

UNIT 87 – UPSC - Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Services

An aptitude is a constituent of a capability to perform certain task at a certain level, which can also be considered “talent”. Aptitudes may be physical or mental. Aptitude is not knowledge, understanding, learned or acquired abilities (skills) or attitude. The innate nature of aptitude is in contrast to achievement, which signifies knowledge or ability that is expanded. Aptitude is considered as natural capability for doing a particular work or solving a particular problem or facing a particular problem or facing a particular situation. Also to be very specific one requires a different skill for law and order, for investigation of a case or for working in an intelligence agency. Though to some extent skill is inherent, but it can be learned and upgraded through training and capacity building. At the written examination stage, it is a fact that applicants do not have working experience, yet they are expected to take decisions and justify them. Experience can be successfully gained through discussing good number of case studies.



Following are some values which forms the basis of civil service ethics:

1. Impartiality
2. Objectivity
3. Reliability of administrative operations
4. Openness
5. The service principle
6. Responsibility

The changes in management and its operating environment have shaped also new values, such as efficacy and result-orientation. These values usually relate to the operations of agencies and they are defined separately for each agency.

Civil Service Values

The statutory basis for the management of the Civil Service is set out in Part 1 of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010.

The Civil Service is an essential part of the government. It supports the government of the day in developing and implementing its policies, and in delivering public services. Civil servants are accountable to ministers, who in turn are accountable to Parliament. As a civil servant, candidates are selected on merit, on the basis of fair and open competition and are expected to carry out your role with dedication and a commitment to the Civil Service and its core values: integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.

Integrity

Integrity is the fundamental moral concept in civil services. It is an important basis of ethical behaviour and ethical competency. It is associated with the value of being honest and maintain strong moral principles. Integrity includes financial integrity, professional integrity and intellectual integrity. Ethics and integrity are closely related. An ethical person having strong moral values is bound to be a man of integrity. Those people who have experience of working in the government know that integrity is evaluated every year through their Annual Performance Report. The assessment takes place on the basis of decisions/performance of the individual Civil Servants throughout the year. In conducting interview for testing personality of the candidates, the board carefully observes the approach of the answer of individual candidate while assessing their integrity. In written examination, the examiner will obviously look into moral stand of the candidates especially on issues and conflicts faced by them while dealing with various glitches.

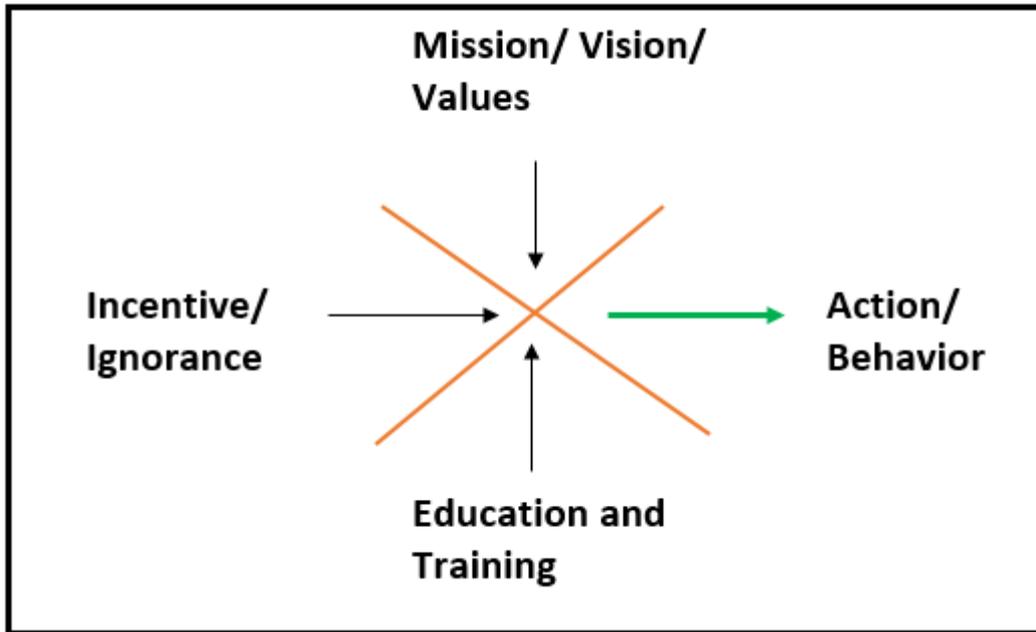
The notion of integrity has to do with perceived steadiness of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations and outcome. When used as a virtue term, "integrity" denotes to a quality of a person's character. Some professionals visualize integrity as the quality of having a sense of honesty and truthfulness in regard to the motivations for one's actions. Persons of integrity do not just act consistently with their endorsements, they stand for something. They stand up for their best judgement within a community of people trying to discover what in life is worth doing. Other observers emphasize the idea of integrity as personal honesty: acting according to one's beliefs and values at all times. When discussing about integrity, it can emphasize the "wholeness" or "intactness" of a moral stance or attitude. Some of the wholeness may also emphasize commitment and authenticity. With reference to accountability, integrity serves as a measure of willingness to adjust value system to maintain or improve its consistency when an expected result appears incongruent with observed outcome. Many scholars consider integrity as a virtue in that they see accountability and moral responsibility as necessary tools for maintaining such consistency. Halfon (1989) offers a different way to explain integrity in terms of moral purpose. Halfon designates integrity in terms of a person's dedication to the pursuit of a moral life and their intellectual responsibility in seeking to understand the demands of such life.

For an individual, his values and culture which determine personal integrity. Personal integrity is about demonstrating accountability for personal actions, conducting personal relationship and activities fairly and honestly. For an individual, it is professional duty and obligation which determine his professional integrity. This means conducting professional relationship and activities fairly, honestly, legally, and in conformance with the professional code of ethics. Institutional integrity is a broader concept which is determined by the mission and vision statements of an organisation. The process which it follow: the code of conduct for its employees and the results of the procedure followed. Thus Institutional integrity is the about fostering the ethical behaviour throughout an institutions through personal example, management practices and ethical training (Santosh Ajmera, 2015).

Basically integrity approach empowers an individual to make value judgement about right or wrong. It is a value driven instead of rule driven. One has to learn how to deal with challenges and dilemmas.

Integrity

Model



Training, ethical education, leadership, incentives and ethical decision making models, theories, are techniques which help in the integrity approach to decision making (Santosh Ajmera, 2015).

Impartiality and Non-partisanship

Impartiality is a norm of justice holding that decisions should be based on objective standards, instead of on the basis of bias, prejudice, or preferring the advantage to one person over another for unsuitable reasons. Impartiality is acting solely according to the merits of the case and serving equally well governments of different political persuasions. Impartiality means that civil bureaucrats in carrying out their official work, including functions like procurement, recruitment, delivery of services etc., should take decisions based on merit alone. Impartiality implies that the behaviour of, and treatment by a bureaucrat to any individual or entity has to be exclusively on the basis of merit. An administrator has to take numerous major decisions such as recruitment, procurement and allotment. To make such decisions effective and efficient, there has to be absolute impartiality. Impartiality is the eminence of a person where one is impartial while allocating any goods or services among several people or selecting a person from a set of people based on certain set of abilities.

In Impartiality, candidates must: Perform his responsibilities in a way that is fair, just and equitable and reflects the Civil Service commitment to equality and diversity They must not act in a way that unjustifiably favours or discriminates against particular individuals or interests.

In political Impartiality, person must:

Serve the government, whatever its political persuasion, to the best of his ability in a way which maintains political impartiality and is in line with the requirements of this code, no matter what your own political beliefs are.

Act in a way which deserves and retains the confidence of ministers, while at the same time ensuring that you will be able to establish the same relationship with those whom you may be required to serve in some future government.

Comply with any restrictions that have been laid down on your political actions.

Candidates must not act in a way that is determined by party political considerations, or use official resources for party political purposes and allow their personal political views to determine any advice they give or their actions (Reddy, et, al., 2015).

Non Partisanship

Non-partisanship is not being precisely owned or allied with any group, party or cause. Non-partisanship can be called political neutrality. Non-partisanship infers that the officer is to do his task without any fear of, or favour to any political party. The values of the administrator will flow from the constitution not from the philosophy of any political party. Non-partisanship is the process of not involving any political party even if the person has strong faith in any political thought.

Importance of these Two Values

In egalitarianism, well-organized civil service must have set of values that differentiates it from other occupations. Integrity, dedication to public service, impartiality, political neutrality, anonymity and non-partisanship are promises of an effective civil service. The public has a right to expect the civil service functions honestly, impartially and efficiently.

Impartiality empowers the administrator to fill the gaps of trust deficit between the subjects and the Government. Impartiality provides lawfulness to the behaviour of administrator and makes it more effective.

Major task of administrators is to adopt a partial (non-neutral in true sense) approach towards serving the poor and underprivileged, over and above personal gain and conferred interests. Non-partisanship strengthens the democratic procedures and institutions along with maintaining the integrity of the service. The administrators are always with continuous interface with the politicians, therefore it is necessary to detach themselves from any political dogma and do his duty sincerely. It does not matter which party is in power. Significance of non-partisanship can be appreciated by considering a situation in which this virtue is absent. If the administrator is motivated to any political party, there would always be a group that would remain alienated from the government services as they would have voted for losing party. It strongly fascinates other prerequisites of moral administration like clearness and trustworthiness.

Objectivity

Objectivity is founding advice and decisions on rigorous analysis of the evidence. It entails that a truth remains true universally, independently of human thought or approaches. It is established that objective decisions are not impacted by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts. Taking an objective approach to an issue means having due regard for the known valid evidence (relevant facts, logical implications and viewpoints and human purposes) pertaining to that issue. If significant valid evidence is denied or counterfeit, an objective approach is incredible. An objective approach is particularly important in science, and in decision-making processes which affect large numbers of people (e.g. politics, beurocracy). In some circumstances,

an objective approach is unmanageable because people will naturally take a biased, self-interested approach. That is, they will select out those views and facts which agree with their own.

To maintain objectivity in public services, candidates must:

- Provide information and advice, including advice to ministers, on the basis of the evidence, and accurately present the options and facts.
- Take decisions on the merits of the case.
- Take due account of expert and professional advice.

Candidates must not: Disregard inconvenient facts or relevant considerations when providing advice or making decisions.

Frustrate the implementation of strategies once decisions are taken by declining to take, or abstaining from, action which flows from those decisions. Therefore objectivity means consideration of convenient and inconvenient facts, taking decision based on merits of the case in the matters related to:

- Public administration.
- Policy implementation.
- Policy formulation.
- Awarding contracts.
- Making recommendation for awards and benefits.

In brief, objectivity entails implementation of policy in letter and spirit without any personal bias (Reddy, et, al., 2015).

Dedication

Dedication is the eminence of people to be devoted or loyal to a duty or purpose, thought or action. Dedication is vital personality trait of an individual. In organizational framework, faithful employees work towards achieving the organizational goals. Dedication will carry person through a lack of motivation. It is his ability to continue acting when motivation is lacking. Dedication will drive to certain task rapidly. There are some occupation in which employees dedicate their lives to public service even sacrificing their personal life and comfort.

Empathy, Tolerance and Compassion towards the weaker sections

A public service officials must possess all the three traits depending on situation. Public servants are meant to serve and this requires developing a humanistic attitude. These traits guarantee that the public servants act sympathetically and interpret the rules so as to advance public interest.

Empathy

Empathy is described as understanding what others are feeling. Empathy is the capability to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within the other person's frame of reference. In general term, empathy is about being able to accurately hear out and understand the opinions, feelings and concern of other people in society. Positive psychology explain empathy as the quality of feeling and understanding another person's situation in present moment, their perspective, emotions and action and communicating this to the person. Barker (2003)

defined empathy as "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person".

Empathy is emotional intelligence competency. Among many competency, empathy falls in social awareness competency. This skill reflects person's ability to connect with others and to relate them which is necessary skill in building and managing healthy relationships. Without the ability to understand what other is going through relationship remains superficial and without the depth and richness that occurs when candidates share an emotional connection the opportunity to work for the person in an effective manner is lost (Reddy, et, al., 2015).

Importance of empathy: Empathy is considered as important in any social and organizational setting. Empathy is the ability to recognise, understand, and share the feelings of other people. It's an invaluable trait for managers, since it enables them to look at things from their employees' perspective. Empathetic officers are required in current scenario of administration targeted towards inclusive growth.

Power of empathy: Empathy may be used to understand negative emotions of other person such as cause of aggression. Empathy makes officer noble and commendable to the people being led. Sacrifice and solidarity for the greater good are easier for people when their leader shows empathy for their struggles. Followers need someone they can identify with, but more importantly someone who understands their pain.

For public servant, there are various level of empathetic situations. It starts from understanding the content and promoting an environment and a culture of respect and service (Reddy, et, al., 2015).

<p>Level 1: Understands unspoken contents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates active listening skills (such as asking probing questions , not interrupting) • Recognises body language, facial expression and/or tone of voice to understand the unspoken message. • Recognises unexpressed or poorly expressed thoughts, concerns and feelings. • Picks up signals when others are not feeling comfortable and displays considerations
<p>Level 2: Has concerns for others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to diversity of opinion. • Understands both what is being said by a person and underlying reasons for the emotional state of the person. • Understands and appreciates other's concerns and feelings • Probes to understand people's issues, unspoken thoughts and feelings. • Displays openness to diversity of opinion and adapts behaviour to be helpful and considerate.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes inferences that go beyond the explicitly expressed content and emotion. • Identifies a unique characteristic or the strengths of the other person.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is sensitive to underlying the problems, and why people act or behave the way they do. • Demonstrates empathy by correctly understanding reactions or emotions of others. • Builds trust by demonstrating respect for other's point of view.
Level 4: Acts as a Role model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays an in-depth understanding of the ongoing reasons for a person's behaviour and response. • Understands the longer term reasons for behaviour • Makes a balanced assessment of a person's strengths and weaknesses based on a deeper understanding of the individual. • Demonstrates an astute understanding of others' view by asking the right questions at the right time.
Level 5: Creates and promotes an environment of respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a culture of mutual trust and respect. • Encourages others to read deeper into others' emotions by providing practical tips. • Creates the systems promoting empathy.

Tolerance

Tolerance is a great feature of civil servants. Tolerance comprises of allowing people to exercise their rights, religious or constitutional. Tolerance teaches us to exercise restraint in sensitive matters. Tolerance is defined as a fair and objective outlook towards those whose lifestyle differs from person. It refers to the skills person need to live together peaceably. It is established in reports that the term tolerance means the willingness to accept or to tolerate, especially opinions or behaviour people may not agree with, or to behave sensibly with those who are not like them. It means showing respect for the race, gender, opinions, religion and ideologies of other people or groups, and to admire the good qualities and good work of others. And to express one's point of view in a decent and respectful way while respecting the sentiments of others.

In times of peace, people have a chance to thrive socially, economically and emotionally. Tolerance creates a society in which people can feel valued and respected, and in which there is room for every person, each with their own ideas, thoughts and dreams. Due to these reasons, most of the experts believe that tolerance is important as it is an indispensable aspect of a healthy, liveable society. Actually, it is the only way in which a country as diverse as India (politically, religiously, economically) can function and use each and every difference to make its people thrive rather than suffer.

In the age of globalization, individuals come from different backgrounds, cultures and religions and work together, and where the world has become multicultural and full of diversity, establishing tolerance and harmony has become very crucial and important, and fostering mutual love and affection has become vital. Without tolerance and harmony, the lasting peace of societies cannot be maintained, and loyalty for each other cannot be established. Tolerance does not imply that only one person exhibit tolerance and the others do not. When some people disagree on particular issue they must support and express their opinion in a courteous manner, and they should not use hateful and provocative words. Tolerance must be revealed from both sides on issues, in order for it to be effective (Reddy, et, al., 2015).

