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PERSONAL MBA COACH

Boutique MBA Admissions Consulting

MBA Planning Kick-Start

Table of Contents

- 03 [About Personal MBA Coach](#)
- 04 [Comprehensive Packages Overview](#)
- 05 [Making Your Career Work Harder For You](#)
- 06 [Building And Improving Your Extracurricular Profile](#)
- 08 [Planning Ahead For The GMAT/GRE](#)
- 10 [Expanding Your Network For Long-Term Success](#)
- 12 [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 advance 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 personalized boutique 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 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

- Personal one-on-one support from Scott, a Wharton MBA, member of AIGAC board of directors and industry veteran with 11 years of admissions consulting experience
- Prior corporate experience to inform your essays and goals including: consulting, banking, and strategy
- Team of former M7 admissions interviewers
- Flexible scheduling and fast turnaround times
- Personalized and customized GMAT/GRE 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.



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 those essays and prepare for your interviews you have plenty to talk about.

1 Be honest about your desires.

- It 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 her 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, I 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 on him to find assignments that fit your needs. In an ideal world you would just work 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. There is no better time of year to put in longer hours than during these cold, dark, snowy months (for those in winter climates) or temperate days (for those lucky enough to live in California or a warm climate).

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 off-site, 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 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 wings and show him the ropes. If you can be a formal mentor, great! But if such an opportunity does not exist, even an informal mentor relationship will supplement your leadership experience.

5. Get your own mentor.

Find someone that you connect with at work or someone you admire and invite her for coffee or a drink. Ask about her career. See if she is 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 a champion in the office or a future recommender. Regardless, getting advice from someone more senior can always help.

Building And Improving Your Extracurricular Profile

Strengthening extracurricular profiles is one of the key early planning areas I am working on with round 1 candidates. This is the time to build or strengthen your extracurricular profile. By putting in the extra effort now, you will have ample opportunities to add real value before the deadlines this fall and avoid being penalized for not having a track record of involvement and leadership by the time summer comes. During application time, you will find many strategic ways to use your activities to fill in gaps in your profile. Do not underestimate the importance of extracurriculars.

There are three key guiding principles to keep in mind when developing your own extracurricular strategy.

Building And Improving Your Extracurricular Profile (cont.)

1

Quality Over Quantity.

- No one has the time to work with 10 different organizations. Having a laundry list of activities is not going to appeal to admissions committee members. Instead, focus your efforts on organizations or areas where you can have a real impact and add value. There is no “right” number of activities; this will vary from client to client and depend on the depth of your work. However, more often than not, less is more, particularly if you are just getting started now.

2

Focus On Leadership.

- You have probably heard this time and time again, but it is important enough to repeat. Business schools want leaders. This is true for all schools, not just HBS. While there are countless ways that you can (and should) display leadership throughout your profile, extracurricular activities are one great opportunity to do so. Look for an organization where you can step up, or explore options to expand your role at an existing organization. Take the time now to do this so that you have clear results to share come essay time.

3

Activities Should Fit With Your Profile.

- Successful applications share a consistent and impactful story. The reader should instantly see who you are, what has defined you and why you have made specific choices. Choose areas that you are passionate about and that fit with your story. For example, if you want a career as an educational consultant, consider volunteering in the education industry. If your passion is tennis, teach tennis lessons to underprivileged children in your neighborhood. You do not need to pick the most unique or prestigious charity. Instead, do what you love!





Planning Ahead For The GMAT/GRE

If you have not researched standardized tests since you took the SAT or ACT many years ago, a lot has changed. GMAT scores are valid for five years AND you can take the exam up to five times during a 12-month period. There is also a lifetime max of eight tests and you can take the test once every 16 calendar days.

Similarly, you can take the GRE once every 21 days and up to five times within any 12-month period. GRE scores are also valid for five years. There is currently no lifetime test limit for the GRE.

Further, you can cancel your score and the report does not go to the school if you are not happy with the result. This change has led to candidates taking the exam multiple times. Our average candidate now sits for the exam two to four times (with some giving the test even more tries). While this policy may seem great, it has caused average GMAT/GRE scores to rise as more and more candidates cancel low scores.

What does all this mean for MBA hopefuls? The pressure to perform is high and doing so takes advanced planning! Personal MBA Coach has five tips to ensure you maximize your score.

1 Start early.

- This may seem obvious, but with scores valid for up to five years and the ability to re-take the test, there is no reason to wait. In fact, the earlier in your career you take the test, the better. Most of the skills tested in the GMAT/GRE you mastered in undergrad (if not before) so the longer you wait, the less you will remember about reading comprehension and math fundamentals.

2 Take a practice test now to see your baseline.

- Even if you do not intend to go full force on your studying just yet, take a practice test and see how you stack up. Check this score against the averages at your target schools to get a real sense of what it means. Getting a true feel for how much work you have ahead of you will allow you to be more honest with yourself when putting together a study plan.



Planning Ahead For The GMAT/GRE (cont.)

3 Set a schedule for yourself.

- Be realistic in terms of how many weeks you will set aside for studying and how many hours in each week you can carve out. Putting pencil to paper on a study plan will make it easier to stick to and less likely that you will need to cram last minute or shortchange your prep time.

4 Think about how you learn best and use this to inform your study plan.

- You know how you learn best. Is it from a book? Is it online? Do you thrive with personal one-on-one support? There are countless support options available for the GMAT/GRE so think about what would be best for you and plan accordingly! Personal MBA Coach tutors who scored in the 99th percentile are available to provide you with customized GMAT and GRE tutoring on your schedule and based on your specific needs. Our tutors can also help you determine which test (GMAT or GRE) is best for you.

5 Read short articles in The Economist or Science every week.

- This is a great way to sharpen your reading comprehension skills and expand your vocabulary. Pick a few short articles every week and make your life easier come test time with very limited effort.



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 my 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. There are four areas where you should look to build your network: at work, with alumni/students from your target schools, with professionals in your preferred field, and with admissions professionals. While each of these is worthy of its own blog, in the spirit of “MBA Planning Kick-Start,” I have included one goal for each of these networks for now.

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, this 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 with coffee or lunch, ask a lot of questions, and 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 lunch or coffee.

2 Network with 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 students they should reach out to. I advise two or three per school. Having a laundry list of students that you have reached out to is 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 students about their business school experiences.



Expanding Your Network For Long-Term Success

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 her out for coffee. Tell her you want to learn more about her job and how she got there. Most people love to talk about themselves and are happy to help aspiring professionals. Avoid being too pushy. Meet at a time and place convenient for her 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. For many, 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 meeting.

4 Network with admissions professionals.

- While there are many ways to connect with your target schools, 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. The MBA Tour, Forte Foundation, QS World MBA Tour and Access MBA and many other organizations have tours throughout the world.

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

Remember, networking is a skill and one you should perfect throughout your career. So, start small and take one step today!

TESTIMONIALS



When I first applied to business school in 2016, I was rejected by six of the M7 schools. With Scott's guidance in 2018, I was able to secure acceptances from Kellogg, Booth and Sloan and was offered a combined \$170K in scholarship money from Kellogg and Booth. Scott took the time to thoroughly understand my background before laying out our plan of attack. He is candid in his feedback, available at a moment's notice, and provides great perspective on the admissions process given his history working with other clients. If you are considering the investment, I would highly encourage you to sign up with Scott. Working with the founder of a top consulting firm is a huge plus.

— CHICAGO BOOTH (W/SCHOLARSHIP), CLASS OF 2021



Scott is extremely knowledgeable in this field. He deeply cares about your development with heart and soul and wants to do whatever he can to help you get into your dream school. It has been a fantastic experience of working with Scott and he made my application process very enjoyable. I would not have gotten into Haas and Tuck with scholarships if I did not work with Scott from Personal MBA Coach. I highly recommend anyone who wants to get into their dream school talk to Personal MBA Coach.

— BERKELEY HAAS (W/ SCHOLARSHIP), CLASS OF 2020



I worked with a larger admissions consulting firm last year and did not have success. I was going to give up and do it myself until my friend put me in touch with Scott, who was a life saver! Scott LOVES what he does and working with Personal MBA Coach was the best decision I have made in my career. From the initial deep strategy brainstorming session to the 8th review of my HBS essay, Scott was deeply invested in my success. The level of detail he gets into is quite impressive and his energy and availability blow everyone else out of the water. I got into 5 of the 6 programs I applied to and will be starting at HBS in a few months. I have sent 3 friends of mine to Personal MBA Coach and they are all equally thrilled. Give Scott a call now and don't think twice.

— HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL, CLASS OF 2018

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

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