's Intelligence Rating (OIR).
2. Picture Perception and Discussion Test.
3. On the Spot Conference

Stage II – Personality Testing

The Personality Testing consists of three tests –

1. Psychological Testing (Day 2)
 - a. Thematic Apperception Test.
 - b. Word Association Test.

c. Situation Reaction Test.

d. Self Description Test.

2. Group Testing (Day 3 and 4)

a. Group Discussions.

b. Group Planning Exercise

c. Progressive Group Task.

d. Group Obstacle Race.

e. Half Group Task.

f. Lecturette.

g. Individual Obstacles.

h. Command Task.

i. Final Group Task.

The Interview is carried out by an Interviewing Officer on the day, the aspirant is available.

Final Conference (Day 5)

A final conference of all the three assessors who have been assessing each aspirant is held. Each aspirant is discussed and based on the assessment of all the three assessors, the aspirant is termed to be recommended or not for Stage II.

Medical Examination (4-5 working days)

The recommended aspirants undergo a detailed Medical Examination in the Military Hospital. Those declared medically fit are recommended for selection. Thereafter, a Merit List of aspirants are prepared. Depending upon the number of vacancies, call letters are sent to the aspirants who make it in the Merit, directing them to report to the Training Institutes.

ASPIRANT'S PERCEPTION OF SSB'S

The SSB's shoulder the key responsibility of selecting the '**Officers of the Armed Forces**', who would always bear in mind that –

The Safety, Honour and Welfare of Your Country Comes First, Always and Every Time.

The Honour, Welfare and Comfort of the Men You Command Comes Next.

Your Own Ease, Comfort and Safety Comes Last, Always and Every Time.

- Field Marshall Chetwode

There is no doubt that, when it comes to matter of selection, they need the *Right* people. Because, you are being taken to lead the men in war. For your men, your orders would mean the difference between *life* and *death*. One wrong person selected can pose a threat to lives of many people. The SSB's would never select the wrong people and reject the right ones.

Let me give you a common example. Suppose, you go to buy a gold coin. The jeweller hands you the coin and you look at it in awe, by its glittering external appearance. By chance, you happen to slide your fingers over it and notice some particles coming off. Now in doubt, you slightly rub the coin and find there is only a gold polish upon the surface and observing underneath, you found it to be made of some other metal. Frankly tell me, would you like to buy such a coin?

This is exactly the same way, the SSB's function as a whole. They just slide their fingers over the aspirants using their primary techniques (*Stage I testing*) and see the

particles of *artificial behaviour* coming off. Next, they rub you over and above, thus revealing your *unnatural* and *facade* personality (*Stage II testing*). As you *didn't* buy the above coin, they *don't* want to buy you either.

On my discussion with a Senior Psychologist, I encountered a disheartening truth. He told me that some aspirants genuinely possess the attributes of becoming an officer, if not every one. But where the problem lies is that, they put a *hard shield of artificiality* upon themselves and lose *flexibility*. Now as mentioned above, the SSB's have got loads of weapons in their armour, to rip and blow off even the toughest of the shields that has been put up. And the result? Please take the courtesy to imagine.

When I am speaking of the aspirants who possess the qualities of becoming an officer, I would like to quote some important points, which I think should make a difference in thinking.

*There is a huge difference between the selection system of the corporate / private enterprises and the Armed Forces. The selection at the entry level in the private world is done on 'as required basis' and has the '**Best Fit**' philosophy, meaning that the best of the lot is selected. The Armed Forces has a '**Right Fit**' philosophy, wherein the Selection Centres are not aware of the vacancies and they recommend aspirants for selection, whom they find fit for the services.*

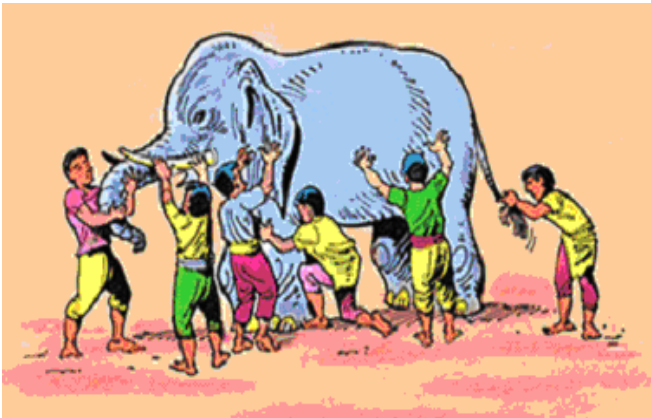
The wide perception gap between the Best Fit and Right Fit is matter of worry and this leads to unnecessary *Competition*.

Throughout the history of Services Selection System, <i>Competition</i> only and itself has never been instrumental nor capable to push the performances to win the recommendation.

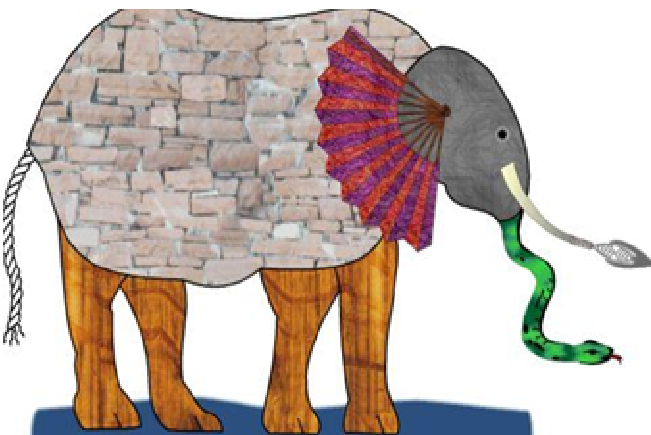
Let me make it more clear to you by citing an interesting example. During our childhood days, we all have come across the story of '*Six Blind Men and the Elephant*'. We know the story, of how the men were given the opportunity to individually touch and feel the elephant and draw a conclusion as to how an elephant looks. Each person perceived the elephant as per his senses. Same is the case with the aspirant's perception of SSB's. Let us see how it is -



⇒ **Actual SSB**

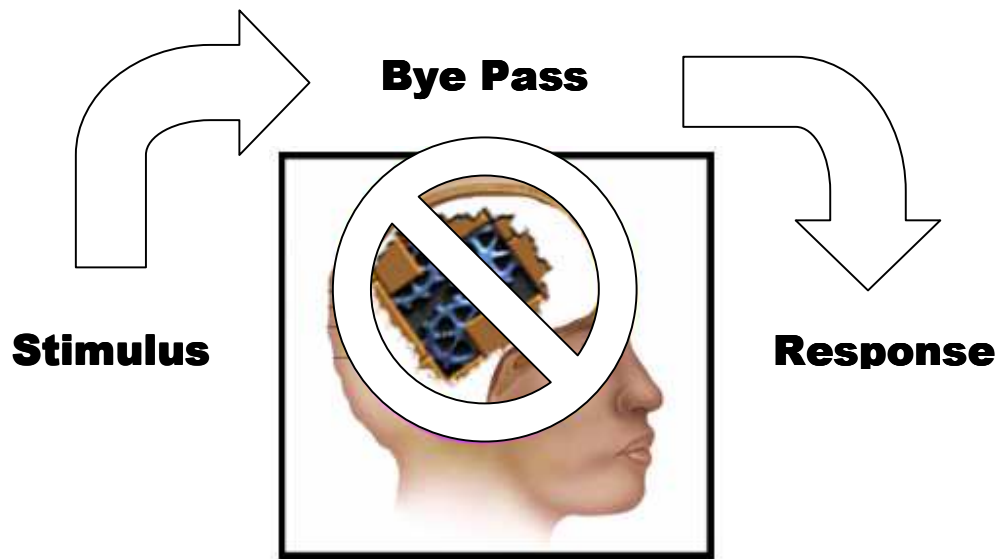


⇒ **Perception Gap**



⇒ **SSB as
'Perceived' by
the Aspirants**

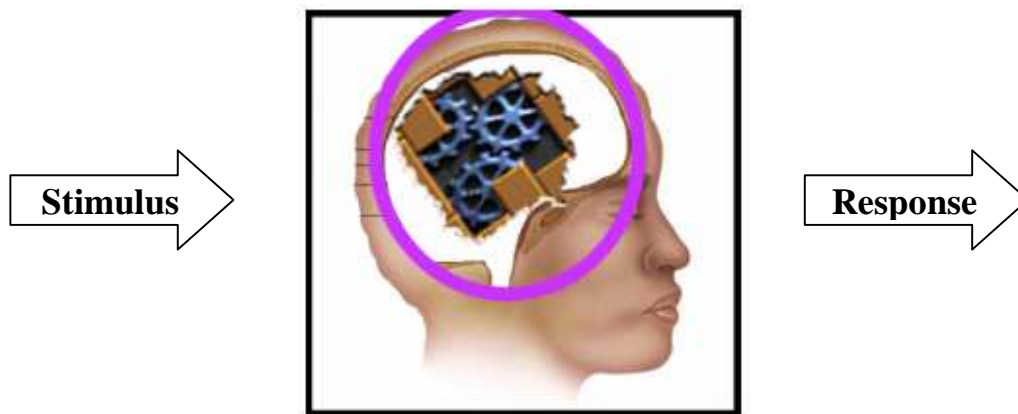
What We Do?



This is exactly what most of us do at the SSB's. We say and do things, which we have learnt from somewhere, regardless of realizing what the situation is. For instance, no soon do we listen to the topic in the group discussions, than we start "Yes Gentlemen I think....." We *compete* mutually. We pay *no heed* to the *Stimulus*, *bye-pass* it and directly *Respond*. We don't see as to what is the demand of the situation and act aimlessly. This is where we lose our '*Natural-Self*' and needless to say, we lose everything else at SSB's.

What We Have to Do?

The *natural* and *simple* approach is the 'Stimulus - Response' approach. It is *Mother Nature's* way of helping human beings thrive on planet Earth. Throughout the book, I have tried to explain this approach. So, you can read further to know details. Try to go into the realm and depth of what is mentioned and you will feel the change.



In order to bring a change into our personality, we must know how the personality is formed over a period of time.

THE PERSONALITY PATTERN, CONCEPT OF SELF AND MOULDING OF PERSONALITY

What is *Personality*? Is it something a few lucky people are born with a gift from the Gods? Or is it within the reach of everyone? If it can be acquired, then why doesn't everyone develop the kind of personality that will bring him success, popularity and happiness that everyone wants? If it can be acquired, then why so many people have the personalities that bring them the things they do not want: failure, unhappiness and lack of social acceptance?

The term "personality" is derived from the Latin word "persona" which means mask. To disapprove the traditional belief that personality is some nebulous, mysterious quality, the studies have suggested that the personality pattern is something that can be objectively observed in the speech and actions of the individuals and measured with a relative degree of accuracy.

Of all the definitions of personality, the most widely accepted is the short, but all including definition proposed by psychologist Gordon W. Allport of Harvard University. He said:

"Personality is the dynamic organization, within the individual, of those psycho-physical systems, that determine his characteristic behavior or thought".

If we analyze the key words in the above definition, it will give us a comprehensive meaning and convey how much stress Allport has placed on *Motivation*.

- a) **Organization:** Organization emphasizes the patterning of independent parts of personality structure, each of which has a special relation to whole. It points that personality is not just the sum

of traits, one added to another, but rather that the different traits or manifest aspects of the personality pattern are held together and influenced by a central core, called the "*Concept of Self*"

- b) **Dynamic:** Dynamic refers to constantly or changing nature to personality. Not only does the personality become more complex in structure as the individual's physical and psychological characteristics, but from time and from situation to situation, there are changes in structural organization. The changes are not radical nor are they necessarily permanent. They are, in effect, fluctuations in the intensity of traits already present. They are thus quantitative rather than qualitative changes. The dynamic nature of personality accounts for the difficulty experienced in trying to measure it.
- c) **Psycho-physical Systems:** A psycho-physical system is composed of habits, attitudes emotional states, sentimentally, motives and beliefs all of which all are psychological but have a physical basis in the individual's neural, glandular or general body states.
- d) **Determine:** The word "determine" emphasizes the motivational role of psycho-physical systems. Within the individual, these systems lie behind specific acts and influence the form they will take. Once an attitude, belief, habit, sentiment or some other element of psychophysical systems has been aroused by a stimulus, either from the environment, or within the individual, it provokes and expresses adjective act which are characteristic form of expression of that individual.

- e) **Characteristic:** The adjective “characteristic” refers to the distinctiveness or uniqueness of the person’s behavior as an expression of the pattern of his particular psycho-physical systems. Even the behavior and concepts that people apparently share with others are in reality individual. Some, of course, are less idiosyncratic than others but none lacks a personal flavor.
- f) **Behavior and Thought:** Together, behavior and thought is a “blanket to designate anything whatsoever an individual may do”. And what the person does mainly is adjust to environment, though he may also reflect on it. This means that patterns of behavior, determined by the psycho-physical systems within the individual, are not aimless, but are directed towards goal of fitting the individual into the physical and social environment in which he lives.

Personality is Unique

As Allport has said, each person is “*unique and never repeated phenomenon*”. Each person is unique in that, it differs from all other patterns in the combination and organization of its constituent traits, in the strength of different traits, and in its core- the person’s concept of himself. While a person’s attributes may be qualitatively similar to those of other people, each of his attributes differs quantitatively from those of others. You may, for example, find any number of brave men, but each man’s bravery will differ quantitatively from that of the other.

Causes of Individuality

- a) Individuality is a course of both heredity and environment. As Allport pointed out, "Nature's method of sexual reproduction guarantees superlatively novel genetic equipment for every mortal that is born". Each of the 46 chromosomes that appear in a newly formed cell which will eventually develop into a new human being contains approximately 30,000 genes or carriers of individual traits. The likelihood of duplication of this hereditary endowment, as has been estimated is, one in 300 billion.
- b) Since, at every moment, the individual is within the environment which largely determines its behavior. It is therefore important to define the environment, since two individuals may behave differently only because; they are, by chance encountering different conditions. No two human beings (with the possible exception of identical twins) have even the potentiality of developing alike, especially when to all these genetic difference we add the differences that will occur in the environment and experiences of each mortal person.
- c) The uniqueness of each individual's personality is thus derived from a combination of:

- ✓ *"A" Factors or Constitutional Factors.*

- ✓ *"B" Factors or Hereditary Factors.*

Both of these vary from person to person. Furthermore, the effect of environmental simulation is influenced by others, past and present, both constitutional and environmental. Even when the hereditary endowment is identical, as in identical twins,

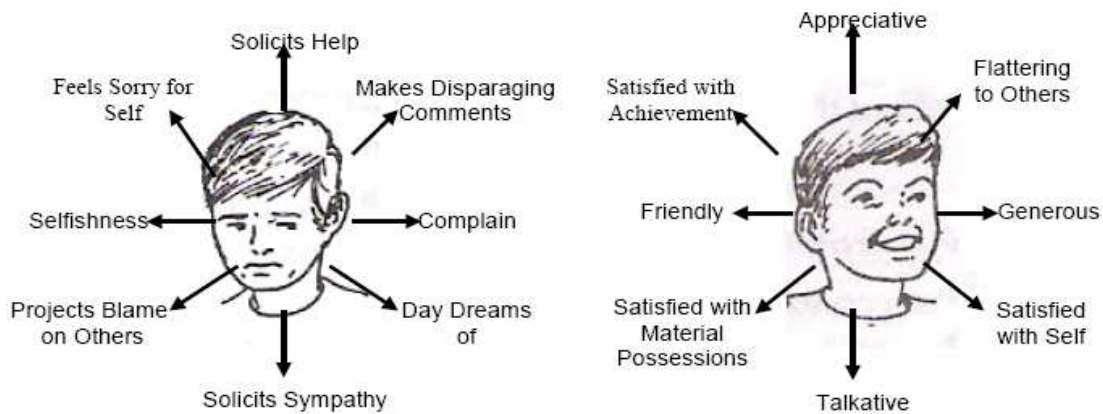
the chances of an identical environment of identical life experiences, and of identical reactions and interactions are believed to be zero.

Role of Heredity

The personality pattern is inwardly determined by and closely associated with the maturing of physical and mental characteristics which constitute the individual's hereditary endowment. Although, social and other environmental factors affect the form the personality pattern takes, it is not instilled or controlled from without but evolves from the potentials within the individual. The principle raw materials of personality physique, intelligence and temperament are results of heredity. How they will develop will depend on environmental influences.

Concept of Self

The personality pattern is composed of core or center of gravity called the "*Concept of Self*" and integrated systems of learned responses, called "traits". These are interrelated, with the core influencing the traits, which are the individual's characteristic methods of adjustment to life situation. To show the inter-relationship, the pattern can be compared to a wheel in which the hub represents the concept of self and the spokes represent the traits. Just as the spokes of the wheel are held in position and, thus influenced by the hub, so the traits are influenced by the *Concept of Self*.



A person's concept of self influences his characteristic patterns of adjustment.

Traits

The personality pattern is unified multi-dimensional structure in which the *Concept of Self* is the core or center of gravity. Into this structure are integrated many pattern of response tendencies, known as traits which are closely related to and influenced by the *Concept of Self*. The major function of traits is to integrate lesser habits, attitudes and skills into larger thought-feeling-action patterns. The *Concept of Self* is the true core or center of gravity of the pattern. Personality traits have been described and defined in many ways though most of the descriptions and definitions are similar in that they include certain common salient points. *A trait has been described as an aspect of dimension or personality which consists of a group of related and consistent reaction characteristic of person's typical adjustment.* All descriptions and definitions of traits emphasized that traits are learned tendencies to:

- a) Evaluate situations in a predictable way and
- b) React in a manner which the person has found more or less successful in similar situations and when similarly motivated.

Since the person's characteristic ways of reacting are learned, each new reaction is influenced to some extent by the success the person has had in his previous adjustment to similar reactions. As a result, the traits while being predictable are not automatic acts which occur in the same form every time they are aroused by the core of personality pattern-*Concept of Self*. Allport has stressed the role of learning in bringing about slight variations in a predictable manner in which a person adjusts to situations.

The trait clusters are divided into two categories; *Surface and Source traits*. Surface traits are those that show the influence of environmental molding and which therefore vary in different cultures. Source traits are environmental or constitutional factors so basic that they apply in any culture and influence many different surface traits.

Characteristics of Traits

Every trait has three characteristics: Uniqueness, degree of likeableness and consistency.

- a) **Uniqueness:** Traits are dimensions of behavior in which individuals differ. Like intelligence, it is distributed as per normal distribution curve with most people clustering around the mean or the average in any particular trait.
- b) **Likeableness:** Some traits such as honesty, generosity and trustworthiness, are liked by others while some are disliked-rudeness, cruelty and ego-centrism. These attitudes towards result from social learning in a particular cultural setting and are almost universal within the culture.
- c) **Consistency:** This means that a person can be expected to behave in approximately the same way in similar situations. Consistency like uniqueness is

relative. A person may be self-confident in a situation because he has mastered the skills needed to adjust to it and has experienced success in similar situations and vice-versa.

Role of Learning

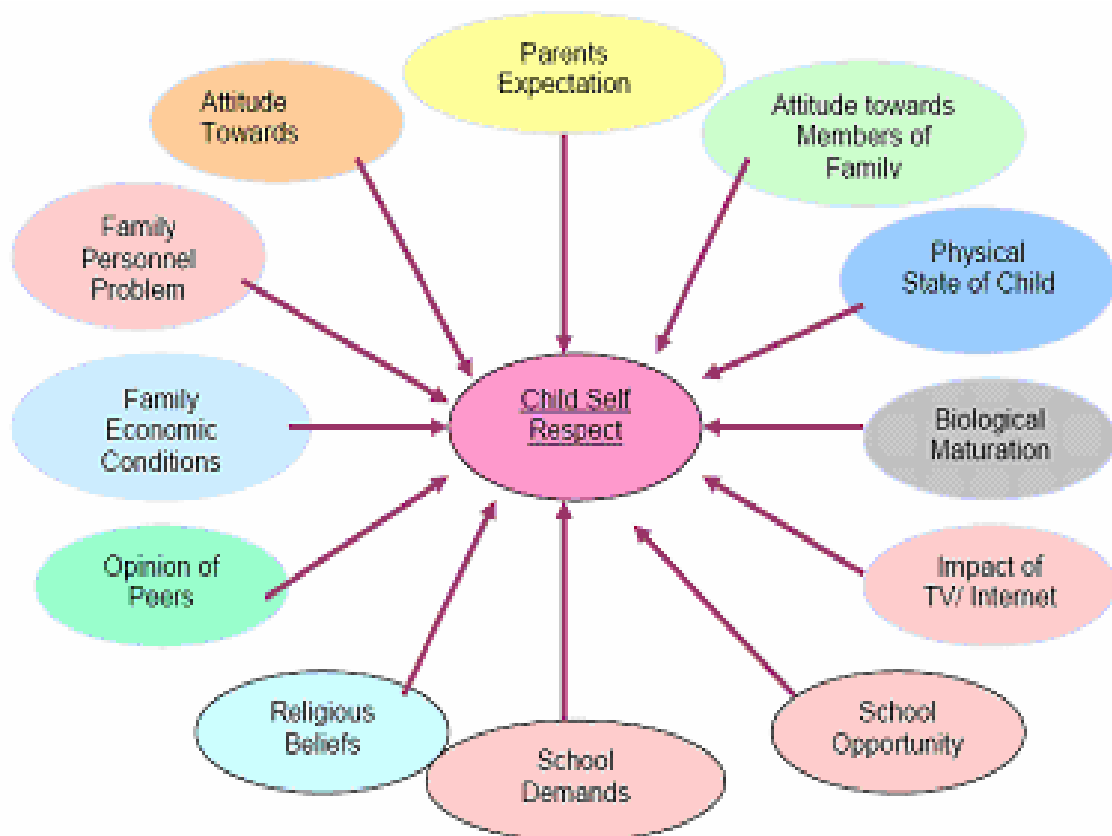
Attitudes towards self, characteristic modes of responding to people and situations, attitudes towards the assumption of socially approved roles, and methods of personal and social adjustment, including the use of defense mechanisms are learned through repetition and are reinforced by the satisfaction they bring. Gradually, the *Concept of Self* is built up and the learned responses become habitual constituting the "traits" in the individual's personality pattern.

Social pressures within and outside the home determines what traits will be incorporated into the pattern. Knowing that learning plays an important role in the development of the personality pattern, it is important for two reasons

- a) ***Firstly, it tells us that control can be exercised within hereditary limitations, to ensure that the individual will develop the kind of personality pattern that will lead to good personal and social adjustments.***
- b) ***Secondly, it tells us that the unhealthy self-concepts and unacceptable pattern can be changed or modified; however the change or modification is has to be attempted earliest.***

Role of Heredity and Learning

The personality pattern is based on the individual's hereditary endowment. But, it is not totally inherited. It is a product of learning during the course of prolonged social relationships with people both within and outside home. Three major factors are up in determining the development of personality pattern namely Individual's hereditary endowment, Early experiences within the family and Important events in later life outside the home environment. How different environmental influences affect personality development is illustrated in the figure below:



Environmental Influences Both At Home And Outside Effecting Self Concept

Moulding the Personality

It is, by now a well established fact that the environment plays a very important role in moulding a personality.

- a) The environment influences a personality pattern by providing the models from a person to imitate, by providing opportunities for learning culturally approved patterns of behavior and by preventing the learning of disapproved patterns.
- b) Another major influence of the environment comes from the opportunities and motivation, it provides for learning.

Studies also show that personality moulding begins early in life and that the early years are the critical ones. Once the foundation is laid, the environmental influences become less important with each passing year. The environmental sources of personality molding include the family, the school, the peer group, mass media, religion and person's occupation. Studies of long term persistence show that relatively minor changes occur in the *Concept of Self* or the person's characteristic method of adjusting to life.

It is not easy to change the concept of self of an individual after he has crossed a certain age, since it is made of attitudes, values, beliefs and aspirations which are established early in life and become fixed with age. The core qualities or the source qualities are more determined by heredity. They are inborn and innate traits which persist despite environment. An intelligent person can put up a front and hide it with his intelligence and skills, but they will always surface when under stress. Those qualities or traits which are

built up through learning and influenced by the environment ie surface traits can be changed.

In sum, the core of the personality pattern preserves the balance of traits within the pattern and thus lends stability to the pattern. Some traits are less stable than the other. Stability increases throughout childhood and by the end of adolescence most traits have become fixed. Personality traits closely associated with the biological structure and heredity viz the source or the core qualities are more stable and then thus less amendable to changes through training. Least stable are those which involve social relations and in our context most of the surface traits. Hence, these can be moulded.

THE SCREENING PROCEDURE

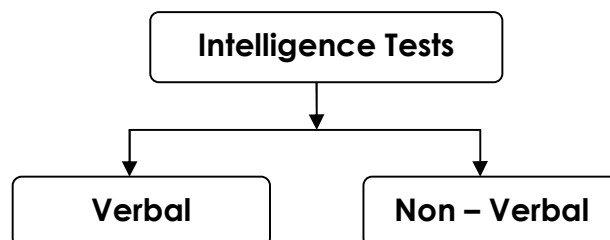
Screening is the preliminary Stage I testing procedure conducted by the SSB's to eliminate unlikely aspirants for further testing. The aspirants who get recommended in Stage I are retained for further testing, while others are sent back. Approximately 50% - 60% of the aspirants get weeded out.

Screening consists of -

- Officer's Intelligence Rating Test (OIR).
- Verbal and Non verbal IQ Tests.
- Picture Story Writing.
- Individual Picture Story Description for about 1 minute.
- Group Discussion on the Story.

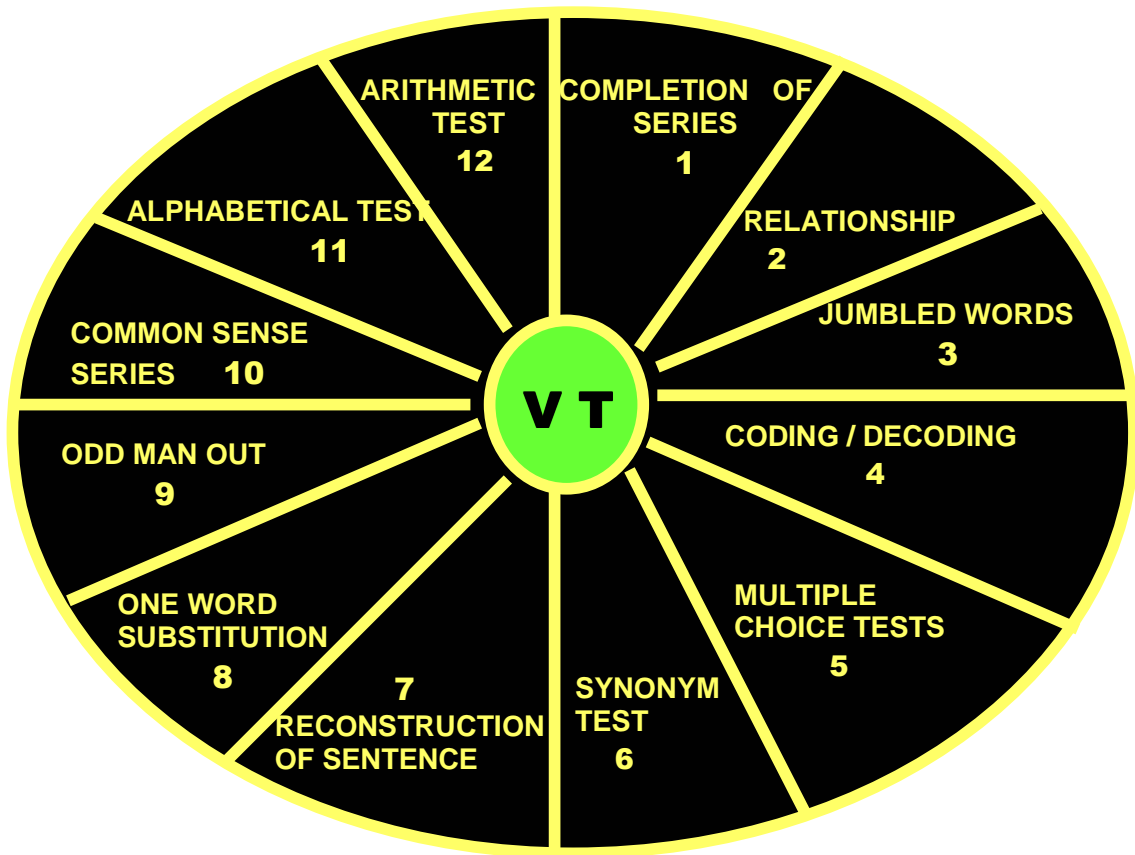
Intelligence Tests

The Intelligence Test comprises of two tests – Verbal and Non-verbal tests. These tests have 54-55 questions, and determine the Officer Intelligence Rating (OIR) of the attempter. They consist of simple linguistic, logical, analytical, and mathematical questions to test the basic common sense.



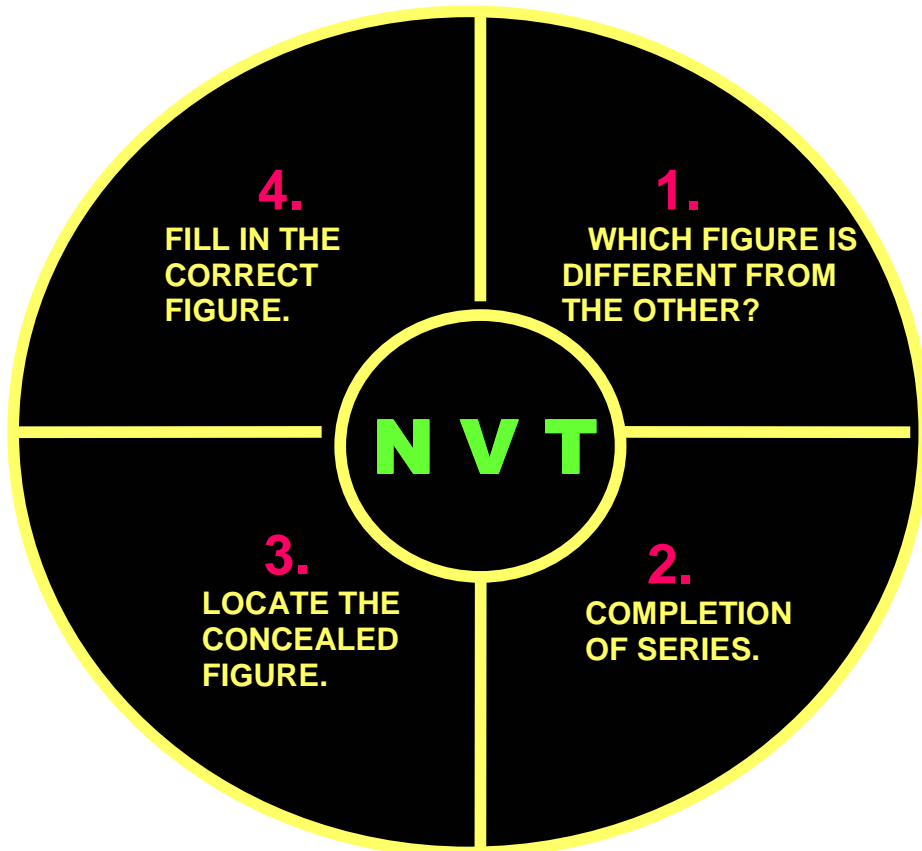
Verbal Tests

The Verbal tests and its contents are given in the representation below –



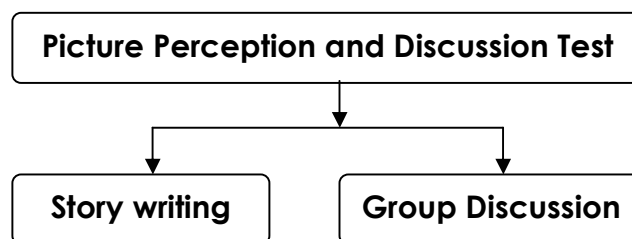
Non-Verbal Tests

The Non-Verbal tests and its contents are given in the representation below –



Picture Perception and Description Test (PPDT)

The governing test of the Stage I is the PPDT i.e. Picture Perception and Description test.



In this test, you will be shown a picture for about 30 seconds; one minute is given to determine the age, sex, mood of the person and to write the action. The next 4 minutes are given to write a story on the same. After that a group of aspirants are made to sit in front of the assessors for the discussion test which is the second part of the PPDT.

Group Discussion

The Group Discussion in PPDT is same as that of the ones in GTO series. We have observed every time, even in our day to day lives, that whenever we start a discussion something with someone, disagreement and conflicts bound to appear.

Disagreement causes dissatisfaction, disapproval and emotional disorder. Disagreement further means disapproval. To handle this, you need skill. How you react to a contradiction, as everyone is in competitive mood is the plot of interest for the assessors. The System wants to see your reaction against contradiction. Whether are you able to be emotionally stable? Or are you able to maintain the degree of patient listening?

Differences are ought and bound to happen and one should have the emotional stability to resolve the emotional disturbances and emotional disorders.

What is required to be done?

The Group Discussion warrants and invites your arguments. The assessors would like to see as to how much mentally cool and composed are you. The moment you speak – your tone, your selection of words, your gesture come which further create your acceptability in the group. Please do not seek an opportunity to stop the discussion. Qualities will come when the discussion is alive. If you are

able to draw the discussion in your favour, taking the consideration and the interest of your fellow members, that too with acceptable gesture and emotional order, you would hold a high chance to sail ahead.

Managing the contradiction is more important rather than entering into contradiction. Being mentally composed means to remain cool, calm, balanced and lively to maintain the harmony.

Body language is an indication of your intention and mental language. Body language should not overpower your words. Without body language, you become neutral. The combination of speed and accuracy makes you sharp, intelligent and speedy.

The existence of Leadership is to *manage* the Crisis. The Crisis may be of any nature or at any place.

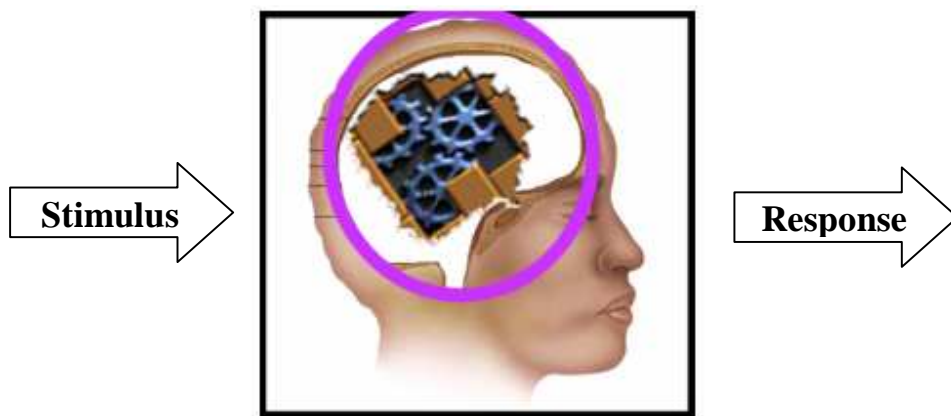
The role and responsibility of the basic intelligence is to decide and enhance your predictive value. Power is one of the psychological needs. Power is balanced by power. The structure of the society requires power and our very existence is to manage crisis.

The main thing that will get you *recommended* in the Stage I is whether you *speak* or *not*. It is generally seen that aspirants with good stories, being rejected, and equally with normal stories being selected. The person who speaks *considering the interests* of the group gets recommended to stage II testing. They are interested in those aspirants, who will show their qualities in the next 5 days and not the ones who do not have enough confidence to do so. The techniques of writing the story have been discussed in the TAT chapter. All the basics remain the same – be it Screening or TAT. Please refer to the TAT chapter for the same

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

The Psychological Testing is a priceless tool designed for the observation of human beings responding to a variety of controlled conditions, conditions which resemble as nearly as possible those of everyday life, and of course, some unusual conditions. It helps in recording various emotional and behavioral reactions, what previous experiences determined them, to what degree and what manner.

It is based on the very popular psychological theory that *"In every living Organism, a Stimulus creates a Response"*.



The technique employed at the selection centre is 'Projective Testing'.

Projective Testing

The word '*Projection*' has two psychological uses which can be clearly distinguished; these are in psychotherapy and exploration of personality. In psychotherapy, the projection process implies the referral or attributing of one's own repressed emotional trends to others. In exploration of personality, a projective is one which aims at exteriorizing,

that is, as if projecting on screen a spontaneous written behaviour or basic interpersonal attitudes.

These have been widely used in personality assessment. The projective technique stem from the idea that what one perceives in the world around him is influenced by his own personality, his needs, his attitudes etc. As Tomlinson has rightly said "*We see things not as they are, but as we are!*" These tests are conducted under *time* and *space* pressure so as to elicit from the individual, his unrestricted and free responses to stimulus situations. The assumption is that what he perceives and records as responses is a projection of his own self. These techniques permit as in the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT); free association to a set of selected words as in Word Association Test (WAT); or responses to verbally presented problem situations as in case of Situation Reaction Test (SRT). The TAT, WAT and SRT constitute the battery of projective tests used by the psychologists in the SSB's.

There is also Self Description (SD) through which the individual projects his attitude towards himself, other's attitude towards him and his capacity for objective self estimation. This is interpreted in the light of other data presented in TAT, WAT and SRT. The rating achieved in the intelligence test is also referred to by the psychologist as a valuable input. These techniques help in finding out the individual's inner feelings, fears, hopes, attitudes and goal: his adjustment to work and people and his sense of responsibility, the impact he creates on others by his intellectual, social, emotional, and moral qualities and also his leadership potential. The psychologist goes about interpreting the individual's reactions to various stimuli presented in different tests and then goes on to make a mental picture of various traits of the individual's personality and their relevance various OLQ's.

Battery of Projective Tests

- Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)
- Word Association Test (WAT)
- Situation Reaction Test (SRT)
- Self-Description (SD)

THE THEMATIC APPERCEPTION TEST (TAT)

The Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) gives an opportunity in the form of a '**Stimulus**' to the individual to project his personality in terms of free verbal '**Responses**' with regard to the pictures, he sees and the plot that he may weave around the picture. It is not a 'fact' based test, rather it is based on *opinion, emotions, value* and *attitude* of the person. What colour and combination are given to the story, which aspects are dominated, does the individual show value, emotions, helping attitude, sacrifice, faithfulness with full of challenges, is all seen through this test. For these aspects, one is required to go beyond the *obvious*. Going beyond the obvious will enhance the imagination process and imagination has no prescriptive limit. It is well said "*Your Imagination can take you places, which you can't even imagine!*"

TAT – What, Why and How?

TAT is purely based on your '*Perception*'. So far as the definition goes -

Perception – It is the process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment.

TAT basically requires you to perceive a '*Thema*' or '*Story*'. The story requires a *Hero*, who must face challenges and risk, but should not fail. Depending on the situational

crisis, the hero may face the failure for time being, but finally he should succeed.

There is no Courage without challenges and risks; there is no Motivation without failure and setbacks.

Basic Requirement in a Story

There should be a match between you and your hero, because the hero is your *alter-ego*, your *deployed leader* who should represent you 100%. There must be a minimum distance between you and your hero. There should be a similarity between age, sex and character. There may be a possibility of difference in perception, emotions and ability, but not in terms of the achievement. To be precise, your hero's achievement is the manifest of your own achievement.

Let's see some sample stories:



It is the picture of a young man pointing out at another person, who is seen running. It is an evening or night scene.

Story:

Due to meager representation of youngsters in the recruitment drive of the Army conducted

recently, Suresh Kolte, a sports coach started to train the youngsters of Satana village in Maharashtra. In the month of Feb 12, 2008, he started with one boy. After a week the strength went to five. He scheduled morning and evening hours for exercises/race and day/evening for written

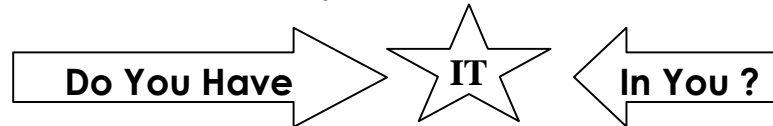
preparation leaving 6 to 8 hours for other activities. For the entire Feb month, he made them familiar with written and physical tests. Right from March 1, he made the entire course competitive. He started pointing towards the best one to follow the speed and maintain the time in physical as well as written practice session. In the month of April, out the 5 boys, 4 got selected in the recruitment drive organized by the Army at the Southern Command, Pune. Seeing the results, many youngsters joined the centre and started taking training for the next batch.

Interpretation

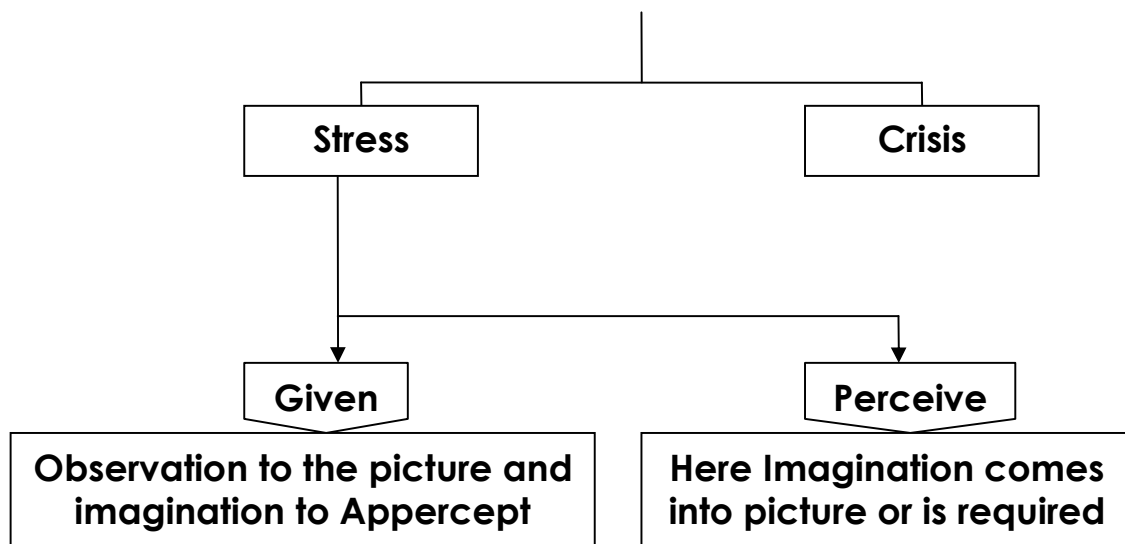
- ✓ The Hero under took the challenge, chose the undriven field in that locality (challenging ability). For the said ability, one has to go beyond the duty, which is sense of responsibility. In most of the case, the sense of responsibility is often dubbed with the risk taking ability, which this hero had.
- ✓ His punctuality, dedication of fixing the schedule and training program reveals his planning and organizing ability.
- ✓ Pointing the best one to be followed by the rest one shows competitive ability and motivation.
- ✓ With his hard work and sacrifice, he creates an exemplary result that would mean leadership by example.
- ✓ Seeing the result, youngsters of neighbouring villages got themselves motivated and joined the training centre shows the motivation level and inspiration.

What separates the Leader from the rest?

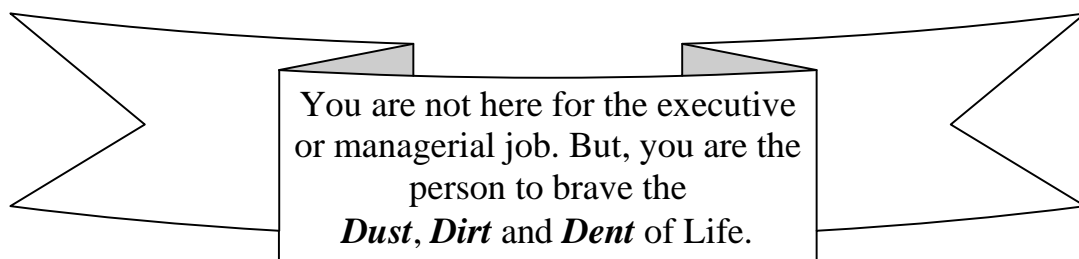
A Leader is required to act against emergency and challenges. Isn't it the requirements of a Defence Officer?



'IT' denotes the demand or the job requirement of the Armed Forces and it is possible only through an adventure which spells the challenges and the risks of life, that too with willingness on the part of the individual.



For writing the story, you have to plot the *Thema* and find a clue, as imagination does not take place in vacuum. It only happens in clue.





It is the picture of two boys in the orchard.

Story:

Two students of the 12 grade, Ram and Raghu were preparing for entrance exams at the Pinnacle Academy, Nagpur, Maharashtra. On the

way back to their home, they used to eat the mangoes while trespassing into an orchard. One day, the Mali caught both of them and started taking them to their parents. Ram confessed the fault with Raghu and requested not to take them to their parents. In return, they promised to do something for the farm. On the coming Sunday, Ram and Raghu went along with their five friends. Along with the Mali, they cleaned the farm, repaired the boundary walls and sprayed pesticides. They promised the Mali to do this once in every month. Mali became happy and gave them fruits and they all became friendly to each other.

Your evaluation becomes positive and goes in your favour, the moment you start **admitting** and **confessing** faults or wrong-doings.

Interpretation:

- ✓ The Hero trespassed into the orchard, when caught confessed the fault (*Initiative*) in an acceptable and submissive way. Also, he made the confession (*Courage*) with his friend not to repeat it (the Hero had

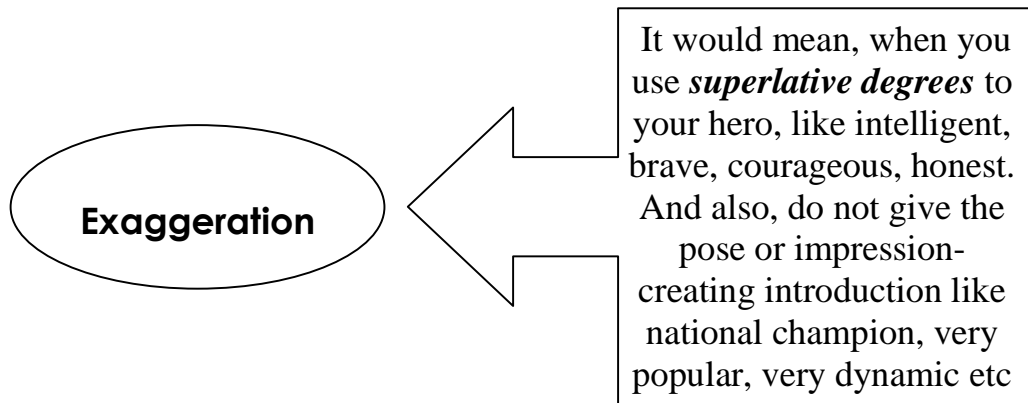
Self-Confidence and a good friendly influence on his friend).

- ✓ Further, he requested not to take to their parents on their promise to do something good for the garden (*Sense of Responsibility*). Seeing their acceptable conversation, admissible gesture and the degree of confession, the Mali released them.
- ✓ Ram and Raghu convinced their friends (*Social Adaptability* and *Ability to Influence the Group*) to set an example by doing some welfare deeds which made the Mali happy and he rewarded them with fruits.

Stories are never good or bad, negative or wrong. They are evaluated and termed to be only desirable and not desirable.

How to write a story – Interpretation and Analysis

- ✓ Power of expression does not mean English or Hindi. It would only mean the ability to convey, the way you want. If you are able to convey whatever is expected from you, keeping in mind your socio-economic background, then your expression will be termed O.K.
- ✓ When the Hero identification is specific, clear, further suiting your situation, crisis or plot and even relevant to it, then it is again O.K. Contrary to this, when the Hero identification is not relevant to the situation, then it will become vague, confused, irrelevant or exaggerated introduction. As a result, the story will not amount to a desirable story.



- ✓ What is the *task* or *aim* before the Hero? '*Task*' means a problem, a crisis, risk, adventure, challenge etc. '*Aim*' will illustrate a career, a target, and an achievement that too in a positive context.
- ✓ Need of a doctor for the treatment or operation for a severe disease, then what type of medicine is required (give specification of medicine and disease).
- ✓ What is the difficulty in finding and getting the medicine (here you have to create the *stress* situation). Creating stress is the direct product of your imagination. Please don't create more stress than required or whatever that particular situation allows to imagine.
- ✓ If no other human help is available utilize the clue, because imagination does not happen in vacuum but it only exists in clue. The further interpretation of clue in a scene requires your observation to find the clue from the situation itself. Many a times, the situation itself provides the environment. If nothing is there except a house, then imagine, what is to be expected to be there as situation allows. It is exemplified as under –



- ✓ A house is on fire. Nothing is around except some trees, pagdandi. Here, the nature or status of the house, trees and pagdandi will become the clue. This clue explores a

village environment and other houses may be at some distance and not shown beside the scene just to give stress to your imagination.

- ✓ Task has to be justified by the appropriate level of hindrances, obstacles, hurdles, problems and risk etc.
- ✓ The most important issue now, is the selection of resources. It is always appropriate for the Hero to use and apply the resources according to the requirement of the situation. The use and the application of the resources, is the direct product of your imagination and more importantly, it should be instrumental to the story.
- ✓ Your Hero (You!) should inculcate and display the will to challenge and skill to perform the task at least at the optimum level.
- ✓ Hero should always have the '*Will*' to lead and '*Skill*' to perform. Will depends on the attitude, and with the passage of time, attitude will develop the will.

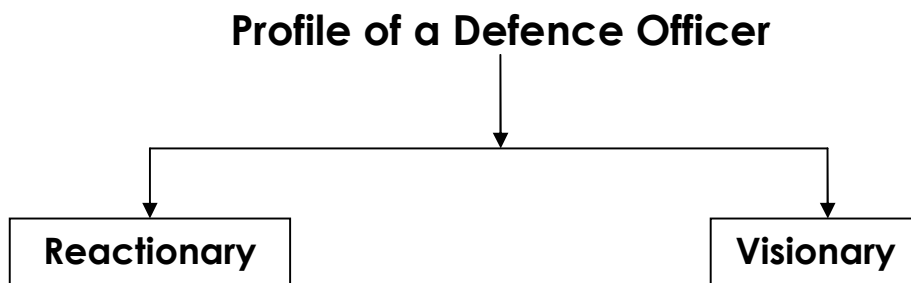
Long-Term v/s Short-Term Tasks

In your stories, the 'Hero' must be engaged in a mission, which must have some crisis, adventure and an

emergency. You can retrieve the situation only by your immediate reaction. Delay in such situation should prove fatal or may further complicate the situation. For example, a drowning man could be saved only by taking an immediate and appropriate step. One can ill afford to delay action in such situation.

There is a difference between a *Routine* situation and situation *beyond routine*. A Situation is a situation, because it qualifies to become a situation.

Saving a drowning man, rescuing flood or earthquake victims to safety, fighting dacoits, arranging blood for a person being immediately operated on, saving persons from a sinking ship, climbing on a steep cliff/mountain, sky diving, river rafting etc are few examples of involvement in hard and adventurous tasks, wherein your qualities are manifested in crisis situations. These situations require urgent action on the part of the Hero.



But, to the dismay of the psychologists, many aspirants, even with the positive Attitude, Courage, Persistence and Leadership qualities select tasks like organizing a picnic, eradication of rural illiteracy, tackling dowry menace, organizing eye operation or polio drop camps, helping a friend arrange his sister's wedding, making people aware of the dreaded diseases like Aids and social issues of various types.

The SSB's would like to see you in the toes of a company commander. For that, you should possess those qualities by the virtues of which, you are able to manage crisis. These above tasks of long-term goal would not allow to progress and display the crisis managing qualities.

There is nothing wrong in selecting such types of tasks, but don't miss to realize that these issues need primarily 'a vision' or a long-term goal or strategy. The requirement of the Armed Forces lays emphasis on the 'Reaction Pattern' when you face the situation. With the vision or strategy you may obviate or avoid falling into the problem. But, once the problem has arisen, you have to solve it using your appropriate reaction, instead of avoiding it.

So, my advice to you is – as far as possible train your intellectual imagination and manage to imagine those problems which contain some stress/urgency and primarily need quick and short-term solutions.

The best way to enter into the 'foe' of a Company Commander is to train your intellectual imaginative faculties of the mind to imagine and plot the stress/crisis and urgency situations which can warrant immediate solutions.

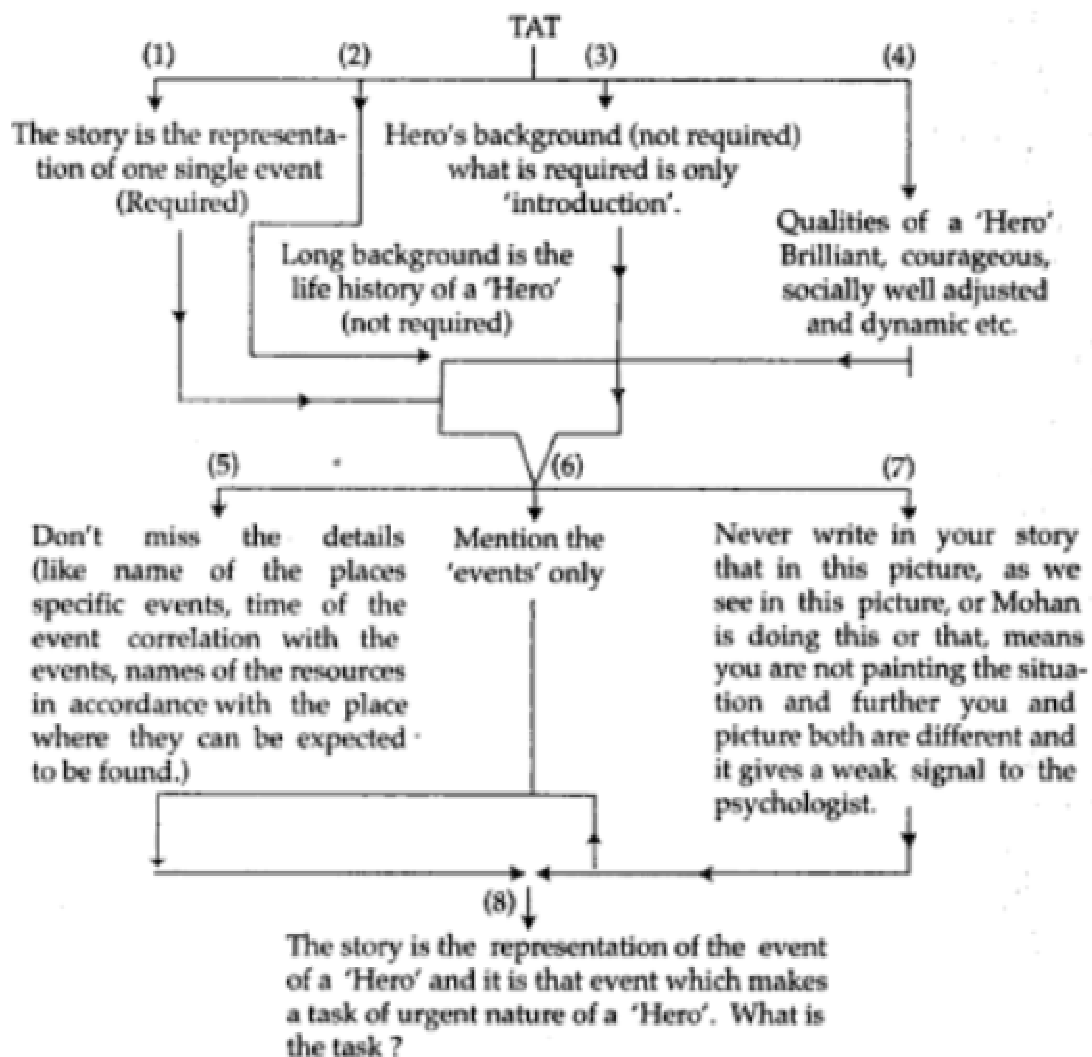
You must imagine a task which is difficult, stressful and necessitates immediate action on your part.

Leader in Crisis from your Profile

Unless a situation of crisis is created, you can't give indication from your imagination and ability, as to whether you are a leader of crisis or not.

Your crisis managing personality is assessed primarily by examining the content of your imagination. If you enjoy fighting the crisis and succeed by staking your comforts and braving risks, you will spontaneously imagine such situations. But, if you are given to comforts, avoid heat and

dust of life and prefer to work in a stress free environment, your imagination will fish out such jobs as the mission for your Hero. Also, you will notice that in a set of twelve (11 + 1) pictures, invariably one or two situations contain something obviously stressful. **You might find the scene of a road accident or a drowning ship or a person being washed away by strong currents. The purpose behind giving these stressful situations is to force you in stress and gauge your reaction.**

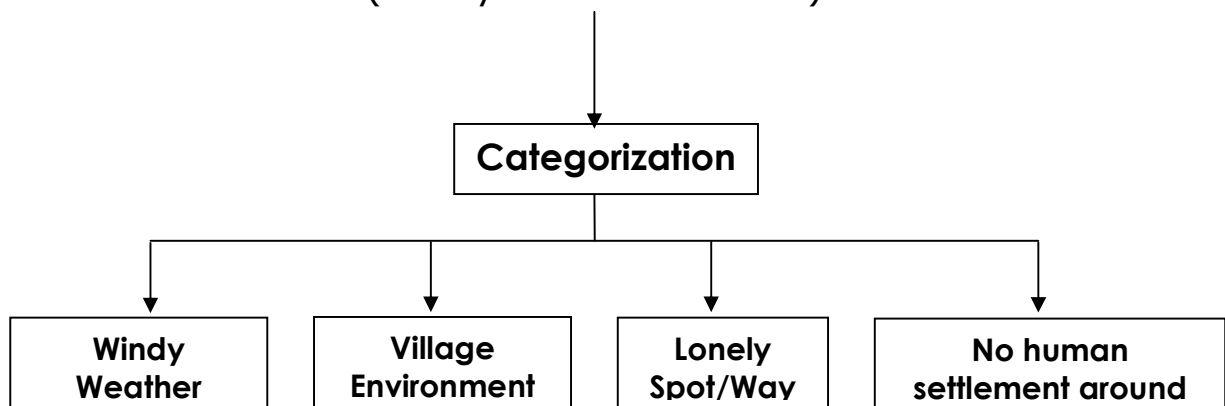


Let's see another example.

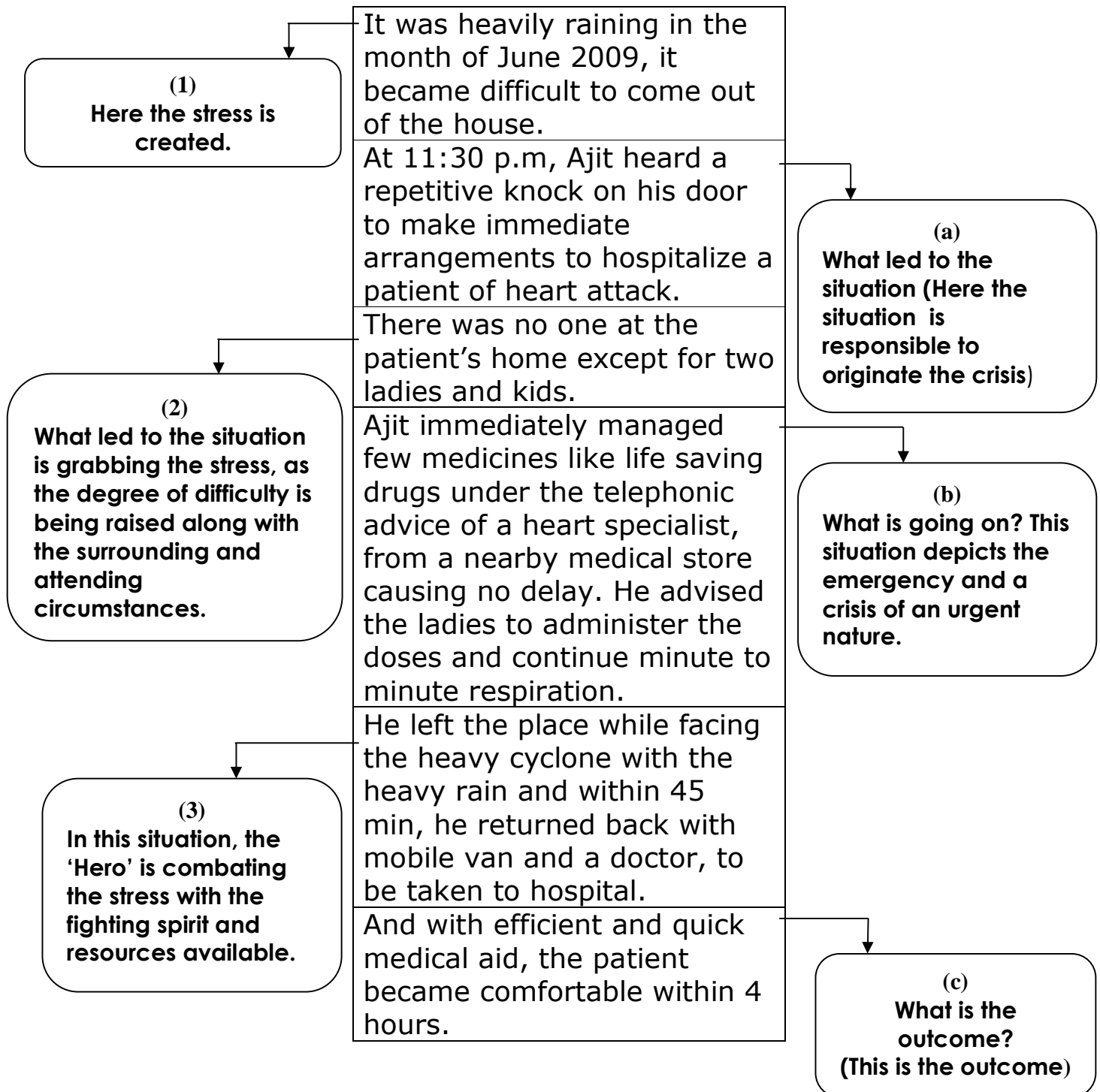


The weather is cloudy, is on its full swing. A young man is confronting the storm with a dash, it seems that he is ready to brave the risk and challenge the situation.

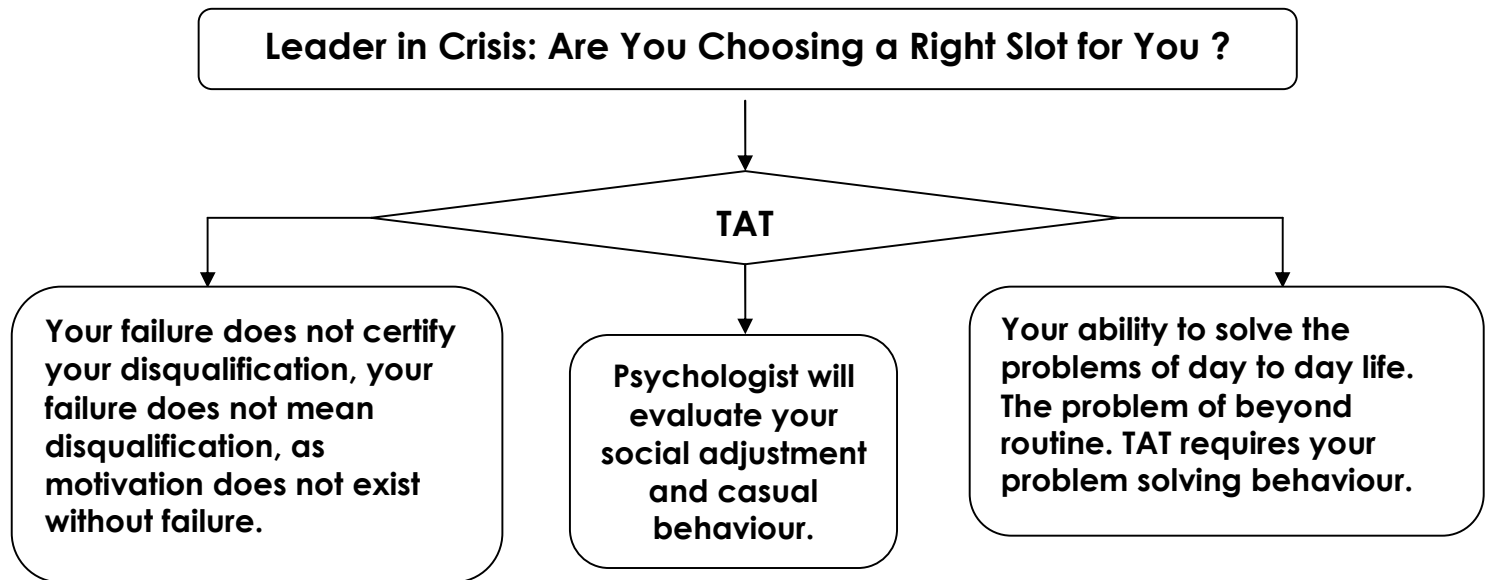
Observation of the Picture
(Heavy rains with storm)



How a Desirable Story is to be Made?



Here, the Hero is retrieving the situation by his immediate reaction as he had no other alternative except to run and walk faster as due to the difficult terrain, no conveyance could be used. Delay in such a situation could have proved fatal and complicated the situation.



Background of the Story

A total of 12 stories are projected on the screen, the last one being 'blank'. If all the stories are of similar background, then your imagination will not have a variety. The psychologist is interested in variety of your stories to find out the pattern of the behaviour. You must be able to solve the problem of beyond routine. Your intellectual imagination is fashioned by going with the situations which are beyond routine. Daily life encountered problems are not the requirement of your TAT. Urgency is the requisite of a crisis leader as urgency qualifies the problem.

What about the Blank Story?

- a) To give a chance to your mind to settle down your mind for another test. In '11' stories, your

unconscious mind becomes active as TAT is the test of your imagination and an unconscious test. Therefore, without settling down your unconscious, you cannot be taken to another test.

- b) You have some *specialty*. You have certain very good quality that you may represent in a blank story.
- c) Whether blank story should be well prepared or should be imagined on the spot? There is no harm, if you go well prepared but it will be better if you imagine on the spot.
- d) Which kinds of story should be written for blank one? There are certain aroused emotions which could not get opportunity in all the eleven stories. You can project your unprojected emotions in blank one. A career oriented story or whichever aspect you have not been able to produce in previous stories can be given a chance here.

Let's see another different example.



It is a picture of a house on fire.

Story:

Ritesh was the student of final year of engineering at College of Engineering, Pune, Maharashtra. At 10 A.M, while he was on his way to college, he heard the scream of a woman. He rushed to the spot, entered in her house and noticed that her house was catching fire from inside. There was no one as it were the working hours.

He snatched the blanket from a nearby bed and struggled hard to prevent the beginning of the fire, but due to the wind, fire spread, extending him some burns. Sustaining minor burns boosted him to cool down the fire. He came out of the house consoling the woman to prevent the havoc. He deployed some passers by to gather the villagers and he himself made a loud cry. The villagers gathered with buckets of sand and dust and started throwing on the house. Ritesh got himself going up and started motivating and working with the people from one corner to another. Within 45 minutes, the fire was finally controlled. He gave thanks to the villagers, consoled the woman, took some first aid and went ahead to attend the college.

Interpretation and Explanation of the Story

- ✓ The story reveals the identification of a Hero and a suitable Hero too completely. There is logical connection between the situation and the point of start. The situation is fire in the house and the man responsible for the point of start is Hero who was on the way to his college and his presence in the situation is justified.
- ✓ The SRT (Situation Reaction Test) is a collection of routine situations, but the TAT is a situation of beyond routine.
- ✓ Another requirement is the element of desirability must be there. It happens when there is havoc, here the woman is crying to prevent and the Hero is fighting to cool down the fire. There must be will to do and skill to perform which is being revealed from the fighting skill of the Hero.

- ✓ Now, the stage comes for the deployment of the resources and the management of resources and then the situation comes for direction. At the first stage, he snatched the blanket, as it was an available resource. When he found that the fire was spreading and he could not control, that he deployed the two passersby and got the people gathered with the bucket, dust etc.
- ✓ Now, having got sufficient resources and manpower, he used his skill of directing, delegating and supervising the people whereas evaluation of psychologist is concerned, there is no lack of adjustment and there is no casual behaviour as the fire was brought under control within a shorter duration of 45 minutes.

Conditions Responsible to Make a Story Undesirable and Psychologically Weak

Let's look into another story, which would put light on the common stories made by the aspirants at the SSB's.



Story:

Mahesh hailed from a remote area. He was a hard working and sincere student, who always thought about the development of his village. Mahesh completed his studies and became an engineer. Mahesh got posted to his district. He saw that his village lacked the basic infrastructure and because of the funds, the village could hardly progress. Mahesh along with villagers approached the administration and requested the

roads and bridges on the river. Soon, the Govt. sanctioned a bridge and a road to the village. Mahesh being the engineer was made the engineer of the construction work. Road and bridge was constructed, which brought prosperity to the village. Village became a modern village.

Line-wise Interpretation of the Above Story by the Psychologist

- **Mahesh hailed from a remote village area** – The first requirement of the TAT is the Hero *identification* and not the introduction. Here, the Hero identification is not complete. Another point here is, you should name the village, district, state etc.
- **He was a hardworking and sincere student** – Please note that, no unwanted details, *impression management* is required and even no *adjectives* like hard-working, sincere, national-champion, honest, brave etc. These qualities should be revealed through your *action* and through your *problem solving behaviour*.
- **He always thought about the development of his village** – Was there no one in the village to think about the development except him? For this, the Hero in the background should not necessarily be from an engineering background; rather he should be have been introduced as a social worker.
- **Mahesh completed his studies and became an engineer** – Which studies did Mahesh complete, whether B. Tech in Civil, Mechanical, Electrical etc and from where? Further, there was no one to see the progress of his village except him and that too, when he became an engineer. And before becoming

an engineer, did he not see whether the village was lacking progress because of fund?

- **Maresh got posted to his Dist. He saw that his village lacked the basic infrastructure and because of the funds, the village could hardly progress** – Again, Maresh means the Hero is doing according to his wish by getting him posted to his own Dist and witnessing that the village lacked the basic infrastructure and due to the shortage of the funds, the village could not progress. So, what he is doing is writing the story as he wants.

This kind of story is evaluated as Self-Generated Response. This means, you generate a response as per your wish and as per your convenience. See Mr. Maresh is doing whatever he wants and the story is running according to his wish, hence termed as *Wishful-Thinking*.

- **Maresh along with his villagers approached the administration and requested the roads and bridges on the river. Soon, the Govt. sanctioned a bridge and a road to the village** – Here, it means that getting the funds sanctioned was pre-determined, that the fund has to be sanctioned without *hurdle* or *problem*. Nothing comes ever so *easy* in life.
- **Maresh being the engineer, was made the engineer of the construction work** – Again, here the story is being designed to *suit* the Hero and as he wants to perform.
- **Road and bridge was constructed, which brought prosperity to the village. Village became a modern village** – Again, here the story reveals a *small effort* and *big achievement*, which is *not* possible in practical life.

The Practical Interpretation of the Story with Context to Subjective Interpretation and Psychological Interpretation

The above interpretation by the Psyche officer was a subjective one. Now, we will see the psychological and actual interpretation which can make and break the story and may not allow the story to become psychologically desired one:

Please see, in the above story the person has not perceived the situation and seen of the situation properly and has not used/applied his imagination to observe that, what this particular situation demands:

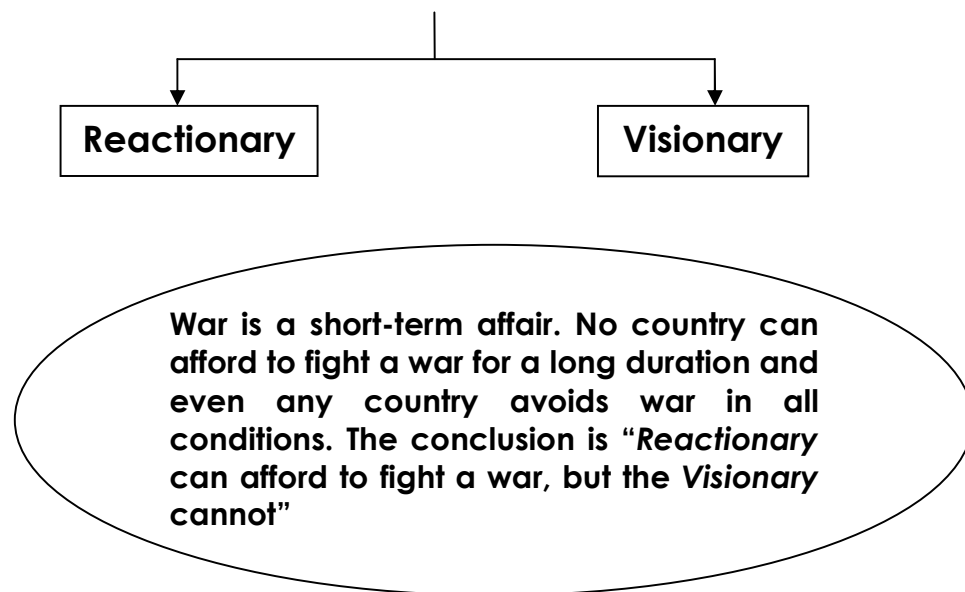
- There is no similarity between the situation and the point of start. Now, the situation of the scene is that a person being alone is going ahead while facing the cyclone and heavy rain, that too in the night.
- The aspirant has not forced his intellectual imagination to imagine that, what this particular situation demands and what the aspirant has perceived or has written in the story – is it logical?

What the Aspirant has *Perceived* and Written?

- The aspirant has perceived that a remote village has not progresses and no one has thought ever to do so except him, whereas the demand of the situation is something else.
- What he is expected to perceive to make his story imaginative and acceptable? The aspirant has perceived a *Long-term goal*, where as the demand of the situation is to perceive *Short-term goal*. The requirement of the Armed Forces is '*Leader of*

'Crisis-Problem Solver' and not a **'Manager-Crisis Preventer'**.

The Selection System would like to see you in the **Toe** of a **Company Commander**. A **Company Commander** is a **crisis leader**, **saviour**, and **trouble-shooter**. To prove yourself as a **leader of crisis**, **leadership qualities** are required. These qualities can only be revealed during **crisis** and **hard-ships**. Therefore, the profile of a **Defence Officer** is:



If you are only *Visionary* and not *Reactionary*, perhaps you may or may not be even the last person to be taken into the **Armed Forces Officer's Cadre**. In the above story, the aspirant has perceived a **visionary task** related to **long-term goal**, which will not facilitate him to **react** and **reflect** the **crisis managing qualities**. Remember, you are being taken as an **Officer to fight in the war and crisis** and not as **bureaucrats, to prevent the war or crisis**.

How to Imagine and Perceive Adequately?

- ✓ Situation itself will tell you what it wants - Whether it requires reactionary concept or visionary one.
- ✓ The question is not only limited to write the story, but to react on a story. That stimulates you to form a plot and when you perceive adequately, the formation of the plot will go in your favour.
- ✓ In the above picture, the aspirant has perceived a long-term goal related to the development of the village, whereas he should have perceived the short-term goal related to some crisis, problem, risk, challenge or trouble as that particular situation requires.
- ✓ Please carefully observe the situation – a young man is challenging the difficult and problematic climatic conditions i.e. heavy rains with cyclone. So, he is fighting the situation, which means some problem would have arisen, that would have been unavoidable or critical and requires urgent disposal. If the problem is not urgently disposed, then there is 100% chance of a big havoc or loss of human life.
- ✓ An aspirant should react on it and should make a plot manifesting an urgent problem which should warrant immediate disposal, through which he can reveal the qualities of a crisis leader.

I will further prove the crisis managing leadership potential with an example.



The scene depicts a woman drowning. There is a huge cry and all the neighbours are only turning themselves as on-lookers. The woman is struggling between life and death. Now, this situational crisis warrants a rescue mission and the delay will definitely be fatal. Only the

immediate reaction / action is a solution.

Seeing this scene on the screen, every attempter would write that he would jump into the river and fish out the lady to save her life. It's so easily predictable, that everyone would jump into the river to rescue. Also, the attempters don't have to jump in *real* to display practicality. But, the Psychologist has tools to find whether '*Would you really jump in such a situation, when faced in real life*' or '*Are you a fake jumper, only jumping in stories and fantasies?*'

A desirable story given below would throw you some clues –

Story – Sunita woke her elder brother up, overruling his instruction not to disturb him as he is resting after winning a 1000m race. Soham, a third year B.Sc graduate at Mahatma Gandhi University realized the urgency and rushed to the spot having noticed the huge cry. He plunged into the pond and noticed the exact point seeing the bubbles over the water. He took a deep dive and brought the woman up in a single attempt. He further caught her hair and pulled her across the pond, being persistently encouraged by the on-

lookers. He pressed the stomach and made the woman vomit and escorted the woman to her residence situated nearby. Having known the cause of attempt to give life, he sat with her spouse and made them compromise with each other. They took a promise, bringing the oath of their children in between, never to fight again.

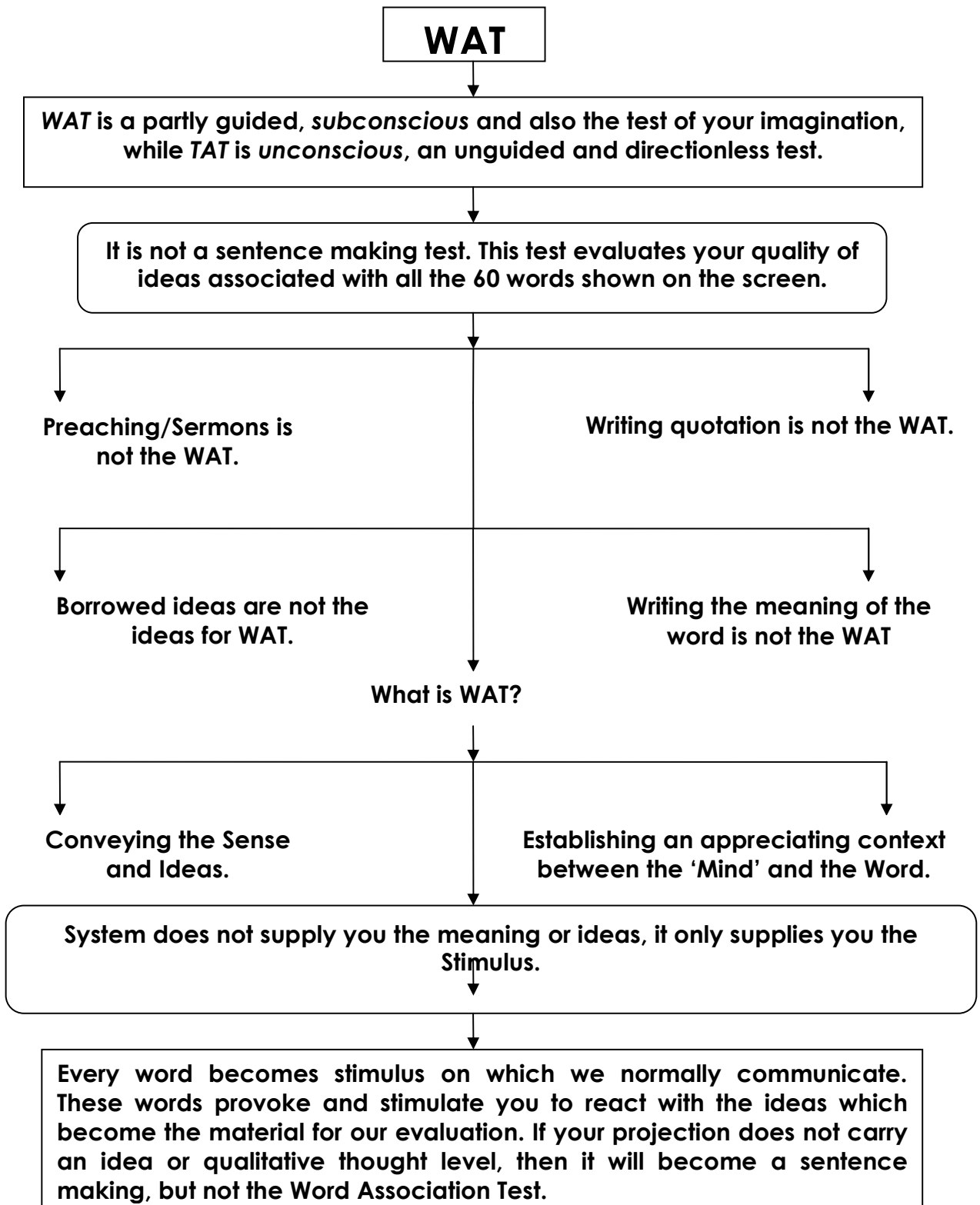
In the above situation, the particular or single context is that, a woman is drowning. Now, let me make you clear as to how this TAT and its leader is fulfilling the need of the system.

- ✓ **First essential** - *The Hero's identification* – The Hero Soham is a Third year B.Sc graduate at the Mahatma Gandhi University, Maharashtra. Now, with this introduction, the Hero's identification is clearer. You should be able to conveniently describe the Hero's basic whereabouts and location.
- ✓ **The second essential** – *The identification of the task.* The task will literally mean a problem, a risk, crisis, urgency or emergency. Here, the task is that the woman is drowning and the situation requires immediate disposal.
- ✓ **The third essential** – *The management of crisis.* Here, the Hero is woken up by his younger sister and the introduction and his urgent rescue reveals that the crisis is within the grasp, but requires courage. Seeing the risking and dying effort, the on-lookers persistently started encouraging and motivating him to grant the new life to the woman having her three kids.
- ✓ **The fourth essential** – *The outcome or result.* See, here the Hero has overcome the demand of the situation with his courageous effort and brought the woman across the pond, that too without delay. He immediately pressed the stomach to maintain the normalcy and escorted her back to her house. He still

My Appointment with a Psychologist by Krish Nair & Anoop T.

didn't finish his job. Further having acknowledged the cause of the attempt to give life, he sat there along with the woman's husband and her kids. He made them compromise and took an oath that, nothing like this would ever happen in the future.

THE WORD ASSOCIATION TEST



WAT is *not* a sentence making test, else it would not have been named so. WAT evaluates the quality of ideas ***associated*** with the words.

Nothing is 'Negative' in this world, only our *Perception* makes it so. We perceive the world as we want it to be. While attempting WAT, the idea that comes to your mind is more important, regardless of the beauty of expression. Every word shown in WAT will stimulate to project some ideas. Having gone beyond the word, we'll find the relation of the word with many areas. Drawing the ideas from that particular area and writing it against the word, is the true essence of WAT. WAT helps find the degree or the level of thinking of the attempters.

The Selection System is interested in *Content* and *Substance*, not in the meaning of the word.

Now, the issue is, if you are not appreciative about the word, then the projection may not reach till the acceptable level.

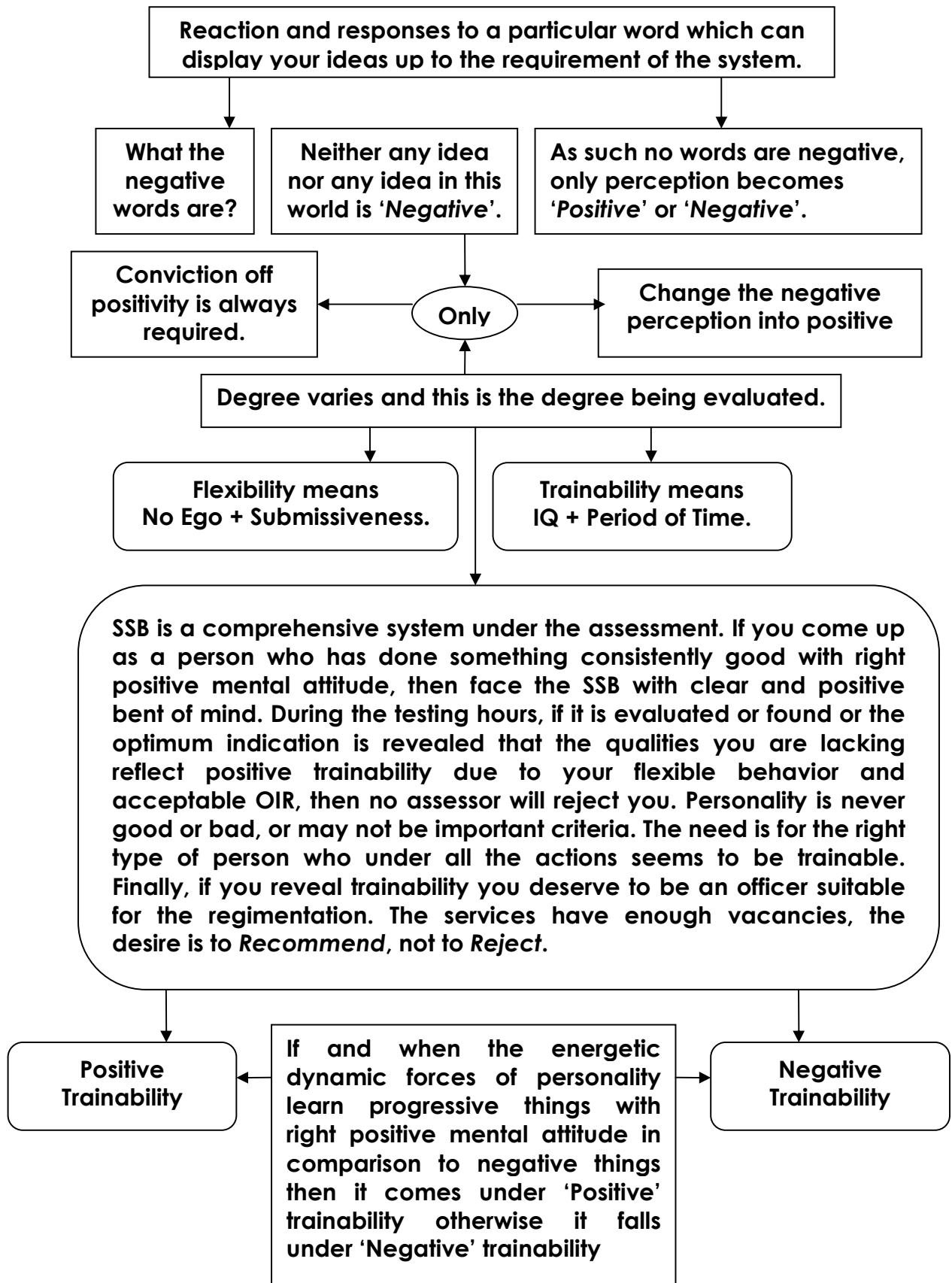
Nobody ever fails in WAT, only assessors find the degree and the level of your thinking.

Let's take an example –

Word: Co-operation

Response: Good co-operation is the outcome of good company.

Interpretation: The word is co-operation and response is 'Good co-operation is the outcome of good company'. Here, you have gone *beyond* the word, that a good company can produce good co-operation. Again, you have associated the word with the 'company' and that too with 'good' company.



Two Common Doubts in Our Mind

- Is there any specific response to any word?

No. A particular word may have as many responses as the number of people who face them and all may be right. Every projection is right, as these reflections involve very short duration which explores your inherent quality and optimistic, enthusiastic, positive and progressive attitude.

Let's take some words.

1. Word: Blood

Response: Donate blood.

Interpretation: Here, it does not indicate the certainty on the occasion, whether you will donate the blood or not. This is injunction or direction or orders to others. Your involvement and existence may not be there.

Suitable Response: Blood donation helps the society; Our College organized a blood donation camp.

Interpretation: Appreciation is more important than general introduction. Here the donation is being appreciated for the whole society

2. Word: Strong

Response: My father is strong.

Interpretation: Not necessary or specific, whether you are appreciating your father's strength or stating the fact.

Suitable Response: We have enhanced the range of Prithvi missiles.

Interpretation: Here, we have appreciated the strength for the whole world.

- Can a word be left blank in between?

If you leave a word in between, then please leave the word according to serial to maintain the similarity. Even if you do not complete the sentence, try your level best to write something. Please do not write a word for the word given to you, because it can be interpreted in a different way than in a manner you want to express. Sentences should be *practical* and show your *knowledge*.

Strategy that You Can Adopt in WAT

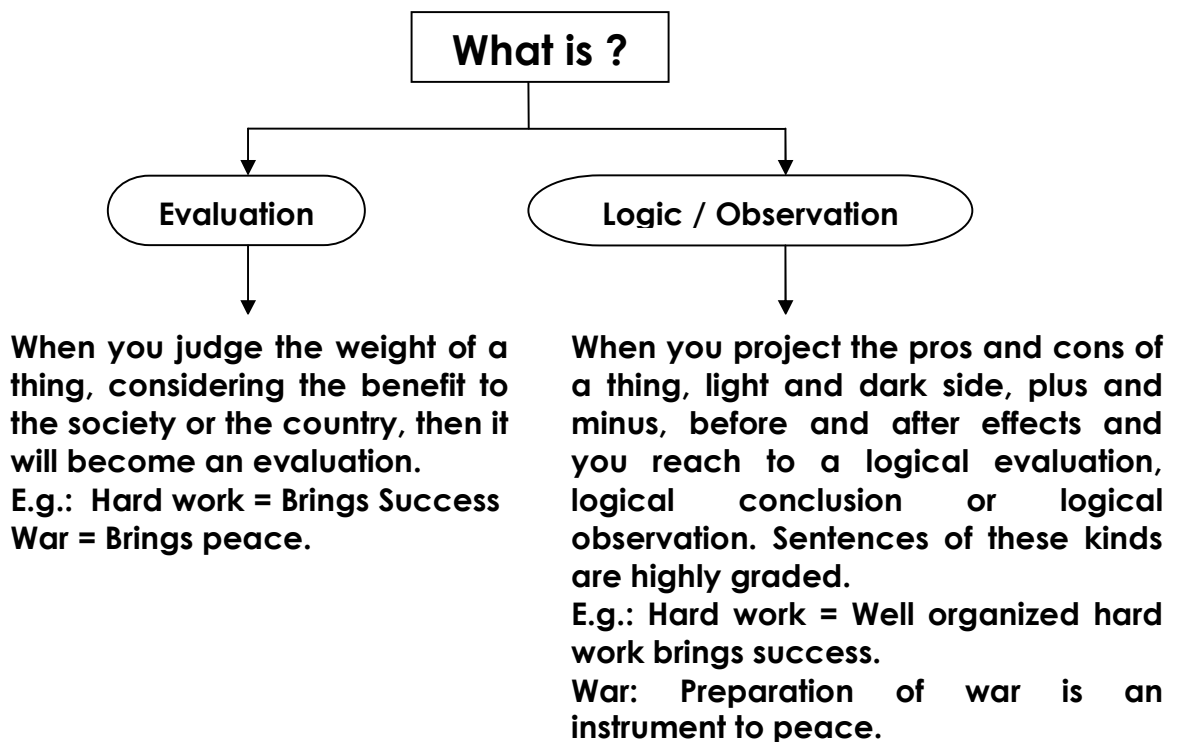
There is a good strategy that you can adopt when dealing with WAT – **Logic** and **Evaluation**.

Once a person said to his teacher "Sir, what is the key to success?" Teacher replied "Hard work". He questioned again "Sir, it may be your evaluation, as a lot of people work really hard, but are not succeeding really." The teacher's second reply was a set of answers –

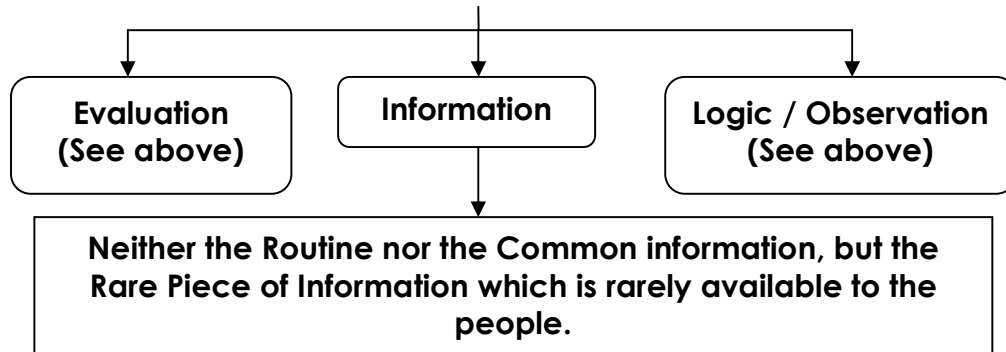
- a) Dedicated hard work brings success.
- b) Intelligently planned work brings success.

- c) Well organized hard work generates success.
- d) Concentrated hard work brings success.
- e) Smart work always brings success.

Let's have a look and before that, being the most important component of WAT, we will now interpret and evaluate these words – Logic and Evaluation.



Three Components are Very Important in WAT



Examples of Routine, Common and Rare piece of Information:

- **Routine Information** – Amritsar Express comes generally in time; Mid-Day meal is being properly distributed etc.
- **Common Information** – Voting right is given to every citizen; Constitution gives equal rights to men and women etc.
- **Rare Piece of Information** – Helicopter was first used in Korean War; Domestic violence act was passed in 2005 etc.

When you use logical and evaluative approach, along with some knowledge based (rare information) sentences, it will be highly graded.

Let's have some more info –

Word: Help:

1. Helping nature is praised by everybody.
2. I help my parents in farming.
3. I have improved my friend's behaviour

4. He is known for his helping nature.

5. Self help is the best help.

Interpretation: Except the last sentence, every projection is good. The last sentence 'Self help is the best help' is good to hear, but it is a bookish sentence. In the sentence making process, the answer remains the same, but the answer becomes different with the degree of positivity. This degree further spells or establishes the difference between common, below, common and above common, leader and a non-leader, between an average, below average and above average.

For example, the word is 'Help' and you write 'Help the needy', then this is a common sentence which reflects a preaching. Try and make a better sentence than this. You may use the word in any form, past, present or future. Not necessary to use the word in the sentence as the assessors have got the list of words. Writing short sentences with consistency means no small or long sentences. Write explicitly and more expressively. Out of 60 words, if you project 50 or 55 or 58, then it is O.K. Please do not write short or incomplete sentences. For example, the word is Father: Bread earner; instead you may write 'Father teaches us to face and win the life'.

Use of 'I' : Most easy it is, to make sentence with 'I'. Limit the use of 'I' as it spells or shows the lack of thought advancing or thought provoking ideas. Sentences should convey good and effective practical meanings.

Since time is too short, therefore it is seen how fast the 'reaction' and 'grasping' is. For e.g. Word: Teacher = Teacher enhances the knowledge of students. Here, you can also write as 'Teacher enhances knowledge'.

Nature, Group and Categories of Sentences in WAT

- Positive
- Social and cooperative
- Observatory
- Critical evaluation
- Injunction, Preaching
- Interactive
- Observation and evaluation
- Informative
- Autosuggestion
- Factual
- Research and analysis
- High social adjustment, highly positive

Grading of the Sentences

Let us be aware of the grading of WAT –

- N-1,2,3 (means Neutral one, two, three)
- P-1,2,3 (means Positive one, two three)
- HP (means Highly Positive one)

Explanation with Examples

1. You blunder, do not lose **heart**.

(Injunctive, preaching and social co-operative word. P-1)

2. I was **involved** in an interesting discussion.

(Positive-Interactional. This projection relates to social adjustment and reveals the feeling of co-operation. P-2)

3. **Crime** never pays.

(This word relates to research and analysis wing and the formation of the sentence is an observatory one. P-2)

4. His and my views **differ** but we are best friends.

(Positive, Interactional, High Social Adjustment. P-3)

5. Give me a hint, I will **solve** the problem.
(Positive, Informational and the formation relates to social co-operative group. P-3)

6. Beautiful people are always **proud**.
(Observatory, Evaluation. N-2)

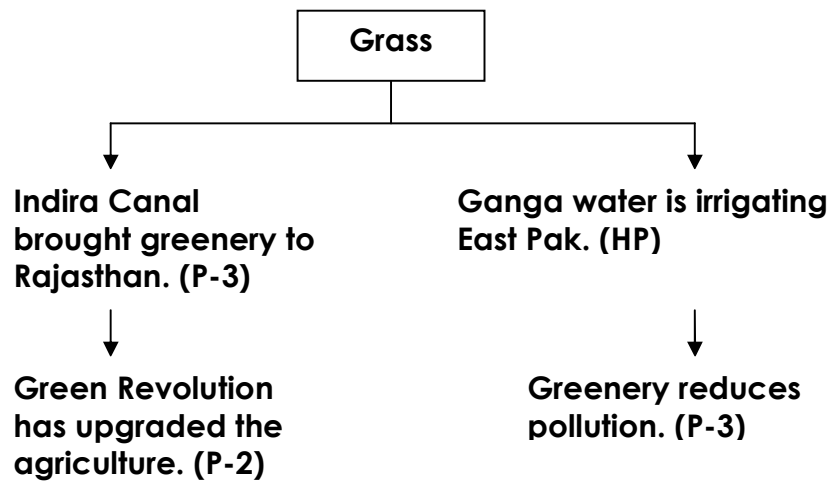
7. We should have **confidence** to win.
(Injunctive, Socially Co-operative but the grading is N-1)

8. It is **hot** in summer.
(It is a factual sentence.)

9. Life is full of **hurdles**.
(This projection relates to research and analysis group. It is an observatory sentence, but autosuggestion and grade is N-2)

10. Children make a lot of **noise**.
(It is an observatory one and relates to social adjustment group, so grading is neutral.)

Idea should be written in the form of a sentence. If you cannot, please do not bother. Try and write a complete meaningful sentence. Sentences with good positive degree are graded better. For e.g. Grass is green. This sentence only projects the factual nature of the grass, which is green and can be green only. It can't be blue or red or any other colours. Therefore, the sentence will not bear a good degree or acceptable level. The reason is that, the above sentence does not contain any creative idea or progressive contents. Therefore, the best sentences would be –

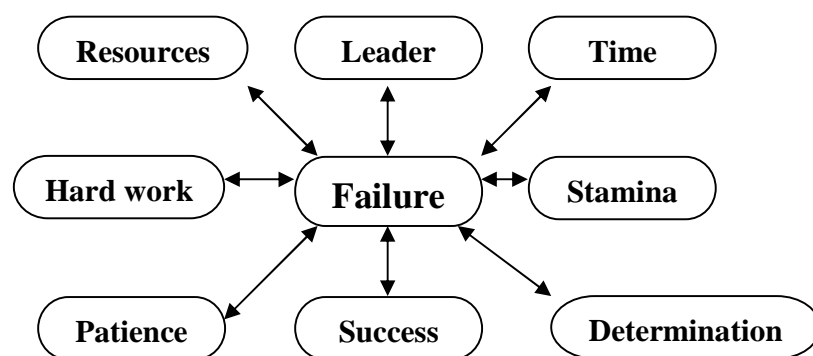


Analysis of Two Useful Words

Failure:

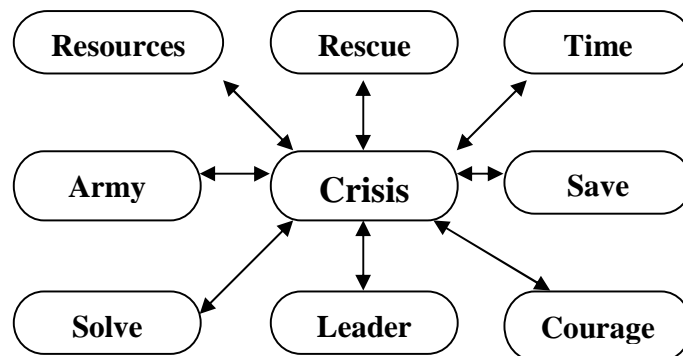
The word is failure, but the association word is stamina.

1. Failure generates mental stamina.
2. Failure gives motivation.
3. A string of failures produce leader and leadership.
4. Success comes after failures.
5. I achieved the success after the first failure.
6. Determination overcomes failures.



Crisis:

Crisis can be of any kind. It may be internal or external and even it may be individual, may be with a group, organization, country or body. The negative perception is to define the crisis or to think about the crisis. The positive perception is to take a step to cool down the crisis.

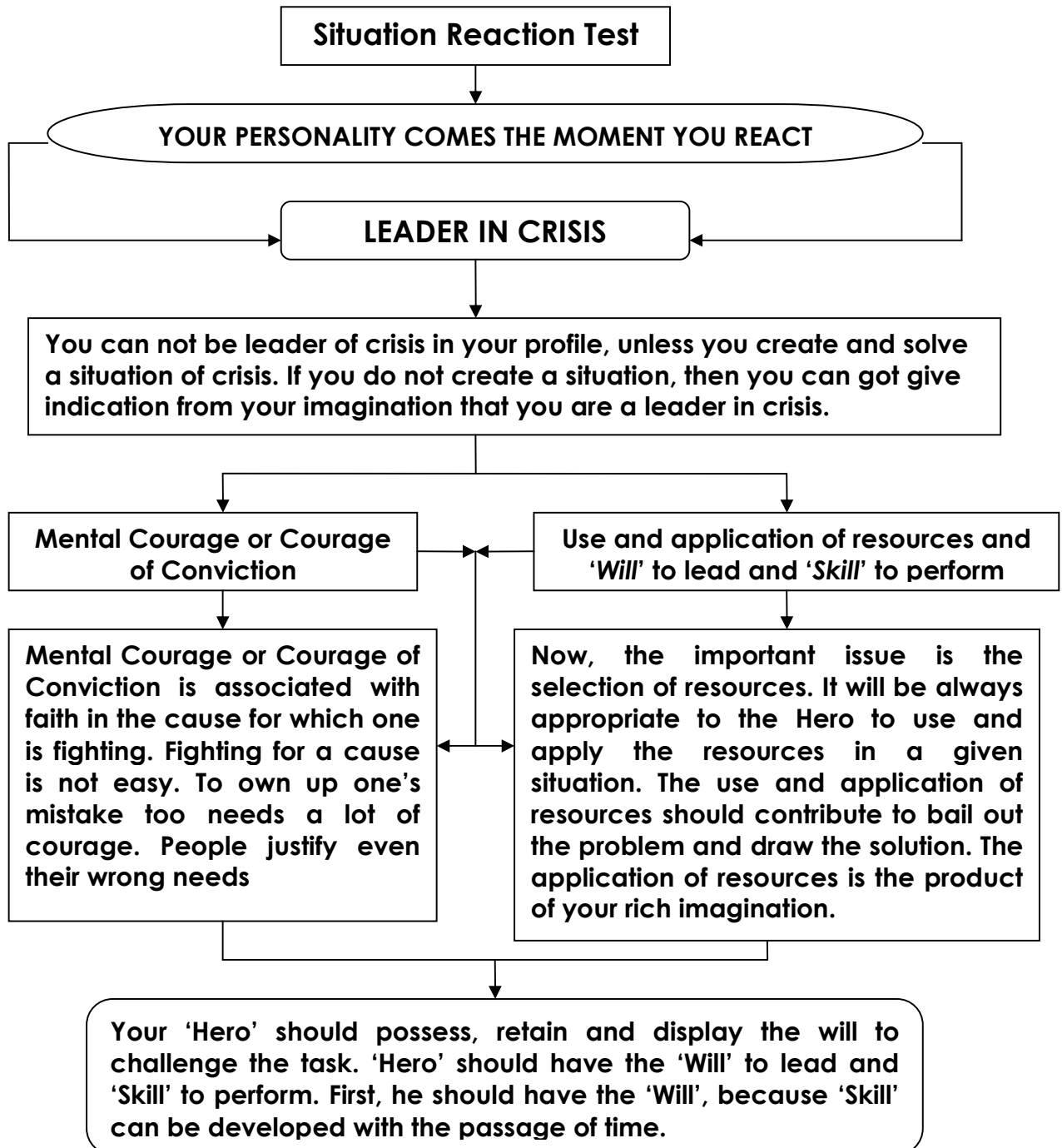


List of Words for Practice

Battery of WAT - Series 1		
1. Persuade	21. Wisdom	41. Practical
2. Plane	22. Willing	42. Prayer
3. Popular	23. Weak	43. Planning
4. Power	24. Sound	44. Pilot
5. Quit	25. Worship	45. Play
6. Rule	26. Work	46. Operation
7. Rest	27. Venture	47. Neglect
8. Revenge	28. Unable	48. Mother
9. Restore	29. Tired	49. Lead
10. Shy	30. Think	50. Line
11. Society	31. Task	51. Kingdom
12. Secret	32. Save	52. Justice
13. Step	33. Stop	53. Injustice
14. Sympathy	34. System	54. Intelligent
15. Tough	35. Security	55. Home
16. Tomorrow	36. Sincere	56. Hand
17. Truth	37. Rigid	57. Govern
18. Travel	38. Relation	58. Hard
19. Pet	39. Romance	59. Bully
20. Victory	40. Principal	60. Crisis

Battery of WAT – Series 2		
1. Desire	21. Expect	41. Hold
2. Pistol	22. Enemy	42. Haste
3. Decide	23. Fear	43. Hero
4. Camp	24. Forest	44. Insist
5. Creativity	25. Flag	45. Identity
6. Coward	26. Firm	46. Interest
7. Break	27. Fine	47. Image
8. Bold	28. Guide	48. King
9. Dark	29. Just	49. Loyal
10. Bible	30. Give	50. Light
11. Bath	31. Company	51. Make
12. Afraid	32. Colleague	52. Obtain
13. Accept	33. Control	53. Music
14. Atom	34. Cooperate	54. Memory
15. Alone	35. Challenge	55. Machine Gun
16. Able	36. Develop	56. Naughty
17. Ask	37. Defend	57. Need
18. Behave	38. Dead	58. Order
19. Begin	39. Donate	59. Principle
20. Busy	40. Depth	60. Protect

SITUATION REACTION TEST



Why is Situation a Situation? What makes a situation, a situation? Does it quality to become a situation?

A situation is a situation because a situation involves a problem and a problem of day to day life. If there is no problem, it won't quality to be a situation. You can't stay neutral. Some behaviour on your part is necessary. You can't refuse. You can't afford to stay away from the situation. Either 'action' or 'reaction' has to come out. SRT tests your problem solving behaviour or ability.

You can't solve a problem on the same level on which it has been created. You have to go above and over the situation to bail out it and solve it. Understanding of a solution is more important rather than offering a solution. SRT does not mean the mere description of a situation. Understanding the situation and drawing solutions, both are equally important.

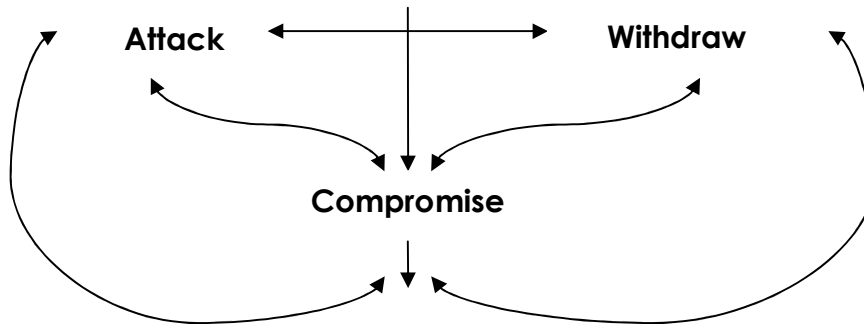
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The aim of SRT is to evaluate those by virtue of which you are able to solve the problem of the day to day life. The process of solving the problem should be convenient outcome of your personality. Your ability to solve the problem of the day to day life is seen in your behaviour pattern and in nature of your duty which becomes the habit and a part of your behaviour which is being evaluated.

Good Response is never taken as actual face value

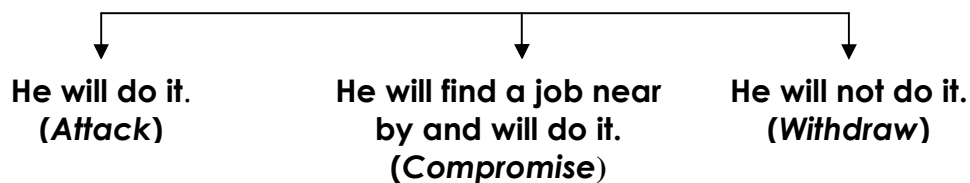
There is difference between routine and a situation. A situation is a situation because it has a problem.

There are three ways to solve any situation.



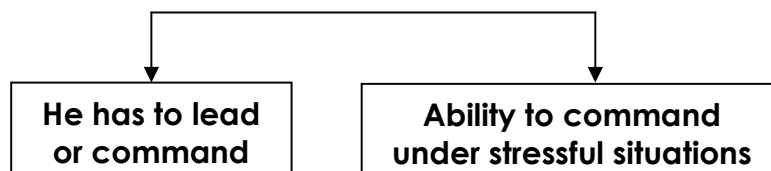
Situational Example – He finds a job 20kms away from his house, he would?

Solution with Interpretation –



Explanation: All the solutions related with attack, withdraw and compromise will indicate the equal degree of intelligence.

There are two functions of an Officer –



Somewhere you attack in some situations, somewhere you withdraw and sometimes you compromise. Let us exemplify as under –

1. **Situation** – He confronts heavy shelling from the enemy side while fighting a war. He ...

Solution 1 – Stop the fighting, defend intelligently, reorganize and overpower the enemy. **(Attack)** It spells the degree of your intelligence.

Solution 2 – Withdraw from the post, wait for the deployment, re-attack and capture the post. Here **(Withdrawal)** also shows equal degree of intelligence.

2. **Situation 2** – His step mother, in absence of his father abuses and threatens him to dislodge him from the house. He ...

Solution – Find the fault once again and live happily.

Interpretation – Here, the step mother may be wrong on her part, but you have to compromise. **(Compromise)** is the only solution.

What is SRT and how can it be tackled?

The answer to the SRT will therefore reflect the aspirant's power of understanding, practical ability, initiative, temperament, imagination, resoluteness, social behaviour, consistency, stability under stress in varying conditions. The psychologist is mainly interested to observe, whether the aspirant reveals a co-operative attitude or a negative or obstructive behaviour, whether he places the group before self interest. If you critically analyse the questions, you will notice that the answer being given has invariably some relation to one of these aspects. Therefore, carefully ensure that your choices are and the answer reveals your attitude. Mainly, you have to sacrifice your

personal interest to general or group interest. Finally, be careful to avoid contradictions and co-relate the answers with the statements you have made in the questionnaire. If you have given your hobby as hiking or trekking, then you must be able to answer the questions related to trekking with certain knowledge, as compared to others.

How SRT can be tackled? "One has to enter into the problem, bail out the problem and draw the solution with the resources available by observing and imagining". SRT is another projective technique to assess human personality traits. One will actually indicate his presence in choosing a particular course of action under a given situation. The time stress has been purposely introduced to ensure that aspirant is bound to record his actions without detailed and prolonged deliberations. No special intelligence or technical skill is required to answer these questions.

How to do well in SRT?

Intermix of many qualities are revealed. These major qualities are –

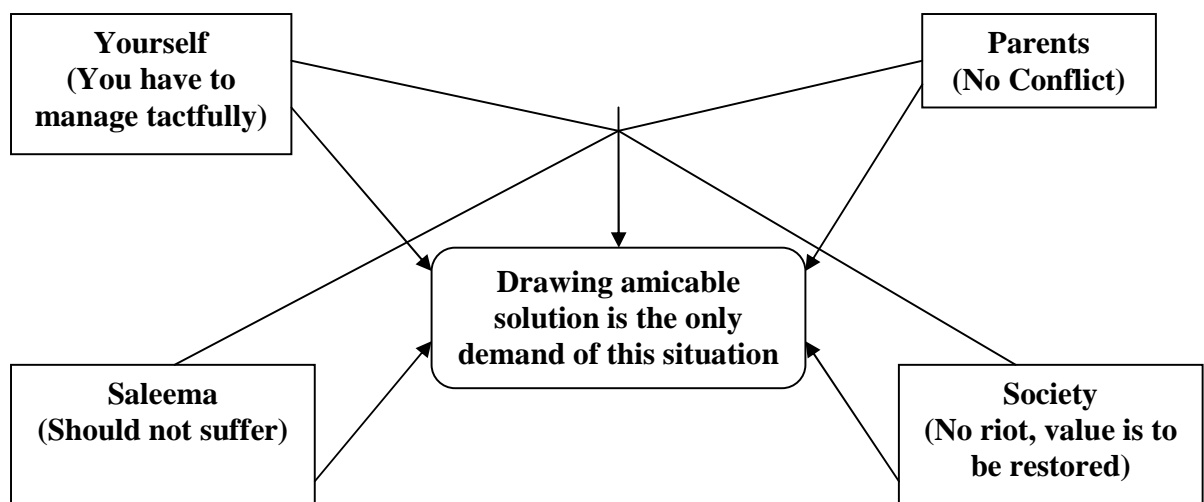
There are two components to solve the problem and to do well in SRT –

- ✓ **Perception:** For perception, you know knowledge and information about various agencies, their role and your role in the organization.
- ✓ **Problem:** One problem is associated with aspects of life. Let us exemplify the above as under –

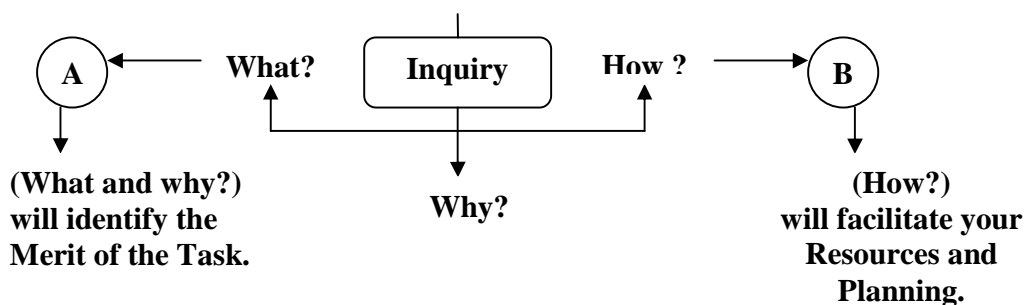
Situation - He wants to marry Saleema Bano, but she is from different religion, both the parents are quarrelling and there is apprehension of riots. He...

Solution – Immediately situation with both parents, elders, discuss the merits and demerits and reach an amicable statement.

Interpretation –



A solution has to bring out the display of your personality through actions and reactions which spell your leadership qualities to come. You must bring solution to a problem. Assessment of situation is more important rather than offering a solution. Certain element will qualify the crisis. Level of problems and solutions both are interrelated. The important aspect to draw the solution is –



THE INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE

The Interview Technique is the oldest and most comprehensive technique involved in selection of personnel for any profession, anywhere in the world. The concept of interview lasts back to the era of kings and kingdoms. Every soldier and every other person recruited into the king's kingdom and army was interviewed to know about his details and necessary where-how's.

Personal Interview is one of the observational techniques used in the selection procedure at the SSB's. Briefly, the interview technique consists of establishing an effective two way communication process between the interviewer and interviewee for transfer of information. The communication is relevant to the situation and the purpose of the interview. In this situation, the two people interact freely and establish contact or '*rapport*' with one another. The interviewee is encouraged to take progressively larger part and has to do the maximum of the talking process.

The Interviewing Officer tries to estimate the individual's planning and organizing ability, his ability to communicate ideas clearly, his ability to work with others in a group, his level of emotional stability to tolerate stressful situations and finally, his potential growth mainly through careful probing into his past development history.

The Interview Technique is a *predictive* test, based on *assumptions* and *inferences*. It takes advantage of the development history of the individual as well as his spot performance. Looking at these two aspects simultaneously, interviewing officer collects critical data, makes logical predictions about the future behavioral pattern of the individual to check his awareness about things around him.

During the interview, the Interviewing Officer (I.O) keeps a close watch on the facial expressions and body language of the individual, which provides critical supplementary information to assess a personality and evaluate his suitability for the job. An expert and experienced interviewing officer while deeply probing into the behavior of the individual, does not let the individual realize his intentions. Thus, the interview culminates in a friendly atmosphere giving an impression of an informal chat or meeting.

The Interview Technique by its very nature, allows unlimited scope of variations in questioning by the interviewing officers wherein the degree of difficulty can be varied depending upon the demands of a situation or level of the individual.

Basic Conduct of the Interview Technique

Though, not necessary that the Interviewing Officer will go for the same order, but more or less, it is grounded upon the following lines.

- ✓ **Creating Environment by Rapport Building:** The first thing that the I.O does is, creating a right environment and atmosphere which is absolutely essential for an interview. The experimental session are made to be as *life-like* as possible. This is important, because the purpose of psychological testing is to discover how a man reacts under *stress*, in both common and unusual conditions. To know how an individual responds to a unique, unnatural laboratory situation is of minor interest here. The I.O establishes a rapport with the individual by exchange of pleasantries and casual talks. By doing this, he removes your inhibitions and makes you absolutely comfortable, free, fair and frank in your stand. So, the course of the talk

is set rolling, when he asks undisputable questions like names, father's names etc, on which there is no dispute.

- ✓ **Rapid Fire:** A series or a bunch of questions either 10 to 15 or 20 depending upon your intellectual level is fired or posed on you based on your PIQ. Most commonly, it includes family and educational background, sports and extra-curricular background and like wise. Your grasp, priority, intellectual capacity, how much you are able to retain, whether you become panicky, and what type of question are you attending first, is all under watch. Your emotional balance, priority, span and depth of your intellectual imagination is conveyed.
- ✓ **Routine:** It is established that the daily routine shapes one's personality. For certain people, the daily routine may not be the same. It varies from person to person. But in most of the cases, it gives certain individual information like punctuality, commitment, sense of responsibility, accountability, motivation, persistence etc.
- ✓ **Personal Achievements:** The achievements of the individual, be it in any field like education, sports, extra curricular activities, or anything else that the person would like to mention. This would reveal his level of aspiration and motivation. What persistent efforts had he been putting in to achieve these, what were the difficulties faced, what adjustments and sacrifices had to be made are expected.
- ✓ **Hobbies, Interests and Likings:** What sort of hobbies does one pursue, what type of people, food, friends, places, and books does he like. Who are his role models, favorite actors, personalities etc are all asked. All this gives the idea of the way, the person

uses his past time, what sort of people do he recognize himself with, what are his likings and likewise.

- ✓ **Organizational Abilities:** Based on the PIQ and your achievements in a game or event, the I.O may ask you to organize a match or tournament to see your *will* and *skill* to perform and organize.
- ✓ **Current Affairs:** The happenings around the world and the person's opinion to it are probed. This will show a general awareness of the surroundings and the *will* to increase one's knowledge and G.K.

A little insight is always helpful – But How?

The under mentioned guide-lines will help you to develop your *will* and *direction* to face the interview. But, it's not in my scope to tell you everything, what is expected everywhere and like wise. Your *intuition* and *self-awareness* would do it for you, to read between the lines and get the vital clues. And hence, I would like to quote '*Samajdar ko ishara kaafi*'.

- ✓ **Family Support:** Our family is said to be our first school. For a child, a *supporting* family structure is equally important, since the satisfaction of the all the child's need depends upon it. It all starts with the mother, from whom the child is *emotionally* programmed till the age of *seven*. Later, from seven to *fourteen* years of age, the child is programmed for *action* by the father. After the emotional and action programming, the resultant is the *personality* of the child, which undergoes some changes influenced by *surroundings* and *environment* in which the child is brought up, till the average age of *twenty seven* years. After this age, the personality is *concretized* and rather

difficult to change. Hence, the family background is sought in the questionnaire.

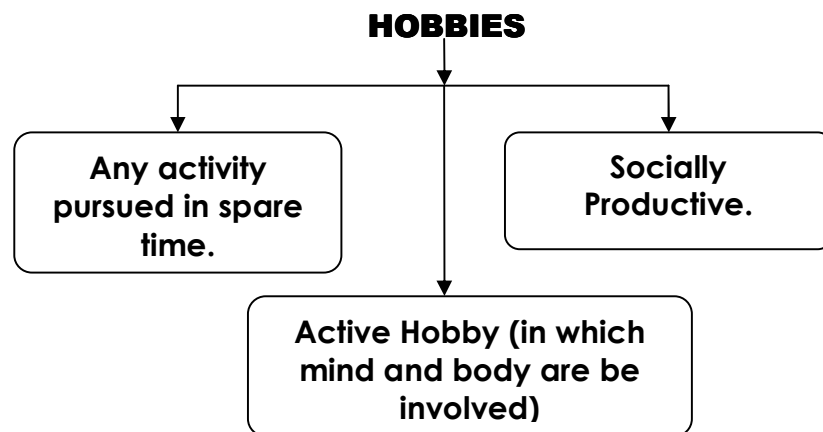
- ✓ **Oedipus Complex:** It is a natural fact that, boys tend to be like their mother, seeking *emotional* incline while girls tend to be like their father, seeking *action* incline. Often it is asked "Who are you closer to, mother or father?"
- ✓ **Independence:** As the child grows, the support from the family is lessened. And this is the stage, where the child begins to become *independent*. He is expected to walk unaided, dress and feed himself without assistance. Thus, '*growing-up*' involves a graded series of removals of support. It becomes clear during the interview, how independent a person is in his day to day life by listening to his routine and other activities.
- ✓ **Friends and Companionships:** There is no description necessary to know how important our friends and social groups mean to us. They play a *non-compromising* role in developing a person's personality. The number of friends, choice of friends, best and close friends, intensity of friendship, time spent with friends, topics of discussion, outings, leisure activities with friends, what is seen by you in a person before making him your friend etc are all vital questions asked.
- ✓ **Deference:** Respect for the authority, the desire to please parents and elders, the readiness to *co-operate* and *comply*, *sympathetic*, *generous* and *helpful* attitudes of a person is understood through his conversation.
- ✓ **Role-Model:** Respect and obedience to an allied authority may be classified here, the emphasis being upon an eager and trusting discipleship. Role-models emerge out of a person's *admiration* for a real life hero.

The emulation of the Hero's sentiments and aims, his charisma and mannerisms are all followed by the person though *consciously* or *unconsciously*. He has now become an indispensable part of the individual's life and personality.

- ✓ **Competition and Team Spirit:** The *willingness* to perform in competitions and the *untamable spirit* of being in a team is looked upon in an individual's talk. The *team spirit* is evolved when the person participates in group activities, when win and loss are shouldered with a positive frame of mind, when the team adopts various strategies and when there is competition and aggression.
- ✓ **Restriiving Efforts:** The *effort* to achieve something after *failure* or *humiliation*, the attempts to replace failure by success, to prove what one can do, is grouped here. To *accept* mistakes and blame, *learning* from them and avoiding their repetition is all that matters.
- ✓ **Leadership:** The will to power over other people, ordering, insisting, persuading or suggesting others to work for him. The attempt to control others, manage an undertaking, to shoulder a *responsibility* willingly, to give and receive ideas from others comes under the leadership attribute of a person. So, the responsibilities shouldered, leadership positions held at various levels are all queried in the interview.
- ✓ **Achievements and Recognition:** The achievements in any field, be it in cultural or sports, Scouts or N.C.C, education or any other areas, are sought from the person. It will determine the *persistent* efforts put in, the *difficulties* encountered and the *adjustments* along with sacrifices made to achieve something, which the person has always thought of achieving in life.

- ✓ **Cognizance:** The *gaining* of knowledge through explorations, *inquiring* nature, *social curiosity*, reading books etc. The thirst for gaining information, healthy curiosity, awareness of situations around the environment and world, opinions about happenings. The questions related to current-affairs, structure of the Defence Forces etc are asked to know cognizant attitude of the person.

- ✓ **Construction and Hobbies:**



- ✓ **Persistence and Intensity:** It is what, we call in everyday language as *power*, *force*, *zest*, *enthusiasm*, *conviction* and *emphasis*. It is the tendency to 'keep at' something until it is finished. It involves the *setting* of somewhat distant *goal*, the *determination* to reach the goal, lack of *distractibility*, *endurance*, *will power* in the face of *fatigue*, the ability to endure *monotony*.
- ✓ **Reason why you are here:** The million dollar question arises "*Why do you want to join the Armed Forces?*" Whatever be your opinion, it is expected from the bottom of your heart and should not to be a stereotyped or borrowed one. Every person has his own

requirements and aspirations for the career, he wishes to undertake. Always remember, the man sitting in front of you is highly qualified in reading your eyes. And needless to say, "A person who can read your eyes is always an expert in reading your mind".

- ✓ **Insight and Intuition:** The *self-realization* of *strengths* and *weaknesses*, acceptance along with the *will* to improve weaknesses and most importantly *admitting* it without hesitation. A person with *intuition* and *insight* is considered most *trainable* and *mouldable*.

Some Special Tools in the Interviewing Officer's Arsenal

The Interviewing Officer is trained and proficient in his job, not to follow the face value i.e. '*Impression Management*' of the interviewee. Impression management is nothing but the "*Good we produce, Bad we hide*" principle. Everybody tries to appear best, produces best and hence the interview technique becomes poor and weak. So, this weak technique is always given to an *old man*. Old man does not mean in terms of age, but with respect to skills, experience, maturity and wisdom. This technique is *predictive* in nature and does not carry many inputs, except your OIR (Officer's Intelligence Rating) and PIQ (Personal Information Questionnaire).

The I.O has got some special *tools* in his armour to break the '*facade*', that you are trying to put over yourself, though *consciously* or unconsciously.

- ✓ **Distraction:** He may distract you by looking somewhere else, or pretending to talk over the phone, or staring at you and likewise. He is probing your reaction to distraction.

Generally, whenever we are talking to someone, we naturally expect the person's approval and solidarity to

what we are saying, either in form of nodding of head or words. When we realize that the person is not paying attention to us, we start thinking that, either what we are saying is not correct or true or we feel that person has lost interest in the conversation. This is absolutely natural tendency.

The motive behind distracting you is to see whether

- What you are telling is *genuinely* true or are you *pretending* to be true? If its true, you would be *less* distracted. While in contrast, *more*, when you are lying or unnecessarily concealing facts.
- Or to see if you are disturbed, even with the slightest of distractions. You either *stop* answering or your *intonation* changes drastically.

The I.O would appreciate your five original weaknesses than your hundred *unreal, fake* and *put-up* strengths. Since Personality is *interplay* of strengths and weaknesses, it would be highly regarded if you are aware of them and admit them without hesitation. So, there is no point in lying or feeling inferior about your grey areas. They are meant to be developed and improved, since no mortal soul is considered *perfect*.

The moment you are caught lying, you *lose* your chances entirely. There is no *compromise* on the grounds of *honesty* and *integrity*, the very foundation on which the Armed Forces are built on.

- ✓ **Rejecting your Answers:** He may reject your answers many a time. It is to test to your emotional stability and balance. It is to see into your reasoning skills and attitude to face criticism. It is normal and natural, when a human being is assessing another

human being. Your honest stand should not deter you much in this case, though some nervousness is acceptable. As I have said earlier “We are Humans, not Robots”

- ✓ **Checking your Defence and Behavioral Rigidity:** He starts scouring you, once he finds out you are lying consistently. To actually see, how much you defend your self in terms of honesty and truthfulness, how much flexible you are when it comes to compromise on certain conditions. I hope this should not matter you so much, since you would prefer to be truthful otherwise. It's not the weaknesses that matter, but your willingness to admit them does. Even being *diplomatic* won't help you here.
- ✓ **Situational Questions:** He may pose certain unusual situations before you. This is to check your adaptability, resourcefulness, common sense and approach in finding solutions. A person giving more wrong answers and less right answers may deserve the recommendation, provided he remains present in his answers. At the same time, if the right answers do not have the presence of the person in the answer itself, may mar the recommendation. Neither right nor wrong, should the answer be the appropriate one. The appropriate answer would only amount to be an acceptable answer which may reveal your natural personality. Therefore, the mindset to give natural responses bears the testimony to this explanation.

THE GROUP TESTING TECHNIQUE

Group Testing Technique is another observational technique used at the SSB's. As opposed to testing individuals in isolation; group testing attempts to evaluate individuals in the context of the group. Therefore, this technique determines an individual's ability to function in a group and based upon functional capacity, ascertains his actual and potential level and assesses his suitability for the Armed Forces. Group Testing promotes interplay and interaction in a group in order to facilitate assessment of an individual, whereas other types of tests prohibit interaction at the time of testing. It is based on sound psychological principles which give it the strength and stability of function as a valid instrument of assessment.

The Group Testing Technique is based on four primary principles:

a) Social Field Theory:

This theory is based on the fact that an individual interacts continuously with other members of the group in the social fields, influencing them and being influenced by them.

b) Group Development:

For natural spontaneous behavior to emerge, proper development of the group is necessary. The development of the group passes through a definite, though overlapping stages. These stages are Formation, Exploration, Co-operation and Discipline.

c) Free Association:

Each member of the group is free to participate as much as he wants and in the manner he wants to, while the GTO takes the observers role.

d) Group Dynamism:

What the GTO as an assessor seeks to observe and evaluate is called an individual candidates' "Group Dynamism" ie the sum total of an individual contributions to the group and to its tasks.

The Group Testing consists of nine tasks which are a tool to assess the personality of an individual. They are:

A) Basic Series:

- 1) Group Discussions (GD)
- 2) Group Planning Exercise (GPE)
- 3) Progressive Group Tasks (PGT)
- 4) Group Obstacle Race (GOR)

B) Confirmatory Series:

- 1) Half Group Task (HGT)
- 2) Lecturette
- 3) Individual Obstacles (IO)
- 4) Command Task (CT)

C) Final Series:

- 1) Final Group Task (FGT)

These tasks are conducted on Day Three and Day Four of testing after the attempters are divided into groups. As the Group Testing series are a set of outdoor tasks, the individuals are advised to *warm up* themselves both *mentally and physically* and bring in a rush of enthusiasm and liveliness before the start of the day.

THE PROGRESSIVE GROUP TASK (P.G.T)

The most important and interesting task of the GTO series. As the name indicates, *prima facie*, it is a group task.

Conduct of P.G.T

The group is faced with a series of obstacles and its mission is to tackle them one by one in progression, within the allotted time and strict adherence to rules. The time allotted is 30 minutes. The group is provided with the necessary helping materials that would contribute to negotiating the task. Also, given in addition is a load (a dead weight simulating the casualty of a wounded soldier) which is to be taken as a liability with responsibility, along with the group as they march ahead in the task.

Helping Materials

- a) Wooden plank (*phatta*)
- b) Bamboo or wooden pole (*balli*)
- c) Ropes for tying
- d) Extra optional tools as per particular obstacle design (Angles, rings, bars etc)

Rules

- a) **Rule of Color:** The structures are painted in different colors viz Red, Blue (yellow) and White. These colors have meanings. Red indicates danger and unusable area. Blue indicates that the person can stand on the structure, holding the helping material, but cannot place the helping material on this structure. White indicates peace and the person can stand on it as well as place his helping material on this structure.

- b) **Rule of Distance:** It states that no distance greater than four feet can be jumped or negotiated using any kind of physical prowess. The gap more than four feet has to be bridged using the helping materials to shorten the distance.
- c) **Rule of Rigidity:** It states that no two rigid helping materials can be tied together face to face with a rope in an attempt to shorten the distance. The helping materials can be tied to the structures in the obstacle, but again, not together.
- d) **Rule of Infinity:** It states that the start and the finish line of the obstacle extend till infinity. The group cannot, by any means, protract or circumvent these lines to move ahead.
- e) **Rule of Group and Load:** The entire group along with the last person, helping materials and load must move ahead in unison at any point of time through the entire course of the obstacle.

We have completed with all the requirements of P.G.T theoretically. But, before we move on to get into details practically, let's see the two basics that have to be kept in mind:

- ✓ The attempter should pay solid attention to the briefing given by the GTO before the start of any obstacle. One must thoroughly register in to his mind, the small details that the GTO describes with respect to any tasks.
- ✓ Look into the minute details, the GTO shows in his explanation. Many a times, he indirectly

gives clues and hints while briefing about the obstacles. Giving careful attention here would be absolutely beneficial while facing the obstacles later.

Practical Approach to P.G.T

The Progressive Group Task reveals the "*behavior of an individual in a group*". The P.G.T is so designed, that a person of an average intelligence can find a logical solution to it. However, an individual while attempting this should not forget that it is a *group* task.

Before getting on to the details of PGT, you must thoroughly realize what is "Group Dynamics"? Right from the Group Discussions (GD) onwards till the last task, every task is designed in such a way that, the *group* and the *task* have to meet the demand of the group development theory or the group dynamics. If you understand the broad meaning of the word 'Dynamic', you can attribute a good behaviour at the GTO series.

Group Dynamics or *Espirit De Corps* is the *interactive* and *interactional* pattern of human behaviour. In broad sense, Dynamism spells – 'When every cell of the battery generates equal energy to project a sufficient light or energy. By chance, if a particular cell becomes weak, the other cell should generate more energy, so there should not be any less or weak display of light or energy'.

The GTO series of testing is based on observational technique which comprises the thought process, action and content of words. The sound interplay and homogenous mixture of these qualities matter a lot to sail through the GTO series. Among all of them, co-operation is a must and it should and must exist, otherwise SSB testing is useless for aspirants.

Give me the heading “Group Testing” and space to write two words. I would comfortably accommodate the two words as ‘Co-operation’ and ‘Social Adjustment’.

The assessor gets a clear picture of a person by the manner in which he socializes amongst his group members. The ability of an individual to adapt himself to social environment and to adjust well with people and social groups, with special reference to superiors, equals and subordinates is all under scanner.

It also unmasks the individual’s ability to put himself into other man’s shoes so as to appreciate justifiable difficulties and to enable rendering of help in a proper way. Also, is seen the ability to skillfully manage the feelings of the members of the group dealt with. In a field situation, an individual’s approach to physical hazards, his participation, his appreciation of his own and other’s capabilities are useful indicators of his mental courage. It also encompasses his readiness to adapt himself to changing social atmosphere whether he is rigid or mouldable.

All this stems from direct influence of the *family*, from the child training method, wherein attitude towards others and tact in dealing is developed. Now, the important concept is to do a *self-evaluation* of oneself and ask whether he has the qualities mentioned above. It may be obvious that the person who had come to the SSB and made it to the Stage Two has some level of social adjustment, or else he would not have been here to see the GTO ground.

Yes, we all adjust socially in a group or a society where we live. Many a times, we help an old man cross the road, offer our seat to a lady standing with her child in a crowded bus, help a man fix his bike early in the morning and countless other helps, which is possible within us.

Before planning a tour with friends, we do have a meeting and plan to decide the spot. We all contribute ideas and take ideas that our friends put forward and finally arrive at a decision. Before ordering food in a restaurant, we do ask our family members about their likes and favorites. We are so nice and *social* in everyone's eyes and people bless us for our so called *good* deeds. We feel, we all are well adjusted in our society and smoothly carry on things in harmony with others in our daily lives.

Now, I would like to ask an interesting question at this juncture: What happens to all our principles and philosophies, when we enter a place called Services Selection Board or SSB's? Astonished and dumbfounded as you may be, with this question? There, I can imagine a lot of them smiling, though unwillingly. Why don't we care for our group members' views and listen to what they want to say in GPE? Why do we move ahead aimlessly without even waiting for our friends in our group to come with us in GOR? Why do we shout three points deliberately, when anyone in our group puts forward a point in GD? Why do we forcefully grab the *phatta* and *balli* from our friends when they are bridging the gap in P.G.T? Why do we people, who call ourselves "**Social**", become so selfish and meaningless in our approach on entering the SSB's?

All this happens because of a misconception amongst in the mind of the aspirants. Curious to know it? Well, the word is '**Competition**'. Surprised? Yes, competition is the word that makes us do all this. We all tend to compete at the SSB's. We all try to prove ourselves ahead of others. They ask "*Do you have it in you?*" and we silently yell "Look Sir, I have it in me, forget others and get me in!"

Now, all this stuff might be a bit amusing and difficult to put down the throat. So, let me prove it. The repeater aspirants should do me a favor to give a thought down their memory lane and answer this question in yes or

no. "Have any of you ever seen or observed the Group Testing Officer provoking you to *compete* with one another amongst in the group? Give it a thought and you get the answer straight away, "No". You may find to your surprise that he never does and neither needs to do this.

SSB is all about psychology-based personality testing procedure. You are tested individually at the Psyche testing and Interview. The purpose of Group Testing is to observe your *behavior* in a *group*. So, why to evoke competition unnecessarily, when every personality is unique and has to be independently assessed? Think over it a little. Rather, your competition should culminate into *co-operation*. Why I'm emphasizing on this aspect, is to drive your attention towards the importance of realization that mutual competition at the SSB's is a strict no-no. Let me tell you about, how competition can affect one's performance at the SSB.

- Competition can make you unnecessarily aggressive. Aggression is good, but what when it dominates on your performance?
- You try to side-line others as you are in a race. Result? You start creating fish-market situation. Revenge and leg-pulling comes into picture. You start using harsh, abusive and unparliamentary language.
- Your otherwise *social* attitude dies away and you only think of getting selected by whatsoever means, be that by a hook or a crook.
- Your *natural* self takes a back seat and you end up showing the assessors, yourself as a person who you actually not are. You start doing things, which otherwise you don't do. Precisely, you loose naturality.

- At the end, you are marked as a person who is having adjustment problems with people and you stand aside, not done.

Throughout the history of Services Selection System, *Competition* only and itself has never been instrumental nor capable to push the performances to win the recommendation. Everything in Armed Forces and SSB is about *team work*. You can't do anything and everything alone. You have to help others and simultaneously you have to take help from them. When the group plunges into situational tasks, all these qualities start revealing. So, the bottom line here is '*never compete*'. Therefore, the best remedy is to be '*Consistent and Natural*'. Get this straight and let me assure you: half of your task at hand is over. Unbelievable, isn't it?

The SSB is not looking for the best person amongst the group, but an '*appropriate*' person to suit their requirements. What the SSB is looking for, is a person who can socialize in the same way, when in stress situations or when the group is in chaos, as he does in his normal life. The manner in which he can pacify his group members, when there is a difference in opinion, when there is an unfamiliar situation under extreme stress. All these aspects are the essence of a true leader.

A true leader keeps his cool and remains grounded. He is composed and tends to stick to his basic principles. He tactfully manages the feelings of his men and moves ahead. He sees opportunities in every situation and learns from them. He asks for opinion from his men and also puts forward his own. He seeks agreement and clarifies the doubts, if any. He justifies his thoughts with logic and reasons.

In the P.G.T, the group is required to evolve a practical solution to a situational problem amongst

themselves through their discussions and they have to execute it as well. There are many candidates who learn about levers in class six, or seven or eight. But in this outdoor task, when they are actually confronting the practical task which can translate their bookish knowledge into something that is practical, many of them are not able to do it. Whereas, some people who may not be very good in academics, they will be able to apply themselves, see on the ground as to how they can relate their helping material to structures that are available. It is observed that there are four categories of people in P.G.T.

- Category One: Those are people who have taken a back seat and are mere *on-lookers*.
- Category Two: Those people who contribute to help on a *physical* plane.
- Category Three: Those people who though give ideas, but are *not* actually coming forward.
- Category Four: Those people, who can *collate* the ideas, *give* their own ideas as well as try and *work* out a solution and *implement* it also.

Ask yourself. Which category do I belong to? *Self-Awareness* and *Intuition* is the best available help anytime, anywhere. Start preparing yourself depending on the category you currently fall in, and the category in which you want to be. Trust me – The change is *possible*. But, one thing is for sure. The category in which you want to be is all about *Socialization*. To be social with your group, you have to be accepted by them. To be accepted, you have to *respect* their thoughts and feelings. Respect cannot be demanded, but has to be earned. The respect that you earn is nothing but the respect you give. It's a give and take policy.

What exactly needs to be done?

- ✓ Respect your group members. It is sure, you will earn respect too. Discuss your ideas with them. Have their word of consent. If someone is giving a good idea, make sure you appreciate it and get it implemented. Take my words. It's all about *Espirit De Corps*, my friends.
- ✓ There is no hurry. Get it straight into your mind. The GTO may put pressure, but you should remain calm and relaxed. He is only testing your group's reaction to *pressure* and *distractibility*. It's not the quantity of work that matters, but quality. Two or three obstacle tasks cleared in P.G.T in a good manner are much better than all five cleared in a haphazard way.
- ✓ Take initiative. As P.G.T progresses, the leaders will start emerging out their own. Let your till now rusty feet step ahead and take the challenge in hand. Give your ideas in a polite way. Convince and give reasons for your ideas. Don't worry at all, if all of your ideas are not implemented. Also, they need not to be. Two or three ideas given by you are more than enough or even if at least one idea gets implemented. It's your *attitude* that matters, and not the altitude of ideas. For rest of the time, help and contribute in the task.
- ✓ Encourage, if possible, other members of the group who are a bit hesitant in coming forward. Show keenness and interest. Be lively and enjoy the task rather than *showing* your OLQ's. Leave it to the assessor to see what he

wants, while you do your bit. Achieving the *group goal* is important here and your contribution to it is under assessment.

- ✓ Try and optimize your performance. '*Once you feel that you have given your contribution, take time to receive ideas from others and get them executed*'. We constantly give and receive ideas from others in a group, this being scientifically proven. When we have some ideas and views in our mind, we are at a *higher potential*, as this is a form of energy. And, according to Second Law of Thermodynamics, energy is only transferred from one form to another. Rather, here I would say from one person to another. It is a natural process. But, we don't stop to listen and continue giving our opinion, thus violating the Thermodynamic equilibrium. Just imagine?
- ✓ Please never try to deliberately display the OLQ's because, unfortunately, you *cannot*! Whatever traits that you possess, won't hide themselves from coming out for too long. You cannot stay neutral; some action along with a behavioral pattern has to come either as an action or reaction. Action and reaction, both are projective in their nature, neither they are subjective nor an objective one. In behavioral psychology, whatever you are trying to show in deliberation is interpreted and termed as '*exaggeration*'. And it is established that, whenever someone is exaggerating something, that something is not actually present in that person. Your eyes and your *body language* never change to exaggeration. As a result, the person is putting extra efforts to show it off. As the famous philosopher Grouch Marx once said

"There's one way to find out if a man is Honest - ask him. If he says 'Yes', you know he's a crook".

- ✓ Keep the *Savoir Faire* and maintain yourself in control. Learn to control your emotions. When you keep on shouting your views and paying no heed to what others are trying to convey, you are disturbing the thermodynamic equilibrium. It's a bit difficult to achieve patience, but *not* impossible. It's never too late to improve oneself in life. The *wish* to do well should be accompanied by a *will* to do well.
- ✓ Establish and maintain a good rapport within your group. We are all strangers from different parts of the country and will be together for five days of testing. We all are here for our individual selection. Who knows, if we all get to meet each other in the future or not? So, why should anyone fight or quarrel with the group? Enjoy the moments of your stay at the centre. *Stop* performing! *Start* enjoying the SSB.

Moving ahead, I would like to quote another significant point. In P.G.T, till everything is going well initially, the entire group is co-operating and socializing. But, as soon as there is a chaotic situation amongst the group amidst the negotiation of task, most of them start showing their true self. Now, the GTO takes advantage of the situation to put *pressure* on the group. He may tell you that time is running out, or that your group is lagging far too behind. What he is doing, is putting *stress* on the group to see its reaction. In this entire pressure cooker scenario, you too join the brigade of chaos. That means, even if initially in the task, you were *receptive* and *social*, you have *succumbed* to pressure and stress.

At such times, take a deep breath and relax. Please don't bother about the presence of the GTO and the stress that he invariably is trying to put. You would like to remain grounded and be like, how you were initially. This can be achieved through *control* over oneself. This is exactly, what the SSB wants – a person who won't lose his cool even in tense and tight-corner situations. Rather, he would continue and find a way to bring the situation under control. This would go further to show how important it is, to you *control* yourself?

Self-Control is achieved through '*Patience*'. Patience is itself a virtue. Courage can be directly attributed to the patience and in turn patience can be attributed to the sense of obedience. A person cannot be termed as courageous, if he does not have patience. And subsequently he cannot possess it, if he is not obedient. All these things cannot be achieved within a matter of one day. It's gradual, but quite possible if you have '*Insight*'. Sit quietly, in a relaxing place and ask yourself:

- ✓ What type of a person am I?
- ✓ Do I have the qualities to become what I aspire to be in life?

The P.G.T shows the '*Organization*' or '*Structure*' of an individual's personality traits. It is said to indicate:

- How does he experience life around him? How does he utilize some of his experiences, attitudes and behavior?
- Is he mentally original or stereotyped?
- Are his abilities creative or reproductive?
- Is he less adaptable or more adaptable to reality?
- Is his '*inner*' life or '*external*' life stronger?

- How and up to what degree does he control his emotions and feelings?
- Is he prone to 'anxiety'?

Many a times, aspirants at the SSB's do not make it due to one single reason. They lose their *natural self* and show, what is called in psychological terms as '*put-up behavior*'. They put a facade on themselves and try to *manipulate* their behavior. But, once under stress, they *revert* back to their original behavior. Let me again reassure you that:

- ✓ We are all human beings, not robots.
- ✓ We have our own weaknesses and limitations. A personality is *interplay* of all the strengths and weaknesses of an individual.

Personality is a thing, which is infinite and different. It varies from individual to individual, and situation to situation. So, as an author, I cannot cover all the aspects of personality here. That is not possible at least, within scope of this book. Give sometime for yourself to unearth your real personality and to make changes that you want to bring about. Many a times, we are largely satisfied with fantasy that we will do well the next time without ever seriously trying to give it a reality. The presence of a strong *will* to do well may actually decrease the difference between the level of aspiration and level of performance, since it not only tends to raise the level of performance, thus bringing it closer to the level of aspiration, but implies a more objective attitude.

This book will help you to do that. I would like to mention a few points that would help you in making a personality profile of yourself. Write your answer as 'yes' or 'no'. Be honest in your answer. Because, there is only one

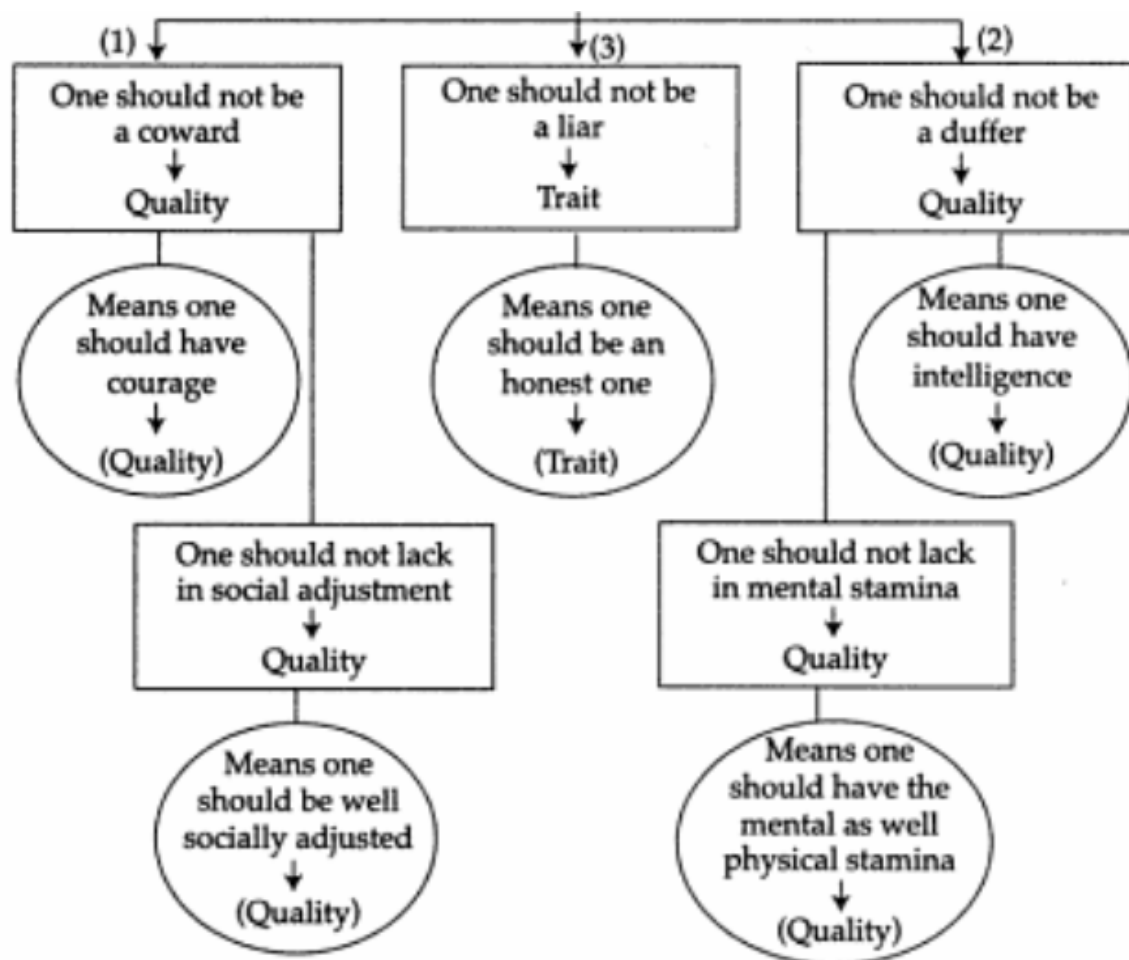
person who can change your personality and that is none else, but **You!**

Your Personality Profile for P.G.T

- 1) Do you adapt yourself to social environment and adjust well with persons and social groups with special reference to superiors, equals and subordinates?
- 2) Have you ever tried to put yourself in another man's position so as to appreciate justifiable difficulties, to enable rendering of help in a proper way?
- 3) Have you ever tried to understand and manage the feelings of a person that you have dealt with?
- 4) Do you show keenness and interest in helping others and in service towards others?
- 5) Do you participate willingly in harmony with others, when in a group and try to achieve the group goal?
- 6) Whom do you give preference to, collective effort or individual effort, when working together in a group?
- 7) Do you feel the spirit of team when you are in a team?
- 8) Are you loyal to aim of the group and subordinate your individual aim to the group aim?
- 9) Do you take initiative to do your best in carrying out even unspecified and probably unforeseen duties and obligations rather than faithfully carry out what you are told to do?
- 10) Are you selfish in your motives and obstruct the passage of others while in a group?

Your *wisdom* and answers to the above questions, will give the judgment of where you stand. This analysis would give you some assistance in knowing yourself as a personality, whether being compatible to requirement of the Armed Forces. Make earnest efforts to improve your grey areas and lacunae. Believe me; it is *possible*, if you are sincere in your efforts and approach.

You, being the aspirant of Armed Forces should not be trapped under five components; otherwise it's a strict No-No. These components are:



That's all about P.G.T. The same principles hold true for Half Group Task (H.G.T) too. Your behavior is under *magnification*, as now the group is reduced to half.

You may find that a few things are repeated over and over again in this chapter. You would have guessed the reason for it. You are right, because they are important tools in shaping yourself for your career in the Armed Forces. Read the concepts on and on, till you notice some change in your behavior. The sooner it is, the better it will be.

THE GROUP PLANNING EXERCISE (G.P.E)

The Group Planning Exercise (G.P.E) is the next most important and yet another interesting task after the P.G.T. You might have observed that, none of the cinemas and movies made with Army in background goes unaddressed without G.P.E shown in it. To simply put it, your personality in *action*, both in your *mind* and *ground*, can be seen through G.P.E and P.G.T alone. So, one can plainly imagine the potential of both these tasks to unmask a personality. Rests of all tasks in the Group Testing Technique are just a manifestation of these two tasks and are confirmatory in nature.

Conduct of G.P.E

The group is seated in a semi-circle fashion around a sand model. The G.T.O first briefs the group about the layout and structure of the model. He reads the narrative and simultaneously explains it with respect to the model. He then hands over a copy of the printed narrative to each one in the group and 7 -10 min of time is allotted with a view to acquaint themselves with various details and situations given therein. After the expiry of the stipulated time, the G.T.O enquires whether all the members of the group have understood the model clearly. Once the G.T.O is satisfied that none of them has any difficulty, he would ask to pass back the narrative and the members are given a sheet of paper each. Each one of you is required to write an individual plan in 10 min of time.

Once the time is over, again a time of 2 min is given to revise through the plan, which each individual has written. After that, the sheet is collected back and the group is given 15 min of time as an opportunity to collectively discuss over the exercise and arrive at a common conclusion. The language of discussion would be preferably English, but

Hindi is also acceptable, in case one gets stuck. But, the person should revert back to English as soon as possible. No third language can be used. The G.T.O takes his seat and observes the progress of the discussion. Once the discussion is over, the group has to appoint a volunteer or a spokesman, who would explain the entire group plan to the G.T.O.

We have completed with all the requirements of G.P.E theoretically. But, before we move on to get into details practically, let's see the two basics that have to be kept in mind:

- ✓ Again here, pay careful and absolute attention to the briefing given by the G.T.O about the task. Though later, you will be given the narrative to read and understand, but the very first impression of the task and the audio-visual approach (explanation + demonstration on the sand model using a pointer by the G.T.O) will offer you a basking edge in the finding solutions.
- ✓ Make a mental note of the key factors and facilities in the model. Also, try to register the sequence of action in your mind. Clarify *genuine* doubts, if any. Please use a pinch of common sense to avoid asking silly and baseless doubts, out of excitement. You might unnecessarily invite a negative impression in the mind of the testing officer.

Practical Approach to G.P.E

The Group Planning Exercise necessarily reveals the *"behavior of an individual in a group, when having met with real life situations and practical problems of varying complexity"*. The G.P.E is so very well designed that, a

person with some basic *logic* and average reasoning can conveniently find a solution.

The aim of the exercise is to find the adjustment of the individual under unusual circumstances whilst in a group. The individual's ability to evolve independent solution of practical problems termed as *Practical Intelligence* and capacity to put to use available means of resources for the desired end, termed as *Resourcefulness*, are all under watch by the assessors.

Before we go into detail with practical approach, let me remind you that, all the things I have mentioned in P.G.T are applicable here as well. Please associate the P.G.T with the G.P.E and you find there's one significant difference - The former is action on *ground* and the latter is action in *mind*. Now, let me help you out with G.P.E.

- ✓ **Comprehension of the problem:** Read the narrative attentively and *analyse* the situation well. 'Well begun is half done' and *grasping* the problem thoroughly is half job done. It's not difficult and can come with diligent practice.
- ✓ **Awareness of the surroundings:** It is the practical sense of an individual regarding his daily surroundings and environment. Like for instance, we can undoubtedly assume that in a village, there will be a police station, a dispensary, modes of transport etc and other basic amenities likewise, even if they are not mentioned in particular. *Common sense* would do the job for you here, because the entire planning exercise is not taking place in *Mars* or *Venus*. It is in your common locality, countryside and surroundings.
- ✓ **Priorities and Order of Importance:** The problems given may be of varying complexities.

Arrange them according to the priority in which they have to be dealt with. Give importance to the problems that need immediate attention while attending to others simultaneously. That would mean the organization and division of resources at hand. This is efficient multi-tasking.

- ✓ **Logical Approach:** Use of common, basic and natural logic by thinking rationally and excluding emotional factors. Analyse the pro and cons of the problem without resorting to *fantasy* or being *wishful*. For instance, assuming that you are carrying pistol unless particularly specified is wishful thinking. Your approach like an ordinary man will aid help. You might feel sorry for an old lady who has lost her cattle, but what about the derailment of train that would endanger the life of thousands? Emotional inclination should be less and practicality should be more prominent.
- ✓ **Resourceful Thinking:** Putting the best means and resources available at your disposal. Sometimes the resources and facilities you may require may be not functioning. Like for instance, telephones may be out of order, no mobile connectivity, tyre of your vehicle is punctured etc. Still, there will definitely be an alternative way out and you need to look out for that.
- ✓ **Receptivity:** It's the ability to understand and absorb new expressions and invites your interest, attention and grasping skills. When some one is giving an idea, listen to it attentively. See if there is any *improvisation* in it, and convey it politely. That shows you are tactful in managing other's feelings and receptive to their views. A good speaker is always a good listener. The assessors also highly

value people who are flexible enough to *adopt* ideas *superior* to their own.

- ✓ **Organizing:** Arranging the resources in a systematic way and putting into best use the available means, so as to produce effective results. Here is where your past experience comes into use, to understand the outline of the problem. Organizing requires *communication* and *reception*.
- ✓ **Social adaptation:** It encompasses the readiness of the individual to adapt himself to changing atmosphere. This would reveal, whether the person is rigid or mouldable. For this, you have to appreciate other's views and give yours also. If you are *considerate* to others, you can expect it in return too. Self-centric approach would take you nowhere.
- ✓ **Initiative:** The ability to originate action and sustain it. To take the first step in a new, unfamiliar situation in the right direction and maintain the momentum. As you initiate your ideas, you will get improvisation from the group and it would come into effect. Patience is the key here and also receptivity. A person cannot be *right* always, neither *wrong* too. So, you always need *feedbacks* and *opinion* from majority of the group.
- ✓ **Speed of Decision:** It is the ability to arrive at *close to workable decisions* expeditiously. It comes with self-confidence and self-esteem. Now, why *close to workable* and not entirely workable? It's because you may be not able to give a foolproof plan always in the first attempt. If your view is logical and practical, the group will definitely put in their contribution of ideas to make it fully workable. Partially workable plan gets *transformed* into fully executable plan as a

result of collective effort of the group to achieve the group goal.

- ✓ **Power of Expression:** The ability to put forward one's views clearly and assertively, thereby giving reasons. Now, this doesn't mean talking fluent English. Please seriously realize the gravity of this fact. Since, your proficiency in language is a result of your socio-economic background, which varies from person to person, no one expects you to be proficient and fluent in English at the SSB's. Your *views* and *attitude* are important, not your language. If you are putting forward your views and solutions clearly using the mixture of two languages allowed to use, it's good and sufficient.
- ✓ **Liveliness:** An individual's capacity to keep himself buoyant when meeting problems and bring about a *cheerful* atmosphere in stressful situations. A leader will be calm and composed in any situation and present a confident picture to his subordinates. Again, *patience* holds key here. You should be stable in approach, come whatever the situation. Your group members may lose their dependence on you, once you start behaving other than normal. Who would like to believe a person, who does not believe in himself? At least, there is a person in the group who is trying to pacify its members in chaos and confusion – why can't it be *you*. Your ideas and plan don't matter always, but *attitude* does.
- ✓ **Courage:** The ability to *appreciate* and take purposive *risks* willingly. The temperament to meet appreciated danger, to keep the enterprising spirit of adventure and willingness of desire to risk a hazard. Also, mental courage is all about the ability to overcome social shyness, normal timidity and the will

to contribute towards group effort during discussion.
Need I say anything more?

- ✓ **Sense of Responsibility:** All the above mentioned factors shall be coined into a single term 'Sense of Responsibility'. It is a direct derivative of *honesty*, *loyalty* and *integrity*. We all shoulder some or the other responsibilities in our daily lives. So, doing the same here without losing cool and succumbing to pressure and stress will sail you ahead. Your responsible attitude will take you places, which you would have not even imagined.

Hints to Help:

- Do not treat the problem or situation posed to you in a casual manner.
- Be very careful and calculative in deployment of men and material at your disposal.
- Time and Distance factors are of utmost importance from military operations point of view.
- Listen patiently to what the other man has to say. May be he has an important or constructive suggestion to make.
- An idea about distances can be interpreted from the scale which is normally indicated on the model.
- Always give due importance and priority to any particular task that deserves it. For e.g. If there is a case of a snake bite or serious injury, it must be attended on top priority basis.

- Due attention should be paid to the Zero Hour if any, in regard to the operations involved.
- The mode of transport or conveyance available here has an important bearing on a prompt and timely execution of the plan.
- The plan that you ultimately devise or decide upon should be simple, practical and safe enough. It should be based on some reasoning and not on whims and fancies.

THE COMMAND TASK

It is a part of the confirmatory series of the Group Testing Technique. It allows the GTO to focus on an individual apart from the usual group formation.

Conduct of the Task

The Command Task is conducted on second day of the GTO series. The whole group is seated at a distant location away from the vicinity of the testing area. Each individual is then called upon one by one and given a task. The task is similar to that of the PGT and all the rules will remain the same, less the group rule. The GTO now calls the individual in any numerical order and proudly makes him the 'Commander'. He then exchanges casual talks and pleasantries to make the aspirant feel at ease.

The GTO then explains him the task and makes sure that attempter has understood it very well. Once this is done, the GTO asks him to choose his subordinates to assist him in completing the tasks. As soon as the subordinates arrive, the GTO asks the Commander to begin with the task. A time limit of 15 min is allotted to complete the task, though the GTO might extent it, if the situation demands.

A Practical Approach

Before we go into the depth of the task, one must know the purpose of this task. The Command Task is to assess –

- The Commander's *leadership* capabilities.
- His ability to *plan* and *execute* the task.
- His reaction to *setbacks* and *failures*.

- His *distractibility* in the face of stress and crisis.
- His *acceptability* by his group members.
- The *willingness* and *body language* of his subordinates.

The Command Task may single-handedly reveal many qualities and traits about a person. The assessor sees as to how a person is analyzing and using his resources in a meaningful way. He also probes into the manner in which the Commander behaves with his subordinates, how he utilizes their strengths and weakness and how he co-ordinates them. The reaction of the Commander in the face of failures and setbacks, how he responds to stress and pressure and his distractibility when facing crisis is all observed.

While dealing with the Command task in particular, keep the following thoughts in mind –

- ✓ Pay attention to the *briefing* given by the GTO and clarify doubts, if any.
- ✓ When the time arrives to select your men, please do not follow any *pre-conceived* notions. The reason why all of you have been screened in for Stage II testing is evident here. All of you possess some officer like potentials or else you would not have been here. So, there is no base for *discrimination* while selecting your men. All of your group members are *best*. Therefore, you may choose whomsoever you feel would do the job for you. Your recommendation solely depends upon *your* performance and not of your subordinates’.

- ✓ Make your *plan* and *explain* it to your team. Make sure your men have understood what is in your mind.
- ✓ Exercise proper *control* over your men and correct them, if they do something wrong or break any rule by mistake. But, while doing so be *polite* and *humble* in your approach. Remember, they are your *subordinates* in this particular task only, but otherwise *equals*, who carry the same pursuit of becoming an Officer as that of yours. Bear in mind - They are *not* your paid labourers.
- ✓ As a Commander, place *yourself* at the most important and *indispensable* part of your plan.
- ✓ The Command Task is a *simulation* of an actual military operation, of which you have been made the Commander. For your men, your *orders* mean the difference between *life* and *death*. So, wherever there is a risk situation in your task, calculate the risks and plan the use of your men accordingly.
- ✓ The GTO may try to *distract* and divert your attention. He is seeing your *consistency* and *emotional stability* to face distractions and disturbances. I would like to ask you to imagine a war situation where the enemy is firing from all sides and there is no clue as where to retaliate. In such situations, an Officer has to be aware of the *distractional warfare* which the enemy has adopted to *paralyze* the counter-attack. Disturbance and distractions in such a pressure situation can cause heavy casualties. Also, I would like to quote an interesting method adopted by the GTO to distract the Commander. He had asked the Commander to narrate the story of the movie 'Dabbang' meanwhile negotiating the task.

- ✓ The GTO may also *deliberately* reject your proposal at times, though they were and are workable and valid. This is to see your *reaction* to failure and criticism. At such times, keep your *cool* and give *logical* reasons to him.
- ✓ *Group Dynamism* plays a significant role here too. The *result* of your *behavior* in the group is visible from the *body language* of your men. If you have been *co-operative* throughout the group testing procedure, it is seen from the *gestures* of your men, that they and your entire group has *accepted* you. From this, one can easily realize the importance of *social adjustment* and *co-operation*.

ENTRY SCHEMES IN ARMED FORCES

ARMY

1. National Defence Academy: Age: 16-19 years. Qualifications: Class 12. Advt. in April and October every year.
2.
 - a. Indian Military Academy: Direct Entry through CDSE conducted by UPSC and SSB interview. Age: 19-24 years. Qualifications: Degree or equivalent. Advt. in April and October every year.
 - b. Engineering Graduates: Age: 20-27 years. Selection through SSB Interview. Qualifications: Engineering Degree. Advt. in April and October every year.
 - c. University Entry Scheme: Final and pre-final students of engineering degree course. Selection through campus interview and SSB Interview. Advt. in July.
3.
 - d. Officers Training Academy: Short Service Commission (Non-Technical). Age: 19-25 years. Qualifications: Degree or equivalent. Selection through CDSE and SSB Interview. Advt. in March and October.
 - e. Short Service Commission (Technical) Age: 20-27 years. Qualifications: Engineering Degree. Advt. in March and October every year.
 - f. Short Service Commission (NCC Special Entry Scheme) Age: 19-25 years. Qualifications: Graduate with 50% marks and 2 years service in

NCC. Selection through direct SSB Interview. Advt. appears in October/November.

- g. Women's Entry Scheme: Age: 19-27 years. Qualifications: Graduate/Post Graduate. Selection through direct SSB interview. Advt. in June/December.

NAVY

1. Permanent Commission

- a. Cadet Entry (NDA), Cadet Entry (Executive) Naval Academy, Goa (through NDA Exam). Qualifications: Class 12 with Physics and Maths. Age: 16-19 years.
- b. Graduate Special Entry, Naval Academy, Goa (through CDSE). Qualifications: B.Sc with physics and Maths or BE. Age: 19-22 years.
- c. Direct Entry Naval Armament Inspection Cadre: Qualifications: BE or PG Degree in Electronics or Physics. Age: 19-25 years.
- d. Direct Entry Law Cadre: Degree in law with minimum 55% marks. Age 22-27 years.

2. Short Service Commission(Men and Women)

- a. Law Cadre: Qualifications: Degree in law with minimum 55% marks. Age: 22-27 years.
- b. Logistics Cadre: Qualifications: BA (Economics)/B.Com with second division or graduation with degree/diploma in material or financial management. Age: 19-25 years

- c. Air traffic Control (ATC): B.Sc. with minimum 50% marks in Physics and Maths. Age: 19-25 years.

3. Education Branch

- a. Permanent/ Short Service Commission: MA degree in Physics, Maths, Chemistry, Computer Science, Humanities, or Engineering. Age: 21-25 years. Men and Women can apply for Short Service Commission.

4. Engineering Branch (Marine Engineers)

- a. Permanent Commission: Cadet Entry (NDA) or (Tech): Qualifications: Class 12 with PCM. Age: 16-19 years. Direct Entry: Engineering Degree. Age: 19-25 years.
- b. Short Service Commission: Qualifications: Engineering Degree. Age: 19 -25 years.

5. Engineering (Naval Architects)

- a. Cadet Entry: Class 12 with PCM with minimum 70% marks in aggregate. Age: 16-19 years.
- b. Direct Entry: Degree in Naval Architecture or Engineering. Age: 21-25 years.

6. Electrical Branch:

- a. Permanent Commission: Cadet Entry: Qualifications: Class12 with PCM with minimum 70% marks aggregate. Age: 16-19 years. Direct Entry: Engineering Degree. Age: 19- 25 years.
- b. Short Service Commission: Engineering Degree. Age: 19-25 years.

AIR FORCE

1. NDA: It's a three year course before one is inducted as a pilot trainee at the Airforce Academy, Qualifications: Class12 with Physics and Maths. Age: 16-19 years.
2. Airforce Academy (CDSE): Qualifications: B.Sc with Physics and/or Maths or BE. Age: 19-23 years.
3. NCC: Qualifications: B.Sc with Physics and/or Maths and a C certificate of the NCC Air wing. Age: 19-23 years.
4. Flying Branch (Transport/Helicopter pilots): Age: 19-23 years, relaxable to 25 for those holding commercial Pilot License. Applications are called by AIR HQ followed by SSB Interview.
5. Technical Branch (Aeronautical Engineering: Electronics/Mechanical): Qualifications: BE/ B. Tech Degree with PCM.
6. Ground Duty Branch: Qualifications: First class graduate or second class post-graduate. Age: 20-23 years for post-graduate. Entrance through SSB Interviews. B-Com/M-Com graduates can apply for Accounts branch. In Meteorological branch, the qualification required is M.Sc.

My Appointment with a Psychologist by Krish Nair & Anoop T.

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