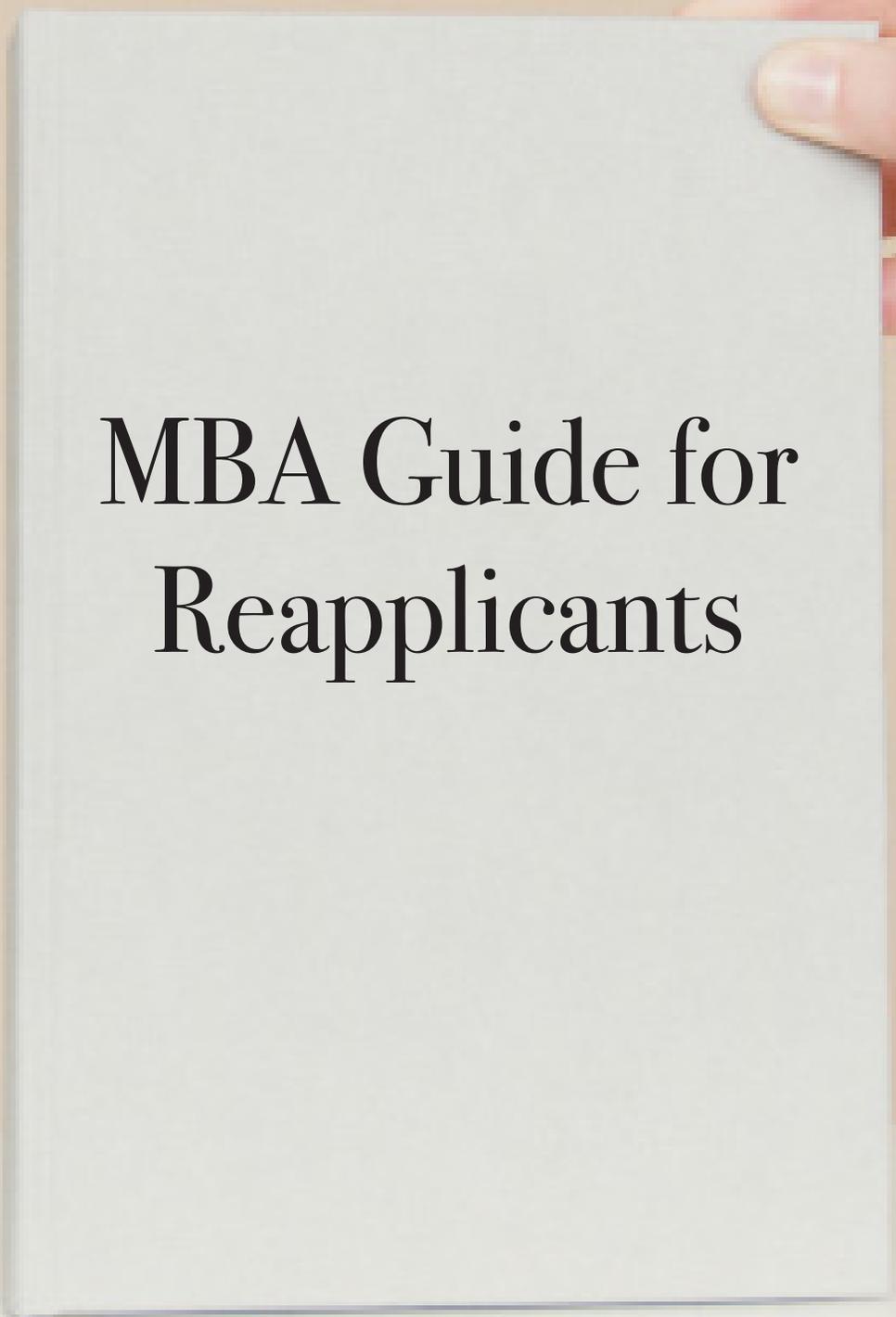


**personal
MBA
Coach.**



**MBA Guide for
Reapplicants**

Table of Contents

- 03 [About Personal MBA Coach](#)
- 05 [Bouncing Back from an MBA Rejection](#)
- 07 [Expanding Your Network for Long-Term Success](#)
- 09 [Making Your Career Work Harder for You](#)
- 10 [Articulating Your Personal Story](#)
- 12 [How To Think About MBA Goals](#)
- 14 [Tackling the MBA Application Reapplicant Essay](#)
- 15 [How to Ace the MBA Interview](#)
- 18 [Testimonials](#)

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, as well as advancing their careers with a 96% success rate.

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 14 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. Develop Your Story

The boutique one-on-one approach begins day 1. With a kickoff call or meeting, Scott will learn all about you and your aspirations. Together you will select target schools, articulate your DISTINCT story and fine-tune your goals.



2. Resume Review

Virtually all professional resumes need to be tailored for business school applications. Your resume will be updated from top to bottom, as many times as it takes to bring it to perfection.



3. Essay Brainstorming and Unlimited Essay Editing

Building from YOUR personal story, we will brainstorm topics and review award winning essays. Send your essays back for detailed edits and feedback as many times as it takes to get them right, with fast two-day turnaround and direct and honest insight.



4. LOR Support

Don't underestimate this crucial step. Scott will guide you through selecting the ideal recommenders and preparing them so your LORs shine and align with your overall application.



5. Interview Preparation

Seal the deal with detailed interview guides and mock interviews with former M7 admissions interviewers, followed by written feedback. For Wharton/Ross, we will conduct group mock interviews and for HBS we include post interview reflection support.



6. Waitlist Strategy and Post Acceptance Support

Our relationship does not end when you hit submit. Whether you are accepted or waitlisted, Scott will continue his personal support. Find out how and when to reach out to get off the waitlist and receive advice on which school best suits your goals. He will connect you with former clients at your future school as you join the small Personal MBA Coach alumni family and attend Personal MBA Coach alumni networking events.



Bouncing Back from an MBA Rejection

Were you rejected from business school this year? After getting over the initial disappointment, you likely turned your attention to finding out what went wrong. While there are countless reasons for an MBA rejection (this is why we created our ding report service), Personal MBA Coach has detailed five of the most common problems below to help you improve your applications the next time around!

1. Lack of a compelling story

Your MBA applications must stand out. The reader should have an understanding of who you are, what you are passionate about, and why these passions are significant to you. It should be easy to identify how you are unique compared to your peers. If your application essays could have been written by any other candidate in a similar role, it will be difficult for you to stand out to the admissions committee. Successful candidates are memorable! This does not mean you need to save the universe, of course. It all comes down to story and execution.

Defining your personal story is an area that Personal MBA Coach's clients often need the most help with. We work on this extensively with you via our comprehensive packages.

2. Application Inconsistencies

All aspects of your application should tie together. This includes your MBA essays, resume, extracurriculars, and letters of recommendation. The strengths you highlight should match those cited in your recommendations. If your recommenders describe you as a detail-oriented candidate while your essays emphasize your free-spirited nature, the reader will undoubtedly be confused.

Similarly, your activities should align with your passions and expertise, and your weaknesses should be consistent. Any two pieces of your application that do not fit together will raise a red flag about your intentions and sincerity.

Bouncing Back from an MBA Rejection (cont.)

3. Low GPA and/or Test Score

This may be more obvious, but if you do not have a competitive academic record and test score, you may not get into your top choice, no matter how amazing your application. Even though some candidates with lower GPA and test scores may be admitted (and vice versa), you must set reasonable expectations.

As you begin to think about reapplying to business school, consider areas you can improve upon. Can you take classes to develop and demonstrate strong quantitative skills? How can you better prepare for the GMAT/GRE this time around? Personal MBA Coach offers customized tutoring services to help you maximize your score. For those taking the GMAT, our tutors raise clients' GMAT scores 90 points on average. On top of these measures, you may need to cast a wider net. Our clients apply, on average, to 5 to 7 schools, including reach schools and some safer options.

4. An Abundance of Applicants with a Similar Profile

For better or worse, sometimes acceptance comes down to numbers. While Personal MBA Coach helps clients from overrepresented backgrounds develop compelling personal stories that stand out, diversity is important to MBA programs. You cannot fill an entire class with former MBB consultants or investment bankers. This “numbers game” is another reason why we advise candidates to broaden their school lists.

5. Insufficient Leadership Experience

It should come as no surprise that business schools want leaders. While this is particularly crucial for Executive MBA hopefuls, leadership is important for all MBA candidates. Luckily, there are many ways you can demonstrate leadership through work experience and extracurriculars. Leading a team at work is a more obvious example, but taking on informal leadership within a team, stepping up outside the office, and mentoring junior team members are also great ways to demonstrate leadership. As you begin to plan for next year, think about how you can step up your leadership experience AND better articulate it in your essays.



Expanding Your Network for Long-Term Success

It should come as no surprise that networking is a key part of every long-term career strategy. It is also something that many of our clients struggle with. To get you on the right path this year, Personal MBA Coach has some tips on when and how to start networking.

It is never too early to start networking. Whether you are planning to apply to business school later this year or a few years from now, a strong network will position you for success. You should look to build your network in four areas: at work, with alumni/current students from your target schools, with professionals in your preferred field, and with admissions professionals. We have also included one goal for each of these networks to get you started.

1. Network at Work

Find one mentor at work and begin to establish this relationship. Look for someone who knows you well and is more experienced. If the relationship progresses, it can be a source of solid career advice from someone who can identify your strengths and weaknesses. Perhaps this mentor could even write you a letter of recommendation when the time comes.

However, do not force the relationship. Start slowly by asking to schedule a virtual coffee chat (in our current work-from-home environment, many people are anxious to find new ways to connect so this invitation is likely to be well received). Then, ask a lot of questions to see if there is a good fit. Remember, finding a true mentor is a process, so do not get discouraged if it takes time to find the right person.

30-day goal: Schedule one virtual chat.

2. Network with students or alums at your target business schools

Speaking to current students or alumni at your schools of choice is an important part of the process. Many candidates ask me how many people they should reach out to. We advise two or three per school. Having a laundry list of current students or alums that you have reached out to is



Expanding Your Network for Long-Term Success (cont.)

not necessary and including it anywhere in your application would be overkill for most schools. Instead, try to have a few meaningful conversations. Alumni directories from your undergraduate university or current/former firm and your personal network are great places to start.

30-day goal: Locate and email two current students or alums about their business school experiences.

3. Network with professionals in your target field

Setting up these relationships now is a great way to get a head start for recruiting time. Start small by finding someone who has your dream role and invite them for a virtual coffee. Tell them you want to learn more about their job and how they got there. Most people love to talk about themselves and are happy to help aspiring professionals. Avoid being too pushy, however. Meet at a time convenient for the professional and do not ask for anything. This is not the time to ask for help getting a job or for a recommendation. Instead, let the relationship grow organically.

Speaking with strangers can be intimidating, but do not let this stop you. Meeting with alumni from your alma mater or friends of friends/family can be an easier place to begin.

30-day goal: Reach out to one professional and ask for a virtual meeting.

4. Network with admissions professionals

While there are many ways to connect with your target schools, virtual MBA fairs are a great way to start. You can meet multiple admissions professionals in one place and ask any burning questions. You will also get tips from the presentations and other students. Plus, it is easy and low risk.

30-day goal: Locate one event in your area and register/put it on your calendar.

Remember, networking is a skill and one you will perfect throughout your career. But you don't have to do it all at once. So, start small and take one step today!



Making Your Career Work Harder For You

Without changing jobs, there are some steps you can and should be taking now to ensure that when you sit down to draft your MBA essays and prepare for your interviews you have plenty to talk about.

1. Be honest about your desires

That may seem simple, but many of us are afraid to be straightforward about our ambitions at work. Whether or not you can be transparent now about your MBA aspirations, let your manager in on your long-term goals. Tell them what skills you hope to master. If there is an experience at work you want to have, ask for it.

Many managers will be more than happy to find projects to help you close existing gaps or develop new expertise.

2. Take on extra work

Yes, we really said this. Now is the time to ask for extra projects. Look specifically for the ones that can fill experience gaps. Even if you have already let your manager know about the skills you are looking to perfect, do not rely only on them to find assignments that fit your needs.

In an ideal world, you would work just on your dream projects, but we know that is not possible. By identifying your own additional projects, you will get more chances to build the skills you desire.

3. Get involved at the office

Internal projects are a great way to beef up your leadership experience, and almost every company has an internal initiative that requires help. Offer to plan the next virtual team-building activity, set up a training or speaker series, or lead recruiting efforts. If nothing exists, create it yourself. Starting a new program at work will score you bonus points with your colleagues and give you plenty to share with admissions committees on your applications.



Making Your Career Work Harder For You (cont.)

4. Look for mentoring opportunities

Even if you have not had the chance to manage your own team, you can still begin to perfect your management skills. Take a new hire or even an intern under your wing and show them the ropes. If you can be a formal mentor, great! But if such an opportunity does not exist, an informal mentor relationship still supplements your leadership experience.

5. Get your own mentor

Find someone you admire or connect with at work and invite them to a virtual coffee or happy hour call. Ask about their career. See if they are willing to give you general career guidance.

At this stage, you do not want to ask for anything specific. Instead, start to build a relationship. Over time, you might be lucky enough to develop an office champion or a future recommender. Regardless, getting advice from someone more senior can always help.

Articulating Your Personal Story

Personal MBA Coach started with the premise that everyone has a personal story and that the most successful candidates craft unique and compelling stories. This continues to be a cornerstone of our support and the area where we find our clients need the most guidance.

We advise candidates to start thinking about their stories months, if not years, in advance! The good news? Everyone has a personal story; you may just need help figuring out how to make it shine.

Keep in Mind: This is not the time to tell the admissions committee what you think they want to hear. As an Association of International Graduate Admissions Consultants (AIGAC) Board Member and Committee Chair, Personal MBA Coach is fortunate to attend an annual conference with Admissions Directors from 25+ top MBA programs including HBS, Stanford, Booth, Kellogg, Wharton, Ross, Sloan, Yale, Darden, Fuqua and many others. Authenticity is often a key point of discussion.



Articulating Your Personal Story (cont.)

The most successful candidates do not always write essays about overcoming a horrible tragedy or solving world hunger. Sure, if you have done something impressive or triumphed over a difficult situation, include it—if it fits with your story. But you also can write compelling essays without this.

So, what should you include in your personal story? This answer will differ for every candidate but across the board I can tell you, **NOT EVERYTHING!** No one wants to read a long explanation detailing a chronological flow of your life. Instead, you must be focused, logical and unique. When Personal MBA Coach meets with a new candidate, we start by asking a lot of questions. We talk about everything the applicant has done, often starting from childhood. You should start with a similar process.

- Make a list of everything you have done in your life and take the time to write it all down. Think carefully about the decisions you have made, activities you enjoy and, most importantly, why you made those choices.
- Think about your future goals. What do you want to do after you earn your MBA and, again, why?
- Next, look for a theme! What single idea connects items from #1 and #2? This is the hard part, so give it time.

Here is an example: One candidate's passion for education began as a result of a family tragedy. Instead of centering his essay on his misfortunes, however, he barely mentioned the tragedy in his essay as, frankly, it did not say anything about him.

He focused instead on what he did in the face of this situation. He shared his penchant for education starting at a young age. His extracurricular activities, past career choices, and future aspirations laddered up to this. Sharing these highlights led to a compelling statement. His application strength did not come from his career successes but from how his essays were focused, his personal and professional moves were logical, and his career path was unique. This candidate was accepted to an M7 school.

Business schools want to know how you will make the business world (and the world more broadly) better when you leave their campuses. They also want to know how you will leave a unique mark. Past behavior is the best predictor of the future, and we all have left a mark in one way or another. No candidate is ever perfect; instead, we chart the best course we can with the hand we are dealt. The best personal statements show this.



How to Think About Your MBA Goals

"What do you want to do after you graduate from business school?"

This seemingly simple question can actually be one of the most difficult to answer eloquently. With a few exceptions, articulating your post-MBA goals is a crucial part of the application process. Most business schools want to know how you will make the world better when you leave their campuses and what your unique mark will be. As you begin to reflect upon and articulate your goals, consider these six key pieces of advice.

1. Be decisive

While no one will hold you to what you write in your MBA application essays, you should generally be decisive when discussing your MBA career goals. Pick a set of goals and run with them. Candidates should not expect to "find themselves" in business school, though in reality this often happens.

If you do have multiple ideas in mind, some schools are comfortable with understanding your thought process and decision-making criteria (Personal MBA Coach discusses this with our clients on a case-by-case basis). Most schools, however, will want candidates to have clear plans laid out before they arrive on campus.

2. Be consistent

Your goals should be YOUR goals. This means they should not vary from one MBA application to the next. Candidates can lose credibility by changing their goals to please the audience, and it can be difficult to articulate true passion (see point 6) for goals that are not genuine.

3. Your career goals should be ambitious, yet attainable

As valuable as an MBA is, you likely will not be running a department on the first day out of business school. Do your research and figure out what positions are realistic for you. You can start by looking at career postings from companies in your target industry. Pay close attention to required industry experience, particularly if you are considering changing careers. This will give you a good idea of what role you might be qualified for immediately post-MBA and will allow you to specifically note which position you hope to secure after school.



How to Think About Your MBA Goals (cont.)

4. Consider a logical career pathway

With your attainable role as a launching point, set out an ambitious path and long-term goal for yourself. This long-term goal is your opportunity to dream big and show how you will drive change in your future industry. It should flow logically (though not necessarily obviously) from your short-term goals.

While you do not need to rise through the standard career ranks at your target firm (though it is perfectly fine if this is your goal), your career path should make sense to the reader and allow you to leverage the skills you will develop during your MBA and throughout your early post-MBA career.

5. Share how you will be unique

Even if you have a very common career goal, such as becoming a management consultant or an investment banker, you want to share how you will make your unique mark. Perhaps you intend to develop a specific area of expertise within the consulting industry or focus on a certain sector. You must go beyond simply stating what position you are hoping to achieve. Think deeper and share your vision for improving your chosen field or company.

6. Articulate Passion

A strong career goals essay will communicate passion for your future field. This does not mean that you need a long explanation for why you selected this career path. That said, as you provide the context and discuss your future, it should be clear to the reader that you are excited about this profession. Sharing what drove you to this field and identifying current innovations that particularly intrigue you are ways to show such passion.



Tackling the MBA Application Reapplicant Essay

Rejected from your dream business school? While rejection can be discouraging, do not give up: Personal MBA Coach successfully guides reapplicants every year.

And do not worry – even though your previous application(s) may be kept on file to assess your growth, reapplicants receive unbiased evaluations just like everyone else. As Harvard Business School asserts, “reapplicants do not have an advantage or disadvantage in comparison to other applicants.”

Business schools do, however, require candidates to wait until the following year to reapply, providing ample time for you to take a step back and revise your application.

Each school handles reapplicants slightly differently. For some schools, the reapplicant application is unchanged. For others, along with changing application components, you may also have to answer a reapplicant essay question. Reapplicant essays help the admissions committee understand how you have evolved personally and professionally between the time of your rejection and your reapplication.

Regardless of the particular question, your general strategy should be the same. Here are four key tips for tackling reapplicant essays:

1. Answer the question – directly!

While it can be tempting to spend the whole essay professing your love for a given business school, focus on what the question asks! Showing passion and interest is important but desire to attend is only one driver of success. Instead, tell the schools about your growth or goals.

2. Be specific

Most reapplicant essays ask candidates to demonstrate growth. Remember, past actions are the best indicator of future performance, so be sure to share very specific examples of growth.

3. Consider both personal and professional growth

While of course it would be great if you were promoted since your last application, this is not essential. You can grow professionally within an existing

personalmbacoach.com



Tackling the MBA Application Reapplicant Essay (cont.)

role by taking on additional projects or changing your approach. In addition, for some candidates, personal growth can be more important than professional growth. Consider weaknesses you have addressed or extracurricular roles you have taken on.

4. Do not dwell on the previous application

Sometimes reapplicant essays focus on what they think went wrong during the previous application. This is not the most effective strategy. Instead of apologizing, focus on the positive. Convince your readers how you are a better applicant, using the tips noted above.

How to Ace the MBA Interview

The MBA interview is an incredibly important component of the application process, and it is critical that you put in the work to prepare for this experience. In addition to practicing, you will want to research each school in detail, know your resume from top to bottom and be ready to clearly explain your goals and why you want an MBA.

Wondering where to begin? Personal MBA Coach is well versed in the intricacies of the MBA interview process. Below, get some of our top tips to ensure that you are ready to ace your interview(s).

Should you want additional support, our team of former M7 interviewers conduct mock interviews every year for all of the top business schools. **Clients who use our MBA interview preparation services see a 70-85% conversion rate!**

1. Prepare your stories

Do your research to determine the questions that each business school most commonly asks. This will give you the opportunity to start preparing your stories ahead of time. We find that bulleting is most effective here. This way you can note the skills you want to highlight and will be prepared to pivot your stories as needed.



How to Ace the MBA Interview (cont.)

You should be able to adapt four to five stories to cover most top questions. For instance, a story about stepping up in the office could be applicable to a question about a time you had an innovative idea OR a question about a time you helped a coworker. Try to assign your stories to possible questions in advance.

Avoid spending too much time setting up the scene. Instead, stick to the main steps you took and how you excelled in each example. It can be helpful to break your stories down into situations, actions, and results.

2. Research each school's interview process

Each business school treats the interview process differently. While Wharton's group interview is the most distinct, tactics for individual interviews vary as well.

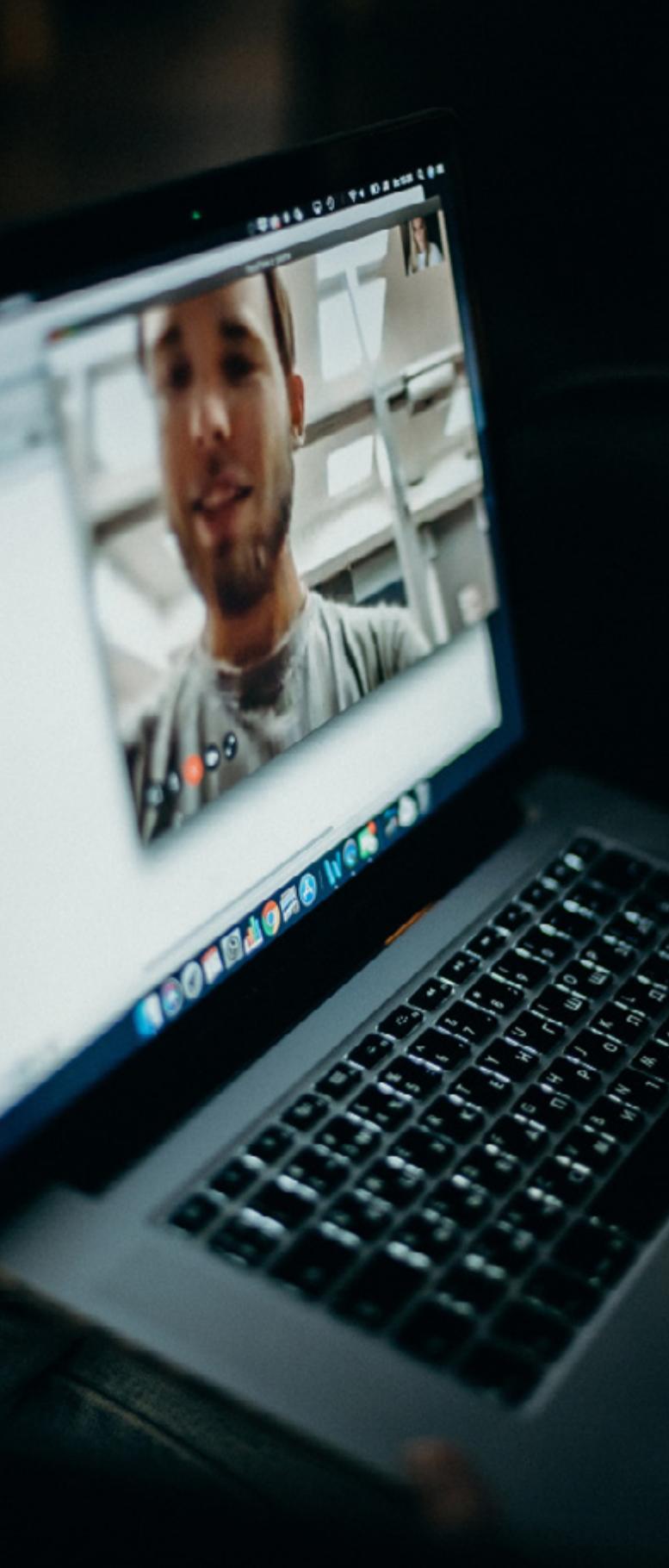
Though fit is always important, some schools will direct their focus more to certain components of your application and background. Through Personal MBA Coach's interview preparation services, we will provide you with a school-specific guide to help highlight some of these differences. This guide not only contains the latest questions that will be asked but also the kinds of answers schools are looking for and the best way to articulate them.

3. Demonstrate school-specific interests and knowledge

Knowing, and being able to explain, why you want to attend a particular program is a pivotal part of the MBA interview. Be sure that you are prepared to talk about the aspects that drew you to each school, particularly in terms of the program's culture. You should demonstrate a clear understanding of the program and be ready to discuss how you will add value on campus. Business schools want to know how you will make your unique mark!

4. Clearly articulate your MBA goals

Be prepared to clearly and concisely explain what you hope to accomplish in your career, why you are interested in this path, and how you will be successful. Prepare specific examples that you can use to back up these plans.



How to Ace the MBA Interview (cont.)

As you share these goals, make sure you are expressing excitement. Since you do not have the nonverbal cues that you would have in person, you want to make sure you are enthusiastic during virtual interviews.

5. Treat the virtual MBA interview like an in-person interview

Although a virtual interview has its differences, much remains the same. Dress like you are going to an in-person interview and, of course, be on time! Try to ask only positive questions and enjoy the process. Remember that your background got you this far, so be yourself and relax.

As with any interview, practice and planning are key! Personal MBA Coach has former M7 interviewers lined up to do mock interviews with you. Plus, mock interview support is included with all Personal MBA Coach Comprehensive Packages.

Our clients have told us this is one of the most worthwhile steps they have taken to enhance their candidacy, helping them build the confidence they need to excel in the interview.

I utilized the mock interviews, which were definitely a game-changer for me. Post mock interview feedback was again constructive and candid and was a great way to practice that I wouldn't have done on my own. Mocks gave me a lot more confidence going into the real interviews. – Chicago Booth Admit

I can say honestly that without this interview preparation, I would not have been ready for the depth of questions I was asked in my actual interview. This package was a critical part of my preparation and allowed me to go into the interview feeling confident and prepared. – MIT Sloan Admit

One of Scott's associates who is an ex-Kellogg interviewer took my mock interview. Her feedback on the mock interview was very helpful and she gave detailed question-by-question feedback. She also coached me on how to answer the questions. My confidence post the mock interview increased tremendously. – Dartmouth Tuck Admit



Fabulous! As a non-native English speaker, I was very worried about applications. Besides putting me at ease, Scott helped me in my crazy dream to attend a top US business school. I didn't know it was possible to get so close to someone personally who is on the other side of the world (11.5 hr time difference), but Scott made it work and got me into Stanford. Every single detail is scrutinized by Scott, even the thank-you letters after the interview. My only regret is not listening to him when he told me to apply to fewer schools. I applied to 7 schools and got into 6 of them. Don't even think about using anybody else. Call Scott before he books up, you won't regret it.

— STANFORD GSB



I started the application process with Scott between the spring & summertime before the application process and had a fantastic experience. We had established reasonable timelines, discussed in-depth different strategies for different colleges, and reviewed the application multiple times to convey the message across appropriately. This would have been a herculean task alone but Scott made the process seamless. I really appreciate the time and effort he and his team put to make my MBA goals a reality.

— WHARTON



Applying to MBA programs can be a daunting task. Between writing the essays, preparing for interviews, and finally deciding on a school that fits, the entire experience is rigorous. Scott prepared me for every single step of the process. He guided me on targeting the programs I was interested in, helped me brainstorm and compose the essays, and trained me for the interviews. I am happy to say I was accepted to every single school I applied to; UCLA Anderson, NYU Stern, Georgetown McDonough, and USC Marshall. I would not have been able to accomplish this without Scott's guidance. His experience helped me complete entire applications in a matter of days with minimal stress. I highly recommend Scott if you are serious about being accepted to the best MBA programs available to you.

— UCLA ANDERSON

LET PERSONAL MBA COACH HELP

Helping clients since 2008, our boutique one-on-one approach has led to a 96% success rate!

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

