

IS BUSINESS SCHOOL RIGHT FOR YOU?

Graduates of MBA programs can be found in almost any type of organization. Business school will prepare you to create or lead an organization, manage resources, develop effective operational strategies, and more. Once admitted, required coursework typically includes: Organizational Behavior, Marketing, Accounting, Finance, Strategy, and Operations Management. This is followed by elective coursework that allows the student to customize their experience. Some students consider an MBA as essential for advancement to a management role while others will use it as a means to change careers. As an undergraduate student, it is unlikely that you will be admitted to enter directly into an MBA program without first working for a few years. This period of employment will give you time to think about your long term goals and help you determine if a graduate degree is appropriate.

Informational meetings

Talking with people (with or without MBAs) currently working in fields that interest you can be extremely helpful as you consider your future career options.

Be sure to ask:

- How is an MBA viewed by the industry?
- Will an MBA improve your chances of being hired and moving ahead?
- If that person has an MBA, ask about their experience in the program they attended
- What was most helpful for you as you prepared your application?

Your conversation can help you put into context how applicable the program will be to your career goals. Also, speak with current students or those who have recently completed an MBA program. Inquire about their experience in the program and how it has impacted their careers.

What should you do to prepare for business school?

There's no magic formula for the perfect undergraduate concentration, set of academic achievements, pre-MBA work experience, extracurricular accomplishments, essays, interviews, or recommendations. Nor is there a common career goal or industry in which you can aspire to work. What MBAs have in common is they find opportunities to take initiative, they are motivated, have a strong awareness of themselves, and have a desire to learn and grow.

Business schools look for leaders. In what ways have you demonstrated initiative or translated a vision into a reality? Bear in mind that it's not about the size of your accomplishment, but the passion with which you invest in and pursue your goals.

Business schools tend to focus on impact more than scale. Make sure, therefore, that the academic and extracurricular choices you make truly reflect your interests, demonstrate initiative, and give you opportunities to play a leadership role in the organization. A strong undergraduate academic record and GMAT (or possibly GRE) score are also important parts of your application to business school. Many schools allow you to sit in on a class to gain insight into what a typical course looks like. Take advantage of this opportunity!