

Sagar Tomar: from a confused 4th year to a testing career

B.Tech Mechanical Engineering, Bundelkhand University, Jhansi (2019 to 2023). Now working in testing and compliance.

STARTING POINT

Confused in 3rd and 4th year, no clear skills, a basic laptop

FIRST INTERVIEW

Rejected because I froze on a simple question about my own hometown

FIRST OFFER

JBM (Jay Bharat Maruti) after a written test and interview. I had to leave after about 2 months for health reasons.

TURNING POINT

Weekly Naukri updates, a resume made for each role and LinkedIn referrals

FIRST JOB AFTER THAT

Testing Engineer at Intertek, an inspection and certification company

TODAY

Still working in testing and compliance

What I would tell my 3rd-year self

1. Pick a direction early (design, quality, manufacturing, testing) and learn the tools and standards of that field.
2. Do not fill the skills section with buzzwords. Write only what you can explain and show.
3. Know your project and your favourite subject completely. Both are asked almost every time.
4. Practise "Tell me about yourself" out loud until it comes out smoothly.
5. Attend every interview you can, even if it is not your field. It removes hesitation faster than anything else.
6. Know your own background: your hometown, what your family does, the machines at your home or farm. These are the easiest questions, and the ones that hurt most when you miss them.
7. Listen to the question fully and answer it directly. If you do not know something, say so honestly.
8. Prepare for written tests: English, maths, general aptitude and basic questions from your branch.
9. Update your Naukri profile every week and change your resume for each type of role.
10. Message people on LinkedIn for referrals, but only after your resume and skills have something to show.
11. Keep a backup offer or a small job so you are not sitting idle while you build skills.
12. Read the bond and salary terms carefully before you accept an offer.

The confusion in 3rd and 4th year

In 3rd and 4th year almost everyone is confused. One person says learn CAD/CAM, another says learn something else. I felt the same. My laptop was not powerful enough to run heavy design software, and honestly I had never shown real interest in it either.

In 4th year it hit me that college would end soon. What next? Everyone worries about what happens if there is no job after B.Tech, and I was thinking about all of it.

Campus placements: not what I expected

Companies did come to our university, but very few, and not many core mechanical ones. Sometimes only one or two came in a whole season.

At first, some roles were open to B.Tech students that were not in my field. I skipped those interviews because I thought I would never join that field anyway. That was a mistake, as you will see below.

My first interview: rejected for a very simple question

The first company that came hired through a third party. I was very hesitant, and my English was not coming out easily. I had never thought this would happen to me.

The interviewer asked: what is famous in Muzaffarnagar? That is my hometown. I froze and asked him back: famous for what, a place? I knew the answer. Muzaffarnagar is known for one of Asia's biggest jaggery (gur) markets, and I have lived there all my life. But in that moment my mind did not work.

The interviewer was from nearby Meerut. He said: why are you asking me, just tell me what is famous. I was rejected for this. I felt bad for a long time, because it was such a small question about the place I grew up in.

The lesson: presence of mind. You do not get much time to think, and questions about yourself and your background must be answered quickly and clearly.

My decision: attend every interview

After that I decided my hesitation would only go away if I sat in front of interviewers again and again. So whenever a company came and I was allowed to sit, I went, even if it was not my field.

It worked. My speaking improved and I started communicating in English. The hardest part at first was even "Tell me about yourself". After two or three interviews things felt normal.

Skills: what freshers write and what they really have

As freshers we write skills like team leader, time management, Excel, MS Office and, for mechanical, CAD/CAM. But most of us have no real skill in them, because we never worked on them.

Looking back, I should have picked a direction in 3rd year and learned for it. For example, if you want quality, there are quality tools, standards and defect types you can read and research on your own before your interview. I understand this now.

The written test and my first offer

Then JBM (Jay Bharat Maruti) came to our campus. Many companies take a written test from freshers first, because they do not have much to ask a fresher. Ours had English, maths, general aptitude and basic mechanical questions: 80 questions in 30 minutes. I qualified.

In the interview they asked my favourite subject and my project. I got the offer letter and joined. After about 1.5 to 2 months I fell ill and had to leave the job for health reasons.

Back home and starting again

I stayed at home for about 3 months and then went out again with my resume. I had other small offers from campus, and I had kept them in mind: if there is an emergency, working somewhere for a few days is better than sitting at home.

I used Naukri.com. Every week I changed something: made my "About" section shorter and sharper, added keywords, improved the resume and added the skills I had learned. A resume has to change with the job you target. One resume cannot be used for quality, testing and R&D roles. I learned this from YouTube and websites.

Delhi, walk-in interviews and a different field

I went to Delhi with a friend and we stayed at another friend's flat. We applied every day and went to walk-in interviews. I got offers, but not good ones.

So I joined a different field for 3 to 4 months, so that I would not be a burden on my family. During that time I kept building my skills.

LinkedIn and the referral that changed things

From Naukri I moved to LinkedIn. I picked a role (quality, manufacturing or production), picked target companies and messaged people working there: sir, here is my resume, can you give me a referral? Classmates who were already working also gave me leads.

But people help only when your resume shows something and you are working on your skills. You have to identify that direction yourself.

I got a referral and joined Intertek as a Testing Engineer. Since then I have been in the testing and compliance field. Once your skills grow, referrals keep coming, and companies sometimes reach out to you directly.

An interview I still remember: the tube well

An appliance company in Noida. The director interviewed me and it went well. He asked about my project and favourite subject, gave me numericals and I solved them. I would say I answered about 70 to 75 percent of his questions. Salary was already being discussed.

At the end he asked: do you have a tube well at home? I said yes, happily, because I thought it was a casual question. Then he asked: how many horsepower is the motor, how many inches is the bore, how much electricity does it use in an hour?

I had never paid attention to any of it. I could not calculate, and I could not even guess, because I did not know how bore size and motor power go together. So I answered honestly that I did not know.

He said: you are an engineer and you did not show interest even in your own home, so what will you show in my company? I was rejected. A few days later they offered a very low salary with a 2 to 3 year bond.

I feel some interviewers ask tough questions at the end when the budget is tight, to put you under pressure. That is only my observation, not a rule. But my mistake was clear: I did not know the machines in my own life.

The lesson: know the systems around you (home, farm, village). They are the easiest interview questions.

Difficulties I faced

- Confusion about what to learn in 3rd and 4th year
- No powerful laptop for design software, and no real interest at that time
- Hesitation and weak English communication in early interviews
- Skills section with buzzwords and no real skills
- Few core mechanical companies at campus
- A health setback right after the first job
- Low-paying offers and long bonds in the first job search

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