



A Dedicated and Personalized Consulting Service for Business School and other Graduate School Applicants

A COLLECTION OF 30 SUCCESSFUL MBA ESSAYS

Gateway to your dream schools

Written by students who were accepted into
top 30 schools

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INTRODUCTION

About MyEssayReview (MER)

Founded in 2011, myEssayReview (MER) is a **dedicated, personalized and affordable** B-school consulting service that believes in the principle that all applicants possess **unique perspectives** and **life experiences** that set them apart. Because of this personalization, 90% of MER students have been accepted into majority (not one, but majority!!) of the schools of their choosing. MER students with scores between 610 - 680 have secured admission to schools such as Kellogg, Booth, ISB, CMU, Manchester, HAAS, Duke, Columbia, LBS, Schulich, IIM etc. Some of them have secured admits with scholarships from CEIBS, HKUST, GW, and McMaster, USC, and Fuqua.

Similarly, MER students with high GMAT scores (typically 700+) have **secured admissions** from top 5 programs such as Harvard, Stanford, MIT, Tuck, and Booth and have also received **fellowships** from Darden, Ivy Richards, Kellogg, Yale, UCLA, Emory, Tippie, Cornell, Duke, IE, CMU, Ross, GW, Wisconsin, ISB, and McCombs etc.

[Learn more](#)

Why Choose MER?

The Best

MER is founded by Poonam, a Ph.D in English with 30 years of teaching experience in India and the US. A master storyteller, Poonam has extensive experience in helping students craft compelling stories for Business schools and other specialized graduate programs. A full-time consultant since 2011, Poonam has worked with more than 350 applicants from all over the world on their admission essays for various MBA programs (full-time, part-time, and executive), Ph.D. programs, and other Master's programs. Poonam is also a member of AIGAC (Association of Graduate Admission Consultants) since 2013 and has attended conferences at prestigious business schools in the US and Europe.

[Learn More](#)

Proven

In the past eight years, Poonam has achieved **excellent success** with her students, and 90% of them have been **accepted into top 20 schools**. Her students have received **admits with scholarships** (30% to 70%) from prestigious schools such as Darden, Kelley, Ross, Kellogg, UCLA, Yale, Haas, CMU, Emory, Cornell, Ivy Richards, Rice, Georgia Tech, Maryland, Wisconsin, ISB, McCombs, CEIBS, and GWU etc. Poonam's story-telling acumen combined with her passion for her work have earned her students' tremendous success and have made her **one of the 5 most-reviewed top-rated consultants** on the GMAT Club.

[Learn More](#)

Simple

Poonam believes that every customer **deserves the best**. Hence, she doesn't follow a cookie-cutter approach or slots you in any template or a particular profile but provides an in-depth and highly personalized support that is unique to your needs. Poonam is passionate about her work and is highly committed to each of her students. She would go above and beyond to ensure that your application **reflects the quality** that she is known for. Unlike some of the other companies, she does not segment the packages into Silver, Gold, and Platinum. You will get the **same level of service** regardless of whether you purchase a **1-school or 5-school package**.

[Learn More](#)

More Personal

Poonam strives to know you completely to ensure that **your best stories** are selected for your essays. She demonstrates her extraordinary ability and patience to ensure that her students settle for nothing less than the best. Every student works directly on a one-on-one basis with Poonam, the founder and CEO of myEssayReview, and not with any part-time or junior consultants. She

works with no more than 6 applicants at a time. Hence, in the first conversation, she does a **thorough review** of your resume and asks pointed questions to uncover the ‘hidden gems’ for appropriate positioning in your essays.

[Sign up for free consultation to learn more.](#)

High Value

At \$1499 for one school and at \$2799 for three schools, MER offers unbeatable value, any way you look at it. MER prices are nearly 50% lower than its direct competitors. The contrast becomes more prominent when you consider that it offers better service than the expensive Gold packages offered by some companies. This has been made possible by minimizing technology and personnel overhead. Moreover, unlike other companies, she doesn't charge her students extra for rush service.

[Learn More](#)

A Proven Track Record

MER has recently released the stats of students we have assisted on different programs since 2011. Click [here](#) for the list.

A Snapshot of MER's Successes

The above list of MER's success stories can help you with the following:

1. Understand the role that a good application plays in getting you scholarships (and not just admission) and
2. Narrow down the list of schools that you think is feasible, given your GMAT score.

While the above list is not comprehensive, it gives you an idea of what is feasible.

Admit to Top 20 schools, some with scholarships:

Poonam has helped more than 350 students get accepted into their dream schools in the USA (Harvard, Stanford, MIT, Kellogg, Booth, Darden, Wharton, Haas, Duke, Columbia, Kelley, Emory, Tuck, Yale, Rice, UCLA, McCombs, GW, CMU, Foster, Georgia Tech, Mays, Purdue, UNC, and Wisconsin), in Europe (LBS, HEC, INSEAD, IESE, Oxford, Cambridge, IE, Imperial, RSM, Warwick, Cranfield, UCL, and Manchester), in Canada (Rotman, Schulich, Telfer, DeGroote, Ivey, and Ted Rogers), and in Asia (ISB, IIM, HKU, NUS, HKUST, and CEIBS).

Some of her recent successes with 700 + GMAT scores are:

- Mansi (770)- HBS, Stanford, Kellogg, INSEAD, and Wharton
- Arjun, Aldieno, and Rishi (710, 710, and 740)- Oxford
- Ben O Bright (720)- CMU, Duke, and Cornell

- Aarti (740) -Tuck
- Bhawna (710)- Tuck, ISB
- Andre (700) -IMD

Poonam has a great success rate with students who received scholarships: To name a few:

- Abhishek (760) - Booth, MIT, UCLA, and Darden; joined Darden with 50% scholarship
- Carlos (720) - Ivy Richards, Emory, and Cornell with more than US \$70K in scholarships; joined Cornell
- Utkarsh (760) - Tepper, UNC, Duke (50%), Kellogg (50% Tuition), and Yale (\$40K) with scholarships
- Andrew (770) - Cambridge, LBS, and Oxford with scholarship; joined Cambridge
- Vladimir (700) - MIF program of LBS
- Eduardo (740) - (Kellogg: 70K Donald Jacobs scholarship), Yale SOM (\$20K), UCLA Anderson, (\$70K) and Berkeley Haas; joined Kellogg
- Ryan (710) - Emory with a merit-based scholarship (\$45K for 1-year program, and \$60K for 2-year program); joined 1-year program
- Aditi (700) - Foster with 10 K in-state tuition fee and Forte fellowship for Women in Business
- Palida (700) - CMU with 10K scholarship
- Ruchika (750) - McCombs with 30 K scholarship

Admits with low GMAT Score

Since 2011, Poonam has helped many students get accepted into top 30 MBA programs with low GMAT scores between 580-680.

- Amrita (680) - Kelley, CMU, and Emory, with scholarships; went to Tepper
- Fatima (590) - Cornell and Wisconsin with scholarship; went to Wisconsin
- Muhammad (620) - Babson, Purdue, and William & Mary with scholarship; went to Purdue
- Axel (620) - EMBA program of Haas and Wharton with scholarship (\$20K)
- Nibedita (610) - Rice and McCombs
- Syed (620) - GW and McMaster with 20K scholarship
- Anisha (680) - Oxford
- Shiv (690)- CEIBS with 40% scholarship
- Michelle (600) – Rice
- Andre (680) - IMD
- Balaji (610)- Booth evening program
- Suet (620); Sara (640); and Jin (660) – LBS
- Saurav (610) Anderson and Kellogg

- Some other success stories with low GMAT scores are for– ISB (620), Kellogg (PT) (660), Booth (PT) (680), Duke (620), UCLA (620), McCombs (610), Emory (620), Schulich (640), GW (620); Tefler (650), NUS (680), and McCombs (670).

Success with Re-applicants:

Poonam has been successful with many re-applicants as well. To name a few:

- Srinivas (Booth)
- Tribhuvan (ISB)
- Tanay (Maryland, Carlson)
- Nithish (Rice, Tepper, ISB, McCombs)
- Dinesh (Schulich)

It is important to note that Tanay received 56K tuition from Maryland and assistantship for 1st year and 24 k+24K scholarship from Carlson, while Nithish received 75% scholarship form Rice and ISB and 15 K plus 17 K/per year from Kelley.

Success with Applicants with Employment/ Education Gap:

Poonam doesn't hesitate in accepting candidates who have serious red flags in their profile, such as long academic gap and employment gap. Last year, she has successfully worked with three candidates who not only had low GMAT but also had long education/ employment gap.

- Syed (620) had an academic gap of 1.5 years was not only accepted into three MBA programs- McMaster, George Washington University, and University of Sydney, but also received 20K scholarship from the GW University.
- Debarpan, (650) was accepted into Tefler and Ted Rogers despite having two years of employment gap.
- Aldieno (700) got admitted into Oxford and NYU with an employment gap of 9 months.

Poonam dug deeper into their stories to understand the reasons/ circumstances behind this gap and helped position their stories in a convincing and persuasive manner that earned them admission into their dream schools.

MER Success Stories:

Read below to learn why her students love working with her.

1. Accepted to the top 5 MBA programs including HBS and GSB! Thanks Poonam:) Mansi

I talked to 5-6 consultants and was really disheartened when they didn't believe in my passion and dream of getting into HBS. They asked me to apply to more "safe" schools. When I had an introductory talk with Poonam, she sounded really encouraging and yet practical. And I knew that I found my companion for this journey. I was keen on applying to HBS in Round 1, but Poonam suggested me to keep HBS for round 2 to give enough time to my dream school. Now when I look back, I feel that this was the most valuable advice she gave me. [Read Debrief](#)

2. Admitted at Kellogg, Haas, Yale, and UCLA Anderson, with generous scholarships- Eduardo

I was interviewed to all of the six schools I applied, admitted to four of them (Kellogg, Berkeley-Haas, Yale SOM and UCLA Anderson) and waitlisted at Stanford GSB. Plus, three of them offered me substantial scholarships! Kellogg-70K scholarship (Donald Jacobs scholarship), Yale SOM- 20k scholarship, UCLA Anderson -70k scholarship. Now I'm heading to Kellogg with scholarship! I had never imagined I would be so successful. Without doubt, Poonam has contributed substantially. [Read Debrief](#)

3. Accepted into Ross full time MBA program with full scholarship -Pablo

I totally recommend working with Poonam Tandon (myEssayReview). Though I first reached out only 72 hours before the deadline for the two essays and resume of one of my applications, she was 100% committed and helped me deliver great results. New Year's Eve was right in the middle of that short period of 72 hours before Ross deadline. I couldn't be more grateful to Poonam as she agreed to provide her strong support and advice and turned around much faster than me. [Read Debrief](#)

4. Best MBA admission service w/o burning your savings -Dennis Lee (Haas and UCLA admit)

Poonam is hands down the best MBA consultant I have ever come across. She doesn't sugar code anything - she will give it to you straight, which is what you need and why you are paying for a consultant. The initial Skype session was very information, provided helpful advice for my essays and answered questions about the application process. She also knows a lot about the programs I was applying to, which made my essays stand out even more. [Read Debrief](#)

5. Got accepted into all the 3 schools I applied to Duke, CMU, and Cornell. Thanks, Poonam- Ben

I wanted someone with extensive knowledge and experience with the MBA process to be able to help guide and trim down my essays. After reading the reviews, I decided to go with Poonam of MER. I really enjoyed going through this process with Poonam. I liked how she made suggestions regarding content that she felt might be beneficial but never pushed me to make the changes. At the end of the day, the essays and content remained mine. [Read Debrief](#)

6. Received 3 admit offers with scholarships. As a reapplicant, I couldn't have asked for more. Tanay

I had an unsuccessful application last year and was looking to work with someone with experience in helping students achieve their dreams. Thanks a lot for your help, Poonam. I've waited so long for this moment (3 GMAT attempts and 2 application seasons) and was over the moon when I saw the Smith mail (my first admit). Your guidance was key, and it helped me better my application 100x when compared to last year. [Read Debrief](#)

Free Resources

To benefit from the free resources offered by MER, visit Poonam's [blog](#). Some of her key articles are listed below:

1. [5 Most Common Mistakes I see in MBA Resumes](#)
2. [Essay Tips for Creating compelling Essays -a Summary](#)
3. [Selecting the Right B School](#)
4. [Helpful Advice for Older MBA Applicants](#)
5. [Getting Stellar Recommendation Letters for Your MBA Application](#)

Video Interviews of Successful MBA Students

The MBA Application process is an extremely challenging and time-consuming process. Would you like to know how real students navigated their way through this challenging admission process and B school itself? Here are [video interviews \(with transcripts\) of successful MER students who were accepted into top MBA programs](#).

Importance of 'Sample' Essays in this collection

When working with MBA applicants, Poonam received one request from almost all of them, "Could you provide us with sample for this essay? Even though each applicant possesses their own unique writing style that they use to showcase their unique traits and accomplishments and backgrounds, it is also true that a model can provide them pointers to brainstorm ideas for their own essays making their essay writing process a little easier. Hence, she picked 30 essays on ten different topics written by some of her successful students for the top 20 schools.

Enjoy 😊

Sample #1- Goals Essay–Booth

How will an MBA from Chicago Booth- from the Evening MBA Program or Weekend MBA Program specifically- at this point in your life help you achieve both your short- and long- term goals?

As a teenager, I was fascinated by personal computers which could screen movies, engage me for hours in visually striking games and find me answers to all my questions. I picked computer science as my major for bachelor's degree and was drawn to the practical applications that access to real-time data can provide. My curiosity led me to pursue my Masters in Computer Science at the University of XXXX, where I started my career as a Research Programmer. Noticing my communication, leadership, and organizational skills, the IT director soon tasked me with leading a multi-campus team to implement a student portal.

The transition from a non-profit to a startup software company gave me the opportunity to help architect the digital buying system which played a vital role in transforming the company to a market leader. My deep knowledge of the products earned me Product Manager's role which is more aligned with the core business and provides more opportunities for growth. My experience as a technologist has been invaluable in performing my current role as a product manager, helping me provide commercially viable and technically scalable solutions.

My short-term goal is to rise to a senior product role in the advertising technology industry, and in order to achieve that I need the marketing, operations, and management skills that an MBA has to offer. Also, working together with future leaders at Booth will help me identify my unique style of leadership. The skills and the network I will acquire through an MBA, along with my industry experience, will help me achieve my long-term goal to be an entrepreneur in the digital marketing technology space.

My goal to provide data-driven and quantifiable solutions draws me to the “analyze everything” approach professed by the Booth MBA program. I tackle problems by questioning the assumptions and challenging the status quo, and I hope to refine these skills at Booth. I look forward to being part of the various student-led groups that match my career objectives, such as *Entrepreneurship and Venture Capital club*, *Booth Marketing Club*, and the *Corporate Strategy and Management Group*.

The Financial accounting course that I had taken under Professor Regina Wittenberg already provided me an understanding of the various accounting principles and their application in real organizations. I am keen to solve real world problems with the help of fellow students from multiple disciplines. Also, I look forward to having discussions on the current issues facing the digital marketing world with the students and professors.

Booth part-time program will provide me the opportunity to assimilate the teachings and research findings of Booth faculty and apply them at work the very next day. The practical application will help me gain more knowledge from the academic learning. The part-time curriculum also allows me to continue my professional career without interruption and enables me to pursue challenging assignments which can fast-track my career growth. If I continue to perform well, I will most likely be promoted to a product director within the next two years.

Sample #2- Goals Essay- ISB

Enrolling in a Business School is an important career decision. Critically look at your career to date, the choices you have made, the key influences behind those choices, your goals for the future and how do you think ISB's PGP can help you in achieving your goals?(300 words)

Fascinated by the idea of empowering business results through people, I embarked on an enriching journey of Human Capital Consulting at XXXX. After 20 months of advising Indian and International organizations, I joined YYYY, a pioneer of HR consulting in India, to deepen my solution expertise.

While I successfully solved my clients' diverse 'human capital' challenges, I was unequipped to solve their larger 'business' challenges encompassing Operations, M&A, Marketing, and Strategy. I am, therefore, fueled by a desire to build a strong 'business' layer on my consulting foundation and advise clients across a wide spectrum of management challenges.

My short-term goal is to join a top tier management consulting firm and help organizations make prudent business decisions. My career aspiration can only be achieved through a theoretical and practical management education. I will leverage my experience across industries and skills acquired at the ISB to design effective solutions to the client's business challenges.

Substantial management consulting experience will help me realize my long-term career vision that is inspired by Dr Santrupt Mishra, Global Director HR and CEO (Aditya Birla Group). In the longterm, I envision to lead a large organization, re-shape its business, and drive competitiveness through innovation, high performance, and talent development.

ISB's PGP program perfectly match my career aspirations. ISB's case-based learning method, faculty from top global business schools, core curriculum, and electives such as ELP will equip me to analyze real- life business situations and design effective solutions. ISB's research-focused curriculum, with contemporary cases will set me up for success in an ever-changing business environment. Consulting clubs' resources such as case competitions, mock interviews, and internship preparation workshops will be invaluable. With my business acumen and personal brand enhanced through a rigorous one year of learning networking at ISB, I will successfully make the next step down my career path.

Sample #3- Harvard's Open-ended Essay

As we review your application, what more would you like us to know as we consider your candidacy for the Harvard Business School MBA program?

I grew up in a conservative and a patriarchal society of a small town in North India. Like most parents in Indian society, my father didn't want to spend money on my higher education; he instead planned to save for my brother's higher education and my dowry. My mother had faced the same prejudice and was forced to get married at a young age of 19. Fearing similar consequences, I decided to speak up. I was punished to be a rebel, but I refused to give up. Seeing my passion to study, one of my teachers sponsored the fees for engineering entrance exam and guided me. With my determination and hard work, I passed the toughest engineering exam of India. This teenage experience instilled in me core values of courage, hard work, and determination and boosted my confidence to stand up for myself.

After graduating from XXXX, I joined the world's leading oil-field service provider, YYYY. Though I was excited about designing oil wells on offshore rigs, I was yet to live the real challenges of this industry. I found myself surrounded by gigantic pumps, noisy cranes, and heavy iron oil rigs, in the company of 100 pair male oilfield workers who pried on my every move. I worked in remote locations and harsh environment, from anywhere in the middle of an ocean to the middle of a desert, where even basic hygiene and sanitary facilities were extremely hard to find. But I stayed determined and consistently delivered successful projects for my clients. These extreme challenges early in my career made me resilient and patient.

When I moved to Indonesia, I was assigned to lead the workshop team of about 20. I was the only female expat in the team, and most of my team members were much older to me. They didn't even accept me as a team member, let alone accept me as a leader. I started by learning their language and lunching with them in the Indonesian cafeteria rather than in the continental one. As I embraced their culture by joining them during the fasting month of 'Ramadan', I found them reciprocating with the same respect and acceptance. I then started doing daily workshop tasks a bit differently, showcasing better efficiency. Rather than instructing new methods, I led by example which motivated them to adopt these methods. Gradually, I improved team efficiency that enabled us to accomplish more challenging projects in lesser time. I learned to develop strong interpersonal relations and be a collaborative leader.

My experience as a service provider motivated me to grow in the industry and join 'ZZZZ'. Before the downturn hit us, I was leading contracting for 57 units, but in a span of six months, I had to reduce it to 19. The biggest challenge came when I was asked to cancel contracts for almost 40 people. This gave me many sleepless nights. Having failed to de-hire personnel, I was summoned by our CFO. I requested him to give me one month and promised him to deliver the same production in 20% lesser cost, thereby forgoing the need to lay-off. For the next one month, I worked tirelessly, took initiatives to save every penny and closely monitored expenditure. Seeing my efforts, my team was motivated and supported me in my initiatives. However, by month end, I was still 10% short of my promised targets. Disheartened, I entered the CFO's

room with the actual numbers, and to my surprise, he still cancelled the lay-offs. Impressed with my efforts, he recommended me for an early promotion to 'Lead Engineer'.

Though we successfully survived the downturn in short term, I realized that it is imperative to hedge against diminishing oil demand in the long term. This realization deepened on my recent diving trip to Sumba Island, where I saw dead corals and almost no marine life due to an oil spill that happened 500 kms away eight years ago. The oil spill had affected livelihood of thousands of seaweed farmers and fishermen. This experience strengthened my belief to harness energy in a clean, safe and sustainable manner.

In the long term, I envision leading a global renewable energy company and drive the transformation from fossil to clean renewable energy. During my recent interaction with our Chief Strategy Officer, I was further encouraged especially on knowing his plans to diversify ZZZZ into renewable energy. He laid emphasis on HBS being the perfect catalyst for achieving my vision and transforming me into an impactful leader. My personal and professional experiences have built a strong foundation. Building on this foundation and my technical knowledge of the energy industry, I want to develop my business acumen, gain a strategic outlook, and be a transformational and impactful leader. Studying at HBS, with the smartest students from around the world and using the case method in conjunction with the FIELD method will make me practice critical decision making every single day and learn to adapt to different leadership styles in diverse situations.

With my passion to learn, my collaborative attitude and unique professional experiences, I will add a different perspective to the case discussions at HBS. I am looking forward to two years of excitement, rigor, and passion!

Sample #4– Accomplishment Essay- Ross

What are you most proud of personally and why? How does it shape who you are today?

In 2005, when I bid adieu to college, I was pressed by the burden of indebtedness– not a huge amount of loan, but the immense value of the education I had acquired. ‘How can I pay back? And if at all, when?’ Puzzled by this thought, I didn’t realize that the answer to ‘when’ would lie miles away on the other side of the world– America

After I stepped in New York City, my acquaintances steadily grew in number, most importantly under the umbrella of Jadavpur University East Coast Alumni (JUECA). And the ‘how’ stood in disguise. Encouraged by generations of highly accomplished alumni members, I organized Bengali cultural festivals, coordinated in alumni events, and welcomed new members to the group. These occasions provided strong platforms for exchanging ideas, understanding each other’s needs, and helping one another by leveraging the strength of the alumni network. As individual bonds grew stronger, I wondered, “How can I make these bonds permanent?”

Engaging people for long was the biggest hurdle in my way. Hence, from time to time, I volunteered to interview eminent alums and published a written excerpt of their life-stories on the community’s website. This invoked people’s interests, enabling them to stay actively connected to the forum and extend their help when necessary. Moreover, it bridged the distance for many passive members who couldn’t attend the alumni events in person. With increasing participation, the energy within the group increased. A flurry of ideas and initiatives followed, the most significant being the collective contribution to University’s alumni association in Kolkata to fund scholarships for the institute’s needy incoming under-graduate talents. Thus, my relentless efforts eventually translated into this novel act, not only lighting up the dreams of education for many, but also diminishing the shadow of moral obligation that had followed me till then. Living in that moment, I felt the proudest ever!

The satisfaction of giving back has amplified my sense of belongingness to society. This experience has sown within me the virtue of fraternity feeling that went beyond the boundaries of textbooks into the realm of ‘equal opportunity for all’. Being a small part of the bigger community couldn’t suppress my desires towards a greater cause. I wish to carry forward the same energy, enthusiasm and sincerity to the Center for Social Impact and join hands with my MBA peers in shaping a better society that will personify us.

Sample #5- Accomplishment/ Failure Essay -INSEAD

Describe the achievement of which you are most proud and explain why. In addition, describe a situation where you failed. How did these experiences impact your relationships with others? Comment on what you learned. (approximately 400 words)

Due to the oil downturn of 2014 and a merger in 2016, XXXX started focusing on innovative and sustainable low-cost methods. I learned that one of our major consuming chemicals- Hydrochloric acid (HCl) is a waste byproduct in the fertilizer industry and can be bought at throwaway prices. First, I took the initiative and presented this business case to the management. Next, to convince them to pursue a new strategy, I proposed a pilot project to minimize risk, to which they immediately approved. And finally, I designed my core team in the field to test the pilot project, but the biggest challenge was to motivate them to work beyond regular work hours. So I involved them in the decision-making process and also requested HR to pay them for over time.

For the next few weeks, I supervised the entire on-ground operation and demonstrated the success of the pilot project, revamping XXXX's HCl procurement strategy and saving more than 1 MMUSD annually. This experience taught me important lessons in taking initiatives and convincing management by carefully evaluating risks. I also understood the importance of motivating team members and leveraging their skills for achieving common goals.

My confidence to take initiatives was built over time while delivering projects to clients globally. In January 2014, I was leading a team of 3 operators for one of my starting projects in Indonesia on an offshore rig. Everyone including the client and my team spoke 'Bahasa', the Indonesian language, whereas I had just started learning Bahasa. This led to miscommunication. Post project execution, when I discussed with my English-speaking manager, he explained that I had misinterpreted one of the conventional terms in Bahasa and had installed at the wrong depth. I felt miserable as this could potentially reduce well life from 20 to 10 years. I requested my manager to communicate this to our client else we would lose his trust. My manager appreciated my honesty and informed the client. Initially, the client was upset, but we offered him remedial treatment free of cost.

This failure taught me to be extra cautious during project executions, especially in a new location. Also, it strengthened my belief in transparency for a trustworthy relationship which earned me respect from my team and the client. Through these experiences, my management gained confidence in me for delivering challenging projects, and my peers respected me for my honesty.

Sample #6- Leadership Essay- Booth

What leadership characteristics do you feel make for the best leaders, and how do you strive to obtain them? And, on the flip side, what are you doing to avoid any potential leadership pitfalls that you observe in yourself or others?

In my opinion, a good leader should be able to communicate and collaborate, and in the process, inspire people to work towards the goal. Working closely with others, listening to the issues they are facing, and collaborating with them to work towards a solution creates a bond. Later, when faced with problems they will reach out to their leaders for solutions to deal with the situation.

A few months ago, I was working as a Product lead on a critical and time-sensitive project to upgrade one of our key external integrations. The project had a huge operational impact for our clients and had a tight deadline which required the team to put in several extra hours. I worked out a plan with the technical team and stayed back late nights with the technical team though I did not have a role to play. My action boosted the morale of the team who volunteered to work harder to meet the deadline. However, a few days before the deadline, we ran into a serious issue that jeopardized the project. The solution I proposed was deemed risky as it involved significant coordination and required an explicit approval from all of our clients. In 24 hours, I coordinated a mass effort with 10 different account teams to get the needed permissions from 100+ clients.

Finally, the project was delivered on time, and in the process has saved the company hundreds of thousands of dollars every year. When my group's VP praised me for my effort, I told him that the real credit should go to the technical team who worked round the clock to make this project a success. Later that day, the technical lead informed me that my VP had appreciated the team's effort. The technical lead thanked me for my gesture and mentioned that in the past projects the team was not given the due credit.

Another quality of a great leader, I believe, is the ability to identify the right talent in his team, groom their skills and build efficient teams. Earlier this year, our company went through a merger. We welcomed five new team members to our team, and as the lead of the digital product, I was tasked with integrating the team. The members of the team had varying experience and technical backgrounds and were spread across three different time zones. I first identified the strengths of each of the new members and assessed how their qualities and abilities could complement the team. Through discussions, I found out their interests and skill set. I then created several two-people groups and assigned them to work on specific areas so each member would complement the other's skill-set, pick up new skills in the process and lead to cross training. Every few weeks, the members changed teams and the areas they worked on. Within a few months, this process created a well-knit and skillfully diverse team, which was efficient in handling various tasks. The integrated team was able to handle 30% more workload and improve their average response time for support by 50%. Its huge success motivated two other teams to implement a similar approach.

I think the largest pitfall that I have observed in a leader is being deceitful. Giving false promises and skewing the facts may work in the short term but will eventually lead to losing peoples' trust. A leader should be able to communicate factually and set realistic goals to inspire others. If I had not been truthful in

communicating to the technical team that they will have to work long days and nights and set real expectations on the end results, the project would have been a failure.

Another major negative quality of a leader I have noticed is being selfish and putting one's self interest before that of the team/organization. I keenly notice the contributions of every specific team member and make sure everyone gets their due recognition. If I had taken the credit for the success of the project, the word would have gotten out which might have affected my chances of expecting the same level of cooperation for the next project. I strongly believe that having leadership in thought and vision is not enough to make one a leader. The small personal gestures enhance the perception of a true leader and can motivate others to work towards the ultimate goal. I am excited to further enhance my leadership qualities through the courses and workshops offered through the Lead Exploration and Development program offered by Booth.

Sample #7- Leadership Essay- Kellogg

What have been your most significant leadership experiences? What challenges did you face, and what impact did you have? This is your opportunity to explain how you Think Bravely.

In my personal and professional life, I have faced several situations in which I had to influence groups to generate results that contributed significantly to my organization. In 2011, I was hired to coordinate the risk management process at XXXX. In March and September, we had to run an extensive risk inventory that involved gathering, treating, and reporting a huge amount of risk information to shareholders. Six months later, the headquarters in Germany decided to implement a unified corporate risk reporting tool to be in use by September 2011. This meant not only transferring databases, but also changing the mindset of a large and diverse group of professionals.

To meet this challenge, I first drafted a plan to meet the expected deadlines with some buffer, and then scheduled initial alignment meetings with IT and HR. From these meetings, we were able to generate a solid eight-week plan, which we presented to the board of officers to get their approval. After approval, I divided tasks amongst the three of us- our manager, our junior analyst, and me. The biggest challenge for me was to keep the people engaged by telling them that we had a challenge ahead and we needed their help. I, therefore, scheduled dozens of meetings, and finally we were able to migrate more than three years of risk documentation to the new corporate system and to train almost 95% of the system users. The result was- TKCSA system migration was recognized as the group reference. The global risk management director visited us to collect our best practices and make them available in a group level.

Almost a year later, while working at YYYY in a project to help a large state-owned Brazilian bank to optimize its credit risk management processes and models, I faced a situation in which I was able to leverage the project management skills developed at TKCSA. When I joined this project, there was a massive delay in schedule. We were operating in a team of just two consultants, with a very limited budget, and I was the only consultant full-time allocated to the client. Noticing the client's increasing frustration, I approached my supervisors suggesting us to take more responsibilities, but they were concerned about increasing the working hours without the corresponding reward. So I decided that besides just advising, I would also develop simplified "pilot-schemes" spreadsheets using real client databases. The developed "pilot-schemes" spreadsheets had potential to become assets in future projects. Finally, they ended up accepting the change, but I knew that if this plan failed, I would be blamed.

After working several unpaid overtime hours, we succeeded in getting the project got back on track with a better client relationship. Also, we recently received the Inov@r Accenture Brazil award, for the FY12/13 most innovative project in the risk management practice.

The experiences, though demanding, were unmatched because of the challenge of initiating change by me and influencing others. Also, they prepared me to adapt my leadership style to different contexts.

Sample #8- Team work/ Challenge Essay– Kellogg

Describe an instance where you encountered resistance in a professional team setting. How did you address the situation?

“Don’t try to re-invent the wheel” said my colleague, Deepak after I showed our team, consisting of 6 IT professionals and myself, my solution for a framework for XXXX enterprise applications. The solution was a re-engineered process to build a framework for the foundation services for the JCI enterprise applications that is the heart of our client’s \$30 Billion multi-industry business. I had developed a similar solution to several other major clients before, so I was confident that my solution was efficient and versatile enough to handle the upcoming product upgrades. I, therefore, expected no resistance from the team. Deepak was wary about the changes to the framework as it is utilized by many client applications, whereas I knew that the existing framework will not support the future product upgrades and is bound to fail.

The next day, I approached my client manager and told him how confident I was about my solution and explained to him the benefits of adopting it. But he told that he and the team were not confident about my solution. He also told me that since I was dealing with a system that was an important part of YYYY infrastructure, it required more than just a presentation to convince the team.

Disappointed, but confident, I decided to prove my results by gathering the supporting data and demonstrating the team with sample prototypes. Over the next one month, I worked on building application prototypes, developed a presentation to demonstrate the benefits of using my framework, and collected few case-studies to support my theory.

A month after the last meeting, I approached my client manager and proposed him my plan. I also showed him few case-studies and explained him how the new solution could help the client cut down 20% of maintenance cost that is spent on supporting the applications. Then I addressed some of his concerns related to security and code migration. Impressed with my analysis, the client manager agreed for the presentation.

A couple of days later, I presented the solution to the team with a complete analysis on the benefits of the solution. I also demonstrated the prototype that I developed using my solution. After multiple rounds of presentations and discussions, the team was convinced that my solution offered greater benefits, so they agreed to adopt it. We later presented this solution to the IT directors from other JCI divisions and showed them the benefits the solution offered to their enterprise IT applications. Six months later, this framework was established as a standard for enterprise IT applications across all JCI divisions.

Personally, overcoming this challenge is significant to me in terms of my confidence. Challenging the client team at a client location and winning my proposal made me more confident in speaking my mind about the project issues at work. Since then, I have never hesitated in expressing my opinion, and it has helped me provide many valuable contributions to the projects.

Sample #9- Challenge Essay- Booth

What is the most significant personal or professional challenge you have faced, and what key learning have you taken away from this experience?

At the beginning of last year, my company had gone through a merger. One of the major challenges for the technical teams was to come to a consensus on the software release process. Even after a few weeks of discussions, the teams could not reach an agreement on the key processes. The primary issue was that the data services team, of which I was a part of, wanted certain controls, while the other teams were opposed to this additional control.

To help reach a compromise, I initiated talks with several members of the other two teams to understand the reasons behind the opposition and eventually found out that the resistance from other teams was due to a lack of trust and proper communication. I discussed the issue with my director and proposed that we needed to show the other two teams that we could add value and were willing to give up certain controls in the process that was not critical. In order to build trust, I volunteered to work with them. The effort also gave me the opportunity to emphasize what the teams would gain from this change which acted as the catalyst to renew conversations between the teams.

A few weeks later, the three teams agreed on a process that did not involve a huge overhaul of the existing process. This experience taught me how to build trust in forming an effective team, how to mediate a confrontational issue, and reach a middle ground acceptable to all parties.

Sample #10- Setback Essay- Kellogg

What's the greatest obstacle you've overcome (personally or professionally)? How has overcoming this obstacle prepared you to achieve success now and in the future?

In 2004, during my junior year, when I was at my parents' house for the mid-year vacation, I received the terrible news during a medical check-up: I was diagnosed with cancer. I felt devastated- my world had fallen apart. I was frightened with the possibility of never being able to have children.

During two weeks of vacation left, I underwent a delicate surgery and faced the dilemma "Should I request a leave of absence or not?" Requesting the leave of absence would be like admitting that cancer could beat me. Although I understood the seriousness of my medical condition and the need for continued treatment, I was not willing to pause my life as I had worked hard towards my academic goal for three years. I asked the doctors if I could continue my studies for the semester and start radiotherapy treatment during the year-end vacation. They told me that there were some risks attached, but that could be mitigated with monthly follow-ups until I started radiotherapy.

I decided to continue with my studies. It was an extremely demanding academic semester, where I had to conciliate my studies, the research assistant internship and the constant fear of bad medical news. The GPA for that semester was the lowest, yet the most 'celebrated'. After exams, I returned to my parents' house and underwent a month of radiotherapy. Finally, after five years of semiannual medical follow-ups, I was declared clinically cured.

This setback taught me to go against the stream and take calculated risks. In my last project, I suggested going beyond the initial scope. I knew if my plan failed, I would be blamed, but I still decided to take the risk and succeeded in getting the project got back on track.

I strongly believe that one of the most important business skills is to believe in your intuition and take the leap; the higher you climb the corporate ladder, the faster you have to make important business decisions. Learning to trust my intuition and taking calculated risks has made me a better prepared professional for present and future success.

Sample #11- Setback Essay- Kelley

Describe a personal or professional challenge or set-back that you were able to overcome. What allowed you to persevere?

It was the dawn of September 1, 2006, and the world came crumbling down for me when my mother succumbed to terminal cancer. I was twenty-three then. The person who meant the world to me, my best friend and guide, was no longer beside me. I was shattered. In the pain of bereavement, I almost forgot about my dad who was equally distressed by his loving wife's demise and was deteriorating physically.

To add to my grief, I faced another dilemma. Exactly four days after the tragedy, before the completion of funeral rituals, I was scheduled to leave my bereaved dad behind and travel 1,300 miles to join my first employment training in Coimbatore. There was a war within me. "Should I go and join my training or mourn the irreversible, stay back unemployed and join the year later?" I decided to stay back and cancelled my train ticket.

It was the 3rd sleepless night when the phone rang at midnight. My grandfather had called. He told me, "Failure is Success if we learn from it, and the Purpose of life is to learn and grow." These words made a deep impact on me. Immediately, I ran to my dad's room, hugged and kissed him. Since then, I took full responsibility to look after him. I suddenly felt transformed into a mature and strong woman. The following morning, I purchased an air ticket for Coimbatore. It was the start of a new phase in life— the beginning of my professional career. With determination to achieve the best, I began my training curriculum. For the next 2 months, I worked on a rigorous 14 hours/day schedule, 6 days a week. My colleagues and faculty appreciated my strength and self-containment shortly after my personal loss. However, at time, I used to lament for my mother, but my grandfather's words motivated and gave me strength to continue.

A few weeks later, I invited my father to Coimbatore and took him on a tour to Ooty, a popular tourist destination. We both started to connect better and from then on, we started our journey of being each other's support system. With my determination and motivation, I completed my training successfully, scoring the 3rd highest grade in my batch and finally getting a fulltime placement at Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. I had made my parents proud!

Through this setback, I emerged as a leader of myself and learned to own my responsibility. I realized that facing adversity is a character and leadership building experience that all humans go through. I gained new knowledge and skills and used them as stepping stones to professional success. My grandfather's words have been my guiding stars; resilience and pragmatism have been my companions on my path to success. After this tragedy, I realized my social responsibility and pledged to open an NGO in India for the cause to fight Breast Cancer and dedicate it to my beloved Mother.

Sample #12- Background Essay- Wharton

We'd like to get to know you beyond your professional life. You may tell us about the people or experiences that have shaped you, what inspires and motivates you, and anything interesting that we wouldn't otherwise learn from your application.

Having grown up in a joint business family of 30 members— Grandparents, parents, 10 uncle and aunts, and 15 siblings, qualities of working for agreement among conflicting views, organization, belongingness, teamwork, and sharing are engrained in me. I still recall the time when, as an 8th grader, I had to convince my grandfather, eldest uncle, and my father separately and altogether to allow me to go on a 15 days' educational school trip to New Delhi and Shimla. Since my growing up years, my eldest cousin brother has been a role model for me— he was a top ranker at high school and in Chartered Accountancy Exams. Also, he has always been thoughtful of the needs of all individuals in a joint family. Today, he is thriving in his business that he set up solely on his own. Another person who influenced me significantly is my mother. She used to save almost every penny of her pin money for my future advanced studies. Thus, she taught me great lessons of saving for the future while living a simple life.

At the tender age of six, I learned a lesson that shaped my success in later life. I flunked in kindergarten grade and had to repeat KG for another year at a convent school in my hometown, XXXX. I was frustrated to see all of my classmates advancing to the next grade, and myself amidst a new group of students. I still remember the first few days in my second year at Kindergarten when I used to peep into next grade class to get a glimpse of my old friends. This event engrained values of hard work in me; since then, I was in the top ten percentile of students in my class and later excelled in my professional career.

While working in more than ten cities across India and USA in the last fifteen years, I have interacted with co-workers and customers across continents- in Canada, Mexico, Italy, UK, France, Germany, Singapore, Japan, and Australia. These experiences have taught me to work with people from different cultural groups effectively, appreciate their culture and build trusted friendships while working towards common goals. My cultural adaptability has enabled me to resolve conflicting situations more effectively.

One of my passions is traveling various places. In the last 20 years, I have travelled to over 100+ cities, towns and villages in USA, India, Singapore, and China— from pilgrim spots to beach towns to mountainous terrains to fast-paced cities. I enjoyed varied cultures and experienced different way of life in these places. I am now looking forward to alternate travel experiences during my executive MBA at Wharton.

I am a true family person. I love to spend quality time with my wife and two sons aged 9 and 4. I enjoy playing with my sons in the park, helping them with their homework, and sharing with them stories of my growing up years. I try to inculcate in them distilled ethics and values that are key to my culture. My wife has been always there for me in time of joy and sorrow. I love to share with her my daily life experiences. The sudden death of my father in late 2004 had suddenly matured me. On Nov 10, I, along with my wife and older son, had reached my hometown and the whole family was jubilant to be jointly celebrating the festival of Diwali for the first time after my marriage. However, destiny had other plans for us. That evening my dad had severe cardiovascular attack; we rushed him to local hospital and then to heart center at Kolkata, where he breathed his last on Nov 13. Those four days of my life were extremely challenging as we

desperately tried to save him. This experience of those last moments with my dad had taught me to live each day to the fullest and be of service to others

My continuous urge to serve others has led me to various opportunities at work and community. In December 2011, while talking to some of my colleagues I came to know that most of them were spending huge amounts with most expensive health plan option– ‘Premium Health Plan’. It was their general perception that costliest health plan option would provide best health risk coverage. To break this perception, I quickly compiled related information and conducted 5 sessions covering 150+ colleagues in the bay area– presenting health insurance expense scenarios and related risk coverage. A year later, I was amazed to see that many of these colleagues reported significant savings with better health coverage provided by economic Plan– a consolidated savings of \$250+ K for them.

My passion to serve others motivated me to join a charitable institution called Tej Gyan Global Foundation, headquartered in Pune, India. Many of my beliefs were shattered when I came across Tej Gyan Global Foundation– my strongest belief “Nothing is free in life” was crushed and transformed into much stronger belief that “Best things in life are all free”. After my association with this organization, I realized that helping others is the best way to help yourself. I attend weekly session to deepen my understanding of core purpose of life, happiness, and world peace. Also, I have organized and conducted 15+ seminars in the last four years to spread the message of happiness. Currently, I am preparing, and refining training content focused on development of school children to build confidence and self-esteem, and I plan to conduct these trainings in local elementary and middle schools in 2013.

As I have grown in my life, I have cultivated humility and openness as key values. I believe my personal values of determination, cultural understanding, and serving others, combined with my professional attributes of leadership, global experience, and team working skills will reinforce the values of Wharton community. At Wharton, I am not just looking for an executive MBA, but a lifetime bonding with fellow students, professors, and alumni.

Sample #13- Background Essay- Haas

Please tell us about yourself and your background. Include information about your family, where you grew up, your interests, and any other people or experiences that have influenced you. The goal of this essay is to get a sense of who you are, rather than what you have achieved professionally.

I was born and raised in a middle-class family in southern India. I was the first child, the first grandchild, the first nephew, and the joy of my entire extended family. My family was close-knit and educated; my father was the first in our family to graduate from college and provided me every opportunity of intellectual growth. Since my parents were the first-generation migrants to the city, they also had great emphasis on the family customs and tradition. Most of my school life, I played two conflicting roles, a city kid who went to an English medium school, and a country kid who loved to help his grandfather in the farm.

I visited my grandparents at the countryside every year during summer vacation. Though I was excited to meet my grandparents, I would get bored soon because I was not allowed to watch TV. Eventually, I got along with the lifestyle and felt the sense of community. I spent quality time with my grandfather and was inspired with his simplicity, kindness, honesty, and diligence. He owned two football fields size land where he farmed and raised cattle. I would get up early to ride along with my grandfather to the farm in his bullock cart and would spend morning helping him water and weed the crops and graze the cattle. My grandfather believed in self-sufficiency and did everything by himself even though he could afford to hire help. He was also actively involved in the community and helped provide basic amenities to the villagers. Growing up watching my grandfather greatly influenced me and taught me to be socially responsible and follow simple living till day.

My mother had been another great influence on my life. A homemaker, my mother taught me to be patient, responsible, and determined. As I grew older, I realized the tensions in the family. My father, a lawyer, was not doing well in his profession and was becoming addicted to alcohol. The fights between my mother and father became everyday occurrences and ended with my mother getting beaten. She could have separated from my father for a peaceful life at my grandparents' house in the village, but she placed me before her wellness and stayed back in the town to provide me a better education. Her only goal in life was to see my brother and me excel in academics and be successful. She involved me in the family's finances and other important decisions from my young age. I hoped to relieve her from the pain and responsibilities when I would stand up on my feet. Unfortunately, that day never came, and I lost her after I had just graduated grade 10. It was August 13, 1998. My brother and I had returned from school to find our mother unconscious. My father being out of town, I ran from pillar to post to get her medical attention, but nothing helped. She breathed her last without regaining consciousness. I was told she had a brain stroke due to hypertension. My grandparents held my father responsible for my mother's ill fate and decided that it will be better for my brother and me to stay away from my father's bad influence. They sent us to a boarding school 300 miles away. It was really hard for me and my brother to cope up with these sudden turns of events. However, remembering what my mother had dreamed for her sons, my determination to succeed in life became stronger.

In the boarding school, my responsibilities increased many folds, as I had to take the role of parents for my younger brother. I got summoned for my brother's poor grades, and I spent time teaching him and helping

him on his homework. While other students' parents visited them regularly in the boarding school, my brother and I hardly had any visitors. We sometimes felt helpless and lonely. I turned my focus into reading, athletics, and school's community programs to keep myself busy and not let emotions take over me. I immersed myself in reading for hours; I remember reading all of Sydney Sheldon's novels in one single month. The same year, I represented my high school in the state level athletics meet for discuss throw and 400 M relay. In 2004, I graduated with an Engineering degree and started my career as a software engineer at the age of 22. I taught my brother the principles my mother had taught me, supported him morally and financially, and made sure that he graduated from college, too. The life lessons I had learned from my mother helped me not to lose hope at turbulent times both in my personal and professional life and brought a sense of responsibility in me to care for people around me.

After college, I decided to forgive my father and reunited with him. By then, he also regretted his behavior and was apologetic to what he had done to my mother and our family. He succumbed to sudden cardiac arrest in 2006 which came as a shock, as we had just started bonding again. But I was glad that I could forgive him and spend time with him in his last years.

In 2007, I came to the United States for work and have been in California since then. I met my wife through a mutual friend and found her selfless and supportive. We both shared the same beliefs and principles. After dating for a year, we married in 2010. My wife understands the difficult times I have gone through and thinks highly of me. We now have an 18 months old daughter, and I am a happy family man, but not a day goes by when I do not miss my mother.

I believe my personal values of tolerance, determination, and resilience, combined with my sense of responsibility will reinforce to the values of Haas community. I also look forward to becoming a part of Haas students clubs and represent Haas in professional and social life.

Sample #14- Contribution Essay- Yale

The Yale School of Management educates individuals who will have deep and lasting impact on the organizations they lead. Describe how you have positively influenced an organization- as an employee, a member, or an outside constituent. (Up to 500 words)

While attending USP, a public university free of charges, I felt a moral obligation to return to the country the taxpayers' investment made on me. Hence, in February 2006 I joined Cursinho FEA, a student-led NGO for the education of low-income teenagers. At Cursinho, I learned that many students who were interested in a quality and free education cheated the NGO's admission process, claiming their income lower than their actual income. Though I understood the challenge of assessing family income in Brazil's informal economy, I thought that there should be a more precise way of estimating income than the existing method.

Consequently, I envisioned and led the creation of a process to accurately evaluate a candidate's income. I collected economic and social data of more than 500 families, interviewed many of them and was shocked by their tight budget and the tough choices they made, from parents sacrificing their health to provide education to their children, to teenagers working night shifts and studying during the day. Throughout this journey, I became emotionally involved with the struggles of poor families. As a result, helping the poor was no longer a moral obligation, but rather a way to ease the suffering of poor families and provide them growth opportunities.

Unexpectedly, a few days prior to interviews, we had to make a decision against adopting the new selection process, as interviews in the new format were more time-consuming. I, however, was afraid that another poorly selected class would trigger loss of our best teachers and donors, so I convinced the interviewers to work long hours, and we finally succeeded in implementing the new admission process which resulted in few cases of successful cheating and a 45% reduction of on average income of admitted students. Following this, I became the president of Cursinho. With reinvigorated engagement from stakeholders, our team raised funds that enabled us to increase annually enrolled students from 140 to 350. Additionally, the rate of students admitted to top universities tripled.

After having worked as Cursinho's president for two years (2007-08), I have been contributing to Cursinho by interviewing candidates and stimulating others to join this NGO. Since 2007, the new selection process has accurately assessed income of more than 10,000 candidates. Furthermore, Cursinho has sustained its strong track record of admitted students to top universities.

Though I am one of the various stakeholders that advanced Cursinho's mission, I consider my contribution unique because I initiated changing an organization from years of conformity with mediocre metrics (e.g. average income, number of students, and student success rates) to a consistently high-performance organization in those metrics. Moreover, I feel rewarded to see students I interviewed and admitted years ago becoming scientists and doctors.

At Yale, I want to create an impact by stimulating creativity and new approaches while organizing Design + Innovation Club workshops, Marketing Club conferences, and Latino Leadership events. After Yale, I will contribute to the mentorship program by mentoring students and helping them advance their careers.

Sample #15- Contribution Essay- Wharton

Teamwork is at the core of the Wharton MBA experience with each student contributing unique elements to our collaborative culture. How will you contribute to the Wharton community? (400 words)

One of my most satisfying professional experiences was strengthening my XXXX Team. Being the only female and expat in the team, I initially faced resistance, but as I embraced the culture and understood what mattered most to them, I was soon welcomed in the team. I identified their strengths and divided responsibilities, motivating them to take ownership of their work, in contrast to their earlier practice of everyone doing everything together. This improved team efficiency and enhanced their skills and enabled us to deliver more challenging projects in lesser time. Through this experience, I learned the value of teamwork and earned their love and respect.

At Wharton, I plan to share my diverse experience of the oil and gas industry. The concept of offshore rigs is still alien to many. By sharing my experience of performing a physically demanding job, managing 24x7 operations, leading male dominated teams in foreign lands and harsh offshore environment, I will add value to the Wharton classroom. With YYYY, I also learned to manage large scale operations, plan resources with 3 months-5 years outlook and deal with Joint Venture. During the oil downturn of 2014, YYYY witnessed drastic cost reduction and many organizational changes. In the classroom of 'Managing Organizational Change', I will share our approach to face these changes by focusing on new, innovative and sustainable methods, and technologies.

Beyond classroom, I plan to lead the Wharton Energy club as the 'Conference Chair' and would invite distinct leaders of the industry, including YYYY's ex CEO and BCG partner, both of whom are Wharton alumni. As an ardent scuba diver, I look forward to introducing the Wharton community to Scuba Diving through the Wharton Surf and Beach Club by organizing diving and snorkeling trips. Furthermore, I am excited to join the Wharton Dance studio to pursue my love for classical dance and share my knowledge of 'Kathak' in fusion with Bollywood dance.

Back in ZZZZ, I organized North India's largest cultural festival 'Rendezvous' and choreographed our team's '*Group Dance*' performance. Continuing this effort at YYYY, I organized this year's team off-site for 100+ employees and persuaded my colleagues for a dance sequence, which was the first ever 'in house' performance of the department. I would love to organize many such events at Wharton, fostering team spirit and would contribute to the close-knit Wharton community through my unique experiences and engaging skills.

Sample #16- Introduction Essay- McCombs

We will learn a lot about your professional background through your resume and letter of recommendation. We want to get to know you further. Please introduce yourself. (250 words)

Defying our conservative family norms, my mom, a practicing lawyer and my dad, an engineer from IIT Delhi have always encouraged me to attain higher education and to be independent, both financially and otherwise. Their support motivated me to qualify the Chartered Accountancy exams, one of the toughest professional courses in India, in the first attempt.

My desire to step out of my comfort zone has led me to accept challenging and exciting roles in my life. Despite having prior experience only in Accounting, I joined a startup early in my career and engaged in front-end selling and marketing activities. Personally, I encouraged underprivileged women to talk freely about menstruation, a forbidden subject of conversation in India, and spread awareness about correct menstrual practices.

My natural ability to strike up a conversation with people, even strangers, has helped me make friends in the unlikeliest of places such as while commuting to work in the train. Travelling in crowded trains in Mumbai has made me a stronger person with great time management skills. Also, my interactions with diverse people across the three cities in India I've lived in– Kolkata, Chennai, and Mumbai and my travels to Europe, Singapore, and Dubai has made me appreciate their unique cultural and behavioral aspects.

An avid reader and a writer, I not only enjoy contributing for my college newspaper and office newsletter, but also like writing speeches for family functions and helping colleagues draft e-mails.

I look forward to a rewarding experience at McCombs!

Sample #17- Ethical Dilemma Essay– Kelley

Describe an ethical dilemma that you faced in your professional career. How it was resolved and what did you learn from the experience?

While working with XXXX, I completed healthcare certificates and understood the security constraints on sharing the private information of patients. In Apr. 2012, XXXX acquired new business for one of the MCOs (Managed Care Organizations) participating in the Medicaid program of Texas, and the State mandated to do the certification testing on the actual patients' data before receiving Medicaid claims from real time environment of XXXX. Due to time constraints, YYYY had a strong opinion of producing claim file from the test server to meet the state timelines. I was leading my team to build the business functionality and was responsible for delivering this Medicaid file from Caremark.

The discussion between XXXX and YYYY about generating file from test server shocked me as any employee could download the patients' confidential information from the test server and share this with third parties which is technically a PHI (Protected Health Information) violation of federal government. I was in two minds, "Should I go ahead with the normal process without making a big deal of PHI? Or "Should I do what is ethically right?" Under the pressure of delivering file on time, I aligned my team and generated the first two test files from the test server but did not feel right about it. I then weighed the integrity of the organization against the client's demand and eventually stopped certification testing in the middle of the project. Due to this decision, I got many escalations from the client and was on the verge of losing my contract with XXXX. In the meantime, I did brainstorm with XXXX technical experts for 2-3 days and came up with another approach for generating the test file without violating PHI. My team worked closely with these experts to setup a different real time like environment so that only specific contracted people were provided access to this environment and allowed to generate those files. Once it was finalized, I persuaded XXXX management to follow this process going forward. This process eventually laid the foundation for using this new environment to do such testing with the state.

This experience reinforced my belief to listen to my inner voice and do what is ethically right. I am proud of myself for my courage to displease my client by not meeting the deadline and did what was ethically right. Also, I have become more confident now to handle similar situations, so in the future, I will take the decision fast enough to meet the demand of the client.

Sample #18- Best Mistake Essay– Kellogg

The best mistake I ever made was...

Born into a family of professors and engineers, I was expected to be academically proficient. With above average scores in high school and college entrance exams, I faced high expectations to get into a good college for undergraduate studies. In my state, the undergraduate admission process is centralized through the single window system in which all Class XII students are ranked based on composite index of the state entrance exam and university final exam scores. Based on this ranking, the students were given the opportunity to pick the school and major of their choice.

In class XII, I was ranked in the 90 percentile and had a decent shot at getting into the engineering program in a good school with scholarship. I had been tracking the availability of seats at all the engineering colleges and was thrilled to know that some seats were available at the best school in my city. I knew which school I wanted to pick, so I imagined the whole process to be quick. Unfortunately, I was in for a rude shock when the counselor told me that the last seat for engineering with a scholarship had just been taken in my dream school. I almost felt robbed and drew a blank as to what my Plan B should be.

Now I was faced with two options- either pick a seat in the school of my choice without a scholarship or settle for a new college with an unknown reputation but with a scholarship. I had never imagined myself to be in this situation as I was very particular about going to school with a scholarship. I thought the effort I put in to get good scores would be meaningless if I did not get a scholarship. Much to the disbelief of my parents, I finally made my decision and picked the new college with a full scholarship and Computer Science major.

As I signed the papers and walked out, I felt that I had just committed the worst mistake of my life. I had picked a school about which I knew nothing only for the sake of scholarship.

Contrary to my expectations, my undergraduate days at the college I had unexpectedly picked were some of the best of my life. Through the years, I was the secretary of the Computer Science Association, the president of the school's ACM Students Chapter, and the coordinator for the Placement Services Council. The various roles and opportunities that the school provided me with in terms of organizational, leadership, and communication skills have molded me into a well- rounded individual. It was the perfect foundation for me to start my career in the lucrative information technology industry. I benefited from the practical and interactive teachings on and off the classroom, and in the process had made great friends for life. I consider my decision about choosing my undergraduate school the best mistake of my life because it has played vital role in shaping my career.

Sample #19- Defining Principles Essay- Haas

At Berkeley-Haas, the following four Defining Principles describe our unique culture and are exemplified in our student body. Please select one of the Defining Principles and give a brief explanation of how you have exemplified this in your life. (250-word maximum)

Please refer to the Haas website for more detailed descriptions of these [Defining Principles](#):

- A. *Question the Status Quo*
- B. *Confidence Without Attitude*
- C. *Students Always*
- D. ***Beyond Yourself***

Hailing from Haiti, the poorest nation in the western hemisphere, exposed me firsthand to the plight of the less fortunate. Thus, from an early age, I learned to be aware of the needs of my community, to look beyond myself, and to ensure that those around me get the help they need.

I grew up in an economically diverse neighborhood in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. At the end of my first year of high school, I recognized that the schools I attended had stronger curricula and pedagogies than those of my neighborhood friends. Consequently, I began tutoring underprivileged middle school kids from the community and continued it until I graduated high school.

With the goal of improving the students' proficiency in French, reading, science, and Math, I organized four-week long academic summer camps for three years. These summer camps were supplemented with "office hours" on Saturdays during the school year. Although I was not the best tutor, fifteen kids took advantage of the personal attention I provided to strengthen their scholastic foundation, resulting in improved grades.

Following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, I used my vacation time to contribute to Haiti's reconstruction and stabilization efforts. For more than a month, I helped clear out the rubbles, build temporary shelters, and raise awareness to bolster fundraising efforts. I also donated blood and volunteered myself as a grief counselor to strangers who had lost dear ones.

At Haas, I will partner with my classmates to serve my community and become a *Beyond Yourself Fellow*.

Sample #20- Culture Essay– Emory

Your most memorable cross-cultural experience.....

I was hired by XXX to coordinate the local risk management process. This was my first work experience in a multinational firm, and the most demanding part of my job was to manage the cultural differences.

In April 2012, when my reporting contact in Germany, Mr. YYY, came to visit our local operation, I had the opportunity to deepen my contact with the German culture. While we were working on action plans, I started writing minutes of the meeting to be sent by email after the meeting. Mr. YYY, however, seemed to take offence and asked: “Why are you writing all this? Isn’t my word enough?”

This started a discussion about the work ethics differences in Brazil and Germany. He told me that Germans have a strong sense of responsibility, and whenever they commit to something, they keep their word. In the meetings, they just jot down their notes about ‘things to do’, so they do not require formal ‘minutes’ of meeting.

His reaction shocked me because e-mailing minutes of meeting with supervisors copied has been natural to me. We, Brazilians, usually avoid direct conflict, and sometimes, even if we don’t agree with something, we say “I’ll do that”, meaning we will actually never do that. Unless there is a written commitment and a supervisor on the loop, verbal agreements do not mean much.

This incident is memorable to me because it has taught me to value my word more and think twice before committing to something.

Sample #21- Culture Essay– INSEAD

Tell us about an experience where you were significantly impacted by cultural diversity, in a positive or negative way.

Four years ago, when I started working as an associate analyst in XXXX Bank, a Scandinavian company, I was delighted to be part of multinational team. I can still recall the day when after a year of serving there, I was called by the Managing director who had just returned from a management meeting from Copenhagen. He reported that the company was going to change analytical product line, and in order to be in line with the changes, he offered me to attend a 1-month training program in Copenhagen. I accepted it, and within one week, I was in Denmark.

I had been on short business trips earlier, so I thought I was well prepared for a long business tour in a foreign country. However, I realized that a long business trip in a foreign country is a completely different experience. The major difference was internationality; in Copenhagen, I met colleagues from Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Spain, India, China, and Philippine. It was the first time I understood that there were actually no walls between people from different parts of the world as we were united by the business we performed.

However, informal communications revealed the concealed cultural diversities. For example, when I appeared 20 minutes late on the first Friday party, my Scandinavian colleagues jokingly reproached me for my unpunctuality. Later, I found out tremendous gap in the perception of time in different cultures. My European colleagues unanimously considered punctuality to be an indisputable virtue, while Asian colleagues said they were not so rigorous about punctuality.

True, globalization is eroding the differences among different cultures. However, my Copenhagen experience taught me to take extra care of subtle cultural features such as perception of time, which has helped me immensely in my communications in a culturally diverse environment.

Sample #22- Strengths/ Characteristics Essay– UNC

What are the 2 or 3 strengths or characteristics that have driven your career success thus far? What are the other strengths that you would like to leverage in the future?

There is a symbiotic relationship between my work and my personal traits—just as much as my strengths have helped me excel at work, my work experiences have been conducive to my self-discovery.

Handling a family business is a challenging work. My family's business is heavily dependent on coal and after decades of successful operations, it is gradually getting tough to carry on coal mining and its ancillary business due to plummeting natural resources, market trends, and new environmental regulations. Seeing my father always worrying about business sustainability, I always wanted to do something to help him. Two years back, I came up with the idea of diversifying our business into hospitality industry, and recently, I partnered with my father to setup a guest house in which I have 25% stake. I am confident that the business will flourish in our hometown- the next destination of business in the state. My father thinks highly of my vision and always appreciates this decision.

My vision to become a global leader has infused in me the passion to take up challenging work in cross-cultural environments. Despite grieving from the untimely demise of my mother, I decided to join XXXX at Chennai in a promising but laborious project. Even though I had the option to join XXXX in my hometown, I went to Chennai because I wanted to get familiar with new work culture. Soon I got opportunity to work in the USA to handle complex projects. My passion to accept challenges in diverse cultures has been instrumental in my career and has helped me define my goals.

Furthermore, I am great at developing a trustworthy and efficient working culture with the customers and influence them with efficient communication. To tap my talents, my XXXX Business Relationship Manager entrusted me with the responsibility to setup a new process at Client sites. I proved myself by bringing business of \$1M for XXXX and helped in client retention and client extension. I am the favorite choice of the business owner who chooses me to represent the company in meetings, make negotiations and deal with the clients. I successfully handled a deal with a client which resulted in 15% profit in the business.

There are some traits that I would like to leverage more in the future. I have an intrinsic skill for networking and have connections starting from film industry to corporates and local government body. I have been given the responsibility to organize events at XXXX and at Project Management Institute West Bengal Chapter. However, I feel that these skills have not been satisfactorily put to a test. I would like to leverage my networking skills and organizing capabilities to make corporate connections, connect with industry leaders and NGOs in the interest of UNC Kenan Flagler and bring in prominent personalities for guest lectures. Kenan Flagler will give me opportunity to enrich these skills, build a bigger network and a launch pad to succeed in my business and NGO venture in future.

Sample #23- Strengths/ Weakness Essay– INSEAD

Give a candid description of yourself (who are you as a person), stressing the personal characteristics you feel to be your strengths and weaknesses and the main factors which have influenced your personal development, giving examples when necessary.

Born the second child, I have had a natural curiosity. It was a big headache to my parents for constantly having to shop for toys since none could survive a day in my hands when I was a toddler. A bit grown up; the ability of speech shifted the stress from their wallet to their nerve system because I couldn't complete a single sentence without affixing a question mark in the end. Later, I used my inquisitiveness to win the high school debate competitions. The curiosity deeply influenced many of my later academic and professional choices of which, pursuing an MBA at INSEAD is the immediate one.

A geek at heart, I am also attracted to adventures of all kinds, not necessarily dangerous situation, though I did enjoy the face-to-face experience with two grizzly bears when I accidentally stepped into the Blueberry Mountain, A.K.A. bears' foraging ground. In a broader sense, adventures also mean taking risks. In 2004, my decision to start a company shocked my family and friends. Despite their countless attempts to talk me out of it, I invested in the business because I was confident in the model. The payoff of this adventure was that I got my master study funded through selling off my shares. In 2007, my 'epiphany' of 'going abroad' concerned even more people as I was considered 'well established in Beijing'. But the urge to uplift my career triumphed, and I did successfully transition to a new career in a new country. The willingness to take on risks has not only made me fearless but also has opened up more opportunities for me. My aggressive and adventurous personality is an evolution steered up by being second to a powerful old sister which has fueled up healthy rivalries on many occasions, such as high school debate club, fundraising for Project Hope etc.

I attribute greater part of my achievements to perseverance. When I joined XXXX, it was going through some drastic changes; the company culture shifted quickly, and the morals were hurt. As a result, many colleagues resigned, but I chose to stay, even when a co-worker left with all his responsibilities shifted to me and the substitute was unavailable for almost a year. The company recovered quickly, and I learned that one progresses and learns fast in adversity.

Despite my effort to not bring personal emotions into professional decision, sympathy gets in the way sometime. In 2012, a high-profiled project that I volunteered to lead over-ran the schedule significantly because a key member failed to deliver a blocking item. I talked to her and figured out that she was going through some personal issues. Out of sympathy, I extended the deadline for another two weeks for her. Two weeks later, she quit without notice without handover of any documentation on the incomplete tasks. The blame from clients fell on me and the entire team had to work extended hours to redo her part and remedy the situation. This incident taught me that even though sympathy should not be avoided, I need to make sure there is no single point failure.

Beside limited personal qualities detailed here, I feel that the 'randomness' and 'possibility' complete me a person: you could find me singing at the top of my lung for hours at Sakura Karaoke, or snowboarding in April or camping in Denali in September, or laughing and chatting with my over 200 relatives in Beijing, or organizing friends to cook at the shelter etc. I am confident that with my unique qualities, I will add significant value to the INSEAD community.

Sample # 24- Random Things about you- Fuqua

First Required Essay: 25 Random Things About Yourself

Instructions: Present your response in list form, numbered 1 to 25. Some points may be only a few words, while others may be longer. Your complete list should not exceed 2 pages.

The "Team Fuqua" spirit and community is one of the things that sets The Duke MBA experience apart, and it is a concept that extends beyond the student body to include faculty, staff, and administration. When a new person joins the Admissions team, we ask that person to share with everyone in the office a list of "25 Random Things About Yourself." As an Admissions team, we already know the new hire's professional and academic background, so learning these "25 Random Things" helps us get to know someone's personality, background, special talents, and more.

In this spirit, the Admissions Committee also wants to get to know you—beyond the professional and academic achievements listed in your resume and transcript. You can share with us important life experiences, your likes/ dislikes, hobbies, achievements, fun facts, or anything that helps us understand what makes you who you are. Share with us your list of "25 Random Things" about YOU.

1. My life is divided into 3 chapters I was born in Razdan, a small town in Armenia. After my birth, my family had to move to a small village in Georgia. I lived there for 6 years and moved to Vladivostok, a medium size Russian city on the border of North Korea, China, and Japan. At the age of 14, I moved to Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, and I currently live there.
2. When I was a little kid, my favorite toy was a cap of jar. I imagined that it was a steering wheel of my Jeep, and I ‘drove’ the car making the noises of engine.
3. I and my friends used to spend so much time in computer labs of our University that the administration gave us the keys and allowed us to stay there for 24 hours as an exception to the rules.
4. Eight years ago, I found a puppy on the street and brought him home. Since then, he is with me. We both benefit from our collaboration; I feed him, and he acts as my personal alarm clock by waking me up at 6 am every day. He is also my personal coach and makes me walk for 2 hours every day.
5. When I first attended Russian school, the only three words I knew in Russian were ‘Yes’, ‘No’, and ‘Hello’.

6. I do my homework with TV on. I cannot concentrate when there is no conversation nearby. When I do not have access to TV, I ask my friends/ family members to talk to each other so that I can work productively.
7. I used to be a heavy smoker since I was 14 years old. I quit smoking in November last year, and I consider this one of the biggest achievements of my life.
8. First thing I do in the morning is checking soccer and computer games news; this helps me to stay up to speed on what I am passionate about.
9. People are surprised to know that despite being Armenian, my native language is Russian. However, I use English as my primary mode of communication.
10. I have been playing World of Warcraft for more than 10 years. When I was 13, I used to be a raid leader in the game and constantly led the group of 25 people to fight the bosses. I was 5-15 years younger than the members of my group, but they thought that I was about 25 years old.
11. I am a huge soccer fan. I enjoy playing soccer computer games and watching matches on a regular basis. My favorite club is Real Madrid.
12. My parents work in Russia, so I live with my grandmother in Armenia. In the evenings, we sit together, and she often tells me the stories from her and her parents' life. I find these stories so entertaining that I always try to persuade her to write an autobiography.
13. My grandmother has advertised my English language skills so intensively among her friends that all the old ladies from our neighborhood come to our house to ask me to translate instructions from their medicines; some of them even bring their grandchildren for my help with their homework.
14. As a child, I was obsessed with pirates. I could tell every single name of all the 17-19 century ships and the famous pirates.
15. For the last 6 years, I have been reading at least one book a month, mostly classic literature. I believe books are perfect combination of entertainment and wisdom. My favorite book is Leo Tolstoy's War and Peace.
16. I watch cartoons more than movies. To me, cartoons are not only more positive, but they are also filled with life wisdom expressed in a simple and concise way.
17. In the summer of 2012, I saw Zach Galifianakis during shooting of 'Hangover'. Thinking that he was a costumed character, I commented: "Nice makeup. I almost believed that you

are the real one.” Though he looked surprised, he didn’t say anything. This was one of the most awkward situations in my life.

18. People often mistake my name for David. I find it funny because my name is nowhere close to David.
19. Most of the English languages I currently know I had learned within the 3-month period in the 9th grade to win the competition organized by our class. I earned the first place, but I feel that knowledge, not winning, was the most important part of that experience
20. When I was in 6th grade, I once used a complicated and literary word in my essay to make an impression on the teacher, but I didn’t know the exact meaning of that word. Later, it turned out that the word had distorted the message of the sentence and showed me in a bad light. I was very embarrassed, and since then have never used a word without knowing its exact meaning.
21. In school, I once went camping with the class, and the smell of the food attracted the bear. It went out of the forest, ate some of our food and silently retired. It was generous of him to leave some for us.
22. Last summer, I didn’t pass the interview for summer job for lacking intermediate Russian language skills. The funny part of it wasn’t the fact that Russian is my native language, but the fact that the interviewer didn’t even test my proficiency in Russian. She assumed that I don’t know the language.
23. Recently, I have developed a new hobby. Whenever I am bored, I start solving GMAT questions. Though I have already taken GMAT and don’t plan to retake it, I find this activity stimulating to me is like Sudoku or Crossword is to other people.
24. I always come to my classes 10-20 minutes earlier just to ensure that I am not late because I fear of the moment when the professor stops the lecture to follow me with his eyes.
25. I sometimes attend the meetings of *Book Lovers of Armenia*, wherein the members discuss prominent works of literature. These discussions help me to assess the timeless classics from new dimensions, thus enriching my understanding of them.

Sample #25: Shocking Trend Essay- Oxford

Consider a statistic or trend that shocks you. Why it is important to you and how could it be changed for the better? (Maximum 500 words)

One in every nine people in the world is undernourished, and one in every four children suffers from stunted growth because of shortage of food.

Growing up in India, my first introduction to hunger and malnutrition was watching children of my age living on the streets. With thin limbs and big bellies, they looked as un-child-like as possible. Without understanding the reasons and circumstances of this disparity then, I felt sad. As I grew older, I heard from our domestic help, how difficult it was for her to provide for her children. My father, a veterinary doctor in rural India, also described how some farmers committed suicide due to crop failures and famines. All these experiences made me understand early on how deep and widespread the problem was.

When I moved to the United States, I found that nearly 41 million people go hungry in this developed country as well. This issue, particularly the thought of hungry children, makes me extremely sad and helpless. I started contributing in my small way to a number of initiatives striving to alleviate this problem. I regularly donate to *Art of Living's Gift of Smile foundation* to provide nutritious meals to malnourished children. As one of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) champions in my organization, I work with my team to fundraise, donate and regularly organize campaigns to volunteer with Gather, NH and New Hampshire Food Bank to help them collect and distribute food to more than 1000 families and 450 needy children in the region.

According to the UN, one-third of all food in the world is wasted, an amount valued at nearly \$3 trillion. In USA alone, 31%-40% of total food is thrown away. Given the number of people that go hungry in the world, this statistic is shocking to me. I have seen people wasting hundreds of pounds of food in social get together and restaurants. Personally, I make sure to buy as much grocery as I need and reduce the waste to minimum to nothing.

I believe, we, as a society, need to manage the global wastage of food. Partnerships between NGOs and restaurants could further help in better management of food. More social campaigns are the need of the hour to raise awareness to minimize food wastage and improve the distribution of surplus food. Corporates should also come onboard to pledge employee hours to this cause. I think ideas of MealMatch and Hunger Site are quite useful, but we need to step up and do more.

Through my research and during my discussions with alumni, I understand that one of the primary goals of Said is creating global leaders who have the ability to improve people's lives through business. This closely aligns with my future goals. At Oxford, I will have the opportunity to collaborate with a global student body and learn unique aspects of different cultures. Networking with them will help me do my part in tackling this global issue in a more organized way.

Sample #26- Introduction Essay Booth

Imagine yourself at LAUNCH (your three-day orientation) meeting your classmates for the first time. Introduce yourself. (250 words maximum)

Hi everyone! I am XXXX, an operations planning professional in the Railroad Industry. My experience with my family's manufacturing business and with operations processes in a variety of industries prepared me well for a career in Railroads, and I have loved every bit of working in this industry. My long-term goal is to create and execute analytics-backed operations strategies and increase technology adoption in railroad operations.

Between my wife and I, we have lived in four different countries and fourteen different cities. We now proudly call Chicago home— we met here as neighbors nine years back. Going for a run by the lake and exploring restaurants around the city is our definition of spending quality time together. Sports have been a big part of my life; I have developed some of my core qualities captaining the cricket team in school and playing mid-west cricket league here in Illinois. Currently, I am focusing on golf and running. Equally rewarding for me is to stay involved with community activities. While mentoring Chicago Public School students and organizing various cultural events are my ways to contribute, painting and meditating are my ways to unwind.

Gleacher center is located on my way to work, and I used to dream about being a student here every time I passed by. I am thrilled to be here with all of you today and want to thank my family, mentors, and friends who helped me get here. Here's to new friendships! Go Booth!

Sample #27– Optional Essay– (Additional Information)

Please use this page for any additional information that was not captured within your application. If you feel you've already provided us with sufficient information about yourself, you need not add anything here. (300 words).

I would like to address the Admission Committee to consider the below mentioned factors while evaluating my application.

Academics, ambition, and culture– have defined my journey in life. Being an academically inclined and ambitious woman, I did my Post-Graduation from the XXXX and got associated with the technological giants YYYY, ZZZZ, and AAAA. I look forward to a Full time MBA which would open the door to thriving career opportunities.

My birthplace is Kolkata, and its Bengali culture is enriched with literary works and songs of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore. Inspired by his work, I, a singer myself, endowed upon one of my biggest achievements– a bachelor's degree in Indian classical music and received accolades with several live performances as a lead vocalist.

I always look ahead with positive attitude during difficult life situations. In 2015, when BBBB closed its office, my employment ended, and my career progression was hindered with financial instabilities and visa sponsorship. However, I gracefully accepted this setback, and with my distinct and diversified skills and experiences that projected my flexibility to learn new technologies, I soon achieved a breakthrough and secured a job in CCCC.

On the personal front, for several months, I have developed a painful cyst on my right wrist which has adversely affected my ability to work continuously for longer hours. The medical condition hasn't deterred me from continuing my momentum and reaching my goals. I have been optimistic and determined to enhance my skillsets with professional courses and live projects.

Lastly, my MBA application is delayed because I received my settlement Visa– Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK in June this year. I decided against changing to another visa category for studying MBA as that would have been counterproductive to getting the much-desired settlement visa in UK.

Sample #28- Optional Essay- (Low GPA)

If you have additional information or feel there are extenuating circumstances which you would like to share with the MBA Admissions Committee (i.e. unexplained gaps in work experience, choice of recommenders, academic performance issues or areas of weakness in application). (250 words)

When referencing my transcript, the review committee may notice a significant GPA deviation beginning in my third year of college. After maintaining a cumulative 3.66 GPA for my first two years, I had a voluntary withdrawal in Fall 2010 accompanied by disappointing grade performances in Linear Algebra, Investment Analysis, International Trade, and Intermediate Economics.

At the beginning of my third year at Georgia College, my father was placed on long-term disability leave. My mind was clearly on my father's health, so I spent more time at home taking care of him. My parents are divorced, and the only financial support I received during college, aside from scholarships, was from my father. The disability benefits were not enough to help pay for college. So, to continue my education, I had to find a job.

I got a job at my apartment complex under the agreement that if I contributed 25 hours a week, the complex would waive my monthly rent. However, the time commitment proved difficult to balance with my coursework and caring for my father. Consequently, my grades suffered in the Fall and Spring semesters.

Determined not to let this hardship get the best of me, I retook the necessary classes and balanced my priorities; by graduation, I was able to replace the unsatisfactory grades and improve my overall GPA. Most importantly, I was able to help my father regain his health in the process.

Through this experience, I developed a more mature respect for balancing priorities while overcoming obstacles.

Sample #29– Re-applicant Essay- ISB

How has your profile changed from the last time that you applied to the ISB?

My application for PGP for 2013– 2014 was denied. According to the telephonic feedback I received from the ISB on my application, my professional experience was less than required, and my career goals were not well- defined.

In the past two years, I have made conscious efforts to strengthen my profile in the above-mentioned areas. In January 2013, I was offered an opportunity to work in the banking industry. I grabbed the opportunity since I was interested in building financial pricing models. I learned about a new industry and got exposure of working directly multiple business verticals like finance, analytics, risk, audit, testing, operations and sales. With limited time to deliver the project, I learned to limit the scope of the project.

Furthermore, the past two years have also given me an opportunity to transition into the role of a team lead from a resource in the team. My interpersonal skills helped me to keep the resource and the client on the same page despite the cultural differences. When the requirement for additional resources came up, I volunteered to engage with the client and XXXX to get the appropriate resource on the project in time.

Thus, during these two years, I have learnt about a new industry, coordinated across geographies and gained exposure to other business functions such as recruiting resources. I have made significant impact on my organization, earning additional business of about 250,000 GBP for XXXX. I have made efforts to develop my skills as a consultant and post MBA, I will seek a role of financial consultant as opposed to strategy consultant because I have recognized my natural affinity towards financial concepts. Therefore, I request the Admission Committee to consider my application for admission to the PGP program in view of my improved profile.

Sample #30- Re-applicant Essay – INSEAD

Last year, I was admitted to the INSEAD MBA program, but unfortunately, I had to withdraw my application because of personal circumstances. This year I took a decision to reapply for the INSEAD MBA program as I continue to look forward to becoming part of INSEAD MBA program.

I have never been so much motivated to enter the INSEAD MBA program as I am today. Over the past year, I have been constantly improving my professional and personal skills and today I feel even more ready to attend the highly designated business education offered by the INSEAD business school.

On the professional side, I am proud to say that as a Chief Economist in XXXX Bank, I have progressed further to become one of the most frequently cited economists in Russia. In May 2015, I was ranked third by *Medialogia*, the recognized statistic and ranking agency, consisting of the most cited experts in Russia who have analyzed the frequency of citation of over 400 financial experts in the leading business mass media from May 2014 to May 2015. This rating is based both on the number and the quality of comments published in the mass media. I really did an excellent job by earning the third rank and outperforming the foremost experts. It is noteworthy that this high accomplishment is largely attributed to the efforts made by the whole XXXX Bank research team I am proud to be the head of.

On the personal side, I have been developing my entrepreneurial skills. As a continuation of my favorite hobby, which is playing in musical group, I have become one of cofounders of a musical school for kids and adults. The music school named *Slista* was founded in April 2015, and I took active part in all stages of establishing the school, which is an emerging but successful initiative.

I feel I have progressed significantly during the last year, and today, I feel even a stronger thirst for a robust business education. I am looking forward to joining the INSEAD community, and I hope that my rather long road to the program will lead to long-expected result.