
AN INGENIUS PREP E-BOOKLET

GETTING INTO A TOP UNDERGRADUATE BUSINESS SCHOOL

*An Insider's View from the Former Director of Admissions at
UC Berkeley's Haas Undergraduate Business Program*

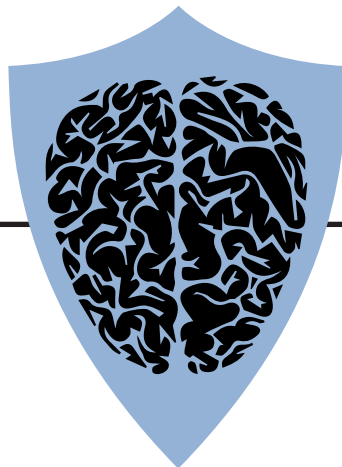




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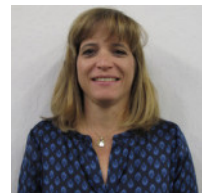
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INTRODUCTION

As Director of Admissions at the [Haas Undergraduate Business Program at U.C. Berkeley](#), I witnessed much angst among students during the application process. The angst is justified: while there are many excellent business schools in the U.S., there are many more students interested in pursuing the degree than available spots. Thus, the application process is quite stressful.

My goal, in this ebook, is to give you a perspective on the entire process - from beginning the search for the right school all the way through making the decision of which undergraduate business school to attend. Along the way, I'll include some "do's and don'ts" based on my experience of what worked, and what didn't, for many of the applicants I admitted or rejected.

1: WHAT YOU SHOULD BE (OR SHOULD HAVE BEEN DOING) BEFORE YOU START APPLYING

With each step discussed, I strongly suggest that you keep notes as you move along in this process. There are going to be questions that you will ask of yourself, teachers, counselors, admissions officers, and family whose input will make a difference in your decision process.

By keeping a living list of those comments or facts you will have a much easier time with the application, and ultimately, the decision process.

If you are asking yourself, "How can I get into the best undergraduate business program?" you are asking the wrong question.

The most important questions you should be thinking about now - for determining your future - are “What do I want for myself?” and “What is important for me?” It may sound cheesy, but you’re going to have to have genuine and thoughtful answers to those questions on your application.

You will better off letting these genuine answers guide your path through high school and ultimately to the undergraduate business program that best fits your personality, goals, and vision.

I encourage you to take a moment to write down your answers to these questions. Probe what is driving you, reflect on your goals, and check in with yourself from time to time.

Any application process, especially one as challenging as undergraduate business school, challenges your integrity. Don’t be the kind of person who strays from what you truly want in life - and don’t be that kind of businessperson!

2: STARTING TO PLAN

If you are beginning high school, this section is written for you. If you are at the end of high school, you should still read this section, because it will give you a good sense of how well-positioned you are for what is to come.

High School Coursework

Early in your high school career, it’s important to do some preliminary academic planning. There is a lot more required to get into competitive programs than simply getting good grades - which itself is no easy task.

First of all, you must fulfill the prerequisites for college bound students. If you have specific colleges in mind, research their admissions requirements and make sure you are getting them right. Taking these required courses, of course, does not guarantee admission, but it at least ensures you have a chance.

Are you in the college preparatory classes that will give you the best preparation for college? If you can handle a more difficult and competitive schedule, especially during your junior and senior year, then do so.

The admissions offices will check the rigor of your high school and will be able to discern if you should have, and could have, taken more difficult courses. This isn't to say that you have to take every honors or AP course offered, but don't underestimate your ability to achieve at a higher level.

If math or sciences are your thing, I strongly encourage you to take the highest level courses available to you. Doing well in these courses is highly regarded by the top undergraduate business programs, which usually place a major emphasis on advanced quantitative skills and logical reasoning.

If you have an academic interest that is not offered at your high school, then consider alternate avenues for pursuing these interests, such as night school, outside tutors, or summer classes.

Many local community colleges offer wide ranges of courses for advanced high school students, as do a myriad of university summer programs (the latter, however, can be rather pricey). In addition to your own edification, your gumption will impress the admissions team and will [make you stand out](#) in terms of your achievements and experiences.

Extracurriculars

Obviously, there is more to high school than just the school work. Many ambitious high school students view their extracurriculars as simply a way of building their resumes for college. This is wrong on several counts. First, it doesn't work. Resume building for the sake of resume building may seem clever to students, but admissions offices spot it immediately. Second, what a lost opportunity! Extracurriculars are opportunities to discover your passion and to excel.

Passion alone, without a demonstrated commitment to **leadership and excellence**, won't get you very far. Engage in different activities in or out of school and then start making decisions about which activity is most important to you, showcases your talents and your strengths, and offers you leadership roles. Schools are going to be looking at your leadership capability, your commitment to, and your progression to more significant roles within your extracurricular activities.

Internships that offer genuine growth opportunities within an organization are ideal, but they are very difficult to find. Because of this, most undergraduate business schools will not expect you to have had such experiences.

If you are an athlete and you don't have a lot of extra time between practice and play, then mentor younger players, assist the coach, or get involved at the elementary or junior high school level to help other kids with the sport. Be a leader - on and off the team.

School Search

It is never too early to attend college fairs and to begin exploring which schools excite you and why. Keep an open mind to schools you have never heard of and geographic regions you might not otherwise consider.

Allow yourself to surprise yourself with what you learn and where your interests draw you.

3: THE PLAN UNFOLDS

Steps to take this year; first, study.

I am sure you have been hitting the books, but the grades you attain your junior year are the most important. Schools will be looking at this year with more scrutiny than they have the previous years.

If you don't have AP or Honors classes, then make sure your grades are at their best. If you do have AP or Honors classes there is a bit of a buffer since you get additional credit for having taken those classes.

If a grade in an honors/AP class doesn't go well (maybe a C), don't fret. You will just want to explain that grade, at some point in your application. Your teacher, for example, may want to address this grade in a letter to the admissions office.

Extracurriculars

As discussed above, it is vital that you are taking your interests very seriously and that you are taking a greater leadership role. Don't overbook yourself with too many activities.

Find one or two that really give you excitement, help you to define yourself, and ultimately play a role in a future career path.

How does that happen? If you are in clubs that promote social activities, then you are probably someone who will enjoy working in a profession that has a great deal of social interchange.

If you are in the chess club or the computer science club, your strengths may be in a more technical profession that doesn't have as much customer interaction. If you are getting great satisfaction from working with community organizations and non-profit activities, then your future role may be to work in a non-profit or socially responsible business entity. As an athlete, there are many activities that you do as a team member that will give you insight into how you want to work with people. Do you enjoy being a follower or a leader? Do you really enjoy sports and want to work on the administrative or management side of a sports organization? Make notes in your notebook as you explore your options.

The Practice Visit

Visiting colleges and universities your junior year is important. These visits are not the "real" visits to the schools you are going to apply to, but rather a "test run" of the visit. Go to schools nearby. Take a tour. Get a feel for the campus. Take notes. After these visits, continue to **update your notebook with thoughts about what you want in a school, where you want be, and why.**

4: PREPARING FOR THE REAL COLLEGE VISIT

Before you visit, it's important to research each of the schools that you want to attend. Get your notebook ready because taking notes will be essential. Detailed below are very important areas to research, contemplate, and then decide on whether or not those schools meet your personal and academic needs.

Assessing the Mission and Vision of the Business Program

What is the school's mission and vision? Mission statements discuss the core values and educational standards at the heart of the program.

A school of business will have a mission and vision statement by which their curriculum, learning outcomes, and their activities are centered. It is important to familiarize with both of these terms, and determine if they are in line with your academic and professional goals. Some questions to consider:

- Is the program conservative or liberal?
- Do they have a global emphasis? Is that important to you?
- Does the program partake in projects or activities in the local community?
- What is the faculty diversity?

Some of these questions may not be important to you at first glance, but your business curriculum will be influenced by the goals of the school.

Another reason these mission and vision statements are important is that they may very well be a part of their application process. It is not uncommon to have an essay asking the prospective applicant how they would embody the mission of the school. **As a former Director of Admissions, I read many essays dealing with this subject area and it was very apparent when the student hadn't taken the time to reflect and understand what the school was truly about.**

For example, if the mission statement includes the importance of social responsibility, then your essay should be driven by how you have embraced this in your life. As you are relaying this information, give it life.

Remember that admissions officers read many essays, so include a little humor and aspects of personal growth. A list of reasons explaining why you believe in social responsibility, without congruent examples, is bland and will ultimately get you rejected.

Got Business Schools? The Different Types of Schools

There are three types of undergraduate business programs. First, the university or college admits you as a freshman into their business degree program, making you a business major.

Second is the sophomore admit. You must be admitted to the university or college as a freshmen and then apply to the business school as a sophomore. Third is the junior admit. Similar to the sophomore admit, you attend the university and then apply to the program as a junior. For top tiered business schools, the admissions process is grueling. To assist you in identifying which schools are freshmen, sophomore or junior admits, see the tables below:

Table 1: 4 Year Programs

Must be accepted into the Business School as part of admissions to the university

Name of School	Setting	Acceptance Rate	Size	Type of School
University of Pennsylvania - Wharton School of Business	Urban	12.6%	9,600 total undergraduate	Private
New York University - Stern School of Business	Urban	35%	22,000 total undergraduates	Public
Carnegie Mellon University - Tepper School of Business	Urban	27%	6200 total undergraduates	Private
Cornell University - SC Johnson School of Business	Rural	16.6%	14,000 total undergraduates	Private

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Table 2: Three Year Programs

Must apply to program as a freshman and be accepted to start in the major as a sophomore

Name of School	Setting	Acceptance Rate	Size	School
University of Texas, Austin - McCombs School of Business	Urban	46%	39,000 total undergraduates	Public
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor - Ross School of Business	Urban	36%	27,000 total undergraduates	Public
Notre Dame University - Mendoza School of Business	Urban	23%	8,500 total undergraduates	Private

Table 3: Two Year Programs

Must apply to program as a sophomore and be accepted to start in the major as a junior

Type of School	Setting	Acceptance Rate	Size	School
U.C. Berkeley - Haas School of Business	Urban	18%	26,000 total undergraduates	Public
M.I.T	Urban	9.0%	4,500 total undergraduates	Private
University of Virginia - Darden School of Business	Urban	29%	15,800 total undergraduates	Private
University of North Carolina - Kenan-Flagler	Suburban	27%	18,500 total undergraduates	Public

Specializations/Concentrations

The other consideration for your B-school choice is your more specific interests in business or your specialization. To add depth to your selection process, it is important to consider the schools' specialities. Below is a partial list created by U.S. News and World Report Rankings. While this is just a small sampling of schools, it will give you some starting points as you begin the research process.

Accounting
University of Texas-Austin
University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign
Brigham Young University-Provo

Entrepreneurship
Babson College
University of Southern California
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Finance
University of Pennsylvania
New York University
M.I.T.

International Business
University of South Carolina
New York University
University of Pennsylvania
University of Southern California

Supply Chain Management/Logistics
Michigan State University
M.I.T.
Arizona State University

Marketing
University of Pennsylvania
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
University of Texas-Austin

B-School Rankings - Should I Read Them?

I do give a word of caution to rankings. As most [business school rankings](#) are educationally sound (not including Best Party School!), they give you the opportunity to investigate schools that would not have otherwise been on your radar. Rankings come from sources like [BusinessWeek](#), [U.S. News and World Report](#), or can be a from a source called, “Colleges that Change Lives.” However, many schools will not participate in ranking activities because they feel they are popularity contests. Because of this, be aware that there is no perfect ranking system.

Often, it is the bigger named schools that remain on the list. While re-searching, I advise you to keep an open mind and not make your decisions solely based on ranking.

AACSB - What is it and Why is it Important?

More important than rankings, research the list of schools that are accredited by the [Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business \(AACSB\)](#). This accreditation program is an intense multi-year process which strengthens the curriculum, learning outcomes, faculty, and the positioning of the business school as a whole.

Due to this rigorous process, and the financial commitment that the institution must make for these program wide improvements, there is only a small percentage (around 5%) of business schools that have this accreditation.

While there are hundreds of schools nationwide that offer business programs, it is important to identify schools that are AACSB accredited.

5: THE VISIT

I strongly suggest that by the time you are a junior in high school, you visit the schools of your choice. That first visit can be during your breaks or the summer, but I strongly recommend that you go when the college students are in session, so that you can really get a feel for the school.

Whether it is your first choice, your reach school, or your fall back school, a visit is imperative to the process. While visiting, I advise you to ask yourself the following questions and then log your answers in your notebook:

- Aside from the curriculum, what other aspects of the program appeal to me? Think about the following:
 - * Activities-by usiness clubs, networking opportunities, business case competitions, community service work using your business acumen
 - * Job placement rates, alumni success stories, internship opportunities
 - * Social clubs, fraternities, sororities, athletics
- What are the academic credentials and research activity of the faculty? Have they worked or are they currently working in the field? Are they business practitioners?
- What is the student/faculty ratio?

Where Should I Apply?

During this process, get out that notebook you have used to diligently write notes. When deciding how many schools to which apply, I caution you to not apply to too many schools.

I have found that there are several reasons to narrow your list to five or six schools. First, if you apply to more than six, you are spreading yourself thin.

Second, applying and getting admitted to too many schools is not going to help the decision process. It will just add more confusion. Third, the application process can be costly.

I believe that there are four categories of schools to which each student should apply:

- **Big reach: Dream school**
- **Great school: Happy to attend**
- **Definitely In: I am a shoe in and I would attend.**
- **Backup: Not in my top choices**

Big Reach - Why Not?

You don't know unless you try, and you may get lucky. There are many stories about students who may not have fit the acceptance criteria, but for some reason they were admitted.

When applying to a reach school, your essays and letters of recommendation can really make the difference. If there are financial concerns about attending a dream school, be prepared to work hard at getting scholarships and financial aid. There is money out there, but you need to pursue it.

Great School

Of course you are going to apply because you would be honored to attend and you would appreciate all that the school has to offer. As you have researched, you meet their admissions criteria and your application package is very strong.

If there are any activities that the admissions office is sponsoring, make sure to attend, introduce yourself, make yourself known. Your essay and the letters of recommendation, again, are what will give you the extra edge. Be prepared to apply for loans and scholarships for this school too.

Definitely In

You must apply because you need to have a “safe” school.

Backup

I don't expect that you will need a backup but it doesn't hurt to have this school in your back pocket just in case. Take a deep breath, get your paperwork organized, get your notebook out, talk to your family about your choices and start. Good luck!

6: THE APPLICATION

Always Take Your Time

The admissions office will be able to tell if you rush your application. How do we know? Grammatical errors, spelling errors, run-on sentences, and information that isn't reflected consistently through the application.

For instance, if you say you were the President of a club on your resume, then that leadership role should be discussed in some form in your essays or reflected in your letters of recommendation.

Essays

Often times, applicants must choose between several essay prompts. Which essay do you pick? The easiest answer I can give you is the essay that you feel the most passionate about.

Think about the subjects. Write notes. Talk to friends and family and see if one of them resonates with who you are and where you are in your own development.

Then, start writing. Remember: be creative, honest, and humorous (if applicable). If you have gone through a life changing event, this is your opportunity to discuss this experience.

If this event occurred during your high school years, you should bring it forward since it may help the admissions office to understand how this affected your academic and extracurricular life. If the [school later requires an interview](#), your essay will be discussed, so it needs to be from you.

I asked one of the recent Haas alumni to give his impressions of the application process:

“The essay section, in both my applications to the undergrad business program and my MBA, is what helped me bring my grades and experiences to life. It is the unique chance for an admissions team to ‘meet’ the applicants and understand their stories of why they want to attend the business program; and that’s what your essays should be: your story.”

Your story, whether you choose to weave it through all of the prompts or just one, should explain where you are now (your current interests, accomplishments, and goals), how and why the business program fits into you reaching your goals, and what you plan on using that degree for after graduating. Now, you may be thinking, 'I have no idea what I want to do after I graduate,' and that is completely fine! The majority of students who enter a business program (and college for that matter), are there to explore and figure out what they want to make of their careers. But take the time to think deeply about this. Spending some moments in introspection can help you convey a more robust and holistic argument as to why you should be admitted to the program of your choice." - M.C., '10

The Resume

In most cases, the college will want to see your "resume" or the activities you have been involved in since you started high school. The expectation from the admissions side is that, from your freshman year forward, you were involved in activities, but also had a healthy balance between school, activities, and family life.

There is a misconception that business schools are looking for young entrepreneurs that have dedicated all of their waking hours to developing the next iPhone. Rather, the admissions officers are looking for passion for an activity, life-balance, consistency and diversity. These are all important because a successful college student needs to have each of these components to meet their personal and professional goals. Sports, clubs, church activities, jobs, all of these matter. It is the experience of being a part of clubs or a job that builds a successful character. It is not anticipated that you were the president of the business club, but that you were a part of one or two activities that mattered and that you were consistent in those activities during over time. Be aware that some schools randomly verify your resume activities by contacting the organization that you were involved in, so be prepared for this type of scrutiny.

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Being in the business club doesn't give more "points" than the English club, but we do look at the consistency of the involvement and the student's movement into leadership positions. Remember, this is more about leadership and the role you take as a leader than being a budding business person.

One of the basic tenets of leadership is to understand how people work, understand how relationships affect business, and how to manage people appropriately.

"Stand out from the rest of the applicants by pursuing your passions and following your dreams. Business schools love diversity: diversity in interests, diversity in experiences, diversity in backgrounds, you name it. That is because the collaborative nature of business programs requires you to constantly interact with and learn from your peers and professors – and those who have distinctive experiences are able to bring in more unique perspectives in approaching problems. Your high test scores and grades in school show that you are smart and can make you stand out; embarking on a path to accomplish what you love can fully separate you from the pack."- M.C., '10

Letters of Recommendation

From high school it is anticipated that the letter would come from teachers with whom you have had an impactful relationship. [When you approach your teachers](#) for one of these letters, I suggest that you give the teacher some key points that you would like highlighted.

With those key points, you may want to detail to the teacher what draws you to that particular business program, and why you think you are a good match. If you are at a large high school, getting a letter may be difficult especially if that teacher is popular with other students. This takes planning. You need to ask early and follow up with the teachers, making sure that they are able to complete the task. Have dates highlighted for them, so that they are aware of your deadlines.

Letters of recommendation from outside recommenders should follow the same criteria, but it is important that you pick the right non-academic recommender. Some questions to ask yourself:

Are they going to be able to add weight to the application? Were there specific goals in your activities that you completed that they can discuss? Were there skills that were learned on the job that go beyond what you could have learned in the classroom? Make sure those are highlighted

Transcripts and scores

Scores and grades matter. This is essential to understand. If you are looking at a **top-ranked business program**, the competition is tough and the echelon of students that you will be competing with is higher. You need to understand that every year, while the process for reviewing transcripts and scores remains the same, the pool of applicants dictates how “high or low” the admissions committees can go in determining who is the right fit.

SAT and ACT scores

When it comes to the SAT, some schools will give you the benefit of using the higher verbal and math scores from each time you take the test to give you a better chance of getting a higher combined score. Check your schools admissions procedures to see how they will treat your scores. If the schools you are applying to accept the ACT, I strongly suggest that you take this test as an alternative.

AP Exams

Again, if you feel that you have done well enough in your classes, take the AP exams. Of course, your scores will determine how much college credit you will get for your efforts.

Each school views the score of 4 or 5 differently.

They may give you 1 semester worth of credit on some tests and 2 semesters on other tests. Please review this information also.

The Application is Read

The reading process of these applications goes through a holistic process of review.

This means that all of your academic, personal, and professional information is evaluated. In most cases, your application will be read by **at least 2 readers and in most case 3 readers.**

The school is looking for applicants who have potential and will contribute not only to the business program, but also to the institution and eventually the common good of others.

With so much information to digest and ponder, another alumni of Haas adds a perspective to the admissions process that is real, recent and hits to the heart of what is important:

Business schools don't accept resumes or transcripts, so they are not looking exclusively at those sheets of paper in front of them. The admissions officers use your application materials as proxies to anticipate (as best they can) who you are and what you will do in the future. Their job is to identify students with potential—those who will later shape their world or industries—and offer admission to business leaders who they will someday be proud to call alumni of their school's program. Keep that perspective in mind while 'crafting' your application. Your Number One goal should be to demonstrate your potential. You want to convince those reading through your essays, looking over your resume, and calling your references that you will succeed, whether or not your path runs through their university." C.H., '11

7: ADMITTED! DECISION TIME: WHERE DO I GO?

YEAH! You have been admitted to all of your schools, now, how do you make the decision?

A couple of years ago, I was at the University of California, Berkeley “Cal Day” (the annual Open House for new and prospective students). There I met with a student who had been admitted to U.C. Berkeley and to the [Stern Business School at NYU](#). The students’ quandary was that he would still have to apply to the Haas School of Business Undergraduate Program and hopefully get accepted, whereas he had already been admitted to the business school at NYU. The student and the parent asked me where he should go to school. Instead of telling him come to Berkeley, I answered his question with a couple of questions, “What matters to you? What are you looking for in a school? What is the culture that you would like to experience? What do you want from the program? What about the atmosphere, culture and surrounding environment? What matters to you?”

He and his father smiled and said that they hadn’t expected to hear me respond with these types of questions, and I responded that the goal of any school is to make sure that students are happy while they are in their respective programs. Happy and satisfied students are much more likely to appreciate their alma mater.

While I couldn’t guarantee this student that he would eventually be admitted to the Haas Undergraduate Business Program, he knew that there were many more pieces to the college question than just the business school. He ended up attending Cal, applying to the program, and was accepted. I met up with him before he graduated and he told me that the advice I gave him on Cal Day was the most important college admissions advice he had received. His overall happiness was my interest.

In many cases the ultimate decision of where to go will fall on the financial aid/scholarship package that you will receive from the schools. My one suggestion in this area is that there are many more scholarships available than students who apply for them. The main reason for this disparity is that many students, by the time they have completed the application process, don't have the energy to write scholarship applications. I suggest that you save some energy for this process since it might make the difference between attending the school of your dreams and not.

8: BUSINESS SCHOOL ADMISSIONS AS A COLLEGE

You are now in the most stressful stage of realizing your business school dream. You are at the university of your choice and now you have to apply to get into your major.

I advise that you have a back-up plan or major in mind if you don't get admitted to the business program. Now is the time to consider the other majors on campus that would fulfill your interests.

Coursework

Make sure you have thoroughly researched the coursework required to get into this program. In most cases, you can take your transcript to the admissions staff of that program, so they can advise you on the courses that you need to take or should take to enter the business program. Grades are very important, but the process for admissions at this level is holistic too.

Grades, essays, activities, leadership potential are all part of the admissions decision. If there is an interview required, your essay and your resume will have greater importance to the question and answer portion of that meeting.

Resume Building

As an applicant to one of these sophomore or junior programs, there are many options available to give you the best possible opportunity for admission.

You have a bit more freedom to choose your activities in college, as there are many outlets to show your leadership potential.

Please note that some schools will not request your prior activities in high school, they will only be looking at what you have accomplished in college. The following tips are centered on the activities/extracurricular area mostly:

- **Get involved.** As a freshman, you should find the clubs that most suit your interests. Get involved as a freshman and stick with it! Take on responsibility and leadership roles so that you can show your strengths to your peers and then ultimately to the admissions office. Again, you do not need to be apart of a business club or fraternity to be considered, but you should be involved.
- **Work.** If you don't have the time to get involved in a club or activity because you are working to support yourself, don't worry, as this is definitely a favorable attribute that you can also highlight. What are your skills, job duties, responsibilities, length of involvement? Do you manage a budget? Are you supervising anyone? Make sure this information is highlighted on your resume.
- **College athlete.** It is understood that college level athletes do not have time for extracurricular activities other than their sport, but it is imperative that you show your leadership role on the team as you complete your application. Don't underestimate how much you do as a team player, or as a mentor when you complete the application.

- **Case Competitions.** if you are really excited about the study of business and you want to get a real taste of what it means to be a part of a consulting team, then try out for a case competition team. Business clubs usually host these case competitions and invite freshmen and sophomores to get involved. These competitions give you an insight into team dynamics, working under pressure, marketing, parsing out the problem in the case, telling the story, and of course public speaking. Undeclared majors are always invited to join these competitions.
- **Non-Profit Work.** Many students will work for non-profits, which shows a passion for working in and making a difference in the community. This type of work is looked at very favorably because business programs have a strong social service core to their programs.

Essays

You will most likely have multiple essay prompts to complete for your **business school essay**. If you have a choice between several prompts, choose the prompt that best shows your strengths. In these programs, the admissions office is looking for students who have a passion, are leaders, have initiative, and are really excited about the program. I suggest that you [have a few people read the essays](#) so that you have different opinions on your writing, your themes, and if you have answered the questions fully. Here are some don'ts:

- Please don't say, "because I will make lots of money."
- Please don't say, "my parents told me to apply here."
- Please don't say, " I really don't want to be a business major, but I thought it would look good on my resume."

If you are reading this e-book, you are too wise to do any of the above, but it is a cautionary statement nonetheless. Humor is wonderful, stories are great, but don't tell them how you started a lemonade stand

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when you were five years old and that was when you knew you wanted to be a business major. They aren't going to buy it.

In the end, you are the sum of many parts of the application, and I can guarantee you that each admissions office is going to do a holistic read of your file. They are looking to build a passionate, smart, and innovative class. The fact that you were admitted to one of these universities already means you are smart, focused and ready to do the work. Now you need to stretch just a bit more to make sure that you show them who you are and why you should be a member of their business school.

Is there a secret to getting into these schools? I wish there was one answer or a few bullet points that could be given that would alleviate the burden of the **business school application process**, but that is not going to happen. From an admissions perspective, the decision process is both subjective and objective. It is frustrating for all, even the people who get to make the decision!

Everyone wishes to get into their #1 school, but the reality is that no matter how hard you work, you may end up at your #2 school. For this reason, you need to make sure that your schools reflect your needs and wants and that you know the school well. **Your notebook** comes in handy here.

While this ebook gives my perspective - through the eyes of a former Director of Admissions at Haas - on the undergraduate business school admissions process, there are many other intricacies and school specific insights to be learned. If you want further help and information on how you can increase your acceptance rate, I encourage you to work with me or one of my [InGenius Prep](#) colleagues, who are also [former admissions officers](#) from top ranked schools.

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