



4 Testimonials – Post-MBA Position

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“David, give me ONE example of when you felt you were connecting your ‘career dots’ in accordance with your personal values. What do you want to do upon MBA graduating?”

I am good at seeing patterns that link apparently unrelated subjects, creating deeper insights. I want to continue my engagement with business assignments that value such competence. I will tell you a story that explains why I feel I am on the right path to achieve my objective.

I was barely 10 when I found out what inspires me in life. As I watched the news - Israeli and Palestinians negotiating the Camp David agreement, I made my mother smile when I announced my career as a diplomat. Experimenting with new cultures and dealing with interdisciplinary themes while living abroad: that’s what I would like to do in life. When college application period arrived, I envisioned the means to follow my dream: International Relations at USP, the most reputable university in Latin America. I started publishing articles and working on research for the Brazilian government. My main legacy to my college was the creation of an exchange program. I had to establish a partnership from scratch and eventually I earned a scholarship to live in Hungary. After an amazing period in Budapest studying different subjects such as Law, Business, Journalism, Public Health, Urban Planning, and others, I sought some ambassadors. Evaluating the diplomatic career, I realized that with the international expansion of Brazilian companies, there would be a demand for a new kind of professional, with fluency in politics and business settings, a frontier still to be defined. That’s how my desire to explore the business world began. During my Master’s degree a classmate mentioned strategic management consultants: “I’m not sure, but apparently those guys solve intricate issues in big corporations”. I had never heard of BCG, Bain or McKinsey, but why not? At the same time, I had to take advantage of my intellectual courage. Until I turned 23, I had never touched an Excel spreadsheet. My world consisted of man and his complex relationship through political institutions. Consulting would allow me to mix numbers and humanities and to have an international career perspective. Now I am a management consultant. Two years later I had my ‘magical moment’ where you feel you are living for what you are meant for. Through a specific consulting assignment, my expectations were reassured: I have learned how to bring the private sector managerial expertise to the government spending capital. It was a massive, 10-month study of Brazil’s railroad infrastructure and its capabilities for meeting passenger-traffic demand during the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil and 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. Amidst a political and economic complex arena, through this assignment I helped my team make several recommendations, including structuring rules of public concessions/privatizations, defining and monitoring clear metrics for rail-sector players, and providing ways to increase private-sector participation in the industry. After that assignment I was sure I had made the right decision moving my career path to management consulting field in order to maintain alive my lifetime pursue of working with international engagements for Brazilian Government or International Multilateral Agencies. My 2-year internship at Chamber of Commerce Brazil-India and 3-year analyst experience in a Big-4 management consulting firm make me confident to follow my dream. In the short term I intend to return to management consulting. In the long term, I intend to blend economic and social development as I lead teams in private-public frontiers.

Upon MBA graduation, I must continue my search for constant involvement in a professional environment that values the relationship among different areas of knowledge.

IMPORTANT: This material is exclusively for educational purpose. It was inspired in real cases, but the text was 101% sanitized and adapted to your teaching needs.



“Sophia, give me ONE example of when you felt you were connecting your ‘career dots’ in accordance with your personal values. What do you want to do upon MBA graduating?”

I am good at establishing plans, coordinating and sequencing events, and implementing strategy. I want to continue my engagement with business assignments that value such competence. I will tell you a story that explains why I feel I am on the right path to achieve my objective.

During childhood I lived in the USA, where I realized my country was hardly known then. Observing my country through the foreigner’s perspective, I was able, upon my return, to pay more attention to our values, to what makes us unique. I grew emotionally mature, with my eyes open to our problems as well as to the countless opportunities we have. On the first day of college I was looking for opportunities abroad. I wanted to replicate my eye opening experience in the USA. After a year of discussion with professors and the dean, I became the first student to enroll a double degree program with an engineering school in France. The amazing international experience helped me improve my skills of teamwork, motivation and vision alignment. I returned to Brazil with a strong desire to follow a path that promotes the mobilization of people with different backgrounds. Nowadays I participate in internationalization projects for my consulting firm. I have enjoyed building, inspiring, and motivating teams that in turn, contribute to my success. Recently, as a senior consultant, I witnessed an attempt to acquire a major listed US competitor. Even today, such deal is unparalleled - most deals, especially in the industry, work in the opposite direction. Economic, cultural, and politics obstacles are endless. Growing up as a citizen of the world nurtured my passion for global affairs. My ambition is to become a partner at my consulting firm. Later, I shall guide Brazilian businesses through a hard yet rewarding path: internationalization. Ultimately, I want to improve competitiveness of my country in the global arena. I believe the next GE will come from BRIC countries, requiring leaders with resilient entrepreneurial mindset, capable of adapting patterns to cultures and managing increasingly complex relationships. I am eager to serve companies that embraced internationalization. Looking ahead, I shall create an Internationalization Practice Area within my Firm to cause impact on not one but several companies. Eventually, I want to leave an even longer-lasting legacy, joining a Brazilian multinational company as a Chief International Officer - and then becoming its CEO. I expect to leave my MBA years inspired to make the transition from an accomplished problem solver to an inspiring business leader. To move on, I cannot take shortcuts: I need to delve into a state-of-art leadership MBA program. It’s simple: I need an MBA to become a better leader.

Upon MBA graduation, I must continue my search for constant involvement in a professional environment that promotes leadership values.

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“Igor, give me ONE example of when you felt you were connecting your ‘career dots’ in accordance with your personal values. What do you want to do upon MBA graduating?”

I am good at coupling two complementary competencies: ability to do the tough analytical work and, not being intimidated for being responsible for executing my recommendations. I want to continue my engagement with business assignments that value such competence. I will tell you a story that explains why I feel I am on the right path to achieve my objective.

Because of my father’s job, we kept moving around. When I was adapting to the neighborhood, to the new region and school, my father would get home with the news: “we’re moving next month.” In the beginning, it was very difficult to leave my friends behind. My father, however, was always there for me. He observed as I felt rejected as a stranger in every new group: “In the beginning, you have to play their game; then, you invite them to play yours.” Thus, since I was a boy, I learned the hard way about the power of change and the value of adapting. Later, unlike other children, I learned to see that situation as something quite natural. Through the years I learned to take advantage of the power that change brings to people’s lives. My story: after my two-year experience of management consulting, I discovered the Private Equity (PE) world. In its unique business, a PE Fund acquires only controlling stakes in other companies, selects and hires competent people to manage the companies, and acts very close to the management in order to perform turnarounds. In this context, I have been able to delve into transactions, transposing the barrier of the superficial financial analysis and understanding the companies to the bones. With the business model involving selection and interaction with the management of our portfolio companies, connecting the dots involves thinking about and handling managers, selecting key executives, and negotiating budget and goals. When I was a management consultant I missed the ‘action’ side of the businesses. Two years after outstanding performance, my company, aware of my needs, offered me an amazing opportunity to better understand the corporate world before my MBA - a special ten-month work period at XXX, the portfolio company that we acquired one year ago. Now I can feel all the implications of having to ‘solve the problem’, but mainly for being responsible for all the aftermath decisions. I can see PE as the only industry in which I can blend these two forces. PE funds are also probably the most prominent players in the evolution of the Brazilian way of managing businesses, generally which is still archaic, very influenced by the early family-run companies, not focused on efficiency and value creation. Since I joined a Brazilian PE fund, I felt enthusiastic about being part of this process and I made it my long-term career. One of the greatest challenges for the next 5-10 years is the internationalization of our operations. Succeeding in this challenge would be an enormous differentiation, since we would compete directly with PE giants worldwide. Beyond their capacity to access a different market, we will be required to understand and succeed in different cultures. I want to be ready when the time comes. I look forward to learning through practical experiences. I believe that there is no real learning without action and no effective action without learning.

Upon MBA graduation, I must continue my search for constant involvement in a professional environment that values the bridge between intellectual rigor and effective changes.

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“Laura, give me ONE example of when you felt you were connecting your ‘career dots’ in accordance with your personal values. What do you want to do upon MBA graduating?”

I am good at inspiring and bringing people together. I want to continue my engagement with business assignments that value such competence. I will tell you a story that explains why I feel I am on the right path to achieve my objective.

I like Charles Chaplin’s quote, “I can’t help it: I am for people.” You know, childhood events can change a person. My brother’s disease determined my life path. I was ten when Lucas got sick. For four years I watched him go in and out of hospitals; mostly I watched my parents. Their sacrifices to provide my brother with the better treatment deeply shaped my personal traits, nurturing a desire to repay those sacrifices. It feels good to know life’s priorities. Since then, I have dreamed of setting up a team that dares to pursue shared dreams. Years later I lost count how many friends asked me “are you crazy?!” when I quit my job as an intern in a Big-4 management consulting firm to pursue a more rewarding career. Holding accountability motivated me to embrace the challenge of launching my own web company still during college. The university incubator’s approval of my rough business plan pushed me to begin a successful entrepreneurial journey. In the past three years, my focus has been on structuring and running our company through its different growth stages. An initial do-it-all-yourself approach for launching the company, defining products and services and targeting first customers has given place to a well-thought career development: I have been able to tackle each challenge timely, forge colleagues for specific business duties, hire specialists for non-core positions, and concentrate on strategic business matters. Later, a first round of investment allowed me to build a team of project managers and sales reps while concentrating on strategic issues, mostly related to marketing, products and services conception, and major account sales. I raised US\$0.5MM from VCs to launch XXX, aimed at revolutionizing XXX in Brazil. And at that time I had the most rewarding experience: I could bring to the team three close friends from my college. We now proudly say we together created over 30 jobs. We want to be serial entrepreneurs. Luckily I had the chance what brings me greatest joy: the possibility of gathering a team, preferably with my three college friends, people with whom I share same core values. We dream in creating a product that helps people throughout the world, a product that makes us proud. By not leaving anyone behind and by dedicating fully to everything I do, I have been an example to people who, in turn, offered commitment and loyalty. An MBA will provide me with a multinational, multidisciplinary network of inspiring people. I look forward to learning, teaching and sharing with my future colleagues.

Upon MBA graduation, I must continue my search for constant involvement in a professional environment that promotes team values.

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