

**personal
MBA
Coach.**

**Personal MBA Coach's
Guide to School Selection
& MBA Rankings**

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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, 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 15 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.



Personal MBA Coach's 6 Tips for School Selection

Personal MBA Coach is repeatedly asked, "Which schools should I apply to?" Picking the right business school is a complicated and personal process and a key component of our services. However, here are 6 tips to help you select business school programs.

Want more information on what sets the leading business schools apart? Check out Personal MBA Coach's school-specific site pages to get insight on how to navigate the application process and learn more about top MBA programs.

1) Begin with the statistics

Statistics such as average GPA, GMAT/GRE/EA, years of experience, acceptance rate and starting salary will give you some good benchmarking data and a better idea of which schools could be potential options for you.

Of course, these statistics are not the only factor and the whole package matters, but these provide a strong initial guide.

2) Go broad

Our average candidate applies to 5 to 8 schools. Make sure that you have some "reach" schools, some "more likely" schools and some "safer" schools, especially if you want to ensure an acceptance this year.

All business schools look to fill their classes with diverse candidates, and you cannot always predict which school might need someone who fits your profile. Adding a broad range of schools helps to balance this out.

3) Pay attention to culture

Culture is more than a buzzword, and it will be key to having a fulfilling MBA experience and developing lasting long-term relationships. Do you want a small close-knit campus where everyone lives and studies nearby? Are learning teams important to you? Do you consider the entire city your campus? As you talk to alums and visit schools, these are just some of the many questions you should ask yourself while narrowing your list.



Personal MBA Coach's 6 Tips for School Selection (cont.)

4) Look carefully at the curriculum and program offerings

Think about your post-MBA goals carefully and pay attention to whose offerings are the best fit. For example, is a flexible curriculum important to you? Do you thrive with more hands-on opportunities? Is the ability to study internationally important? All schools vary in the degree to which they meet these needs so do your research. Not only will this help you determine which programs will be the best fit, but this research will be critical as you target your application.

5) Explore areas of excellence

Similarly, explore emerging areas of research at each campus. This is particularly important if you have a specific focus. Finding a professor who is working on a project in your area of interest could be a key driver of both your experience on campus and your chances of success during the application process.

6) Consider location

Sure, you can live anywhere after graduation, and companies from all over the world will travel to recruit. But for obvious reasons, it is much easier to recruit at schools that are closer geographically. This does not mean you should only consider city schools. Look at which schools your target companies visit for recruitment, what local opportunities are available to candidates and which speakers come to campus.



Evaluating Different Types of MBA Programs

Getting an MBA does not necessarily require taking two years off from work. While the traditional two-year program might be the best fit for many MBA hopefuls, there are an increasing number of alternatives you can consider based on your personal circumstances and goals.

All programs teach the same general curriculum, often by some of the same faculty. However, full-time MBA programs tend to have more students who are looking for a career change and are interested in a more intense program with a heavy networking and social component in addition to the academics. Of course, many part-time MBA graduates also go on to seek new employment and/or change industries completely.

Executive MBA programs tend to cater to students with more and more varied years of experience compared to the traditional 3 to 7 years for most full-time MBA programs.

Wondering if one of these nontraditional options might be right for you? Below, Personal MBA Coach shares some of the factors tipping the scale for each program.

What Is an Executive MBA Program?

Executive MBA programs are geared to higher-level executives and members of senior management. Entrepreneurs who run their own businesses also can fit well into EMBA classes. EMBA students tend to have more leadership experience than part-time MBA students, though the required experience varies greatly by school. Personal MBA Coach sends applicants with as little as 5 to 6 years of experience to some EMBA programs, whereas others are looking for 10 to 12+ years of work experience. At MIT Sloan, for example, applicants have an average of more than 17 years of experience. Successful candidates also often have international leadership expertise, though this is not required for admission.

EMBA students are generally not looking to change roles immediately, although recruiting is certainly possible from the program. Much of the recruiting happens through internal networking, often with fellow EMBA classmates.

Want to learn more about top EMBA programs and which one might be right for you? Take a look at our [EMBA Programs eBook](#).

If you are interested in an EMBA program, learn how Personal MBA Coach can help you achieve your goals with our [EMBA Packages](#).

Evaluating Different Types of MBA Programs (cont.)

What Is a Part-Time MBA Program?

Part-time MBA programs are geared to professionals in the early or middle part of their careers who want the experience of an MBA without taking time off work. Students usually fall below 37 years old and are trending younger, with the majority falling between 27 and 32.

By enrolling in a part-time program, students are able to reduce the overall cost of an MBA because, in most cases, they do not have to forego two years of salary to earn the degree.

Part-time MBA classes are held at night, over the weekend, or both, and they can be completed in different amounts of time depending on the school, the schedule the student wants to have, and how many courses a student decides to enroll in each year.

This program can take longer and may offer fewer recruiting opportunities, but recruiting still happens both on campus and through individual networks. One of Personal MBA Coach's first part-time clients went to NYU Stern many years ago and has a leading job at Google today!

A part-time MBA can be financially and logistically attractive, especially if a short-term career switch is not your key motivator for pursuing an MBA.

What Is a One-Year MBA Program?

For those who want to dedicate themselves full time to their studies but do not need an internship, a one-year MBA may be an attractive option. If you are not switching industries or roles, the standard recruiting process may not be necessary.

One-year MBA programs provide fewer networking, recruiting and community-building opportunities. However, for those candidates who can't afford to take two full years out of the workforce, they can be a good choice.

What Is a Deferred MBA Program?

A growing number of top business schools offer deferred MBA programs in which current undergraduate students can apply during their senior year, with the intention to work after graduation for a couple of years before enrolling in an MBA program. This gives students the chance to lock in a top MBA program before entering the workforce.



Evaluating Different Types of MBA Programs (cont.)

Harvard Business School's 2+2 and Stanford's Deferred Enrollment Program are some of the best-known deferred MBA programs; students accepted into these programs work for two years before starting on campus. Taking a slightly different approach, Yale SOM's Silver Scholars Program allows students to study in an MBA program immediately upon finishing college. After one year of MBA studies, students join the workforce for a year before returning to Yale SOM for the third year to finish their MBA.

Kellogg, Berkeley Haas, Wharton, Columbia Business School, Chicago Booth, UVA Darden, and MIT Sloan are other top business schools that offer deferred MBA programs. Download our [Deferred MBA eBook](#) to learn more about these programs. With later spring deadlines, candidates finish the undergraduate recruiting process and secure full-time job placement (hopefully) before applying.

Successful applicants have already demonstrated considerable leadership through internships and extracurricular activities, either on or off campus. They also have a strong sense of their career goals, though this often becomes clear only after working with a consultant on the applications. While these programs are competitive, they are a good option for high achievers looking to get a jump on the MBA application process.

Unsure which is right for you? Personal MBA Coach advises candidates through all types of business school applications and can guide you on which is the best fit for your unique situation. Sometimes, candidates will apply to more than one program type and select the one with the most attractive package. We can talk through whether this is an ideal strategy for you.

Learn more about how Personal MBA Coach can help you achieve your goals with our [deferred MBA admissions consulting packages](#).



A Guide to MBA Rankings

As you develop your school list, you might be wondering how much emphasis you should place on business school rankings. These rankings are often a subject of much debate, especially since there are many and they differ widely. *US News and World Report* and *Bloomberg Business Week* are just two available. Rankings drive a lot of revenue for publishers because they are such an important tool for business school applicants.

However, please keep in mind they are just one of many tools and not the be-all and end-all! Below is Personal MBA Coach's view on these guides: why they matter, how to use them and some important things to keep in mind!

Here are 5 steps you should be taking today!

Why MBA Rankings Matter:

By applying to business school, you are making a large investment in your future, with the hopes of improving your job prospects post-MBA. Naturally, many prospective employers and investors will look closely at where you went to school to evaluate your skills and potential. Right or wrong, these rankings can influence a school's perceived education quality.

How to Use MBA Rankings:

Get the lay of the land: MBA rankings provide a great overview of the business school landscape: what schools exist, where they are located and how they generally stack up against each other.

Gather statistics: Statistics such as average GPA, GMAT (in some cases GRE), years of experience, acceptance rate and starting salary provide good benchmarking data. Use the rankings to get a high-level idea of which schools could be potential options for you. However, keep in mind these statistics are averages across all students. Schools will evaluate your entire profile when deciding whether to accept you.

Find out unique areas of expertise: There is more than one "top" school. While you will get a strong general business education from many programs, schools have specific areas of strength. Rankings, particularly specialty rankings, can show you which schools send more students to investment banking or produce successful entrepreneurs, for example.



A Guide to MBA Rankings (cont.)

Keep In Mind:

Average ranking over time is much more important than year to year fluctuation. When you are courting that investor 10 years from now, she will not know what your school was ranked when you applied; pay closer attention to general trends.

While there are some schools that will be at the top of nearly all rankings, every ranking scale will give different results. As with historical data, the general trend is most important.

Rankings are not the only way you should evaluate a school. There are many other factors to consider when selecting your ideal schools including location and which companies recruit on campus. Attending a school near your target firms or one where your dream company recruits on campus could be more important to your career success than the school's ranking.

Personal MBA Coach is a full-service admissions consulting firm that can help you design your overall strategy. School selection is a crucial part of the process!



US News Historical MBA Rankings: Have the Top MBA Programs Changed?

If you are in the process of selecting which top MBA program you want to apply to, you are facing a mountain of information to vet—rankings included. “Which school do they say is the best?”

While rankings may not entirely capture what makes a school a good fit for you (Personal MBA Coach offers our clients complete school selection advice through our comprehensive packages) they are a commonly used tool during the school selection process. To help guide you, here is a long-view take on the rankings for you to consider.

Keep In Mind:

Although much ado is made each year when the *US News and World Report* rankings come out, pitting one prominent business school in the ring over another, the differences are much more subtle than they are made out to be.

A look at the *US News* historical MBA rankings over the past decade demonstrates that the play between the top ten schools is more often one of musical chairs than real change. The data is clustered so closely that minor changes can cause shifts that look like upsets but are really more like small nudges.

The same three schools have swapped turns on the business school rankings throne for years: Stanford GSB, Harvard Business School, and Wharton. Similarly, the same 14 or 15 have occupied the top 15 spots for at least as long.

Why Is This?

The *US News and World Report* rankings are based, in weighted values, on quality assessments from academic peers and business recruiters; employment rates and starting salaries; and student selectivity, including acceptance rates and GMAT/GRE scores.

The differences from year to year between the top 10 schools in those metrics often vary a tenth of a percentage point. In addition, some of the measurements may hinge on factors that have nothing to do with performance or quality of education and more on uncontrollable factors such as overall employment rates or the state of the universe.



US News Historical MBA Rankings: Have the Top MBA Programs Changed? (cont.)

General economic shifts affect salary scales; unemployment or recessions can cause more people to apply to business schools, thus lowering the acceptance rates and propelling schools upward in the rankings (though nothing may have changed in the criteria for acceptance). As a result, schools swap places easily but sometimes meaninglessly. Sometimes one school falls merely because another rises.

In the rankings published just last month, Booth was able to rise to a #1 tie with Wharton, thanks to better job placement stats (by 3-4 percentage points) over other schools. But differences of a few thousand dollars in salary at job placement time surely do not equate to measurable differences in quality of education.

Stanford GSB, for example, has been penalized at times for having job placement numbers that are lower than its peers; the school points out that many of its MBA graduates are not looking for jobs because they are busy founding startups.

Also, startups often pay with stock options, which are not reflected in starting salaries—for which Stanford has also been dinged. Yale SOM has also been dinged for lower salaries at placement, but the school points out that many graduates go into nonprofit or civic work that is paid less, a work choice guided by a philosophy that attracts many applicants to Yale SOM.

Musical chairs continue in the historical rankings all the way down the line of the top 15. Booth, MIT, and Kellogg have been locked in their own battle for, generally, the second three seats, a tradition broken by Booth's rise to #1 (and sometimes to #2 and #3). How long will that last?

CBS has generally moved between #7 and #8; Berkeley Haas has consistently stayed at seventh place, with rare exceptions. Michigan Ross, Dartmouth Tuck, NYU Stern, UVA Darden, and Duke Fuqua have occupied the next tier companionably, jostling between spots of 8-14.

But there have been fluke drops or rises: Stern fell to #20 in the *US News* rankings published in 2015 because the school did not report in one data category. In turn that helped other schools rise.



US News Historical MBA Rankings: Have the Top MBA Programs Changed? (cont.)

Overall, this is the worst and the best that the top 15 schools have ranked since 2010 (listed in this year's ranking order):

School	Highest	Lowest
Chicago Booth	#1	#6
Wharton	#1	#5
Kellogg	#3	#6
Stanford GSB	#1	#4
Harvard Business School	#1	#6
MIT Sloan	#3	#5
Yale SOM	#7	#13
Columbia Business School	#6	#10
Berkeley Haas	#6	#8
Michigan Ross	#7	#13
Dartmouth Tuck	#10	#12
Duke Fuqua	#10	#14
NYU Stern	#9	#20
UVA Darden	#10	#13

So, What Does it All Mean?

The relative stability in the data and the positioning of the schools means that, essentially, wherever you go in the top 15, you are going to get a great MBA education. Also worth considering are the schools that have been making steady inroads up the rankings: Johnson, Marshall, Anderson and others.

As we like to advise, other factors should be foundational in your decision-making process: specific academic programs or galvanizing institutes that focus on a particular interest of yours; geographic preference; or special connections to a business category or type of activity (for example, Stanford is well known for incubating startup founders, and Yale SOM has a long history of promoting work in nonprofits). A school "feel" may sway your decision.



US News Historical MBA Rankings: Have the Top MBA Programs Changed? (cont.)

To Conclude:

Do not let a single ranking determine your choices—and your life. We advise you to apply to as many schools as needed to give you a reasonable chance of admission, a reasonable chance of a good fit, and a great chance of getting a stellar education wherever you end up. That's why Personal MBA Coach's average client applies to six schools or more.



Personal MBA Coach's Take on the *US News* Best Business Schools 2023

The *US News* Top Business Schools report for 2023 has just been released, with some interesting changes in this year's rankings.

School	2023 rank	2022 rank	2021 rank
Chicago Booth	#1 (tie)	#3	#3 (tie)
Wharton	#1 (tie)	#2	#1 (tie)
Kellogg	#3 (tie)	#4	#3 (tie)
Stanford GSB	#3 (tie)	#1	#1 (tie)
Harvard Business School	#5 (tie)	#5 (tie)	#6
MIT Sloan	#5 (tie)	#5 (tie)	#5
Yale SOM	#7	#9	#9
Columbia Business School	#8 (tie)	#7 (tie)	#8
Berkeley Haas	#8 (tie)	#7 (tie)	#7
Michigan Ross	#10	#13 (tie)	#12 (tie)
Dartmouth Tuck	#11	#10 (tie)	#12 (tie)
Duke Fuqua	#12 (tie)	#12	#12 (tie)
NYU Stern	#12 (tie)	#10 (tie)	#10
UVA Darden	#14	#13 (tie)	#11
Cornell Johnson	#15	#15	#15
CMU Tepper	#16	#16 (tie)	#17 (tie)
UCLA Anderson	#17	#18 (tie)	#16
Texas McCombs	#18	#18 (tie)	#18
UNC Kenan-Flagler	#19 (tie)	#20	#20 (tie with Foster)

Wharton has regained the #1 spot (which it held in the 2021 rankings but lost in 2022), sharing this top honor with Chicago Booth. This is a jump from 3rd place for Chicago Booth. Wharton reported an acceptance rate of 18.2%, with an average GMAT score of 733. Chicago Booth's average GMAT score was 732 while its acceptance rate was 22.6%.

Stanford GSB fell in this year's *US News* Best Business Schools rankings to #3 (it held the #1 spot for the previous two years), tying with Northwestern Kellogg. This was a jump for Kellogg, which had fallen from 3rd to 4th in the 2022 *US News* Rankings.



Personal MBA Coach's Take on the *US News* Best Business Schools 2023 (cont.)

Despite the drop to #3, Stanford GSB, with a much smaller student body, reported the highest average GMAT score of the top 10, at 738, while accepting only 6.2% of its applicants. Kellogg's average GMAT score was 727, and the school reported a 26% acceptance rate.

Harvard Business School and MIT Sloan School of Management were once again tied for 5th place. HBS reported a 12.5% acceptance rate and an average GMAT score of 727. HBS also reported an average GRE score of 163 for both GRE quant and GRE verbal. MIT Sloan's acceptance rate was just slightly lower, at 12.1%, while the average GMAT score was 728.

Yale School of Management jumped to #7 this year, up two spots from #9 in 2022. This is the best-ever finish for Yale SOM, which reported an acceptance rate of 23.6% and an average GMAT score of 726.

Columbia Business School and Berkeley Haas tied for #8, a one-place drop for both schools. University of Michigan's Ross School of Business rounded out the top 10, a sizeable jump from #13 in 2022.

How to Use MBA Rankings

Personal MBA Coach would like to remind you that changes over time are more significant than year-to-year and guide-to-guide fluctuations. The constant shuffling at the top and the rotation in and out of the top 10 demonstrates the growing competition among elite business schools. While the M7 business schools receive a lot of attention, Personal MBA Coach urges our clients to consider a broad range of schools. Our average client applies to five to seven programs to maximize their chances of acceptance.

Beyond MBA rankings, in choosing a business school one should consider factors including a school's location, culture, academic programming, areas of specialization, and job placement rate. Similarly, culture and teaching style vary across schools. To learn more, we encourage you to review Personal MBA Coach's new [school guides](#).

Finally, available financing also should be a key consideration since you may be able to secure more funding from one school versus another. Last cycle, Personal MBA Coach's clients earned \$6.5M in scholarships. Depending on your personal circumstances, you might be inclined to select a school with a more favorable financial package regardless of ranking. Some M7 schools are very generous with scholarships while others award them much more sparingly.



Evaluating the 2023 *US News* Best Part-Time MBA Programs

The *US News* Best Part-Time MBA Programs report for 2023 has just been released. Unlike the full time rankings, there was no shuffling among the top 5 part-time MBA programs.

Top part-time MBA programs are ideal for working professionals who want the benefit of an MBA without taking off time from work. Part-time MBA programs are also financially and logistically appealing, especially for those who are not looking to change careers immediately post-MBA.

Rank	2023	Rank	2022
1	Chicago Booth	1	Chicago Booth
2	Berkeley Haas	2	Berkeley Haas
3	Kellogg	3	Kellogg
4	NYU Stern	4	NYU Stern
5	UCLA Anderson	5	UCLA Anderson
6	CMU Tepper	6	Michigan Ross
7	Michigan Ross	7	CMU Tepper
8	Texas McCombs	7	Texas McCombs
9	USC Marshall	9	USC Marshall
10	Washington Foster	10	Indiana Kelley
11	Emory Goizueta	10	Ohio Fisher
11	Indiana Kelley	10	Minnesota Carlson
11	Ohio Fisher	13	Emory Goizueta
11	Rice Jones	14	Georgetown McDonough
11	Minnesota Carlson	14	Washington Foster
16	Georgia Tech Scheller	14	WashU Olin
17	Georgetown McDonough	17	Georgia Tech Scheller
18	ASU WP Carey	17	Rice Jones
19	Santa Clara Leavey	19	Case Western Weatherhead
19	UT Dallas Jindal	20	Santa Clara Leavey

This year, Chicago Booth has regained its #1 position as the best part-time MBA program, followed by Berkeley Haas at #2. These 1st and 2nd place rankings have remained quite consistent over the past few years. In fact, this is the fourth year in a row that Booth and Haas have earned these placements. Booth reported an average GMAT score of 680 for its part-time program while Haas's part-time program had an average GMAT score of 705.



Evaluating the 2023 *US News* Best Part-Time MBA Programs (cont.)

Kellogg, NYU Stern, and UCLA Anderson's *US News* rankings have also remained the same this year. Kellogg once again secured 3rd place, followed by NYU Stern in 4th and UCLA Anderson in 5th. GMAT scores for these three part-time programs were 680, 676, and 669, respectively.

While the top five part-time programs saw no movement, there has been a bit of shuffling farther down the list. CMU Tepper has risen steadily, now taking 6th place (an increase from 7th in 2021 and 8th in 2020). Michigan Ross, on the other hand, dropped from 6th to 7th. This is a notable change, given that the school had held 6th place for the past 4 years.

Texas McCombs also fell slightly from #7 to #8. USC Marshall and Washington Foster rounded out the top 10 part-time programs. This was the second year that USC Marshall secured 9th place, whereas Washington Foster's position as #10 is a significant jump from its previous ranking as #14.

This year's top part-time MBA program rankings includes a 5-way tie for 11th place. Emory Goizueta, Indiana Kelley, Ohio Fisher, Rice Jones, and Minnesota Carlson all share this position.

Georgia Tech Scheller, Georgetown McDonough, ASU WP Carey, Santa Clara Leavey, and UT Dallas Jindal closed out the top 20, in that order, with a tie between the final two schools.



Personal MBA Coach's Take on the 2022 *Financial Times* MBA Rankings

The *Financial Times* recently released its 2022 MBA rankings. Unlike last year's *Financial Times* MBA rankings, which international business schools dominated, U.S. schools rose to the top this year. This shift is a reminder to pay attention to a school's placement over the years, as rankings are always changing.

While Wharton was among the business schools that chose not to compete in last year's *Financial Times* MBA rankings, the school returned to assume the top position in this year's rankings. Following close behind, Columbia Business School took the second spot and Harvard Business School took the third. Like Wharton, these two schools did not participate in last year's rankings.

Given the return of these top schools to the rankings, INSEAD dropped from first place to #4. In a minor change, Kellogg moved up slightly from #6 to #5. Stanford, which also did not compete last year, took #7. Chicago Booth and London Business School finished #8 and #9, respectively.

Yale SOM closed out the top 10 in the *Financial Times* MBA rankings. While there are numerous strong programs outside of the U.S., 8 of the top 10 programs this year are U.S.-based.

Part of this focus on U.S. business schools could be attributed to the high salary reports for U.S. MBA graduates. Additionally, international enrollment at U.S. schools is on the rise after these numbers took a large hit during the pandemic. Both trends may have contributed to the rise of U.S. programs in the latest *Financial Times* MBA rankings.

While these rankings can help MBA hopefuls build their target school lists, Personal MBA Coach likes to remind candidates that rankings are not the be-all and end-all. Below, we have shared some of our top tips to keep in mind as you review MBA rankings.

Need help determining which programs are right for you? Program selection is included in our Comprehensive Packages!

1) Look at MBA rankings to get an overview of the business school landscape.

If you are in the early stages of your MBA application journey, rankings can be useful to get a general lay of the land. Use these rankings to see what schools are out there, where they are located, and how they compare to one another.



Personal MBA Coach's Take on the 2022 *Financial Times* MBA Rankings (cont.)

2) Review statistics as an initial guide.

Statistics including acceptance rate, average undergraduate GPA, and average test scores of enrolled students will give you some strong benchmarking information. That said, these numbers should only be used as an initial guide since the whole applicant package is far more important.

Plenty of applicants with GPAs or GMAT/GRE/EA scores below average are accepted every year while others with higher statistics are not. This disparity is why we encourage candidates to apply to a range of programs (ideally 5 to 8 schools).

3) Consider average ranking over the years.

A school's average ranking over time is important to consider when looking at MBA rankings. When you are applying to jobs down the road, recruiters likely will not know your school's ranking when you applied, but they may look at its current standing.

Therefore, it is worth evaluating how the schools you are interested in have placed over time. Have they consistently stayed in the top tiers, or has their placement fluctuated greatly?

4) Analyze general trends.

While the latest *Financial Times* MBA rankings show Wharton, Columbia Business School, and Harvard Business School in the top three, other rankings scales are likely to show different results (check out the latest *U.S. News & World Report* rankings and *Bloomberg Businessweek* rankings for reference).

Of course, certain schools will consistently place in the top ten, but the general list will vary from source to source. Keeping this in mind, as mentioned with ranking over time, the general trend across different ranking sources is the most significant.

5) Notice how rankings vary from one industry to the next.

While all MBA programs highlight strong general management education, each school has different areas of expertise. Thus it will be helpful to consider how schools perform in industry-specific rankings as well. Think about your MBA goals and check out rankings that pertain to these goals.



A Look into Top Stem MBA Programs in the US

Over the past few years, many of the top US business schools have achieved STEM designation. By identifying their MBA programs as STEM degrees, business schools give international students the opportunity to remain in the U.S. for an extra 2 years post-graduation and gain training via work experience.

These programs benefit domestic students as well, equipping them with the skills to excel in business and tech and stand out to potential employers.

So, how do STEM MBA programs differ from traditional full-time programs? While some business schools' full-time MBA programs are STEM-designated without any curriculum changes, other schools now offer specific specializations.

Below, get a glimpse into these unique STEM MBA programs.

Harvard Business School

Harvard's MS/MBA: Engineering Sciences Program is designed for those with undergraduate degrees in engineering, computer science, or a related technical field.

Focus: The STEM MBA program at Harvard focuses on engineering, design and business fundamentals.

Post-MBA Objectives: Most students aim to found technology-intensive startups. Others aspire to lead new ventures in established technology companies.

Application Information: Applicants can apply in Round 1 or Round 2. One additional essay question is required for Harvard's MS/MBA Engineering Sciences Program.

Kellogg

Kellogg's Management Science major qualifies as a STEM-designated field of study that prepares students to both manage and direct analyses to improve decisions.

Focus: The major focuses on the application of analytical techniques, tools and models across the school's academic disciplines.

Post-MBA Objectives: Kellogg's Management Science major prepares students for a wide range of careers including consulting, technology, finance and entrepreneurship.



A Look into Top Stem MBA Programs in the US (cont.)

Application Information: Applicants can select Management Science as an area of academic interest for any of Kellogg's 3 application rounds.

NYU Stern

Along with its STEM-designated full-time MBA, NYU Stern also offers a Tech MBA program. The Andre Koo Tech MBA is a one-year STEM MBA program that gives students a foundation in business and allows them to graduate with a focus in technology.

Focus: NYU Stern's Tech MBA focuses on four key curriculum components: the business core, the technology core, Stern Solutions and electives.

Post-MBA Objectives: The program's experiential learning opportunities immerse students in the tech industry and prepare them to solve real-world problems post-graduation.

Application Information: When starting an MBA application for NYU Stern, candidates can select the Andre Koo Tech MBA as their program of choice. The essay questions remain the same as the full-time questions.

Cornell Johnson

Cornell's one-year Tech MBA program is STEM-designated. With the majority of the program based at Cornell Tech in New York City, students have access to a rapidly growing tech sector.

Focus: The Cornell Tech MBA program focuses on STEM MBA core courses and exposes students to topics ranging from financial accounting to marketing and leadership.

Post-MBA Objectives: Cornell's STEM MBA program prepares students for career success in the digital economy.

Application Information: Those interested in the program can apply separately via the Cornell Tech website.



A Look into Top Stem MBA Programs in the US (cont.)

USC Marshall

The USC Marshall IBEAR MBA provides a STEM track for MBA hopefuls. The one-year program is designed for globally focused mid-career professionals.

Focus: USC's IBEAR MBA focuses on curricular and co-curricular learning, allowing students to build the knowledge, tools and business networks to become global business leaders.

Post-MBA Objectives: Those who attend USC's STEM MBA program are seeking global leadership positions post-graduation.

Application Information: Due to its global focus, the IBEAR MBA does not accept a large number of students from any one country. Thus, applicants are advised to apply early. The application deadlines vary slightly from the full-time MBA application deadlines.

So why are STEM MBA programs growing in popularity? STEM-designated programs really began to take off in 2016 when the US federal government created the STEM Designated Degree Program.

Along with helping international students, STEM classifications are attractive to future employers across the board. STEM graduates can also expect to receive higher salaries compared to traditional MBA graduates!

Need help with your applications? Each year, Personal MBA Coach helps clients advance their careers by pursuing a variety of specialized MBA programs, including STEM MBA programs.

Contact Personal MBA Coach Today to find out how we can help you reach your goals when it comes to STEM MBA programs.

TESTIMONIALS



I highly recommend Scott and the Personal MBA Coach team. From the very beginning, Scott was honest and gave valuable insights. The team is very prompt in getting back to you, especially with essay edits. I never felt like I was waiting on them. The feedback they provided was very helpful too. I saw my essays transform greatly and it would not have been possible without Scott and his team. The whole process was very smooth and organized. I am excited to say that I got into my top choice because of the help from the Personal MBA Coach team.

— COLUMBIA BUSINESS SCHOOL



I had an amazing experience working with Scott and his team on my MBA applications this year. They took the time to really learn my story, motivations, and goals, and help me articulate those thoughtfully and authentically into my essays. They completely demystified the process for me, and were extremely patient and readily available to help and answer questions whenever needed. I got into my dream school and don't think I could have done it without their guidance!

— STANFORD GSB



Scott and his team provided a very structured approach for my MBA applications. This allowed me to create effective material which included all pertinent talking points the AdCom for the respective schools are looking for. Furthermore, Scott and his team were very flexible and always reachable. I got admission to two M10 schools along with scholarship offers. One of the scholarship offers was tied to topics I included in my essays which I may have omitted if not for the Personal MBA team's suggestion of said topic's pertinence. I would highly recommend him.

— WHARTON

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Call or email for a consultation with founder, Scott Edinburgh

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