

Good Luck!

Essays by successful admits.

Treat the essays as guidance materials.

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The Bootcamp is an initiative by 15 ISB admits to help aspirants prepare for GMAT, b-school application and interview. We cater to B-School admissions in India and abroad. Our team has expanded lately to include not just IIMA, IIM B, IIM C, FMS and ISB admits but also INSEAD, Carnegie Mellon, CBS, Kellogg and Wharton admits.

Our mentees bear the testimony of our extremely customised preparation services. We not only provide mentors matching your educational background, be it engineering, medical, psychology, economics etc, but also provide weekly study schedules matching your preparation approach and easy flowing communication over not just emails and phone calls but also over Whatsapp any time you are stuck in your preparation. Our connections wired over multiple alums and current class admits help us help you out with the latest updates on admissions and applications.

Speaking of our success rate, into the first admission cycle, Bootcamp can already boast of 26 admits in YLP and Round 1. Considering that the intake for YLP is 40-60 every year. We successfully enabled 9 out of 11 of our mentees to procure this coveted admit. Taking into account YLP and round 1, we got a 85% conversion rate.

On the Global b-school admission front, we already have admits to Ivy league universities such as Columbia Business School among others and also a number of prestigious b-schools such as Carnegie Mellon and Kelley School of Business. We have not only secured admits for our clients but also helped many of them bag 100% scholarship.

Describe a (only one) defining moment in your personal / professional life when you had to make a risky decision, and explain what you did, why and the outcome?

OR

Describe a (only one) situation in your personal / professional life when you had to interact with people from diverse backgrounds. How did it affect you and what did you learn? (300 words max)

In my first year of college, I realized that even though I loved Engineering and Technology, I could never opt for a conventional Engineering career. Very early in my life, I had realized that it was the unorthodox that attracted me. The lure and challenges of the road less taken is what drove me.

Teaching has always been one of my passions and a career for which I have utmost respect for. Getting into the education sector was a promising prospect while giving me a sense of fulfilment. I wanted to start my Own education start up that would provide coaching to first year students. However the roadblocks were many.

Firstly, it was unheard of – a first year student starting classes for other first year students. Secondly, there was no support at all – no premises available, no credit and no legacy that I could bank on. Most importantly, I myself was afraid of sacrificing valuable time for engineering studies, and playing with the careers of the incoming students who would put their trust in me.

Sometimes though, risk brings with itself the audacity and strength to start something new. Despite all odds, Phoenix Education with 10 students was born and this altered my entire career! Phoenix Education grew from strength of 10 to a total of around 100 students in just one year. It produced college toppers, challenging the results of well - established institutions. It finally led me to a career in T.I.M.E Aurangabad – teaching more than 24 batches and 2300 students before I graduated.

The risk clearly paid off! The outcome was that at the age of 19, I was financially independent and sponsored my own education. The cherry on the cake was me completing the Engineering degree with top grades along with a top 5 position in the department.

What are your post ISB career plans and how will your past experiences and the Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) contribute to taking you there?

I firmly believe that the Indian test prep and coaching industry (\$30bn market size) is ripe for technology - enabled disruption. After the PGP program, I intend to launch my e - learning venture in the Indian coaching market. This venture shall be focused on providing online coaching (via web and mobile) and support to Indian MBA aspirants appearing for various competitive exams. My plan is to make MBA coaching affordable and accessible to students, who are located in the remote parts of India, so as to create a level playing field with their city counterparts.

Based on initial market testing and feedback, I have realized that to make my venture successful, I need to augment my technical skills with business skills including strategy, marketing, sales and finance. Completing the Post Graduate Program (PGP) from a reputed institute as ISB is a perfect step for me to plug in the gaps as it provides me the right tools, network and exposure required to upgrade my skills and to make my product market ready.

Life is full of uncertainties and one must always be prepared to face the worst. If my venture fails to prosper, I intend to take up a general management position in a large Indian education company. This will not only help me deepen my expertise across various areas /functions of the company but also provide me the opportunity to network and learn from veterans in this business. Simultaneously, I would devote time to look back and assess what were the shortcomings with my venture. I would then aspire to refine my business idea and jump into execution when I believe I have the right business strategy along with the right team supporting that strategy.

If we were to admit just one more student, make a compelling argument as to why that student should be you by describing an (only one) achievement in your personal / professional life that you are most proud of. What did you do that sets you apart from others? What did you learn? (400 words max)

The numerous leadership positions, I have held for a long-time have unleashed my potential and shaped my personality.

I have been selected from over 300 students to lead boards, councils and a student population of 1200 students. I was the General Secretary of the college in the fourth year, the Cultural Secretary of the college in the third year, the literary events held in the second year, the batch prefect in the first year and the Head of the Editorial Board in Class-12.

As the General Secretary of the college, I had the responsibility to lead the Student Council comprising 10 boards and 20 key members. I organized Founders Day attended by Chief of Army. I learnt judgment, decision-making, foresight and negotiation skills.

As the Cultural Secretary in the third year, I was heading a board of 4 members. I organized an event, the Battle of Bands, for the first time in a disciplined Army campus, where the large sponsorships we accrued and participants from across the city made it a huge success. In this role, I learnt managerial qualities such as innovation and relationship management.

As the batch prefect in first year of college, I learnt the magnitude of responsibility you shoulder when you represent people's voice and the importance of listening to people and understanding their qualms.

At Deloitte, I was the youngest person to manage simultaneous projects on weekdays and weekends. These projects involved checking the clients' network and web applications and tracing security vulnerabilities. We scan millions of IPs and report to the client with recommendations. For my efforts at securing the web application of a client, I have received client appreciation for pointing out flaws at their internal access accounts. In another project, my director praised me for rising to the occasion and independently managing a project that required 2 resources. I worked 12-18 hours a day for weeks and salvaged the situation by wrapping up the activities within deadlines.

Despite these long working hours of 14 hours on an average, I took out time for Deloitte's annual community initiative program, Impact Day. I led a team of 4 to manage 30 volunteers to spend a day with 800 children at a government school. The event was a huge success and I felt proud of delivering hundreds of smiles that day.

These invaluable and rigorous learnings have enriched me to take on larger challenges ahead.

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Describe a (only one) defining moment in your personal / professional life when you had to make a risky decision, and explain what you did, why and the outcome?

OR

Describe a (only one) situation in your personal / professional life when you had to interact with people from diverse backgrounds. How did it affect you and what did you learn? (300 words max)

One of the toughest situations I have encountered was the ragging case during my tenure as the General Secretary of Army Institute of Technology. Misinterpreted statements pertaining to actions dubbed as ragging unfortunately framed seven students, who had brought accolades to the college from national and international competitions. This issue spiraled beyond the college to the highest echelons of Southern Command Army Headquarters, Pune. The management had been taken over by headquarters citing the need for exceptional steps to curb ragging. These exceptionally bright students were, as a result, being unjustly expelled from the college.

As the General Secretary of the college and a part of the Disciplinary Committee, I was of the opinion to mitigate the unjust punishment but the committee's statement was overshadowing my position. Thus, my fellow 1200 students felt I was not utilizing my power to save the accused.

Along with fellow students, I boycotted the college for a day and tried to explain the repercussions of the unjust punishments to the management. During this incident, I displayed strong emotional balance and maintained the poise of a leader. I stood firm and disregarded any miscommunications floating on campus. I could have conveniently chosen sides and let anarchy prevail among students, but I took the harder path of maintaining a neutral stand and faced flak for not taking sides.

I believe the one aspect that I could've managed better was sensitizing fellow students about the serious meetings with the management. I learnt the importance of effective communication, even when people might seem to be disinterested in listening to you.

I channeled the energy of the mob to the best of my ability for a positive outcome. As a result, the case against the 7 students has been dropped. They are pursuing careers in various walks of life.

What are your post ISB career plans and how will your past experiences and the Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) contribute to taking you there?

There is no stop to learning and likewise neither is there a start.

Every decision I have taken over the last 6 years is directly aligned with my career goals. I have demonstrated leadership skills during college and at work where I lead multiple projects. I have been single handedly handling most of my projects at Deloitte. I led a thread in a community initiative and managed a school of 800 for a day with the help of 30 volunteers. I believe I possess a head start when it comes to leadership potential and managerial capacity and I wish to leverage the time I have made for myself. As a computer engineer from a competitive college, I possess analytical and mathematical skills.

At Deloitte, I have gained a fine understanding of IT security for leading firms. However to grow in organizations I need business skills. I need to acquire fine understanding of all organizational functions and how they are connected in order to gain a well-rounded business acumen. I believe I am ready to pursue an MBA to leverage multiple experiences and learnings I have drawn so far.

ISB offers me unparalleled learning to accelerate my success manifold. Post ISB my short-term goal is to bag a Product Management role in an IT firm. I will take courses such as *Marketing Management, Marketing Decision Making and Strategic Analysis of information Technology* to enrich my skill-sets. My engineering, work-in-progress technical learnings and an MBA from ISB will make me ready to succeed in this role.

As an EEO applicant, I have 16 months before I join ISB. In the meanwhile I will take certifications related to *Strategic Management, Economics of Transition and Emerging Markets*. These certifications will help me develop business foundations and accelerate my learning of business dynamics at ISB.

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Please use this space to provide any other information not covered elsewhere in the application that could significantly impact your candidature at ISB.

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I use this optional essay to underscore certain traits of mine that I will bring to the table on joining ISB.

As the General Secretary and the Cultural Secretary of the college, I headed the student council comprising 10 clubs for 1200 students. I will bring to ISB, the learnings of leadership, decision-making, multitasking, innovation, foresight, networking etc.

I actively participated and won different kinds of co-curricular activities while I excelled in studies. Each day, I would multi-task 14-hours/day on-campus and reach hostel to hold meetings and solve various issues. These experiences have better prepared me for jam-packed schedules at ISB.

In addition to the above, I have presented papers at International Conferences and got one published in an International Journal. I have won multiple technical paper presentations at inter-college and intra-college levels. These experiences have helped me hone my presentation skills.

An army ward, I lived across 17 cities and studied in 7 schools, learning about different kinds of people. I bring to ISB, my ability to team up with people of differing backgrounds and impeccable networking abilities.

For 8-months I taught Mathematics to 60 children on Saturdays. Overtime, they were proficient in Algebra, Trigonometry and Equations etc.

If we were to admit just one more student, make a compelling argument as to why that student should be you by describing an (only one) achievement in your personal / professional life that you are most proud of. What did you do that sets you apart from others? What did you learn?

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I absolutely must have it, musical talent, it's inherent, it's natural, it comes from the rhythm within and the melody around, of beating hearts and nature's resonance. Yet, I was tone deaf and couldn't keep a beat for even 10 seconds. As a 9 year old, I entered a singing competition, last minute entry, clueless about the nuances, yet overflowing with passion. It was a disaster and still the audience clapped, I knew it was sympathy and I knew I'll have to earn the applause.

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Years spent listening and practicing songs, trying to perfect the melody, by myself, for music classes weren't an option. Soon enough I started getting it right, or so I thought, I joined the choir only to be ousted for the lack of pitch matching ability. Another hurdle, overwhelming, yet surmountable, I sat for endless hours going up and down scales until I was pitch perfect. I picked up the guitar, started singing along but something wasn't right, for they still won't take me into the band. I had to get my timing right, the sense of rhythm was shrouded in oblivion, and it took a metronome and two years of foot tapping to get it back.

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Finally, I was technically sound, ready to perform, to collaborate and compose, to enthrall and amaze, so I did. With my band I performed across venues, college fests, hard rock carnivals, pubs, open mics, concerts, you name it, I had earned the applause I so desired, but I am far from perfect, I look forward to it.

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.If there's a lesson here, I have learnt it well, I wouldn't have improved if I had compromised, mediocrity isn't an option, not when it's my passion, and to pursue knowledge, certainly is.

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.Management is an all encompassing holy grail, it will facilitate my transcendence to understanding the world, with an alternate perspective, quite different from the engineer's, that I possess. ISB is the stepping stone, it is my metronome, it has to be conquered.

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.I came close during YLP, 2013, got an interview call, but there were chinks in my armor, however , they have been ironed out, the pursuit ends only when I get accepted and it has to be now, for the time aligns with my goals. I didn't have a music teacher to count on, yet I succeeded, with ISB by my side, one can only wonder what I'd do.

Describe a (only one) defining moment in your personal / professional life when you had to make a risky decision, and explain what you did, why and the outcome?

or

Describe a (only one) situation in your personal / professional life when you had to interact with people from diverse backgrounds. How did it affect you and what did you learn?

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Within a few months of joining Cisco as a right out of college Network Consultant Engineer, I got an opportunity to lead a large scale Network Deployment Project for one of our biggest customers in the Middle- East.

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Once On-Site, I was introduced to the team I would be leading to carry out the implementation. While they were all very sound technically in their own areas of expertise, they didn't have any visibility on the rest of the scope or technologies involved in the project. As such, I was in-charge of ensuring that all the work went on seamlessly, and the project proceeded in a timely manner. As the single point of contact I was in-charge of all the cross-communication as well.

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My team-members were from diverse backgrounds, and while they all worked for my customer, I had to ensure that there were no communication-gaps. Also, since I was younger than most of them, I had to ensure I was sensitive and polite, but at the same time assertive enough, to get the work done.

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Since most of my teammates were devout muslims, they prayed at stipulated namaz timings and I ensured that there were no meetings that clashed with their prayer times. I actively took interest in the Arab culture and got to know about the significance of greetings, collective lunching and a few other nuances.

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There were a few instances when certain escalations would come to me and I would have to coordinate with multiple experts, trying to figure out and isolate faults. While it was necessary for me to be interrogative at these points of time, I still maintained a tactful approach.

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Throughout the project, I learnt a lot about inclusivity in diversity, tactfulness, and professional sensitivity to cultures and customs, and in retrospect owe the project's success, to my lessons.

What are your post ISB career plans and how will your past experiences and the Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) contribute to taking you there?

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I have always had entrepreneurial ambitions, but the clarity of pursuit recently dawned on me. As a Network Engineer, I have been involved in a lot of projects, research and proof of concepts pertaining to the technologies that in the future, will facilitate 'Internet of Things'. While untapped, it has a massive market potential, both globally as well as closer home, in India. Currently Cisco, my employer, is leading the 'IoT' race, and I have aligned my technical cross skills, to be in-line with that of an IoT expert. Eventually, I want to start my own venture and bring IoT to the masses.

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However, the start-up world isn't a level playing field anymore, even with the necessary technical skills, I would lag behind thousands of entrepreneurs who might have better managerial/business skills, experience and people network.

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In this regard, the ISB's PGP in Management would be extremely valuable for me to develop my business acumen, leadership abilities and managerial skills. Moreover being a part of ISB's vast and distinguished alumni network, would be a great advantage, helping me foster life-long connections and expand my business circle. Also with the wide and varied, student pool typical to any class, I'd get numerous viewpoints on any situation, which would contribute to my decision making ability as a business professional.

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Most importantly, I'd like to get some experience managing start-ups before I go ahead with my own venture, and ISB provides an excellent opportunity for the same with its Start-Up First Initiative, which throughout the last couple of years has been instrumental in providing a great platform for students to take up senior leadership positions, ultimately preparing them for launching their own ventures.

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With its diverse perspectives, ever expanding alumni network, and entrepreneur friendly outlook, ISB would be the perfect fit to nurture my aspirations.

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I have been a proponent of free and unrestricted knowledge transfer for a long time, and I believe that whatever I have learnt I should teach it to anyone who is a willing student. I have started a non-profitable initiative in which individuals with expertise in any area, can voluntarily help other willing students develop those skills. For example, twice a week, I conduct guitar classes, and provide my students with the necessary tutelage to be better guitarists, I ensure that I give them necessary individual attention and monitor their progress.

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The knowledge transfer is two way, since many of my students are themselves experts in varied areas, such as arts, philosophy, computer science and management. What I started as free guitar lessons has turned into a much bigger platform for sharing knowledge. We now have nine focus groups, and I get to learn boxing, contemporary dance, as well as android app development from the students/teachers I have.

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There is no dearth of talent, only lack of communication and collaboration, and each individual is in themselves an ocean of knowledge. I wanted to highlight this initiative because it's precious to me, and I am proud of what it has become.

If we were to admit just one more student, make a compelling argument as to why that student should be you by describing an (only one) achievement in your personal / professional life that you are most proud of. What did you do that sets you apart from others? What did you learn?

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I am a risk taker and do not hesitate from taking initiatives or driving change. I was hired by Jabong to take the team out of the 'inertia' and not get too involved with the current system. After I joined here, I spent my initial days in learning what the existing operational logic was and soon figured the loopholes in the systems and that the losses were at its peak.

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The first step was to change the returns process in and out and ensure that losses were minimized. The bigger challenge was to convince the CEO and the other seniors for such major changes in 50% of the company rules on which it had been functioning for the last 4 years. On understanding the previous loopholes, I designed the new strategies on which the returns process of the company should work, convinced the senior authorities to implement the same and got approval from them a few months back. I developed a Fraud Panel to keep track of all the fraudulent transactions. The refunds that were earlier done by judgment calls were easier now and all the fraud customers were watch-listed or blocked.

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Apart from handling the return risk, I did some technical changes in the systems used by the warehouse and instructed teams to arrange for re-dispatch of wrong items being received instead of processing refund for them. Also, I collaborated with the logistics partner GoJavas to make some major changes in the quality check process which were affecting significant losses. I personally conducted 5 quality check trainings (each attended by 120-150 members) PAN India to bring sanity in the quality check part of the returns process.

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I take pride in saving more than INR5 Crore in the last 3 months. My next focus is to automate the entire returns operation to save the man hours of employees and make the process entirely smooth.

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The last few months instilled extraordinary confidence in me, reinforcing my belief that I had the potential to deliver strong value despite my age. I learnt the importance of participating both from outside and inside to gain a holistic perspective of the system. This initiative at Jabong also offered me good practice in leading teams professionally. My penchant for taking initiatives, planning and precision and the courage to change the status quo are what I will summon through my stint at ISB.

Describe a (only one) defining moment in your personal / professional life when you had to make a risky decision, and explain what you did, why and the outcome?

or

Describe a (only one) situation in your personal / professional life when you had to interact with people from diverse backgrounds. How did it affect you and what did you learn?

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I worked with Vodafone in Mumbai for about 13 months. During my tenure with Vodafone, I performed stints in all verticals viz. Sales, Retail, Operations, IT and Networks to learn the basics of each. This helped me develop a strong foundation since I was fresh out of college, and getting familiar with all verticals helped me comprehend the functioning of large MNCs.

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Out of all the stints, the Sales stint was particularly remarkable where I had to deal with people from extremely diverse and varied backgrounds. The prime objective of the stint was to understand the sales of Vodafone at the grassroots level by visiting the local shops in Mumbai. This was done for 3 months and I visited about 35-40 shops daily which primarily included small shops in slums, e.g. a pan-shop who sells recharge cards and SIM cards. My major concern was to understand how the sale was happening at the root level, how the incentives were given to them, what drives the shopkeepers, and the issues faced by these sellers.

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During this stint, I also had conversations with the customers at the shops and discussed their concerns and how I could solve them. My prime focus was to collate all the requirements of the retailers and the customers and bring it to management's notice so that corrective actions could be taken.

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Collaborating with people from such diverse backgrounds was the major challenge during this stint. While dealing with shopkeepers, they would often be indifferent to service and would only look for latest schemes, whereas customers differed largely in what they wanted. Some were more particular about quality, while others looked for ease of recharge. With all the learning, my biggest take away was the insightful interactions I had and how I could invite participation even without immediate returns.

What are your post ISB career plans and how will your past experiences and the Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) contribute to taking you there?

I am currently associated with a Rocket Internet owned e-commerce startup, Jabong as a Manager in the Finance Operations department. My primary objective is to design new strategies and take initiatives for maximizing customer acquisition.

Indian e-commerce market is relatively new and the current strategies and daily operations focus primarily on customer acquisition. However, lately investors have begun to shift towards optimizing operations in order to achieve higher profitability. Being associated with a relatively well established start-up, my current focus is to design the strategies that also focus on minimizing the company losses. Such an experience at the ground level at an early age will surely form a strong base for a career in e-commerce.

Before Jabong, I had an enriching stint with Vodafone in varied verticals viz. operations, retail, sales, IT etc. Through these experiences, I learnt to appreciate a process driven system, while adapting well to a contrasting environment at Jabong. I now find it important to gain exposure to formal training in management in order to gain higher cross-functional perspective. This will help me transition to a mid-level managerial position in Operations with one of the leading e-commerce companies. In the medium term, with deeper understanding of the business, I aspire to position myself in the internal strategy team of the company.

Through ISB, I wish to move from day-to-day operations for a better customer experience to developing strategies to turn an e-commerce venture profitable. Core courses in finance, marketing and strategy along with case studies and simulations will help develop a holistic perspective and expose me to greater possibilities. A range of opportunities for professional and personal development will enable me to not just upgrade my academic and business perspective, but also transform me into an individual capable of impactful innovation and calculated decision-making.

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My career has been propelled by undiluted focus and a raging desire to excel right from my early days.

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I graduated from the Indian Institute of Technology (BHU), Varanasi as a Gold Medalist and the department topper (1st rank). An IIT is considered the benchmark of quality and excellence with some of the best brains in the country gathering at one place. When I landed in college, I was aware of the competition I was about to face, but with undeterred commitment, I continued to give my best. Consequently, I stood first during all four years of my B.Tech. I was awarded with several scholarships by the college. I also won the O.P. Jindal Engineering and Management Scholarship (OPJEMS) and stood amongst top 100 students from all IITs and IIMs. I was awarded the "Best all round performer in B.Tech for 4 years". I also received a fully funded B.Tech project by the Institution of Engineers. At the convocation, I became entitled to 3 gold medals, one of them being the IIT Gold Medal.

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While achievements like these have boosted my confidence, I remain confident that the esteemed peer-group at ISB will further bring out the best in me.

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Describe a (only one) situation in your personal / professional life when you had to interact with people from diverse backgrounds. How did it affect you and what did you learn?

When I joined Futures First, a futures trading firm, I wasn't the best among the lot of traders. I tried a lot of things, but still didn't manage to get hold of the key to making money. This went on for some time and I knew this wasn't going to work-out and I have to do something as we have a six month probation after which employees are either confirmed or told to leave.

I had a very long session with my manager and mentor and I explained to them everything about my trading and what I felt. We concluded that the problem lied in my risk averse nature and my inability to look at the bigger picture of the market, and the solution lied in me trading diverse strategies such as multi-year spreads, butterflies and condors.

Four months into my probation and with just two left I had to trade something completely new and different and hope it would be successful and ensure my probation. Or I could just continue the way I was and hope things worked out. I thought it out thoroughly once again and decided to go ahead with the planned execution. It started off pretty bad and took me quite some time to get a hang of. But just when it mattered the most and with only a few weeks left, things started turning around. I narrowly managed to get hold of an extension and then got confirmed the next month. Two months later I was the highest grosser in the group.

This experience taught me the value of analyzing situations and problems rationally and choosing a solution after very careful consideration. But once you do, fully back yourself to achieve what you set out for. Success will be there just around the corner.

**What are your post ISB career plans and how will your past experiences and the Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) contribute to taking you there?
(300 words max)**

My long term career goal and something which I have been planning since my UG days is to start a financial services firm, more specifically in the area of Islamic investment banking, a field which has tremendous potential in our country. I am planning to start off on a large scale and I feel it requires extensive ground work to be done.

I started off learning more about economics and the financial world and about how Islam deals with investments. I wanted to get some experience in a finance or IB firm post my graduation and I made it to Futures First during my campus placements and from there on I put in even more effort towards my ambition. Right from doing both my Mini and Major project in allied areas to increased reading/learning, I started out on all fronts.

Now, having worked here since 15 months, I am so much more sure and clear about my career plans and the ultimate goal. I am pretty sure of being a good trader and an investor for my firm and as a matter of fact it will be another 17-18 months before I leave Futures First, so I hope that just makes me even better.

Now, the next step is to get back to a school and learn a lot more about hiring, marketing, general administration etc. and this is where I feel that the role of a B School comes into my plans. I want to use my ISB experience to learn more about handling an organization and planning and strategizing the growth. I hope to get into a network of high performing individuals among whom I learn a lot and broaden my corporate exposure.

If we were to admit just one more candidate to the Postgraduate Programme (PGP) at the ISB, why should it be you? (400 words max)

As a mechanical engineer, I wanted a hands-on, specialized role in which I could challenge myself. I was rewarded for my dedication when I was selected by Siemens and was soon shortlisted as a trainee Balancing Engineer. I was quick in grasping the nuances of the role, already dealing with complex site issues independently, before my formal certification. I became the 2nd Balancing Engineer from Siemens India - youngest in the elite Eurasian pool of 15, after an intensive certification program in Berlin.

My frequent visit to power plants to troubleshoot turbo-machinery issues honed my customer responsiveness and sharpened my problem solving and decision making abilities. Since time is of essence in power plant breakdowns, I started taking pressure in my stride. Providing quick, reliable and sustainable solutions became my mission. Working hands-on in 40+ field projects taught me dozens of important lessons, helping me face challenges head-on. In parallel I participated in 'high-impact projects', despite extensive site work, solving business challenges for the business unit (BU). Later I began handling division communications, working closely with the division CEO and HQ team. This experience boosted my macroscopic understanding of the business and consolidated my bedrock for a long term career in management.

My experience of working in a specialized domain, troubleshooting issues on sophisticated machinery, has instilled a certain direction of thought that enables me to address any issue rationally and practically. These qualities, coupled with my overall business exposure, could enable me to immensely contribute in the ISB's PGP class in the following ways:

1. Share rich field experience in class discussions, enhancing the learning experience of my peers
2. Exchange real life industry problems involving key stakeholder management and resolution of plant issues with my peers in the Consulting & Energy Clubs
3. Provide solutions which are feasible and implementable by leveraging my experience in large value projects, ensuring success in case competitions.

Also, having donned several executive committee roles in the past, I intend to contribute as a GSB core team member. I would also love to lead one of the Ultimate Frisbee teams in ISL, and put my practice sessions with Storm Chasers (Mumbai's UF team) to good use.

I believe that I provide a balance of professional maturity, practical thinking, and strong extracurriculars which would enable me to add value to the ISB's PGP program and enhance the overall experience of my peers. (397 words)

Describe your short and long term career plans. How does the PGP fit in with those? (300 words max)

Companies in emerging markets are beating the blues by thinking out of the box while enhancing their global footprint. Such global fluidity coupled with the opportunities it brings, motivates me to apply to the ISB's PGP. The intensive course work will arm me with the necessary tools and frameworks required to solve business challenges, allowing me to further expand my 'Big' picture vision. My short term objective is to work towards a career in Strategy Consulting with companies such as Siemens Management Consulting, enabling my clients to develop strategies and implementation plans for business challenges such as global integration, growth and service delivery.

Handling diverse consulting projects across industries and verticals will provide me with in-depth knowledge of the challenges faced by business units and their leaders, preparing me for my long term objective - build and manage globally agile business units or organizations. Then as an ISB alumnus, I see myself as a business leader orchestrating growth, driving strategy and enabling measurable change for humanity.

ISB's emphasis on leadership in action, self-development and domain expertise would help me take stock of my own personal leadership aspirations and capabilities. The structured and disciplined curriculum will shape my perspectives on business excellence, organizational change and behaviour and link my personal and professional experience with case studies and simulations. The case study approach along with the 'Practicum' course would give me an opportunity to reinforce my academic learning, gaining hands-on experience of business and macroeconomic issues. Best of all, the intense selection process at ISB assures me I will have the opportunity to enjoy my metamorphosis with outstanding professionals with diverse experiences and backgrounds. This diverse cohort along with the ISB's resources and high calibre faculty would create an unforgettable, satisfying educational and personal experience. *(291 words)*

THE BOOTCAMP

ISB ESSAY BOOK

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Please use this space to provide any other information not covered elsewhere in the application that could significantly impact your candidature at ISB. Note: It is not necessary for you to write this essay. Please use this space only if there is something really significant that you would like us to know. (200 words max)

Over the last four years, I have travelled to 6 countries and 15+ states in India working and interacting extensively with people from different nationalities, backgrounds and cultures. Each of these experiences has been truly enriching, and has offered incredible learning and self development opportunities. They have helped not only look at the world from a different perspective altogether, but also cultivate critical thinking skills and develop global ideas.

I am also actively involved as an alumnus with my undergraduate college. In the recent months, I helped my college architect a digital networking platform ensuring better engagement of alumni. As a part of professional outreach benefitting Engineering Seniors at my alma-mater, I frequently conduct '*College to Corporate*' sessions to ensure their seamless transition to futuristic professional roles with a better appreciation of demands from the corporate sector. 'ShareYourBook' is another initiative that I co- founded recently to support the educational needs of under privileged students. Through this initiative, alumni and senior students are encouraged to 'share' their books upon completion of their courses. As a future ISB alumnus, I look forward to developing a similar long term association and contributing in whatever possible ways I can.

If we were to admit just one more student, make a compelling argument as to why that student should be you by describing an (only one) achievement in your personal / professional life that you are most proud of. What did you do that sets you apart from others? What did you learn? (400 words max)

I believe that a true leader takes the initiative and sets an inspiring example for others. I also believe that ISB values leadership and teamwork as a strong basis for its applicants and its students. I therefore use the following example to illustrate both these qualities, and to distinguish myself as an accomplished applicant to ISB.

ManipaltheTalk.net (or MTTN) is Manipal University's primary student forum online. In 2011, when I joined college, I was strongly inspired by the talented writers and PR managers in the team handling the website. I therefore wrote 60-70 articles for MTTN, which attracted 50,000 views, and led to me being appointed Editor and Technical Head. Yet, I realized that in spite of being an excellent resource for students, the site was known by few students, and used by even fewer. Over the 2012-15 period, I took multiple innovative steps that transformed MTTN.

First, over 2012, I ensured relevance by solely handling the academic section of MTTN. All assignments, news, timetables, and notes were now available at one place for students to access. Second, I fostered popularity by introducing reporting on regular college events, articles on movies, and funny comics on everyday life in the college. Third, I motivated others, and put in place a process that would outlast me managing MTTN. I would motivate juniors to take up assignments outside their comfort zone. For example, a PR manager would handle technical issues for some project, while a technical contributor would work on PR for some time. We also ensured that multiple people were given credit for articles, to promote greater camaraderie and team spirit. Over time, this created a team of dedicated people with a broad base of skills.

In 2011, MTTN had just 1,000 Facebook likes and low popularity. Today, it has more than 15 times that number, and is the most popular forum for students (online or offline) to interact, learn, and connect with the community.

This experience taught me the importance of initiative, the power of ideas, and the impact of focus and teamwork. I learnt how to introduce new ideas, work on them collaboratively, and then make them a success. Most importantly, I created a lasting and valuable resource for Manipal and my juniors. This spirit of shared achievement, camaraderie, and teamwork is what I represent, and I hope to hone it further as a student at ISB.

Describe a (only one) situation in your personal / professional life when you had to interact with people from diverse backgrounds. How did it affect you and what did you learn? (300 words max)

From May-July 2015, I interned for the Center for Environment Education (a United Nations organization), managing a team of young interns. We launched a campaign on the harmful effects of carbon emissions and the importance of leading a low-carbon lifestyle through setting up kiosks in popular Delhi malls.

To begin, I was the only engineer in my entire team, and the only one who had volunteered for the cause himself. I learnt to incorporate the views of my peers from humanities, philosophy, and commerce backgrounds. Next, when visiting malls for our proposals, I met different kinds of mall managers- some very welcoming, others rude, and yet others driven only by monetary incentives. I and our team learnt to approach and work with different managers according to their personalities and motivations.

However, my greatest exposure to diversity came at the stall we had set up. Stalls with social messages are not very popular, so I learnt to use different methodologies to interest different kinds of visitors. To foreigners, we showcased our initiatives and success stories. To skeptical housewives, we highlighted ways of efficient cooking to save costs. To young visitors, we demonstrated the importance of using electrical appliances at less than full intensity to save money and prolong their use.

We were successful in registering 3000 people in just a 3-day campaign, and also convinced 6 other malls to partner with us on this initiative. I consider this a huge success for us as a team.

I was affected tremendously by this experience, and learnt how to tailor my negotiation, communication, and influencing style according to the people I was addressing. I also became more accommodative to others' views, their sensibilities, and their needs. In turn, this made me a better listener and a better manager.

What are your post ISB career plans and how will your past experiences and the Post Graduate Programme in Management (PGP) contribute to taking you there? (300 words max)

My post-ISB career plan is to work as a consultant in a management consulting firm like Accenture, KPMG, Deloitte, or McKinsey. I choose this position because I want to go beyond the role of a data analyst, and explore the strategic and operational aspects of consulting from a process and business functions perspective.

My current role at Fractal Analytics has allowed me to work with top global consumer giants like Unilever, Krugers, and Burlington. While I enjoy the work, and am still learning, I can already see the importance of formal business understanding in deriving insights from data. Without business expertise and understanding, making sense of this data, and using it to create strategic and tactical action points is difficult. This is why I wish to gain comprehensive business education to understand business processes and functions.

The PGP is critical to helping me achieve my goals. At ISB, I will learn from top educators around the world like Prof Stine (Wharton), Prof Anjani Jain (Yale), Prof Finn (Kellogg), and Prof Shamika Ravi (ISB). They will help me gain a strong foundation in core business areas, along with the benefit of their deep perspectives into business.

Beyond the core, ISB electives like Strategy Implementation, Operations Strategy, Economics of Strategy, and Global Strategic Management (as only some examples) will give me in-depth knowledge related to business strategy and operations. The ELP will further help me gain hands-on skills relevant to a career in consulting.

At ISB, I also get the unique opportunity to learn from experienced peers in the Consulting club, and from industry experts in events like the Big Lead Summit and ISB Leadership Summit. This will further enhance my knowledge with an understanding of latest business trends and veteran perspectives.

This is why I apply to ISB.

Please use this space to explain any career breaks / provide any other information not covered elsewhere in the application that could significantly impact your candidature at ISB. Note: It is not necessary to write this essay. Please use this space only if there is something really significant that you would like us to know. (200 words max)

I would like to briefly highlight my academic achievements and my potential contribution to ISB.

Strong academic achievements: I have always been an excellent student, finishing in the top 15 students in a competitive batch of 230 students at Manipal Institute of Technology in 2015. Earlier, I had written 3 research papers in the field of distributed power generation, and presented them in various conferences and research forums in the country. I had also been given a prestigious scholarship from Intel for my bachelor's studies, being selected from 1400 applicants across 26 countries on the basis of my leadership potential in school.

Potential contribution to ISB: Apart from my work with MTTN and Center for Environment Education, I have also been an Editor for Art of Living, a freelance publicist for BookMyShow, and a volunteer at a home for the mentally challenged. At ISB, I hope to leverage my experiences at and for the Radio Club and the Net Impact Club. I would also like to stand for election to the post of Director of the Operations & Sustainability council, and serve the student body through my efforts.

I look forward to be an immersive part of ISB.

If we were to admit just one more candidate to the Postgraduate Programme (PGP) at the ISB, why should it be you?

Years ago, I came home teary eyed to tell my parents that I'd received a 'D' in Hindi. For a six year old with straight A's, this was earth-shattering. My father consoled me and said that everyone has limitations but those who can surpass them achieve true greatness.

He said, 'Bash on regardless!'

This stuck with me.

Even at an engineering college, I knew my strengths lay in management. I applied for the post of the cultural secretary and got selected from over 300 students to lead boards, councils and a student population of 1200.

It was one of the most challenging experiences of my life. I had grand plans for our cultural fests but they were punctured by budget constraints. I remained ambitious nonetheless and tried my best to gather sponsorship.

I traveled tens of kilometers every day, meeting prospective sponsors, negotiating and pitching our events. After a few futile attempts, I reevaluated my strategy and optimized my target sponsor-base. I approached small scale coaching institutes whose primary clientele was students.

Most sponsors were skeptical about the footfall and therefore I decided to boost the publicity of our event. I created a core team for publicity and successfully gathered over 1500 registrations within a month. Consequently we bagged sponsorship far exceeding our expectations and introduced two new events. This experience enhanced my foresight, decision-making and negotiation skills.

As the cultural secretary, I headed 4 clubs and organized various events such as the Founders Day attended by the Chief of Army. I also arranged a very high profile visit by Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam. Interactions with such dignitaries honed my social skills, boosted my confidence and strengthened my willpower. I also acted as a mediator between the administration and the student body. I handled a plethora of issues ranging from dress-code to ragging. I learnt managerial qualities such as relationship management and diplomacy.

As the Batch Prefect for 4 years, I understood the magnitude of responsibility one shoulders while representing people's voice. I also learnt how imperative a part of leading it is to listen to and not

just hear people's perspectives.

My learnings will be valuable in taking up initiatives and contributing to the Graduate Student Board as a student director. I intend to look for opportunities of optimization. With my grit and determination, I will be an asset to ISB. Despite the challenges, I will bash on regardless!

Describe your short and long term career plans. How does the PGP fit in with those?

Destiny introduced me to the subject of Cervical Cancer vaccinations in twelfth grade. India accounts for one-fourth of all cervical cancer deaths in the world and the irony is that it is preventable. What began as a school project transformed into a passion for healthcare. I worked with cancer patients to understand the root cause-ignorance-and started spreading awareness about the vaccination across schools and colleges in Bangalore and Pune.

When Deloitte came to campus offering a position in the Healthcare Advisory sector, it was the perfect piece to my puzzle.

Healthcare demand already outstrips supply in India and the gap will continue to grow with increase in population, disease burdens and ignorance of health issues. Currently, access to quality healthcare is difficult for many patients while a luxury of premium customers. In the next two decades, I aim to help usher in India a healthcare system where every citizen has insurance.

With that long term goal in mind, post ISB I see myself continuing in the healthcare industry, addressing macro-level problems such as highly variable and below-standard clinical care, low patient satisfaction and variability in health status among the population etc. that global healthcare businesses face.

My heart is set on ISB because I want my MBA to not only be an education but also an experience. An MBA is more about what one can do outside a classroom than in it. The professional student clubs at ISB pique my interest, the Healthcare and Consulting Club will nurture my post MBA goals. The CAS at ISB will give me the opportunity to discuss my goals with industry experts and work at firms such as Novartis and Biocon.

To succeed in consulting, leadership and people skills are as important as proficiency in an industry and ISB is where leaders are made.

Please use this space to provide any other information not covered elsewhere in the application that could significantly impact your candidature at ISB. Note: It is not necessary for you to write this essay. Please use this space only if there is something really significant that you would like us to know.

"Where do you belong to?" A question I'm often asked. Having changed 9 schools and lived in 15 cities, the answer is more complex for me than for most.

I'm north Indian with a Kannada accent. While in Bangalore, I was surrounded by prejudice against North Indians. Moving to Delhi for work, I was surrounded by the same prejudice but against South Indians.

Prejudice irks me.

Being an army ward has taught me to not define people by the region they come from or the God they pray to. I grew up to be more sociable and adjustable and developed impeccable networking skills.

This transcended to my work at Deloitte. I interacted with teams from across India as well as global clients. I was co-located to a partner team's office where I helped increase productivity and improve quality.

I also led multiple teams and worked 120 hour weeks. I am the youngest in my team single-handedly driving a multi-million project.

For Deloitte's annual CSR, I led a team of 6 and managed volunteers to teach underprivileged kids about unity in diversity.

My demonstrated leadership ability, initiatives and community outlook lead me to believe in my perfect fit to ISB's culture.

If we were to admit just one more student, make a compelling argument as to why that student should be you by describing an (only one) achievement in your personal / professional life that you are most proud of. What did you do that sets you apart from others? What did you learn? (400 words max)

In school, Model United Nations (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Model_United_Nations) provided me the first exposure to public speaking, through debates on diplomacy, international relations, and United Nations. It enhanced my knowledge base on global issues, honed my research skills, and built my proficiency in effective communication. This passion for public speaking has stayed with me ever since, and continues to contribute immensely to my persona. In college I joined Renaissance, the debating society, to break into the larger debating circuit in Delhi University. The debating circuit in the Colleges of Delhi University is extremely active and very competitive. However, our college's debating society was dormant, with members lacking expertise in Parliamentary Debating, a format followed in most university tournaments.

As part of 5-member core committee, I introduced a comprehensive training regimen, including case-building sessions, mock debates, and argumentation activities, substantially improving our debating competence. To further rejuvenate our college's debating society, we invited experienced debaters to train us on the nuances of Parliamentary Debating. These initiatives started yielding results, as we won prestigious intra and inter-varsity tournaments. In a testimony to the increasing clout of our college debating society, our college organised the Women's Studies and Development Centre (WSDC) Debate in collaboration with M/o Overseas Indian Affairs in the second year.

By our third year, we had imparted these skills to 25+ members. After participating in more than 15 tournaments and gaining repute in the larger circuit, I was invited as an adjudicator in Mukherjee Memorial International debate at St Stephens. An adjudicator decides the win-loss of the debating teams; convincing the losing team about your decision, especially where margins are extremely close, is no easy task. The teams in turn evaluate the adjudicators, who qualify to the next round on a competitive basis. Sound listening skills, coupled with ability to identify logical fallacies, helped me break into the quarter finals of the tournament.

Parliamentary format of debating at various national platforms has refined my thought process, making it more logical, structured, and open to unconventional viewpoints. I am a staunch feminist, but won the best speaker award on the motion "Women belong in the kitchen". Debating has also inculcated in me, the traits of empathy and the ability to persuade people over whom I do not have any formal authority. To me, debating transcends mere verbal communication; it exemplifies spontaneity, rationality, and out-of-the-box thinking, traits that have become a part of very existence.

Describe a (only one) defining moment in your personal / professional life when you had to make a risky decision, and explain what you did, why and the outcome? (300 words max)

During graduation, the world of “hedge funds” invariably invoked immense interest (bordering on “awe”) among many of us. Hence, the news of a top US hedge fund visiting our campus for recruitment for the very first time overwhelmed everyone. I distinctly remember the day when this hedge fund revealed the salary offer—a figure that most of us could only have dreamt of as freshers.

The selection process was rigorous, comprising multiple technical and personality rounds. I cleared all of them. In my final round, I probed the interviewers on my job profile, role in the organisation, and prospects for career growth. Surprisingly, the interviewers seemed evasive and far from candid. Further discussion convinced me that the job profile did not have much to offer, except the hefty package.

I politely refused the offer, a decision that stunned my friends and disappointed my parents. They thought I had acted impulsively, but I knew that it was not a rash, but a rational decision, reflecting my equanimity of thought and my ability to take a long term view, beyond just immediate gratifications. I was clear that I did not want to start my career with a job that does nothing to enhance my profile and adds little to my proficiencies.

The decision was risky, but it paid off. A month later, I got placed in Ernst & Young with a profile which not only complements my skill set but has accelerated my learning curve in more ways than one. The salary is peanuts compared to what I could have earned elsewhere, but the client facing role and the phenomenal industry exposure is what I did not want to compromise on. This clarity of thought and self awareness is what set me apart from others and guides all my life choices.

Describe your short and long term career plans. How does the PGP fit in with those?

My association with Social Service started 3 years back, with AIESEC and later “Make a Difference” NGO for underprivileged children. Although this first brush with social service sector was more out of curiosity than interest, I increasingly got my hands and feet wet in this sector. I witnessed how most NGOs had a “shelf-life” of only few years. It was clear to me that “not-for-profit” organizations cannot be “for-loss” organizations, and no philanthropic endeavour can sustain for too long, solely on endowments and largesse.

Hence, I started deliberating on sustainable models for bringing social change. A summer program in Soda village under the mentorship of the Sarpanch gave me a glimpse of the rural India and the problems at the grassroots. I worked on areas of primary education, gender sensitization, and sanitation. These experiences have enhanced my perspective and convinced me of the entrepreneurial approach to development, culminating in my winning the Enactus Social Entrepreneurship B-plan competition for presenting workable model “Women on Wheels”.

While my thoughts vis-à-vis social development have matured considerably, my ideas are still work-in-progress. Consulting has given me the opportunity to understand various business domains, problems across industries and intricacies involved in proposed solutions. My approach to problem solving has become more pragmatic and result driven. This experience, I believe is critical to my success as an entrepreneur.

ISB is my next logical destination to acquire knowledge, network, and nuances, to refine my thought process. ISB’s social venture competition iDiya, thriving Net Impact Club and Khemka Foundation manifest ISB’s immense relevance towards my goals. ISB Global Pro-Bono Consulting Program would provide a platform to work on business problems of not-for-profit organizations. At ISB, I also hope to team up with like-minded people who share my social entrepreneurship dreams and care to make those dreams a reality.

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What defines a person is not their CV, trophies, or fat pay cheque but the intangible aspects of their personality. The underlying theme in all my achievements is the strong sense of ownership that I develop for all my endeavours. My work reflects ability and willingness to make a positive difference to my surroundings.

While working as a volunteer in “Make A Difference” NGO, I implemented an impact assessment module across six centres to measure improvement in English communication skills of children. Lack of formal designation in the organisation never deterred me.

In college, most students have a casual approach towards college projects. As a part of four member team for the Market Research project, I performed primary research to assess the accessibility and acceptability of generic drugs among the slum population in Delhi. The study was comprehensive and is now being used by the NGO SIFE’s SSCBS unit, to launch a new program.

In life I have explored multiple avenues with an aim of developing myself, both on a professional and personal level and have always stood out for my initiative and ability to go that extra mile.