

顶尖商学院 MBA 亲身体验

A Must-read for Chinese MBA Applicants

MBA GUIDE BY INSIDERS

申请国际商学院指南

王健 李凯军 陈蕴 著



上海译文出版社

顶尖商学院 MBA 亲身体验

A Must-read for Chinese MBA Applicants

MBA GUIDE
BY INSIDERS

申请国际商学院指南

王健 李凯军 陈蕴 著



上海译文出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

申请国际商学院指南：顶尖商学院 MBA 亲身体验 / 王健, 李凯军, 陈蕴编著. —上海：上海译文出版社，2004. 11

ISBN 7 - 5327 - 3510 - 9

I. 申... II. ①王... ②李... ③陈... III. ①留学生教育—概况—美国—英文②高等学校—简介—美国—英文 IV. G649. 712. 8

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2000)第 059635 号

本书中文简体字专有出版权
归本社独家所有,非经本社同意不得连载、摘编或复制

申请国际商学院指南

——顶尖商学院 MBA 亲身体验

王健 李凯军 陈蕴 编著

上海世纪出版集团

译文出版社出版、发行

网址：www.yiwen.com.cn

上海福建中路 193 号

易文网：www.ewen.cc

全国新华书店经销

上海书刊印刷有限公司印刷

开本 850 × 1168 1/32 印张 12.25 插页 2 字数 310,000

2004 年 11 月第 1 版 2004 年 11 月第 1 次印刷

印数：0,001—6,000 册

ISBN 7-5327-3510-9/H · 635

定价：25.00 元

PREFACE

前 言

编者按：本书是一群来自美国顶尖商学院的中国 MBA 学位获得者为帮助您实现梦想，精心准备的指南，由陈蕴完成汇编。三位主要作者及七位特约撰稿人都毕业于 Harvard, MIT, Stanford 和 Wharton 等顶尖商学院；他们也曾帮助过几十位朋友顺利攻入顶尖商学院，并应邀在各所商学院的申请讲座中发表演讲。

MBA 学位到底有多大价值？您可能已经读过许多这方面的评论，也会有许多自己的见解。而在过去的三年里，我们参与了无数这样的讨论。MBA 这个学位对于不同的人当然有不同的价值，但有一点几乎是无可争议的：那就是我们中间的许多人都能通过攻读 MBA 为自己的事业插上腾飞的翅膀。

2003 年秋，《美国商业周刊》(Business Week) 调查访问了排名前 30 位的商学院的 500 名 1992 年 MBA 毕业生。调查表明，在毕业 10 年后，89% 的毕业生认为商学院的经历对他们取得今天的成就非常有帮助，并且表示如果让他们重新选择，他们还会选择攻读商学院的道路。这些 MBA 毕业生现在从 Smith Barney 的执行总裁到慈善机构的总管，从事着各行各业的重要工作。在事业上，他们绝大多数处于各公司最高管理阶层，平均每人管理 93 人；在经济上，他们平均年薪加上奖金均在 40 万美金以上；在社会福利上，他们开办的公司创造了 10 万多个就业机会，并且慷慨地向慈善机构捐助款项。而在他们中间，有相当一部分是中国人。

近年来，我们经常往来于中美之间。我们欣喜地发现，愈来愈多

的中国人开始认识到一流学府 MBA 学位的重大价值。他们希望能去国际知名的商学院学习一套系统的经营管理与金融方面的知识和技能,去结识一批世界级的商业管理人;他们希望对世界级商学院能有更多、更细致、更全面的了解;他们希望能更加顺利地进入这些世界级的商学院学习。但是我们也发现,他们所能了解的信息量和信息的准确性、针对性都非常有限,导致有些十分优秀的人才最终还是功亏一篑,未能进入理想的学校。针对这样的现象,在过去几年里,我们参加了许多 MBA 研讨会,并于 1999 年在美国出版了一本商学院指南“MBA Secrets”(《MBA 申请秘诀》),为申请者提供必备但又难以找全的宝贵信息。由于“MBA Secrets”受到了极大的欢迎,让我们很受鼓舞。为了给国内申请商学院的朋友提供方便,我们决定扩充此书内容、增补信息,更名为《申请国际商学院指南》,在中国首次出版。

这本书建立在“MBA Secrets”的基础上,我们在内容和信息的深度和广度上又进行了大量的增补,使之更具指导性、实用性和权威性,成为一本真正的“指南”,而不仅仅是简单机械地罗列法则、技巧和资料的所谓“攻略”。其中最有力度的更新,是增加了与 8 位来自美国顶尖商学院的毕业生的对话,这些充满活力的佼佼者,将用生动的话语向你展示各自丰富多彩的学习和事业历程。我们希望通过这本书打开一个窗口,让读者能更真切地了解中国学生在世界顶尖商学院里的学习与生活,了解 MBA 的学习经历为他们带来的事业上的发展;同时也能让您看到一条符合自身条件的 MBA 之路。

在这本书里,我们提供了从我们自身的经验中提炼出的具体的策略与方法,在读这本书的时候,我们希望读者能在我们身上发现您自己的影子。我们都是一群普通的中国人,攻入美国商学院之前,我们来自中国不同的地区和学校,有着不同的家庭和专业背景,其中有的人原先的家庭条件并不好,出国前根本不知道 MBA 是什么,但仍然凭着自己的钻研和努力,进入了美国最好的学府。在面对是否要去商学

院的时候,我们也曾有过犹豫和惶惑;而一旦决定了攻读 MBA,如何考入自己理想的学校又成为呈现在我们眼前的一大难题,在步入学校的过程中,我们也遇到过挫折,走过弯路;当我们终于进入一所理想的学府,为能与一群雄心勃勃且各具其能的管理人才交友而兴奋无比时,新的挑战又接踵而至。作为一群“过来人”,我们深深地体会到,若当时能受益于一些经验之谈,得到一些指点,我们就会少走许多弯路,求学之路将更加顺利。

有鉴于此,我们将此书分成两大部分。第一部分通过了解我们的情况和经历,来帮助你决定是否要去念 MBA。我们力图避免泛泛而谈,而是用真实经历阐明对于不同背景的个人,其攻读商学院的利弊,用自身业绩告诉你“有志者事竟成”。第二部分是专为中国学生准备的具体的申请步骤和指南。为了帮助你取得 GMAT 高分,我们请两位 GMAT 分别获 800(满分)和 780 的朋友介绍心得,我们还摘入了 47 篇由考入全美顶尖 11 所商学院的学生提供的、经过实战考验的真实范文(ESSAYS),每一篇都曾帮助一位申请者进入顶尖商学院。在附录中,我们为大家准备了许多有关美国最优秀商学院的崭新信息,包括学校排名与学生分布的数据。

我们知道您和我们一样,也是有着不寻常梦想的人,渴望有一天成为成功的商业领导者与管理人。我们想用亲身经历告诉你,我们能做到的,您一定也可以做到,并且可以做得更好!

这本书是集体工作的结晶。作为此书的作者,我们非常感谢我们的特约撰稿人,他们为此书提供了丰富的信息和资料,带给我们不同凡响的体验。为写作此书,我们花费了大量时间,如果没有我们各自家庭的支持,这本书就不可能如期完成,我们在此感谢他们。最后,我们还要特别感谢译文出版社以及吴莹老师对我们的引导与支持。

王 健 李凯军 陈 蕴

2003 年于美国

CONTENTS

目 录

前言 / *PREFACE*

第一部 我是否应该申请商学院 / *PART ONE IS BUSINESS SCHOOL FOR ME* 1

第一章 三步指南 / *Chapter I The Three-Step Guide* 3

第二章 美国顶尖 MBA 心得 / *Chapter II The Insiders' View* 11

第二部 申请指南 / *PART TWO APPLICATION GUIDE* 107

第一章 申请概述 / *Chapter I Overall Strategies* 108

第二章 短文写作 / *Chapter II Application Essays* 116

第三章 推荐信 / *Chapter III Letters of Recommendation* 136

第四章 面试 / *Chapter IV Interview* 151

第五章 GMAT 备考要诀 / *Chapter V GMAT Preparation Tips* 166

附录 I 全美前 20 所顶尖商学院排名 / *APPENDIX I Top 20 Business School Ranking 2002/2003* 198

附录 II 顶尖商学院概况 / *APPENDIX II Detailed Information of Top B-schools* 200

附录 III	短文写作题集锦 / APPENDIX III	<i>Categories of Essay Questions</i>	253
附录 IV	短文写作范例 / APPENDIX IV	<i>Sample Essays</i>	263

PART ONE IS BUSINESS SCHOOL FOR ME

第一部分 我是否应该申请商学院

阅读提示

MBA 现已成为一个炙手可热的学位,越来越多的人在考虑去商学院深造。但是,与一般学位不同,要想去一个好学校念 MBA,尤其是想要获得一个世界顶尖商学院的学位,将会是一笔巨大的投资。于是,各种问题相应而生:

“我究竟应不应该去作这笔投资?会有什么样的回报?”

“MBA 是否真能帮助我将来的事业发展?”

“若我想在中国发展事业,国外顶尖商学院的学位对我会有帮助吗?”

“如果我已决定出国念 MBA,我应该怎样申请,才能进入我理想的学校?”

“顶尖的商学院有那么多,它们是各有区别还是都差不多?我应该怎样去挑选?”

为了帮助大家回答这些问题,我们不仅准备了一个基本测试来帮你回答“是否应该去念 MBA”这个问题,还与八个名校的 MBA 毕业生进行了对话。这些 MBA 毕业生分别来自 Berkeley, Chicago, Columbia, Harvard, Kellogg, MIT Sloan, Stanford 与 Wharton 这八所国际前十名的商学院,他们有不同的背景,在不同

的行业里工作,对 MBA 也有自己不同的感受。在对话中,他们介绍了他们各自申请商学院的经验,在学校中的心得体会,以及不同商学院的特点。我们希望他们的话能解答大家的种种疑问,为大家指明方向,让读者对世界顶尖商学院有更多、更全面、更细致的了解。

Chapter I The Three-Step Guide

第一章 三步指南

Prior to starting the application process, it is important to first carefully think over whether a business education fits you. Finding the answers to the following questions would allow you to avoid getting into a business school blindly. The business schools you will apply to will ask these questions anyway.

To the question “Why are you interested in going to business school?”, different people have different answers; many of which are “wrong” because they are based on myths or faulty assumptions. One most common wrong answer is: “An MBA degree will bring a glamorous life to me.” I can tell you from my own experience that this answer is often untrue. Majority of our top business school classmates have experienced periods of unemployment, especially right after the burst of the Internet bubble. I assure you that living on unemployment benefits and looking for a job is not glamorous. The fact is that, while a top MBA degree might provide you with a “key” to a more successful career and fulfilling life, the degree itself does not guarantee success.

Facing the same question, some people may answer: “An MBA degree will take me out of my current miserable life.” Wrong again! If your nature is not suitable to be a businessperson, getting an MBA could make your life more miserable. I know a brilliant scientist who

decided to give up his research career for an MBA. After paying over \$80,000 for tuitions and expenses and forgoing two years of salary—totaling about \$120,000, he found himself unable to get a job since he did not have strong interpersonal skills. He felt more miserable than ever.

Another common “wrong” answer is “everyone else is doing it”. A Chinese who has never been abroad is even more likely to make this mistake. “An MBA degree from the U.S. must be worth it. Otherwise why everyone is getting one?” You could be thinking. Although it is true that the number of business school applicants is at a record high, other people’s decisions may not be the best for you. Remember the “Internet bubble”? Everyone was buying Internet stocks. Should you buy it as well? If you did, chances are you have probably lost a lot of money. To some people, an MBA degree is a path to success, but to others, it means a series of failures, years of struggles with language issues and culture barriers. This old saying is true: “Some people’s meat is other people’s poison.”

But what is the “right” answer to the question? The answer is simple: “An MBA degree would ‘fit’ me!” Yes, “fit” is the name of the game. “Fit” means your personality, interests and strengths will allow you to be a successful business person. We have designed a “three-question” test to find out whether an MBA would “fit” you.

Step 1: Figure out whether you would feel happy to be a business person

You are the only person in the world who can answer this ques-

tion. This seemingly easy question requires deep and objective thinking about yourself. If you, like many other people, find it difficult to give a straight answer to the question, try to ask yourself more “clear cut” questions. Would you feel excited to manage people? Are you interested in building businesses? Do you tend to think strategically? Are you a “big picture” person or do you tend to focus on technical details? Do you feel that business people are important or they do not “create” any real value? Honestly answering these questions can help you gain a clear picture of yourself.

Only when you believe you are pursuing happiness, will you be able to overcome the difficulties ahead of you to gain an MBA from a top business school. We believe that people can generally do well in the long run as long as the person puts his mind to it.

Please do yourself a favor—don’t try to become a businessperson if you are not passionate about business. You should never drag yourself to do business. Not going to business school may seem to be an uncomfortable decision at the moment but this decision could save you years of misery.

Step 2: Figure out whether your strengths suit a business career

A person should utilize his strengths and avoid his weaknesses as much as possible. To figure out whether your strengths suit a business career, ask yourself: Do you prefer to work with people or “things”? Are you an introvert or an extravert? Do you enjoy connecting with strangers? Are you expressive? Would you feel comfortable to “sell” to people?

The answers to these questions should give you a clearer and more realistic picture about yourself. If you are an introvert good at working with machines but not with people, you probably should not get an MBA. If you are not strong in the skills important for a successful business career, such as interpersonal and communications skills, try another career which would fit your strengths better. You should not fight against yourself by trying to become who you are not.

If you plan to work in the U.S. after the business school, pay extra attention to your language skills and the culture barriers. I once met an intelligent Chinese who had an MBA from a top business school. He was good at written English, but could not speak the language well. Perhaps due to his old age, he has never sharpened his language skills enough to communicate well in English. After struggling in the U.S. for a couple years, he moved back to China, where he could better develop his career. While working in China is by no means bad, he did fail to reach his goal, which is to develop a career in the U.S.

When you are thinking about whether your strengths would “fit” a business career, try to figure out whether you could gain some essential strengths by hard work and determination. Perhaps you do not have strong English language skills to begin with but you are a quick language learner. You would be able to overcome the language barriers over time.

Step 3: Figure out whether you would gain more than you would cost to get an MBA

There are two aspects that you need to consider: career and finances. On the career aspect, consider whether going to business

school would allow you to gain the strengths that you do not currently have but are important for your career success. Could you gain similar strengths without spending the precious two years and a large amount of money? At which career stage would you likely be if you spend the two years working? Would you still be on the technical side or have already “migrated” to the managerial side?

Step 3 requires you to understand how an MBA could benefit you. There are many answers to this question: brand name, a doorway to a world of business opportunities, career shifting opportunity, powerful network, leadership mind-set and, last but not least, business knowledge.

First, an MBA is a key to a world of business opportunities. You could use the MBA to change your career path. Perhaps you have a scientific or technical background. Once you have the degree, people would “perceive” you a businessperson since you have been trained for doing business. Do you know that over 3/4 of all MBAs are career shifters? That is, majority of MBAs pursue different post-MBA careers from their pre-MBA careers. We had classmates who used to be elementary school teacher, sportsmen and movie producer ended up as successful business people.

If you are from China, you could use a business education to make big changes in your career. It could give you good exposure to the Western world. You could also “quantum leap” into world-class business training. Such amazing “transformations” have been achieved by many driven, persistent and intelligent Chinese each year.

Another important benefit of getting an MBA from a top business school is the brand name. In the U.S., be it right or wrong, the business school's ranking is often important for an MBA's job opportunities. While top ten schools' MBAs are generally in high demand, the graduates from below top 20 schools often find the degree not particularly helpful.

Going to a top business school would also provide you with invaluable opportunities to network with important business people, including your classmates, alumni or people who are associated with your school. Such a network would be critical for your business career but it would be difficult to gain by other means.

Moreover, getting an MBA from a top school often provides an "intangible" benefit to many people: the leadership mind-set. Being trained to be a leader with a group of outstanding leader candidates probably would have positive impact on your way of thinking. At a good school, you would have the opportunities to meet many great business leaders. You would learn their stories of successes and failures as well as their way of thinking and decision-making. You would find yourself more confident, strategic and with a "broader vision".

In addition, you will also gain from the MBA training—the business knowledge. The knowledge is critical to your career development.

You should take your Chinese background into consideration as well. Would an American MBA help you in what you want to do in the long run? If you plan to work in China after getting the degree, perhaps common sense and street smart, which you could gain by working in a local environment, is crucial and a U.S. MBA degree would count less.

To understand the financial aspect of business school's costs and benefits, you need to realistically project and compare your financial futures under two scenarios (going to school and not going to school) according to your personal situation. You should compare the financial impacts on your entire career between business school and working. Forcing yourself to put some numbers on paper would help you understand the pros and cons of going to a business school.

MBA's financial costs include opportunity cost—two years of salaries—as well as costs related to the MBA education, such as tuitions and fees. MBA's financial benefits should include the income increase after getting the MBA and the income from your summer internship (between the two business school years, if any).

If you are a Chinese working in China, it is likely that you would gain financially by attending a top international business school. This, however, is not always true. If you are involved in a very promising business opportunity, which you would lose if you go to business school, the loss might not be recovered by the financial gains after business school.