In life, there are many paths one can go along and find a career in any of them. The best path to go along, undoubtedly, would be the one where passion and career come together. I believe that success will come knocking on the doors of those who have made the wonderful decision to follow their heart and take up a career which truly interests them.

A wave of positive energy, accompanied with feelings of joy and self-satisfaction, surges through my body when I say that I am one of those people who has followed his heart while pursuing a career. Today, I stand on the verge of completing 14 months of work with Deloitte which is a fruitful and enriching experience, my merchandise delivery start-up company is expanding and exploring new potential markets, the milkshake store chain for which I head the operational activities is blessed with great business. Therefore, I see myself in a position where my decision in the past, to follow my passion, has paid off brilliantly. The learning, the enrichment and experience gifted by my professional work at Deloitte and both my entrepreneurial endeavors, have been key factors in driving my interest towards pursuing a Master's degree in Management Information Systems.

At Deloitte, I have been working with the Audit and Enterprise Risk Services (AERS) division with a portfolio of over 45 projects which include Fortune 500 clients. While working on every project, my focus was on extracting maximum knowledge, which I could put to use in my further engagements. Projects of risk assessment and mitigation required good understanding of the business processes and information technology embedded in the client operational environment. This required of me to have in depth knowledge of financial business processes around payroll, accounting, opening and closing periods, fixed assets, procure to pay cycle and technical know-how of technology elements such as Enterprise Resource Planning Systems, Databases, Operating Systems and Networks. These terms were almost alien to me during the initial days at work, but that did not instill fear in me. Rather, there was a feeling of excitement since I saw a great opportunity to learn.

I vividly remember that when Deloitte had come to my undergraduate college for hiring, they had offered 48 open positions in the Consulting division and only 7 open positions in the Audit and Enterprise Risk Services (AERS) division. After they had announced this fact, I could see many of my friends changing their mind and opting for Consulting because the probability of getting hired was higher. Doing a thorough self-study about the job role and the type of work being done, I found immense interest in the AERS division. The moment they announced about the number of open positions, there was a conflict of though within me whether to change my opinion. I could best put it in this way, my heart said AERS and my mind was against it. I blanked out for a while and then slowly I started thinking as to what was it that I wanted and would I be happy doing something which I have no heart in. I decided not to change my opinion and went ahead with what I had wanted to do. A decision to follow my heart, for which I pat myself on the back even this day.

Today, I find interest and liking towards what I do at work. This has made me take up a great number of increasingly challenging projects where commanding knowledge over IT audits of SAP and PeopleSoft resource programs is a must. I have achieved ERP auditing proficiency with over 1500 hours of work on SAP and PeopleSoft. I have also trained more than 10 professionals on PeopleSoft It Audit. My interest and voracious appetite towards work, has been recognized by the leadership and they have awarded me a promotion within my first 12 months at work. Further, received 2 busy season performance awards and two spot awards for quality of work and for providing exceptional client value.

During my undergraduate education, I chose to invest my free time in activities that I had a liking towards. Soccer was a sport I was passionate about right from childhood and therefore I practiced soccer diligently and earned myself a position in the college soccer team. Avid participation in many campus events had crafted me into a skilled hand at event organization and thus I was chosen as deputy head for the prestigious biennial campus event named Carpediem. Donating one’s time for the benefit of those in need is a great deed and hence community service is something I value greatly. Being the son of a Doctor, I had easy access to doctors and medical practitioners within my city. Taking advantage of this fact, I have brought together Medical experts and social welfare organizations creating scope for setting up free hygiene or medical check-up camps. A deep sense of satisfaction and pride hit me when I received immense appreciation from the social welfare organizations. I have been honored with several letters of appreciation for putting efforts in organizing the health camps, giving health talks and for taking up the initiative to bring together people who could help serve the community. Every pat on the back received and each heartfelt thank you conveyed have driven me to do more. I strive to do as much possible, within my ability, hoping to inspire other individuals to contribute towards community service.

Towards the end of my Undergraduate studies, two of my friends and I teamed up to work towards building a customized merchandise delivery company. We started off on a small scale by providing merchandise in the form of shirts, wristbands and caps for minor college events. We put in a lot of efforts and invested immense time in finding more and more business. After a few months we had generated enough capital to rent out a small office space, hire a couple of designers and invest in marketing. Being the head of marketing, it is my responsibility to ensure that the company’s name has an optimum reach across all in-scope markets. This day, Merakii, a merchandise start-up company that was established 18 months ago, supports merchandise requirements of Governments of 2 states in India and numerous private entities. There was a shipment of merchandise goods that was sent by us to the United States of America for the TANA (Telugu association of North America) conference. We have started off with a team of 3 people and now we comprise of 18 individuals. It has been a wonderful journey right from the start. I never talk about the difficult times, sleepless nights or the failures we endured, but only brag about the success we are endowed with as of date. Running this business taught me extensively about accounting, taxation, banking activities, advertising, product pricing and quality checks. Setting up an organizational structure, working with people to achieve a common goal and managing human resources were important fragments of an overall entrepreneurial sphere which presented itself as an opportunity of learning for me.

My cousin had opened up 3 new milkshake stores in the city and was looking for someone who could take up the role of heading operational activities. Here, I saw a gateway to new learning and therefore pounced upon this opportunity. I approached him and convinced him to put the responsibility on my shoulders. Keeping track of monthly sales and expenditures along with activities like Inventory management, accounting, staffing and periodic auditing, are an integral part of my to-do tasks. This is to be done for 3 of the stores and it is crucial for every task to be completed on a timely basis as these would affect the entire operation. Challenges present themselves in many forms on a daily routine. Quick decisions have to be when something does not go as planned and the alternative must be worked upon immediately. Time management and smart work would be the key take-away lessons from this role where I have more than one store to manage.

Working with Deloitte has given exposure to various client operational environments and I clearly see the emphasis laid on integration of business processes and technology. Finding business solutions through the use of information systems and the management of these systems is what the world is focusing on. Organizations are extensively relying on information systems for business support and working towards a smart integration between the financial processes and technology elements. Interaction with the CIO’s and senior leadership on client side further enhanced knowledge of how information systems were embedded in the operational environment. Being a part of the operations of both my entrepreneurial endeavors, I could closely monitor the business activities and this helped me better understand how information systems could support my business. At Deloitte I audit the client’s business environment to assess risks over information systems and I am in my client’s shoes when I run my business. This has opened up a whole new level of learning and has drawn my interest towards Management Information Systems. I have been grasping every opportunity to learn more in this field but I know my learning can only be concrete after graduate studies in the field of Management Information systems.

The course structure for the MIS being offered at “University Name” is both enticing and appealing to me. Course offerings such as Digital Transformation of Organizations, Information Technology and Marketing in the New Economy, Compliance and Legal Issues in Information Technology and Enterprise Systems and Integration interest me immensely. I believe this course will lay a solid foundation on which I can build my career further. The learning will mold me into an adept Business Technology Analyst and I can work with leading organizations in key areas such as decision support systems, resource and people management applications, Enterprise Resource Planning, Supply Chain Management, Customer Relationship Management, and Project Management. I will also have the ability and skill to integrate my business activities with information systems to support my business and take it to new heights. This course in MIS will be a unifying structure that will bind all my work and entrepreneurial experiences together to form a wholesome sphere of higher learning.

Presently, I am a juggler who is juggling with three key components of my day. My professional work with Deloitte, running my merchandise start-up company and doing justice to the role of head of operations for the three milkshake stores. Often people ask me how I go through a day filled with numerous tasks and responsibilities and how I move forward with so much burden. When I think through this, I realize that none of my daily tasks feel like chains that drag me down. Moreover, they give me pleasure and inspiration to move forward, to achieve more and be more. Everything I do has my heart in it, there is no external source asking or forcing me to do these things. That is why a juggler can juggle not 3 but more than 10 things at a time, if he loves what he is doing.

Pursuing a course in MIS at your university would be my next destination along the path of passion I am following towards success.

“May the heart lead me in the right direction and may the odds, ever, be in my favor.”

Rishikesh Mothukuri.