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Executive
Education

Education That Takes You to the Corner Office and Beyond

If you desire to take your career to the next level, now might be a good time for you to get your Executive MBA. According to the Graduate Management Admission Council, 72% of companies surveyed said they planned to hire those with graduate business degrees in 2015, up 3% from 2014. In addition, senior-level jobs are increasingly hard to fill. Results released earlier this year by recruiting firm Robert Half, found that 68% of 2,100 CFOs interviewed said it was challenging to find skilled candidates for professional-level positions.

While a traditional MBA attracts many interest-
ed in switching industries or gaining a unique skill set tailored to their field, an Executive MBA (EMBA) aims to propel mid-level managers to a C-suite position within their company.

Companies seek to hire EMBA graduates because of deeper expertise and industry knowledge of current and emerging business practices. According to the Executive MBA Council, EMBA programs not only help business leaders grow, they help them move significantly faster through career transitions, find a new job or achieve a promotion, or launch a new business. That’s why it’s no surprise the Council’s Student Exit Benchmarking Survey reports 41 percent of EMBA graduates in 2014 said they received a promotion during their time in the program.

What makes an EMBA impactful? Advanced training that comes from an EMBA provides integrated and complete business skills fundamental to running an organization. However, not all EMBA programs are created equal. Ranked 23rd in the world by Bloomberg Businessweek, the Pepperdine Executive MBA program focuses on the development of strategic leadership competencies through a collaborative learning environment. It delivers a full MBA experience in 19 months with a format and curriculum that fits the needs and schedules of busy executives. Meeting every three weeks on Friday and Saturday, the program offers:

- Executive mentoring exclusive to you. Unique to Pepperdine’s EMBA, each cohort is assigned a class advisor to offer guidance throughout the program. These entrepreneurs and business executives are graduates of our EMBA program and bring a wealth of valuable experience and connections to you.
- Learning focused on your business. Pepperdine’s “live case study” program makes your company the focal point of an intensive research and consulting project. Making your business part of the curriculum allows you to bring what you are learning directly into your firm to solve real challenges in real-time.
- A global perspective. An international research excursion gives you keen insight into developing markets and a deeper understanding of global business. Students visit two countries and meet face-to-face with company executives to experience first-hand how global business is done.
- Experienced faculty from all areas of business. Pepperdine’s EMBA faculty includes respected scholars, seasoned executives, consultants, and entrepreneurs. The low student-to-faculty ratio ensures students have ample opportunity to ask questions, share ideas, and build relationships with leaders and peers across industry.
- Presidents and Key Executive MBA Students working on a consulting project. Graduates become part of an exclusive network of senior business executives who can network with throughout their careers.

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While an Executive MBA is intended to get you that senior executive position, Pepperdine’s Presidents and Key Executives (PKE) MBA is for top-level executives charged with strategic decision-making and bottom-line results. The only MBA program in the world designed for C-level, senior and business owner executives, the Pepperdine PKE focuses not only on the operational and financial aspects of business, but on your personal development as a leader. With a special focus on the strategic challenges faced by company presidents and senior executives, classes are limited in size and structured in an intimate boardroom setting where top-level peers exchange ideas and problem-solve as a group.

Along with this, the Pepperdine PKE MBA focuses on ethical leadership and corporate social responsibility, which is at the core of the Graziadio Business School mission and is incorporated into all facets of the PKE program. Similar to the Pepperdine EMBA, the PKE is a degree that will get you beyond C-suite success and into personal prosperity.

Pepperdine’s EMBA meets at campus locations in Southern California. In these locations, students have access to executive-style classrooms, faculty offices, computer labs, and reference facilities. In addition, the West Los Angeles Graduate Campus offers a Part-Time MBA, M.S. in Management and Leadership, M.S. in Human Resources, and its Bachelor’s Completion Program.

Whether you’re a mid-level professional looking to advance your career to the next level or a seasoned executive looking for professional and personal growth, an EMBA or PKE with Pepperdine will ensure you reach your goal.

Information for this article was provided by Pepperdine's Executive MBA program. For more information or questions, please contact the program at (800) 766-5062 or email execpgms@pepperdine.edu.
Prepares Our Future Business Leaders

Preparing Our Future Business Leaders

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he mission of Woodbury University’s School of Business is to prepare future leaders of organizations to communicate effectively, act ethically, and think globally in a strategic manner.

Founded in 1884, Woodbury University has been empowering students to transform their lives for over 130 years. The school’s motto is “transform the world by transforming yourself.” As such, Woodbury transforms students into educated professionals and socially responsible citizens by integrating its Four Pillars of learning: Transdisciplinarity, Design Thinking, Entrepreneurship and Civic Engagement.

Woodbury’s MBA program is designed to prepare future leaders by cultivating their authentic voice and developing their distinctive talents. Like most successful MBA programs, one of Woodbury’s key factors of success is the personal mentorship that students experience from faculty members who are also accomplished businessmen and women.

Woodbury’s intensive MBA program also prepares business leaders to compete in a global environment marked by rapid technological and social change. Whether students are looking to transition into a new industry, start their own business or further a career in their current field, an MBA from Woodbury University gives students a competitive edge.

During their MBA studies, degree candidates participate in unique service-learning initiatives. In their projects, students take on a leadership role by identifying a problem and finding an organization to work with, and creating a connection in order to engage in a morally responsible venture. This unique degree requirement marries the foundational pillars of the university with developing the skills—statistics, communication, presentation, team management—that our students will need in the current business landscape.

Woodbury’s program proudly offers Capsim Simulations, which are used by the world’s best companies (e.g. Johnson & Johnson, Microsoft, Lockheed Martin, and Sony Music Entertainment) to train emerging leaders in the management of a multi-million dollar company. Capsim is designed to teach all the elements of running a business: finance, the cause and effect relationship between functional departments, satisfying customer demands, competitive analysis, leadership, management development, and team-building skills.

Woodbury’s students represent the cultural diversity of Southern California and personify the American dream of education and hard work. With an average class size of fifteen, Woodbury students learn from a combination of full-time and part-time faculty. This mix of highly credentialed, academically trained professors with extensive practical business experience is led by the Dean of Woodbury’s School of Business, Andre van Niekerk, who is a specialist in international and luxury brand marketing. Dr. van Niekerk’s long history of work as an academic researcher and a strategy consultant for Mercedes-Benz demonstrates how Woodbury provides its students with the best of both worlds. Woodbury University is an accredited member of AACSB International—the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. It is also accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACSBP) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) since 1961.

Woodbury students attend classes on a 22-acre residential campus nestled at the foot of the Verdugo Mountains on the border of Burbank and the City of Los Angeles. Woodbury University has educated more than 75,000 alumni. Three-quarters of its graduates have resided in Southern California and Woodbury alumni can be found in all 50 states and in 49 countries. Notable alumni have founded and built businesses, led national publications, held public office, led non-profit organizations and much more.

Today’s world requires a totally different breed of leaders; leaders who are centered but not

Why Do Students Like Online Learning?

Why do students flock to the online learning environment? With over 4 million students are enrolled in online schools and universities (and that number is growing 30% per year), there are many compelling arguments for attending a cyber classroom.

1. Students can “attend” a course at anytime, from anywhere. This means that parents can attend to their children, then sit down to class; working students can attend classes no matter what their work schedule might be, folks that travel for business or pleasure can attend class from anywhere in the world that has internet access.

2. Online learning enables student-centered learning. Every student has their own way of learning that works best for them. Some learn visually others do better when they “learn by doing.”

3. Course material is accessible 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Students can have the ability to read and re read lectures, discussions, explanations and comments. Often, students find material in the classroom passes students by due to a number of distractions, missed classes, teasing or busy schedules.

4. In an online environment, attendance to class is only evident if the student actually participates in classroom discussion. This increases student interaction and the diversity of opinion, because everyone gets a say, not just the most talkative.

5. Online instructors come with practical knowledge and may be from any location across the globe. This allows students to be exposed to knowledge that can’t be learned in books and see how class concepts are applied in real business situations.

6. Using the internet to attend class, research information and communication with other students teaches skills in using technologies that will be critical to workers in the 21st century business community that works with colleagues globally and across time zones.

7. Participating online is much less intimidating than “in the classroom.” Anonymity provides students at level playing field undisturbed by bias caused by seating arrangement, gen- der, race and age. Students can also think longer about what they want to say and add their comments when real class concepts are applied in real business situations.

8. Because online institutions often offer “chat rooms” for informal conversations, the conversation could have gone way past the point where the student wanted to comment.

9. Online classroom discussions are facilitated. Among other things, students can talk openly with their teachers through online chats, email and in news-group discussions, without waiting for office hours that may not be convenient. This option for communication provides enhanced contact between instructors and students.

10. Online course development allows for a broader spectrum of content. Students can access the school’s library from their PC’s for research articles, ebook content and other material without worries that the material is already “checked out.”

11. Students often feel that they can actually listen to the comments made by other students. Because everyone gets a chance to contribute, students are less irritated with those that “only contribute” and can ask for clarification of any comments that are unclear.

12. Over 75% of colleges and universities in the U.S. offer online degree programs, with online degrees as respected as “on the ground” degrees.

13. Online classrooms also facilitate team learning by providing chatrooms and newsgroups for meetings and joint work. This eliminates the problems of mismatched schedules, finding a meeting location and distributing work for review between meetings.

14. Students often comment that online learning lets them attend class when fully awake and attend in increments of convenient time block, rather than rigid 2 or 4 hour stretches once or twice a week.

15. Because there are no geographic barriers to online learning, students can find a diversity of course material that may not be available to them where they live or work. This is especially true for professional training such as medical billing training or purchasing training and for students in remote rural areas that cannot support college or vocational training centers.

While “brick and mortar” institutions will never be eliminated, it’s easy to see why a growing number of people are attending class in the cyber world. They may be reasons of Accessibility, flexibility or quality, all compelling and contributing to the attractiveness of this mode of learning.
BREAK BOUNDARIES
WITH A WOODBURY MBA

Woodbury University’s MBA is designed to help you discover, polish, and excel with your unique talents. Schedule a campus visit today!
818-252-5224
#woodburyuniversity
Global Perspective: Interest in MBA at Nine Year High in 29 Countries Worldwide

The three countries with the highest percentage of parents contributing to MBA funding are Italy (46%), China (44%) and France (34%). Lowest parent contribution is traditionally in the USA (10%).

Interest in MBA at a nine year high in 29 countries worldwide

Statistics from GMAT® admission tests show that 29 countries worldwide are at a nine year high in the number of admission tests taken (the number of GMAT tests taken strongly correlates with interest in MBA programs). This includes Germany, Austria, Netherlands, Poland and Denmark in Europe and many emerging economies from Africa (Ghana, Senegal), Asia (Mongolia, Vietnam, Myanmar) and South America (Colombia, Peru, Uruguay).

One year full time MBA program is the most preferred degree by Western European, Canadian and African residents.

The GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) is the leading admission test in MBA education programs. It is currently used by more than 2100 universities and institutions and taken more than 230,000 times annually. It is administered by GMAC (Graduate Management Admission Council) which also regularly surveys test participants and issues annual survey reports.

The future of online learning – Blended learning will triumph

The level of disruption caused by MOOCs is much lower than initially expected – MOOCs are actually expanding the market by lowering entry barriers for learners who otherwise would not have an opportunity to access education. The concept of learning is changing over time. Whilst in theory every topic in the MBA curriculum can be taught online, there is much discussed skills development, combining ‘content and context’ – online learning with personal experiences – in a hybrid model of education, is according to many conference delegates, the best way forward.

In order for students to adopt the tech-enabled learning formats, they need to develop a learning management system and know where to find information. “The learning curve, however, is not nearly as steep or long as we live in an increasingly online space all the time.”

Talking about mode of delivery is a distraction – the real question is – what are we teaching? Online learning is just facilitating the discussion and is additive, rather than disruptive,” said Dr. Daniel Spriro, Dean of Executive Education, Jack Welch Management Institute, a keynote speaker at the conference.

Information for this article was provided by AMBA, the international impartial authority on postgraduate business education and the only global MBA-specific accrediting body. Established in 1967, it sets the global standard for accrediting MBA, DBA and MMM programs. The Association currently accredits programs at 224 schools in over 70 countries worldwide. AMBA is also a professional membership association with thousands of MBA members in over 100 countries, connecting MBA students and graduates, accredited business schools and MBA employers worldwide.
Respect and Professional Learning Must Come Hand in Hand

By GEORGE ROCKWELL

Too many adult education instructors or management trainers treat adult learners as if they are “high school” level students. It is essential to always treat professional learners as the adults they are.

Good management trainers or adult education specialists should apply knowledge of the following fundamentals of adult learners:

Adults are people with years of experience and a wealth of information. Focus on the strengths learners bring to the classroom, not just gaps in their knowledge. Provide opportunities for dialogue within the group. Tap their experience as a major source of enrichment to the class. Remember that you, the teacher, do not need to have all the answers, as long as you know where to go or who to call to get the answers. Students can be resources to you and to each other.

Adults have established values, beliefs and opinions. Demonstrate respect for differing beliefs, religions, value systems and lifestyles. Let your learners know that they are entitled to their values, beliefs and opinions, but that everyone in the room may not share their beliefs. Allow debate and challenge of ideas.

Adults are people whose style and pace of learning has probably changed. Use a variety of teaching strategies such as small group problem solving and discussion. Use auditory, visual, tactile and participatory teaching methods. Reaction time and speed of learning may be slow, but the ability to learn is not impaired by age. Most adults prefer teaching methods other than lecture.

Adults relate new knowledge and information to previously learned information and experiences. Assess the specific learning needs of your audience before your class or at the beginning of the class. Present single concepts and focus on application of concepts to relevant practical situations. Summarize frequently to increase retention and recall. Material outside of the context of participants’ experiences and knowledge becomes meaningless.

Adults are people with bodies influenced by gravity. Plan frequent breaks, even if they are 2-minute “stretch” breaks. During a lecture, a short break every 45-60 minutes is sufficient. In more interactive teaching situations, breaks can be spaced 60-90 minutes apart.

Adults have pride. Support the students as individuals. Self-esteem and ego are at risk in a classroom environment that is not perceived as safe or supportive. People will not ask questions or participate in learning if they are afraid of being put down or ridiculed. Allow people to admit confusion, ignorance, fears, biases and different opinions. Acknowledge or thank students for their responses and questions. Treat all questions and comments with respect. Avoid saying “I just covered that” when someone asks a repetitive question. Remember, the only foolish question is the unasked question.

Adults have a deep need to be self-directing. Engage the students in a process of mutual inquiry. Avoid merely transmitting knowledge or expecting total agreement. Don’t “spoon-feed” the participants.

Individual differences among people increase with age. Take into account differences in style, time, types and pace of learning. Use auditory, visual, tactile and participatory teaching methods.

Adults tend to have a problem-centered orientation to learning. Emphasize how learning can be applied in a practical setting. Use case studies, problem solving groups, and participatory activities to enhance learning. Adults generally want to immediately apply new information or skills to current problems or situations.

Note: New information and skills must be relevant and meaningful to the concerns and desires of the students. Know what the needs are of individuals in your class. Students do not wish to learn what they will never use. The learning environment must by physically and psychologically comfortable.

George Rockwell is a freelance writer.
Getting Into Business School with a Great Application

By JOHN POLLARD

Business school students face a uniquely difficult challenge, because most programs require a series of essays rather than a single, comprehensive personal statement. This fact alone should indicate the importance that business schools place on your written responses. Part of the reason for this extra required writing is that business schools also place a stronger emphasis on practical experience. Academic ability may still be the number-one factor, but it’s not enough to get you into a school, just as it’s not enough to guarantee your success in the business world. Business schools pay close attention to personal qualities, including your leadership, communication skills, initiative, vision, and many more. Grades and scores do not explain this side of you, and neither does a resume.

Thus your admission will depend largely on your ability to convey your experiences and goals in written form. Self-assessment is a significant part of this process, as is a careful review of both your past and future and filling in those gaps. Admissions officers have to read hundreds of essays, and they must often skim. Abstract rumination has no place in an application essay. Admissions officers aren’t looking for a new way to view you; they’re looking for a new way to view you, the applicant. The best way to grip your reader is to begin the essay with a captivating snapshot. Notice how the blunt, jarring “after” sentence creates intrigue and keeps the reader’s interest. Admissions officers have to read hundreds of essays, and they must often skim. Abstract rumination has no place in an application essay. Admissions officers aren’t looking for a new way to view you; they’re looking for a new way to view you, the applicant. The best way to grip your reader is to begin the essay with a captivating snapshot. Notice how the blunt, jarring “after” sentence creates intrigue and keeps the reader’s interest.

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Before: I am a compilation of many insignificant parts, the eldest of six children in the Bronx, when my father was murdered.

After: I was six years old, the eldest of six children in the Bronx, when my father was murdered.
assert “I learned my lesson” or that “these lessons are useful both on and off the field.” They show it through personal detail. “Show, don’t tell” means that if you want to relate a personal quality, do so through your experiences without merely asserting it.

Before: If it were not for a strong support system which instilled into me strong family values and morals, I would not be where I am today.

After: Although my grandmother and I didn’t have a car or running water, we still lived far more comfortably than did the other families I knew. I learned an important lesson: My grandmother made the most of what little she had, and she was known and respected for her generosity. Even at that age, I recognized the value she placed on maximizing her resources and helping those around her.

The first example is vague and could have been written by anybody. But the second sentence evokes a vivid image of something that actually happened, placing the reader in the experience of the applicant.

4. Do Be Concise. Don’t Be Wordy.

Before: My grade point average provides an incomplete evaluation of my potential and of the person I am today, since it fails to reveal my passion and determined spirit which make me unique and an asset to the ______ School of Business.

After: Though my overall grade point average was disappointing, I am confident that the upward trend in my under-graduate transcript will continue in business school. Furthermore, my success on the GMAT and in the corporate world since graduation reinforces my conviction that I have a keen business sense— one that I hope to develop at the ______ School of Business.

5. Do Address Your Weaknesses. Don’t Dwell on Them.

Before: At some point on your application, you will have an opportunity to explain deficiencies in your record, and you should take advantage of it. Be sure to explain them adequately: “I parted too much to do well on tests” will not help your application. The best tactic is to spin the negatives into positives by stressing your attempts to improve; for example, mention your poor first-quarter grades briefly, then describe what you did to bring them up.

After: My grade point average provides an incomplete evaluation of my potential and of the person I am today, since it fails to reveal my passion and determined spirit which make me unique and an asset to the ______ School of Business.

6. Do Vary Your Sentences and Use Transitions.

The best essays contain a variety of sentence lengths mixed within any given paragraph. Also, remember that transition is not limited to words like nevertheless, furthermore or consequently. Good transition flows from the natural thought progression of your argument.

Before: I started playing piano when I was eight years old. I worked hard to learn difficult pieces. I began to love music.

After: I started playing the piano at the age of eight. As I learned to play more difficult pieces, my appreciation for music deepened.

7. Do Use Active Voice Verbs.

Passive-voice expressions are verb phrases in which the subject receives the action expressed in the verb. Passive voice employs a form of the word to be, such as was or were. Overuse of the passive voice makes prose seem flat and uninteresting.

Before: The lessons that have prepared me for my career as an executive were taught to me by my mother.

After: My mother taught me lessons that will prove invaluable in my career as an executive.

8. Do Seek Multiple Opinions.

Ask your friends and family to keep these questions in mind:

Do I use all long or short sentences?

What about the essay is memorable?

What parts of the essay do not support my main argument?

What do I use concrete experiences as supporting details?

What’s the worst part of the essay?

Can I use transitions appropriately?

What parts of the essay need elaboration or are unclear?

What’s the essay reveal about my personality?


Many applicants try to turn the application essay into a complete autobiog-raphy. Not surprisingly, they find it difficult to pack so much information into such a short essay, and their essays end up sounding more like a list of experiences than a coherent, well-organized thought. Make sure that every sentence in your essay exists solely to support one central theme:

10. Do Revise, Revise, Revise.

The first step in an improving any essay is to cut, cut, and cut some more.

John Pollard is a freelance writer.