

SSB Interview: A Complete Guide for Defence Aspirants

The **SSB Interview (Services Selection Board Interview)** is the most crucial stage in the selection process for joining the Indian Armed Forces as an officer through entries such as **NDA, CDS, AFCAT, and Technical Entries**. Unlike conventional job interviews, the SSB interview is an intensive 5-day assessment that evaluates a candidate's personality, leadership, decision-making skills, and overall suitability for a career in the armed forces.

This article provides a **complete guide to the SSB Interview**, including its structure, selection criteria, preparation tips, and expert strategies to crack it.

What is the SSB Interview?

The SSB Interview is conducted by the **Services Selection Board** of the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force. It is designed to assess the **Officer-Like Qualities (OLQs)** in a candidate through a series of psychological tests, group tasks, personal interviews, and physical challenges.

Candidates who clear the written examinations like **NDA, CDS, or AFCAT**, or are shortlisted through direct entries such as 10+2 TES, SSC Tech, or NCC Special Entry, are called for the SSB Interview.

SSB Interview: 5-Day Procedure

Day 0: Reporting Day

- Document verification
- Briefing about the SSB process

Day 1: Screening Test

This stage filters candidates for the next four days.

Tests conducted:

- **OIR (Officer Intelligence Rating) Test** - verbal and non-verbal reasoning
- **PPDT (Picture Perception and Discussion Test)** - write a story based on a picture and discuss it in a group

Result: Candidates who qualify move to Stage II of the interview.

Day 2: Psychological Tests

These tests assess your subconscious mind and personality traits.

Tests include:

- **TAT (Thematic Apperception Test)** - Writing stories based on images
 - **WAT (Word Association Test)** - Responding to 60 words in 15 seconds each
 - **SRT (Situation Reaction Test)** - Reacting to 60 daily-life situations
 - **SDT (Self Description Test)** - Writing opinions about oneself from different perspectives
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Days 3 & 4: GTO Tasks (Group Testing Officer Tasks)

These outdoor and indoor tasks assess teamwork, leadership, initiative, and problem-solving abilities.

Key tasks:

- Group Discussion (GD)
 - Group Planning Exercise (GPE)
 - Progressive Group Task (PGT)
 - Half Group Task (HGT)
 - Lecturette
 - Command Task
 - Individual Obstacles
 - Final Group Task (FGT)
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Day 4 or 5: Personal Interview

A one-on-one interaction with the Interviewing Officer (IO) focusing on:

- Personal background
- Academics and achievements

- Situational responses
- Hobbies and interests
- Motivation to join the Armed Forces

Day 5: Conference Day

All assessors (IO, GTO, and Psychologist) meet to discuss each candidate's performance. A final brief interaction may occur. Results are announced, and selected candidates are sent for medical examinations.

Officer-Like Qualities (OLQs) Tested in the SSB Interview

SSB assessors look for the following 15 OLQs grouped under four major factors:

1. Planning and Organizing

- Effective Intelligence
- Reasoning Ability
- Organizing Ability
- Power of Expression

2. Social Adjustment

- Social Adaptability
- Cooperation
- Sense of Responsibility

3. Social Effectiveness

- Initiative
- Self-Confidence
- Speed of Decision
- Ability to Influence Group
- Liveliness

4. Dynamic Factors

- Determination
- Courage
- Stamina

How to Prepare for the SSB Interview

1. **Understand the Process Thoroughly:** Know the format and expectations of each test.
2. **Practice Regularly:** Daily practice of WAT, TAT, SRT, and GDs is essential.
3. **Work on Physical Fitness:** Prepare for obstacle tasks and maintain good stamina.
4. **Stay Informed:** Read newspapers and follow current events for GD and lecturette.
5. **Self-Reflection:** Prepare your self-description honestly and introspectively.
6. **Mock Interviews:** Take guidance from professionals through SSB coaching programs.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Memorizing stories for psychological tests
- Being over-aggressive in group tasks
- Faking answers or personality traits
- Lack of preparation for personal interview questions
- Ignoring communication and body language

Expert Tips to Crack the SSB Interview

- Be natural and honest in your responses
- Practice effective communication and listening
- Stay calm under pressure

- Exhibit leadership without dominating
- Maintain a positive mindset throughout

Final Thoughts

The SSB Interview is more than just a test — it is a journey of self-discovery, confidence, and personal growth. Success in SSB comes from consistent preparation, a strong mindset, and the genuine desire to serve the nation.

If you are serious about joining the Indian Armed Forces as an officer, invest in proper guidance, coaching, and practice. With the right preparation, clearing the SSB Interview is absolutely achievable.

Looking for expert SSB coaching?

Join Victor Growth's **SSB Interview Coaching Program** designed specifically for NDA, CDS, and AFCAT aspirants. Get trained by retired officers and SSB experts, with mock interviews, psychological test practice, and full personality development.

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