Personal Statement

When you hit rock bottom, you know life is not easy. After I graduated from high school I enrolled in one of the best universities in my home country of Saudi Arabia to major in computer engineering. But I did not give my studies any attention. After two years, and because of my low grades, I had to drop out. I moved to a new school and chose a new major, but I kept the same attitude, so I kept sliding toward the bottom. Four years after I graduated from high school I looked around and saw my friends with degrees and jobs while I was stuck in the same place. Here where I hit bottom and I felt the life inside me. I started reorganizing and planning. I changed my major from information systems to computer science at the same university with my low GPA of only 2.8 on a 5.0 scale. After four years of hard work, I finally earned my BS in computer science with a GPA of 4.01 on a 5.0 scale.

My way of looking at life has changed since then. I have started seeing through things. Whenever I notice something that I've never done before, a feeling of curiosity comes over me: "Did he use this? Can I do it this way?" Those and similar questions come to mind.

Time and self-improvement have become valuable to me. I use most of my free time to learn, especially with the plentiful online resources available "MOOCs". I even started the habit of reading in bed to help me learn as well as to get to sleep faster.

Learning and self-improvement have given me confidence, the courage to try new things, and the habit of taking advantage of what is in front of me. At King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre where I work, the management of the hospital wanted to develop an iOS application for patients, but we do not have a mobile development team. I started working with Objective-C and Xcode, which I had never worked with before, and in one week I created a simple prototype to demonstrate the flow of the application and to give an indication of what the final product would look like. The director of the application development saw my work, and

then he assigned me the task of developing the application. After two months of hard work, lots of reading, I finished the application, which was published in the app store.

Another great moment for me was when I realized that the management of the hospital was planning to sign a 1 million Saudi riyal (approximately US$250,000) deal with a local company to design a theme for the hospital's portal and e-services. I volunteered to create a prototype. My supervisor agreed to let me try but with no guarantee that management would accept my work. Over the weekend I created a clean and simple prototype that fit the hospital's needs. Then, I presented the prototype to my supervisor, and I saw the surprise on his face as he said he would present my work to management. By the end of the week he told me the hospital had decided not to sign the deal with the other company because management had selected my work instead. Since then my theme has been integrated into the hospital's e-services and is being used on the main portal.

As time has passed I have started believing that the struggles I went through were worth it. Now I have found my passion and my joy. Learning, exploring, and self-improvement have become enjoyable to me not only inside the classroom but also in my free time. And I believe my struggles is what led me to be awarded a full scholarship from the hospital to purse a master degree in computer science.

My view to my future is becoming clearer every day, and my passion to software development is getting bigger and bigger. And I believe receiving a graduate degree from prestigious school like Brown University will help me reach my goal of becoming a successful and talented software architect. In addition, it will increase my chances for a leading position in the government or related sectors, especially with the current positive drastic changes in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.