

Five common mistakes to avoid on GMAT Exam

Studying for only 2-3 weeks

1st mistake students make is to just study for 2-3 weeks, people have misconception how difficult or challenging is GMAT, they have misconception that how fast they are or how good they are with numbers but studying for two weeks will not just not cut it. Many of you will be shocked that how many effort goes in preparing for GMAT, it takes several months to prepare for it although people have their own capacity & speed to grasp/learn things. Rough guide is to study for 100 hours, I imagine most of the GMAT takers are working professionals so investing 2 hours a day is reasonable time as you don't have 8 hours, for people who even do have 8 hours a day should go for small size chunks rather than going for 8 hours a day, break it & set weekly targets. 100 Hours should be broken into weekly targets like 12 hours per week.

Studying only on weekends

We understand people are busy professionals & when they get home they complain that of being tired & stretched out, we live in 24*7 world where clients & bosses keep on pushing you off limits & work hours are demanding. But you don't want to wait for weekends as we mentioned earlier you need to target small size chunks, if you let 5-6 days without studying you will break the momentum & will be playing catch-up.

Keep Chanting "I will not wait for weekend & start revolving my schedule around my daily targets."

All concentration on one Section

Beside study plan & timing aspect, it's very important to focus on topic and on how you can get more out of it; common mistake people make is that they focus only on one section. Say engineer saying "I need to work on verbal, I work all day along with number & I should be able to crack it. I need to focus more on verbal section." But the fact is Lawyers, English Teachers, and Journalist and other such people who read & write for living, find Verbal challenging when it comes to GMAT & same goes for people from Accounting, Engineering background finding Quant section challenging. Whatever successes you have in past in certain field you may use it in application process but in GMAT it will help to certain extend but focusing on one section sight based on past experience will not be advisable. Keep sections going simultaneously, it's important as it helps you keep your brain fresh. Let's say there are different section of your brain that helps in understanding quant & other verbal so on & off focusing on both sections will keep them fresh & ready to go. Give it a shot & take practice test & see results.

No Debriefing after Practice Exam

When people discover that they want to apply for MBA program they start reverse engineering things, they see deadlines and start thinking about GMAT. This lets them appear for Diagnostic GMAT test; it's not a bad idea to analyze your strength & weaknesses. But biggest mistake that most of the students end up making is that they don't go back & review the practice test. Other extreme is where people score 700+ on practice test & they think they have nailed it & don't need to analyze test. Since we live on internet & there is no shortage of tests out there but one need to take time out & go back to analyze test given whether you nailed it or bombed it. It's good to spend 100 hours in studying but major portion of learning comes when giving practice tests you discover new things while giving tests. You will do 100s & 1000s practice questions before actual test to time yourself & know your preparedness but not going back & analyzing them will not help.

Reviewing only wrong questions

GMAT aspirants are generally busy professionals who take out time to study out of busy work schedule by studying at night or on lunch break or while travelling using Tablets or Phones. With time economics, students only review questions that went wrong during practice test & not spend time reviewing question that went right. Students think that they got question right and so don't need to look and their explanations. You may have got it right due to many reasons –

- Gussed It Right – your guess work did magic for you.
- Your one strategy but that might not be best of this question.
- You used best strategy but used different numbers or scenarios.

Your way may or may not match model solution but no harm in going through explanation as it's a great way to gives yourself different layers of context.

It's really tough for strong test takers to take this advice as they are already scoring 700+ in practice tests but trust me this never hurt. Lot of people ask me what's best skill for GMAT test taker, I tell them

Its ability to consume information quickly & process quickly

Ability to recognize

Have conversation with yourself; ask what you know & what you not know. GMAT is notorious for giving information that is not related to help you solve question but it's equally notorious for omitting information that is needed to solve that question. There are several tips for GMAT but I focused on 5 mistakes that people generally overlook & you will not find them in any book or any coaching manual.

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