



M7 Essay Analysis

personal
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Coach.

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ABOUT PERSONAL MBA COACH

Personal MBA Coach has helped hundreds of applicants around the world get into top MBA, EMBA, part-time MBA and graduate programs including HBS, Stanford, Wharton, Chicago Booth, Kellogg, Columbia GSB, Dartmouth Tuck, MIT Sloan, London Business School, INSEAD, Yale SOM, UVA Darden, Duke Fuqua, Berkeley Haas, NYU Stern and many more with a 96% success rate. Last cycle our clients earned \$10M in total scholarships.

Personal MBA Coach was founded in 2008 by Scott Edinburgh, a former management consultant and industry strategist with an MBA from Wharton and a BS from MIT. With a boutique and personalized approach, Scott helps turn analytical, general management and client services experiences into the powerful and convincing stories that admissions committee members are looking for. Personal MBA Coach helps clients through all aspects of the application process, including application strategy, pre-application planning, GMAT/GRE/EA prep and school selection. Scott is on the Board of Directors and is a Committee Chair of AIGAC (Association of International Graduate Admissions Consultants: an organization that meets annually with admissions directors of the top 25 schools globally). Learn how Personal MBA Coach can make your dreams a reality by walking you step by step through the entire process.

SERVICES OFFERED

- Comprehensive Packages
- GMAT/GRE/EA Tutoring
- Interview Preparation
- Waitlist Support
- Gut Check
- Early MBA Planning

WHAT SETS PERSONAL MBA COACH APART

- Founded by Scott Edinburgh, a Wharton MBA, member of AIGAC Board of Directors and industry veteran with 17 years of admissions consulting experience
- Scott presents globally and was invited to present to admissions directors at GMAC conference
- Prior corporate experience to inform your essays and goals, including consulting, banking and strategy
- Former M7 admissions directors and M7 MBA interviewers on our team
- Flexible scheduling and fast turnaround times
- Personalized and customized GMAT/GRE/EA tutoring
- One point of contact
- Direct, honest feedback
- Internal network of former clients at all top schools

Comprehensive Packages Overview



1. Application Strategy & Story Development

Personal MBA Coach consultants learn more about your background and develop a thorough application strategy for you to follow, helping fine-tune your educational goals and articulate your distinct story. This includes compiling a list of schools you want to attend. Your consultant will review your credentials and work experience to help you identify what programs make sense for you based on factors like your test score, grades, scholarship desires, ideal study location and more.



2. Resume Review

Structure your MBA resume using our provided templates. We will go over your education and career accomplishments to paint an accurate picture of you on paper and make sure to turn your professional resume into an MBA resume that resonates with admissions directors. Our experts will help edit your resume so that it follows the correct format and uses effective language throughout. The Personal MBA Coach team knows what top schools are looking for when admitting students into their programs, so we make sure you stand out by including only important resume details.



3. Essay Brainstorming and Unlimited Essay Editing

Building from your personal story, you will partner with your admissions consultant to brainstorm topics and develop award-winning essays that allow you to stand out among other applicants. We provide you with school-specific insider knowledge as to what MBA programs are looking for in MBA application essays. You can submit your admissions essay and short-answer responses to us as many times as it takes to get them right. We provide you with feedback in two days and work seven days a week. We will check that you answer questions fully and provide enough detail to impress application essay reviewers. Count on Personal MBA Coach to catch spelling and grammar mistakes before the final submission of your personal development pieces.



4. Video Essay Feedback

Some of the leading MBA programs in the U.S., Europe and Canada require a video essay submission. For the live videos, we will send you software that you can use to practice sample video questions on your own.

Personal MBA Coach comprehensive packages involve sharing feedback on sample recordings to improve your confidence and perfect your video delivery.



5. Letter of Recommendation Support

To enhance your overall application, we will guide you through the process of selecting which of your contacts is best suited to write your letters of recommendation. Our consultants will help you develop the best timing and approach for reaching out and determining how much information and guidance your contact will need to write a letter that aligns with your overall application.



6. Interview Preparation

Personal MBA Coach organizes mock interviews with former M7 and T10 admissions interviewers from our team. Our interviewers provide you with written feedback to help you hone your skills. You have the option to participate in group interviews as well as to grow your skills for all interview structures. For Wharton, we will conduct mock group interviews with former group interviewers.



7. Pre/Post Interview Essay Editing

Harvard Business School, Chicago Booth and MIT Sloan ask that some candidates selected to interview submit an additional essay or video for their MBA program applications. Our personalized MBA admissions services in our comprehensive package include editing your follow-up written or recorded pieces. We will verify that your writing and speaking tone is consistent during the application process so that everything you submit is of the highest quality.



8. Waitlist Strategy & Post Acceptance Support

Our relationship does not end when you hit submit. Whether you are accepted or waitlisted, we will continue our personal support. Find out how and when to reach out to get off the waitlist, receive guidance on your waitlist update and get our advice on which school best suits your goals. We will connect you with former clients at your future school and across all schools as you join the small Personal MBA Coach alumni family.

A photograph of a desk setup. In the foreground, a black mug sits on a dark wooden desk. To its right, a laptop is partially visible. In the background, a potted plant sits on a stack of books, one of which has 'NFOLK' visible on its spine. The scene is lit with soft, natural light from a window on the left.

Harvard Business School Essay Analysis

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?

“How do I get into HBS” is one of the most common questions we hear from MBA applicants. The HBS essay is arguably one of the most difficult to tackle, given its open-ended nature.

This application essay is an open invitation to show HBS what is truly interesting about your profile. This question allows you to focus and elaborate on what is important to you. Think about the HBS essay as your chance to let them “meet” the real you — the authentic person behind the resume and application questions.

As everyone is likely well aware, HBS educates and admits leaders. It goes without saying that whatever story or stories you choose should show your leadership and demonstrate how you have excelled across disciplines.

HBS students will emerge as leaders in the areas they are most passionate about. They will drive change. They are not afraid to stand up for their beliefs. They show courage. You want the admissions committee to see and understand how you personify these traits.

Personal MBA Coach advises applicants to watch [this video](#) on the HBS case method to re-enforce how critical leadership and diversity of thought is to HBS. Keep this in mind, along with Harvard’s other stated values of analytics and community, as you craft your HBS essay.

While we recommend that most applicants show their professional accomplishments, make sure to share enough anecdotally so that the admissions committee can learn more about you on a personal level.

Successful essays have included some sort of personal anecdote at a minimum and often a much more detailed personal story, which is often tied to a recurring theme throughout your essay.

Think about what makes you unique and why you made the choices that you did. The most accomplished individuals follow their passions, and these are usually shaped by particular experiences or personality traits. Consider what has had the greatest impact on your choices, who you are today, or who you want to be. This will likely give you some areas to expand upon. But do not just tell this story; as we have said in the past, try to help the reader live it.



Harvard Business School Essay Analysis (cont.)

Personal MBA Coach's HBS Essay Guide – Key Takeaways:

Make your essay interesting to read. Each year the admissions team receives ~10,000 applications.

Differentiate yourself, particularly if you come from an overrepresented industry, such as consulting or banking, or an overrepresented demographic pool. HBS looks to select a well-rounded class, and it will be crucial to show how you will add unique value.

Consider this essay as a starting point for an interview conversation. HBS has very detailed interviews that are planned in advance for each applicant and will dive into at least one aspect of your application. Be ready to talk in great detail during the interview about anything you submit as part of your application.

Show rather than tell. Essays are much more impactful when they describe something about you, showing it in action instead of just stating the facts. Give the reader details about the situation. Add names to the players within your stories. Describe your setting and tell the reader how you felt.

The HBS essay will be VERY different for everyone. Do not fall into the trap of trying to write an essay like one you have read in the past or like your friend is writing. There will be a wide range of successful essays this year, and proper execution will be the key rather than simply the content alone.

While HBS retained the 900-word limit in an effort to eliminate any stress about how much is too much to write, most essays that work will fall somewhere between 700-900 words. Consider quality over quantity. If you can write a solid 600-word essay that is powerful and moving, do not feel the need to lengthen it. We have helped many applicants write successful essays on the shorter side.

Visit Personal MBA Coach's [Harvard Business School guide](#) for more program-specific information.

Wharton Essay Analysis

Founded by a Wharton MBA graduate, Personal MBA Coach is intimately familiar with the Wharton MBA program and the culture at Wharton. We advise candidates to think about each question differently, ensuring answers complement each other AND show readers multiple aspects of their candidacy.

Essay 1: How do you plan to use the Wharton MBA program to help you achieve your future professional goals? You might consider your past experience, short and long-term goals, and resources available at Wharton. (500 words)

This is a fairly traditional goals essay (to find out more about MBA application essay types, read [How to Write Winning MBA Essays](#)). With this first Wharton MBA essay question, you should discuss your specific short-term goals, but also think more broadly. Essay 1 allows you to reflect at a higher level on your aspirations. Think about where you see yourself in 10, 20 or even 30 years. Consider the path you will take to get there.

It is also expected that you touch upon your past successes, explaining how they are relevant to your future objectives. This question does not require you to walk through your entire resume, and candidates are advised not to do so. Instead, focus only on your past to establish what your key skills are as well as how and why you will succeed in the future.

As you think about your future, also think about your skill gaps and how a Wharton MBA, specifically, will help you to close these gaps. It is important that you allow adequate time to research all that Wharton has to offer. Personal MBA Coach suggests being very specific in detailing the opportunities you plan to take advantage of on campus.

Discuss classes you are particularly interested in or perhaps professors you are looking to study with, etc. Do not include a laundry list. Instead, carefully think through how each offering will allow you to fill in your skill and/or experience gaps. Be sure to show an understanding of Wharton's culture here. Avoid writing vague statements and copying and pasting content from other MBA application essays.

Essay 2: Taking into consideration your background – personal, professional, and/or academic – how do you plan to make specific, meaningful contributions to the Wharton community? (400 words)

Essay 2 gives candidates the opportunity to share past accomplishments and detail potential contributions to the Wharton community. Think about what you have done beyond what is in





Wharton Essay Analysis (cont.)

your resume. Consider items you wish you had space within your resume to elaborate on. Ask yourself what makes you special.

This question gives you the freedom to consider talents, impressive extracurricular accomplishments and/or unique professional skills. We advise candidates to think broadly here about what makes them unique and how they have succeeded both professionally and personally in the past.

Then, consider how you might share these passions, experiences, and successes with your future peers. Tell the reader how you will improve and enrich the Wharton campus. Be sure to do your research on all that Wharton has to offer and to be specific on the contributions you will make. Is there a club you want to join? Perhaps there is a talent you want to share?

As with essay 1, avoid listing items. Instead, select a few unique areas where you will contribute and discuss the mark you hope to leave. Then, as you discuss the specific contributions you will make, tie these to the past experiences you have just brainstormed. A strong essay will cover multiple contributions that flow naturally from your personal story, your passions and your career goals.

Required Essay for all Reapplicants: Please use this space to share with the Admissions Committee how you have reflected and grown since your previous application and discuss any relevant updates to your candidacy (e.g., changes in your professional life, additional coursework, and extracurricular/volunteer engagements). (250 words)

Reapplicants should use the required additional essay to demonstrate growth. We advise candidates to review [our tips for reapplicants](#) before tackling this essay.

Optional Essay: Please use this space to share any additional information about yourself that cannot be found elsewhere in your application and that you would like to share with the Admissions Committee. This space can also be used to address any extenuating circumstances (e.g., unexplained gaps in work experience, choice of recommenders, inconsistent or questionable academic performance, areas of weakness, etc.) that you would like the Admissions Committee to consider.

Looking for more information on Wharton's MBA program? Check out our Wharton guide to find out what sets the program apart, get the latest class profile information, and more.



Columbia Business School Essay Analysis

Columbia Business School's three questions together will prompt MBA candidates to cover a wide range of information about their professional goals, plans on campus, personal stories and leadership styles. Avoid repeating yourself while ensuring that the three Columbia essays work together to paint an accurate and consistent picture of your candidacy.

Essay 1: Through your resume and recommendation, we have a clear sense of your professional path to date. What are your career goals over the next three to five years and what is your long-term dream job? (500 words maximum)

Columbia specifically asks that candidates not repeat their resumes in this career goals question. While some mention of your professional past is still expected, it should be brief and used as context to further elaborate on why your goals are attainable. This question explicitly asks for both a short-term goal and a long-term dream job so be sure to include both.

According to Nicole Shay, former Columbia Business School Admissions Director: "Your goal should be pragmatic. The committee will be asking themselves: 'Given the applicant's work experience + the resources/opportunities at CBS, will this applicant be successful in achieving their short-term goal?'"

In addition, your goals should show a logical progression from your current experiences. If they do not, then a brief explanation is a good idea so that the admissions committee can understand how you will realistically attain your goals.

Discussing your long-term dream job is an opportunity to show the admissions committee your true ambitions and what really matters to you professionally. It is important that candidates have lofty goals here but ones that make sense for them and fit with both their short-term goals and overall story. This is a unique chance not only to show how you envision your career unfolding, but also to give the reader a little more insight into who you are by adding at least a brief mention of why this career interests you.

Finally, while not explicitly asked, a bit on how you will prepare for these goals while at Columbia would serve as a nice conclusion.



Columbia Business School Essay Analysis (cont.)

Essay 2: The Phillips Pathway for Inclusive Leadership (PPIL) is a co-curricular program designed to ensure that every CBS student develops the skills to become an ethical and inclusive leader. Through PPIL, students attend programming focused on five essential diversity, equity, and inclusion skills: Creating an Inclusive Environment, Mitigating Bias and Prejudice, Managing Intercultural Dialogue, Addressing Systemic Inequity, and Understanding Identity and Perspective Taking.

Tell us about a time when you were challenged around one of these five skills. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome. (250 words)

This new second essay directly addresses a topic that continually is top of mind for nearly all top business schools. When it was asked during the 2021-2022 application cycle, it was not required for all candidates and we recognize that some applicants may struggle to answer this question.

With a very short word limit, it is crucial to be very direct in sharing the circumstances, your actions and the result. There is no room for fluff here. Similarly, do not force this essay and be sure your story is authentic. You may need to consider DEI a bit more broadly and that is ok.

Essay 3: We believe Columbia Business School is a special place. CBS proudly fosters a collaborative learning environment through curricular experiences like our [clusters and learning teams](#), an extremely active co-curricular and student life environment, and career mentorship opportunities like our [Executives-in-Residence program](#).

Why do you feel Columbia Business School is a good fit for you academically, culturally, and professionally? Please be specific. (250 words)

This question takes a direct approach to addressing fit. During some previous cycles, CBS has asked candidates about their desire to be in New York City. While the current prompt addresses fit more broadly, mentioning how you plan to leverage the city would still be advised here.

With only 250 words and a lot to cover, it is important to be focused and specific. Show that you have done your research on what options are available on campus and which specifically interest you. Naturally, a tie should be made between these opportunities and your career goals.



Columbia Business School Essay Analysis (cont.)

According to Nicole: “In this essay, the committee is looking for which resources you are going to utilize to achieve your short-term goal and fulfill your social/cultural needs/interests. However, they are also looking at how you are going to contribute to the CBS community.”

This is the time to discuss the classes you hope to take, clubs you will join and other programs of interest to you, such as speaker series or immersion seminars. While we have always recommended that candidates consider culture as they answer this question (which, as we have shared in the past, is becoming increasingly important to many top business schools) this year CBS explicitly asks applicants to speak to why the CBS culture is a good fit. Be sure that you have done your research on CBS and its culture and community.

Optional Essay: If you wish to provide further information or additional context around your application to the Admissions Committee, please upload a brief explanation of any areas of concern in your academic record or personal history. This does not need to be a formal essay. You may submit bullet points. (500 words maximum)

Finally, Columbia has an optional essay. As we advise for most schools, do not feel compelled to answer this unless you have something specific to explain in your background (e.g., a career gap, an unusual recommender, extreme personal circumstances, etc.) This is not the time to spend 500 words professing your love for Columbia.

Considering Columbia Business School? Visit our [CBS guide](#) page for more program-specific information.

Plus, watch Personal MBA Coach’s Nicole Shay’s [exclusive interview](#) with former colleague and current CBS Adcom Director, Jordan Blitzer. Get insider information about CBS including what Jordan wishes applicants would do differently, what is new on campus and common misconceptions about CBS. This is a must see for prospective CBS students.



Chicago Booth Essay Analysis

Once again, Booth will require two essays, each with no strict word limit. The first question remained unchanged once again, while Chicago Booth altered the second essay question this year.

Essay 1: How will the Booth MBA help you achieve your immediate and long-term post-MBA career goals? (250-word minimum)

For this question, you will want to discuss your specific short-term and long-term goals. Be sure to explain a bit of your thinking behind these goals, allowing the reader to understand both your higher-level aspirations and how you developed them.

As with other “goals” essays, you are also expected to touch upon your past successes, explaining how they are relevant to your future objectives. This question does not require you to walk through your entire resume, and candidates are advised not to do so. Instead, focus only on your past to establish your key skills as well as how and why you will succeed in the future.

Next, think about your skills gaps and how a Booth MBA will help you to close these gaps. Be specific here and take the time to do your research. Detail the classes, programs, or clubs you hope to take advantage of on campus and how they will help you to achieve your post-MBA career goals.

Again, do not include a laundry list. Instead, carefully think through how each area will help you fill in the necessary pieces of the puzzle. Finally, be sure to show an understanding of Booth’s culture.

Essay 2: An MBA is as much about personal growth as it is about professional development. In addition to sharing your experience and goals in terms of career, we’d like to learn more about you outside of the office. Use this opportunity to tell us something about who you are. (250-word minimum)

The second Chicago Booth essay challenges applicants to think about personal aspects of their profile. At Personal MBA Coach we specialize in helping our clients develop their personal stories. This essay is an opportunity to share more about yours.

A photograph of a wooden desk with a laptop, a pen, and a blank sheet of paper. The laptop is open and shows a blank screen. The pen is silver and lies on the desk next to the paper. The background is slightly blurred.

Chicago Booth Essay Analysis (cont.)

As you brainstorm topics for this Booth MBA essay, remember that admissions committees are looking to create a well-rounded class. Think about how you are unique. This is your chance to think about what sets you apart from other applicants.

Potential topics to explore here include passions, values, hobbies, and extracurricular activities. However, be careful not to copy your Kellogg essay when discussing values if you are applying to both schools.

While there is no stated maximum for the Chicago Booth essay questions, we advise our clients to be focused and succinct. This is not the time to write a 1,000-word essay, so choose your words carefully.

Optional Essay: Is there any unclear information in your application that needs further explanation? If so, please use this section to clarify. (300 words maximum)

The Chicago Booth application also includes an optional essay question. For tips on handling this third (optional) Booth MBA essay, visit Personal MBA Coach's [blog](#) on optional essays.

Visit Personal MBA Coach's [Chicago Booth guide](#) for more program-specific information.



Kellogg Essay Analysis

Both of Kellogg's MBA application essays are fairly broad, giving candidates the opportunity to reflect on and discuss multiple aspects of their candidacy. However, remember to strive for quality over quantity when crafting your essays. With a 450-word limit for each, your responses should be particularly succinct.

Kellogg MBA Essay 1: Kellogg Leaders are primed to tackle today's pressing concerns everywhere, from the boardroom to their neighborhoods. Tell us about a time in your life where you've needed a combination of skills to solve a problem or overcome a challenge. Which skills did you use? What did you accomplish? (450 words)

Kellogg has reworked its leadership essay this year; however, the objective is the same as in recent years: give Kellogg an example of how you are an accomplished leader. Many candidates likely will share a professional story to answer this first prompt. However, strong leadership examples in your extracurricular activities could also work well here.

Be sure to think of a significant undertaking where you can clearly articulate the challenge that you overcame. Ideally, with this example you will also demonstrate the value you added. This story also should be easy enough to explain that you do not have to waste too many words setting up the situation.

A strong essay will discuss the actions you took and show which specific leadership skills you used in your approach. While this year's question does not specifically ask, you might consider sharing some learnings from this experience. A strong answer not only will demonstrate your leadership experience but also will highlight your most impressive strengths.

Kellogg MBA Essay 2: At Kellogg, our values are based on research that concludes organizations comprised of leaders with varied backgrounds and perspectives outperform homogeneous ones. How do you believe your personal and professional experiences to date will help to enrich the Kellogg community? (450 words)

This second Kellogg MBA essay is completely new, replacing Kellogg's longstanding "values" essay. As we have increasingly seen with other schools this year, Kellogg is giving applicants flexibility to talk about what makes them unique, noting the importance of diversity (though not in these exact words) in the classroom.

For this essay, you want to think about how you stand apart from your peers. You can think of



Kellogg Essay Analysis (cont.)

this essay as you would any personal story essay (for more on how to think about a personal story essay – check out [this blog](#).)

Ask yourself: “What makes me special?”

You might also evaluate what you have done beyond what is in your resume or items that you wish you had space within your resume to elaborate on. As you draft your answer, consider how your accomplishments (both in and out of the office), background and/or experiences have shaped you. Then, as you discuss your past, go beyond just telling the reader what you did or how you were raised, and dig deeper. Think about what you have learned from these experiences.

Next, and most importantly, tell the reader how these experiences have prepared you to add value on campus. Write about how you might share your passions, perspective, experiences, and successes with your future peers. Tell the reader how you will improve and enrich the Kellogg community. As with all essays, be specific about the contributions you will make on campus, and less is more. Do not submit a laundry list here.

Additional Kellogg MBA Application Essays

Kellogg requires candidates considering options other than the full-time MBA to answer these additional essay questions.

One-Year applicants: Why is the Kellogg One-Year Program the right fit to help you reach your post-MBA career goals? And what unique academic, personal or professional experience do you bring into this specific program? (250 words)

MBAi applicants: Why is the Kellogg McCormick MBAi Program the right fit to help you reach your post-MBA career goals? And what unique academic, personal or professional experience do you bring into this specific program? (450 words)

MMM applicants: Why is the MMM Program the right fit to help you reach your post-MBA career goals? And what unique academic, personal or professional experience do you bring into this specific program? (250 words)

This year, Kellogg asks applicants to the one-year MBA program, MBAi or MMM program to



Kellogg Essay Analysis (cont.)

answer an additional essay. For those unfamiliar with the MMM program, it is a dual degree program offering graduates both an MBA from Kellogg and an MS in Design Innovation from the Segal Design Institute at the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science.

The question for all three programs is essentially the same, but applicants to the MBAi have a little more space to work with.

For all three questions, we advise applicants to be very direct both in terms of their career goal (need help on approaching a career goal essay?) and how Kellogg will help. To answer these specialty MBA questions, you want to tell the reader where you are in your career currently, and what gaps you are hoping to close.

Next, you want to demonstrate how the unique offerings within your chosen program are best suited to help you close these gaps and reach your goals. Be specific here, outlining what you will take advantage of on campus and how each opportunity will help you.

You should also consider how you will contribute specifically to the program of your choice by sharing what you uniquely bring to the table. Be sure not to repeat anything already discussed in essay 2.

Reapplicants are also required to answer one additional question: **Since your previous application, what steps have you taken to strengthen your candidacy? (250 words)**

Check out Personal MBA Coach's tips for addressing reapplicant essays [here](#).

Kellogg MBA Video Essay Questions

"We've read your essays, we've read your resume — now we want you to bring all that to life in a video. Show us the person behind all those carefully crafted words. The video will be comprised of three questions, each designed to help you showcase your personality and share some of the experiences that brought you here today."

Finally, Kellogg has mandatory video essays this year. This component of the application offers admissions committee members the chance to learn more about you on a personal level.



Kellogg Essay Analysis (cont.)

Once you submit your application and payment, you will be able to access the Kellogg video essay through your application status page. Unlike last year, the school has not shared these essay questions in advance..

Optional Essay: If needed, use this section to briefly describe any extenuating circumstances (e.g. unexplained gaps in work experience, choice of recommenders, inconsistent or questionable academic performance, etc.).

Finally, the optional Kellogg MBA essay should only be answered by those with extenuating circumstances. Read more on our approach to optional essays [here](#).

Are you looking for more information on the Kellogg MBA program? Visit our [Kellogg guide](#) to get details on what sets the program apart, class profile statistics, and more.



Stanford GSB Essay Analysis

The Stanford MBA essay questions, as expected, will not change for 2023-2024 MBA applicants. Once again, there are two Stanford GSB essays, which have a combined word limit of 1050 words. Stanford suggests applicants allocate up to 650 words on Essay A and up to 400 words on Essay B.

Stanford shortened the combined word limit a few years ago, a sign that the school encourages applicants to remain focused and concise in their answers. Below, please find Personal MBA Coach's advice on how to approach the two Stanford GSB essay questions.

Essay A: What matters most to you, and why? (650 words suggested)

For this essay, we would like you to reflect deeply and write from the heart. Once you've identified what matters most to you, help us understand why. You might consider, for example, what makes this so important to you? What people, insights, or experiences have shaped your perspectives?

This first Stanford MBA essay is arguably one of the hardest MBA application questions across all schools. This challenging question requires candidates to speak from the heart.

As Stanford advises, think more about your values here and WHY you made the choices you have made than WHAT you have done. Personal MBA Coach recommends you do some serious soul searching before starting. Think about what you are most passionate about. What drives you to get out of bed each morning? If you could spend your time as you wish, what would you do? Ideally, you have acted on this passion, and it extends throughout multiple aspects of your life. Then, think carefully about why this matters to you. Did you have an experience as a child? Are you following a passion held by others in your family?

Finally, once you have established the why, you should include some WHAT here. After all, a passion or cause that you have done nothing with will not be very believable. Remember though, this is only PART of this personal essay.

Essay B: Why Stanford? (400 words suggested)

Describe your aspirations and how your Stanford GSB experience will help you realize them. If you are applying to both the MBA and MSx programs, use Essay B to address your interest in both programs.



Stanford GSB Essay Analysis (cont.)

In this short Stanford MBA essay, candidates have a lot to cover. First, you should set up why you want an MBA. Naturally, this would include what your goals are and what skills you need to develop to achieve these goals.

Then, establish how Stanford will help you to fill these skill gaps. Once again, be specific! Name classes, clubs, programs, etc. and how they will help. Finally, be sure to articulate what attracts you to Stanford's culture. We realize this is a tall order with a suggested word count of only 400 words, so be succinct.

Unlike other schools, Stanford gives the candidate discretion on how to divide the 1050 words (1100 for dual degree candidates) across the two essays. The breakdown above is a suggestion and, in general, this is an ideal breakdown for most candidates.

In addition, there is one optional question in the Stanford GSB application.

Stanford GSB Optional Question: Think about times you've created a positive impact, whether in professional, extracurricular, academic, or other settings. What was your impact? What made it significant to you or to others?

In the Essays section of the application, we ask you to tell us about who you are and how you think Stanford will help you achieve your aspirations. We are also interested in learning about the things you have done that are most meaningful to you. If you would like to go beyond your resume to discuss some of your contributions more fully, you are welcome to share up to three examples. (Up to 1,200 characters, or approximately 200 words, for each example)

For many other top MBA programs, Personal MBA Coach advises clients to answer optional essays only to discuss unique circumstances. Take a look at [our blog](#) on optional essay questions to learn more. However, the requirements for addressing one or more of the optional Stanford MBA essays are not quite as stringent. You can use these optional essays to share other aspects of your candidacy not included in your essays. That said, use these Stanford MBA essays sparingly. Less continues to be more here.

For more information on the Stanford GSB MBA program, visit our [Stanford guide](#).



MIT Sloan Essay Analysis

This year, the MIT Sloan application remains the same as the previous cycle. Again, the school requests that applicants submit a cover letter, organizational chart and 60-second video statement as part of their application. MIT Sloan also announced that all versions of the GMAT and GRE test will be accepted during the upcoming application cycle

MIT Sloan Cover Letter: MIT Sloan seeks students whose personal characteristics demonstrate that they will make the most of the incredible opportunities at MIT, both academic and non-academic. We are on a quest to find those whose presence will enhance the experience of other students. We seek thoughtful leaders with exceptional intellectual abilities and the drive and determination to put their stamp on the world. We welcome people who are independent, authentic, and fearlessly creative — true doers. We want people who can redefine solutions to conventional problems, and strive to preempt unconventional dilemmas with cutting-edge ideas. We demand integrity and respect passion. Please visit the website for frequently asked questions.

Taking the above into consideration, please submit a cover letter seeking a place in the Sloan MIT MBA program. Your letter should conform to a standard business correspondence, include one or more professional examples that illustrate why you meet the desired criteria above, and be addressed to the Admissions Committee (300 words or fewer, excluding address and salutation).

Applicants wondering how to get into MIT Sloan should keep in mind that the MIT Sloan cover letter requires quite a different approach from other MBA application essays. Candidates really need to reflect on their most significant accomplishments here and make clear what they will bring to the table once they arrive at Sloan.

We advise Sloan MBA candidates to approach this cover letter as they would any professional cover letter. Ask for a place in the MIT Sloan class and tell the reader who you are. This is not the time to repeat your resume but, as with any cover letter, provide greater depth about your character and accomplishments. With such a short letter, you will need to choose each word carefully and select the most compelling stories to tell. Think about MIT's values as you write this letter and consider instances where you exhibited innovative thinking and leadership.

Finally, note SPECIFICALLY how you will bring this experience to the Sloan MIT MBA program and how you will use it to create meaningful contributions within the community.



MIT Sloan Essay Analysis (cont.)

MIT Sloan Video Statement: Introduce yourself to your future classmates. Here's your chance to put a face with a name, let your personality shine through, be conversational, be yourself. We can't wait to meet you!

Videos should adhere to the following guidelines:

- No more than 1 minute (60 seconds) in length
- Single take (no editing)
- Speaking directly to the camera
- Do not include background music or subtitles

Note: While we ask you to introduce yourself to your future classmates in this video, the video will not be shared and is for use in the application process only.

Use your MIT Sloan MBA video essay to share personal aspects of your candidacy. This script is NOT the place to address why Sloan is a good fit or to cover details already included in your resume or your cover letter. Instead, think about what make you unique and what your passions and/or hobbies are. You truly should be **INTRODUCING** yourself to you classmates here.

For the video component of your MIT Sloan application, it is most important to be yourself. This is also a chance for admissions committee members to evaluate applicants' physical presence and delivery. Keep this in mind as you develop your video and consider factors such as audio quality, demeanor, and fluency in addition to the content itself!

While you do not want to memorize the video statement and sound overly rehearsed, we do advise that candidates write out some thoughts/bullets in advance of filming and to practice multiple times!

Personal MBA Coach includes analyses of sample videos in its [comprehensive packages](#); reach out today to schedule a consultation and find out more!

MIT Sloan Organizational Chart: To help us better understand your current role and the impact that you have on your team and department, please submit an organizational chart. We should be able to clearly understand the internal structure of your organization, where you sit in your organization, and your line of reporting.



MIT Sloan Essay Analysis (cont.)

Some important details:

- Give us as much detail as possible (names, titles, etc.) but it's ok to redact names if you need to.
- Please circle your role in red so that your position is easily identifiable.
- Make sure we can easily identify where you are, to whom you report, and if applicable, who reports to you.
- If your recommender or references are on your organizational chart (they may not be, and that's ok!), please highlight them for us.
- If you are a consultant, entrepreneur, or affiliated with the military review our [FAQs](#) for suggestions on how to approach the organizational chart.

Please upload an organizational chart that outlines the internal structure of your place of employment. Limit to two pages.

Click [here](#) to view a sample MIT organizational chart.

There is no right or wrong format for the organizational chart. The key is that it is easy to follow and understand and shows your direct reports (if any) and who you report to. Most companies should have a chart that you can work from.

Optional Short Answer Question: Applicants are invited to expand on their background by responding to the following optional 250 word short answer question: How has the world you come from shaped who you are today? For example, your family, culture, community, all help to shape aspects of your identity, please use this opportunity if you would like to share more about your background.

This question is truly optional; applicants will not be evaluated more positively or negatively should they choose to respond. This is an opportunity for you to share more about yourself with the admissions committee, should you choose to do so.

If you want more help with your MIT Sloan application, please check out our [MIT Sloan Guide](#) and contact us to learn how Personal MBA Coach can assist in getting you into MIT Sloan.



MBA Application Extras

1. Many schools include optional essays

Do not feel compelled to answer these optional questions. In most instances, we only advise candidates with extenuating circumstance to answer the optional statements. These include low GPAs, gaps in employment and unusual choice of recommenders.

2. Check for additional or alternate reapplication essays

The essay analysis here included essays for first-time candidates only. If you are a reapplicant, some schools will ask you to complete an additional essay while others may have a different essay question all together.

3. Look out for follow-up videos and pre/post interview essays

It is increasingly common for schools to request video statements or follow-up pre/post interview essays. Our best advice here is to be yourself! You often have little advance time to prepare for these essays but do not underestimate these important additional requirements. Personal MBA Coach has proprietary software available to help candidates prepare for these videos and includes analysis of sample videos in all comprehensive packages.



Scott and the rest of the team are fantastic. I felt thoroughly supported throughout the whole process and he always made sure to guide me (without ever generating material on my behalf or in any way distorting the application material I was writing). I couldn't be happier that now, this fall, I'll be headed to Stanford GSB (a school I never would have dreamed of going to). Thanks, Scott!

— STANFORD GSB



I can say without a doubt that Scott and his team's support has been instrumental in my success. From the start, they've been masterful in helping me craft my story, patient in my many essays and resume revisions, and honest in their recommendations from an admissions perspective. I initially had the least confidence in my essays, resume, and recommendations, and with the editing and proofreading team's help, I am now as confident in those as ever.

— MIT SLOAN



After talking with many different consultants, I decided to go with Scott and Personal MBA Coach because I felt he and the team gave me the best chance of achieving my goal to get into an M7 school despite coming from an extremely competitive demographic. Scott can be direct, but his advice and tough love are needed to take the right steps throughout the application process. Scott was clear and concise with how I could communicate my story and helped bring out the pertinent parts of my life to best develop each application. He and his team had an excellent turnaround time (1-2 days, even less most times!) on any questions, edits, or concerns that I had during my experience. Highly recommend!

— COLUMBIA BUSINESS SCHOOL

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Call or email for a consultation with founder, Scott Edinburgh

SCOTT EDINBURGH

Founder, Personal MBA Coach

+1 617 645 2424

scott@personalmbacoach.com

www.personalmbacoach.com

Facebook: @PersonalMBACoach

Twitter: @PMBACoach

