Instructions

Please describe your background (academic and extracurricular) and experience, including research, teaching, industry, and other relevant information. Your space is limited to 2000 characters.

Background Letter - Online Masters in Computer Science Candidate

I attended high school at Harvard-Westlake in Los Angeles, CA. In 2001, I attended Emory University in Atlanta, GA and received my BA in Economics. In the past two years, I have taken a strong interest in online education especially in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and language learning. At that time, I moved to Berlin, Germany to experiment on my own in these fields. On the language learning front, I have used many, many different free online resources to learn German from scratch. In this time, I was able to learn the language to an upper intermediate level (approximately CEFR B2). In fact, I parlayed my knowledge of online language learning into an opportunity to create my own after-school program at an underprivileged high school in Berlin. I teach students how to use various sites to improve their English skills. On the MOOC front, I have received certificates of accomplishment from over a dozen MOOCs in subjects ranging from computer science to art.

Professionally, I worked for Navigant Consulting, a top consulting firm in the US (NYSE: NCI), between graduating from Emory and moving to Berlin. During my time there, I worked in two divisions, first the Construction Management practice, and then in the Financial Services practice. In the Financial Services practice, I analyzed individual home loans by performing complete re-underwrites of each loan to determine if the original loan was properly underwritten at the time of origination. This was done in order to settle long running disputes between the banks and the insurance companies. Many times, I would utilize my programming knowledge to solve problems quicker than the traditional methods such as using MS Excel or manually performing operations. For example, each loan underwrite required downloading individually every PDF of every document related to that loan from the clients server. I wrote a java program that automated this process and cut loan preparation time from hours down to minutes. I have experience with CS, but not formal educational experience.

Finally, although not required for this program, I beleive my GMAT score of 760 (99th percentile) is reflective of my academic capabilities.