



Optimizing Your R2 Strategy (Even if R1 Did Not Go As Planned)

November 12, 2019
Scott Edinburgh
Founder, Personal MBA Coach



I have been helping clients around the world get into dream schools since '08

- 14 years of professional experience
- Consulting, financial services and travel and hospitality experience
- 11+ years of MBA admissions consulting expertise
- #1 ranked consultant on MBA Insight
- #4 ranked consultant on Poets & Quants
- Hundreds of clients served
- 96% success rate
- \$4.5M in scholarships secured last year



Massachusetts
Institute of
Technology

Deloitte.

J.P.Morgan



pMC personal
MBA
Coach.

Boutique, one-on-one MBA and graduate school admissions consulting and tutoring

- Comprehensive GMAT tutoring and admissions consultancy
- Full-time support from an expert (since 2008)
- Personal MBA Coach is available 7 days a week
- AIGAC Board Member (Association of International Graduate Admissions Consultants)
- Early MBA planning (1-3 years pre-application) through post-acceptance support
- Former M7 MBA interviewers on our team
- Former clients to network with at every top school



Agenda



SCHOOL
SELECTION



GMAT



PERSONAL
STORY CRAFTING



RESUME & LORS



ESSAY
DEVELOPMENT



School Selection



Develop a well-rounded school list

- My average candidate applies to 5+ schools
- Include a range of difficulty levels
- Pay attention to culture & fit



Do not be afraid to refine your list

- If round 1 did not go as planned, add more schools in round 2
- There is benefit to adding schools at the same level
- If round 1 went better than planned, consider reaching in round 2



G **M** **A** **T** TM

GMAT

The GMAT has changed considerably in the past few years, leading to rising average scores



Scores are valid for up to 5 years



You can take the test up to 5 times in a 12-month period and cancel low scores



There is a lifetime max of 8 tests

Start GMAT prep as early as possible

Get a baseline now and kick your study plan into high gear

- Begin by taking a practice test (or 2) to get a baseline score
- Think about how you learn best and get help accordingly
- We find one-on-one tutoring works best and allows you to develop a customized and targeted plan
- Read short articles in top periodicals to enhance your vocabulary





What score do I need?

- This answer will vary for each candidate
- A candidate with weaker academic performance needs a stronger score
- Those from overrepresented profiles often need to perform 20-30 points above average
- Candidates with unique profiles will be penalized less for lower scores
- Not all schools value testing scores the same way

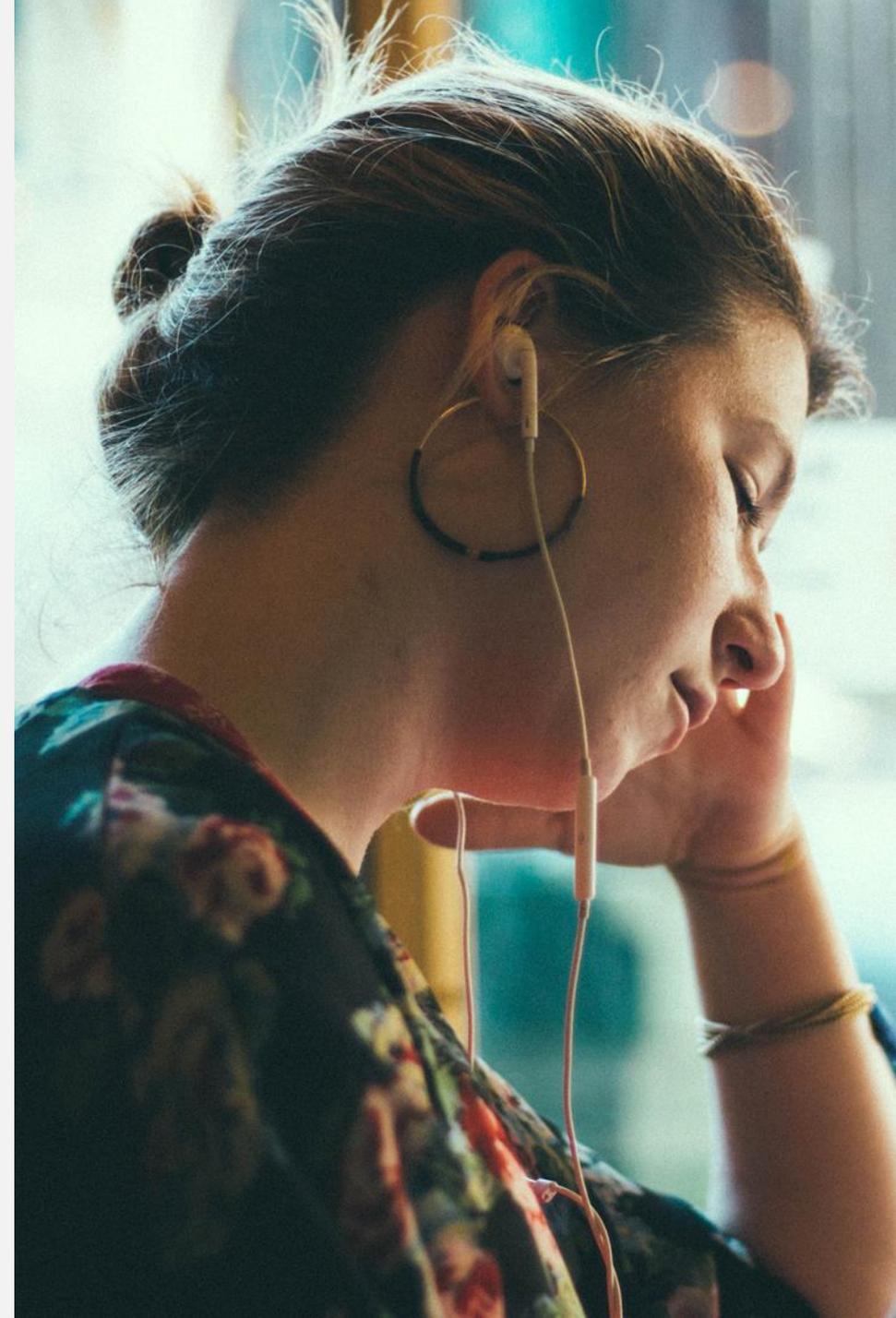
WHAT'S YOUR
STORY

Personal Story
Development

When developing your personal story,
begin with self reflection

It is important to truly assess your “personal
story” and what makes you unique

- Ask yourself what really drives you
- Take stock of your true passions
- Think about how you are unique from your peers
- Consider the circumstances and choices in your life that have shaped you the most



Everyone has a “unique” personal story

Jenny

Undergrad: Yale GPA: 3.8

GMAT: 750

Work exp: 3 Yr Deloitte Consulting, Clients: Aetna, BCBS, Dell, Sears

Interests: Music aficionado

Extra-curric: Junior Achievement 5hr/mo

ST Goal: Work in a tech start-up

LT Goal: Start a company in digital media

Michael

Undergrad: BC GPA: 3.7

GMAT: 730

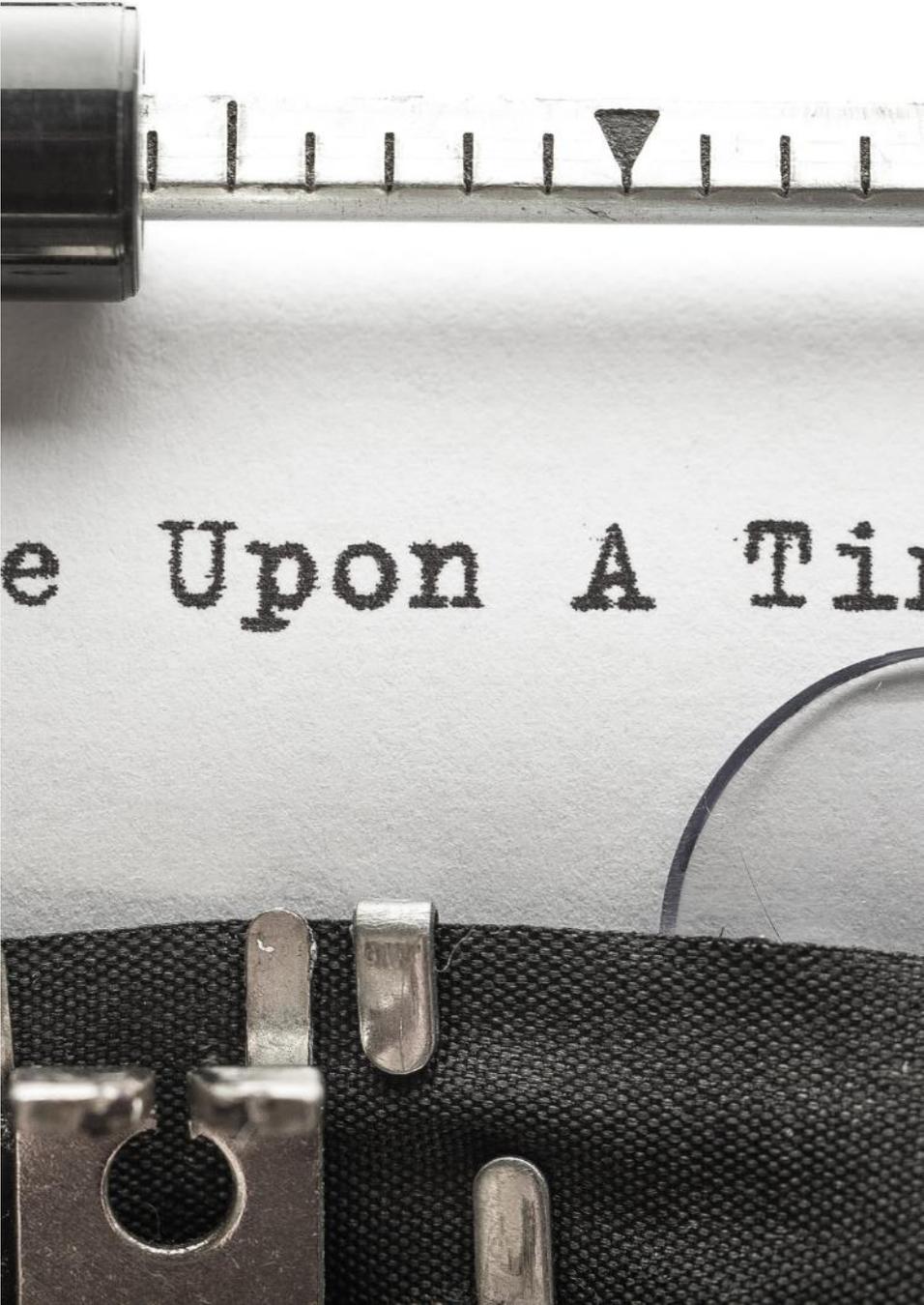
Work exp: 3 Yr Deloitte Consulting, Clients: major tech

Interests: Competitive swimming

Extra-curric: Teaches underprivileged how to swim, mentored 2 teens for 5 years

ST Goal: Deloitte, build product management expertise

LT Goal: Run product management at technology firm



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John Smith
123 Broadway
City, State 12345

John Smith, 123 Broadway, City, State 12345

Director
Corporation
123 Pleasant Lane
City, State 12345

December 8, 2012

Dear Sir or Madam,

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nullam aliquet tellus vel justo porta et semper libero rutrum. Duis vestibulum sagittis aliquam. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Phasellus ac velit eu dolor lobortis fringilla. Quisque imperdiet porta ante in pretium. Maecenas facilisis varius metus et blandit. Proin rhoncus arcu non ante elementum non vehicula sem varius. Morbi feugiat, elit eget tristique posuere, urna eros vestibulum nibh, at tempus neque justo nec enim.

Curabitur id est enim. Suspendisse potenti. Fusce eleifend sodales tortor, a interdum tortor sollicitudin vel. Morbi vel tellus enim, eget hendrerit ligula. Proin molestie suscipit erat, eget consectetur orci convallis at. Ut vestibulum, odio vitae blandit dignissim, dui magna auctor leo, at molestie augue magna sed nisi. Phasellus ipsum magna, fringilla id tempor id, tristique vitae mauris. Maecenas sed orci vel eros consectetur ultrices.

Mauris enim velit, feugiat at venenatis eu, scelerisque vitae mauris. Nullam accumsan facilisis mauris sagittis iaculis. Mauris condimentum dictum libero. Vestibulum ante ipsum primis in faucibus orci luctus et ultrices posuere cubilia Curae; Nullam consequat malesuada feugiat. Vestibulum tempor commodo turpis id gravida.

Sincerely,

John Smith

Attached: Copyright permission form



Resumes and Letters of Recommendation

Start to think about your letter of recommendation strategy in detail

You do not need to ask the highest person you know in the company

- Ask someone who will write an amazing letter
- Ignore title / prestige
- Ensure s/he has worked with you for a while
- Start doing things you want written about
- Ask non-professional references if you have strong extracurriculars
- Ask your references early
- Use additional influential / alumni informal notes in some cases



What makes a good letter of recommendation?

Specificity

- Your recommender compares you to others
- Allow the reader to clearly see your teamwork
- Have you grown in the past? If so, how? Ensure examples are used

Recency

- Make sure your current abilities are reflected
- Letters should not come from “old” connections

Honesty

- Quality should be very high, but you are human!
- Make sure the feedback is actually feedback
- A believable letter carries more weight than a “better than god” letter

Detail

- Ensure recommender answers the questions!
- Pay attention to question differences across schools
- Ensure the letter is the right length (or at least close)



What does an MBA resume look like?

- Fill out bullets completely. 1-2 lines for most

John Michael Doe
12 MBA Way - Boston, MA 02112
617-214-2019 – mbaapplicant@gmail.com

EXPERIENCE

COOL SERVICES COMPANY (company description if needed, otherwise leave blank) Boston, MA
Position/Title 2013 - Present

- Action word, then description of accomplishments
- Detail 2
- Detail 3

PRESTIGIOUS FIRM Boston, MA
Position/Title 2013 - 2014

- Detail 1
- Detail 2
- Detail 3

COMPANY London, UK
Position/Title 2012 - 2013

- Detail 1
- Detail 2
- Detail 3

EDUCATION

HARVARD UNIVERSITY Cambridge, MA
Bachelors in Something Interesting 2008 - 2012

- Detail
- Detail

EXTRA-CURRICULAR/VOLUNTEER (OR OTHER)

- Detail 1
- Detail 2

SKILLS / LANGUAGES

- Detail 1
- Detail 2



The nitty gritty resume details

How much work is really needed on the resume?

- I have seen 1,200+ resumes over the years. Only a few were great without needing to edit
- Avoid throwing everything on the resume. They are only one page
- Avoid specific industry jargon
- Ensure skills and accomplishments are presented
- Deal breakers? – Multiple pages, bolded words, short bullets, job description bullets, too little white space





Essay
Development

Think about your career goals....

....but don't overthink them

- Most goals can get you accepted!
- Simpler goals are better than complicated ones
- If you like your current company, you can go back!
- In general, be decisive and specific



Make sure to show school specifics....

....and actually make them specific

- Avoid vague statements that could apply to any school
- Schools want to know WHY you want to join THEIR unique campuses
- Connect each class to what you will do in your future career



MIT Sloan has innovative professors



I am excited to take Kellogg's marketing classes

Answer the question....

.... and consider why it was asked

- This sounds OBVIOUS!
- Do not write what you think they want to know
- While it is ok to include some details for context, if background is not asked, don't spend a lot of time on it
- Schools place varying importance on specific criteria

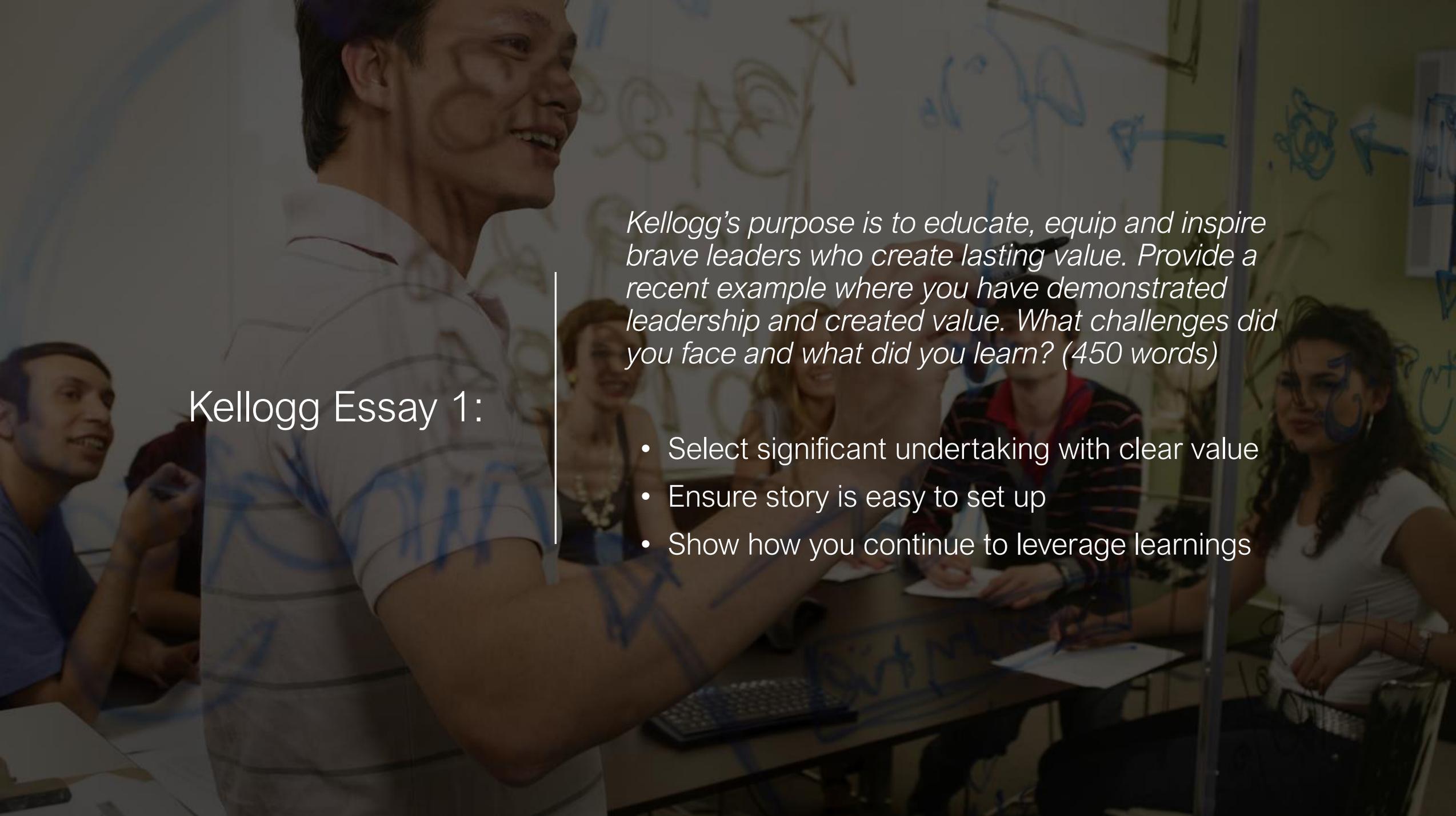


Be consistent....

....but not repetitive

- All of your application pieces should fit together, including your LORs!
- Show what makes YOU unique
- If you have a key theme, make sure it appears throughout the application
- Do not tell the same stories multiple times



A man in a white polo shirt is standing in a classroom, pointing at a whiteboard. He is smiling and looking towards the right. The whiteboard is covered in blue hand-drawn diagrams and arrows. Several students are seated at desks in the background, some looking towards the man. The overall scene is a classroom or workshop environment.

Kellogg Essay 1:

Kellogg's purpose is to educate, equip and inspire brave leaders who create lasting value. Provide a recent example where you have demonstrated leadership and created value. What challenges did you face and what did you learn? (450 words)

- Select significant undertaking with clear value
- Ensure story is easy to set up
- Show how you continue to leverage learnings

Kellogg Essay 2:

*Values are what guide you in your life and work.
What values are important to you and how have they
influenced you? (450 words)*

- Authenticity is key
- Explain “why”
- Get personal



Columbia Essay 1:

Essay 1: Through your resume and recommendations, we have a clear sense of your professional path to date. What are your career goals over the next 3 - 5 years and what, in your imagination, would be your long-term dream job? (500 words)

- Include short-term and long-term goal
- Be specific and share how you will leave your mark
- Dream big but stay logical
- Include past experience for context only
- Mention how CBS will help



Columbia Essay 2:

Essay 2: Why do you feel Columbia Business School is a good fit for you? (250 Words)

- Do your research
- Name 3-4 specific offerings
- Include a mix of classes, clubs, seminars etc.
- Mention at least one NYC specific offering
- Where relevant, include cultural fit





Columbia Essay 3:

Essay 3: Who is a leader you admire, and why? (250 words)

- Pick someone you want to emulate or with a shared belief
- Consider someone with a similar background
- The “why” should speak to your personal story
- Essay should show your leadership style

Personal MBA Coach clients received \$4.5M last year

Below is a sample of the schools clients got into



How Personal MBA Coach Can Help?



Call: +1 617 645 2424

Email: scott@personalmbacoach.com

Web: www.personalmbacoach.com



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<https://www.personalmbacoach.com/beyondm7-ebook-signup>



GMAT prep



Extra-curricular strategy



Network development

MBA ESSAY ANALYSIS

