

Personal Statement

My name is Rakesh Sharma, and I come from Amritsar, a city in Punjab, India. I was born into a middle-class family, and my father retired from BSNL Company (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) in 2018, while my mother is a dedicated homemaker. I have two elder brothers who have always been supportive of me, and I've grown to be an independent individual. As of this October 10th, I will be turning 28. It's remarkable how as we age, the world around us evolves, especially with the rapid advancements in technology.

My educational journey began when I completed my 12th standard in the non-medical stream in 2015. Subsequently, I pursued a course in hotel management at CT Institute in Jalandhar, which was quite a distance from my hometown. During my studies, after completing the fifth semester in 2017, I decided to reside in the CT Institute hostel with some of my friends. It was during this time that I stumbled upon the world of e-commerce through a friend who was involved in dropshipping on Shopify. I approached him to learn more about this online business model, and he generously shared his knowledge, guiding me through the process of setting up a Shopify store and understanding the nuances of dropshipping.

Initially, my dropshipping venture didn't yield immediate success, but with persistence and by creating valuable content, I eventually started making money, which was a thrilling experience. However, despite my entrepreneurial pursuits, I faced a setback during my sixth semester

when I failed one of my exams, leading me to not complete my degree. I felt a deep sense of disappointment in myself and cried a lot during that period, considering the three years of hard work I had put in, including earning good grades in the previous semesters. It was a challenging phase, and I withdrew from social interactions. Thankfully, my brothers stood by me, offering unwavering support and motivation. They suggested that I take a vacation to relieve stress and anxiety.

In 2019, I embarked on a rejuvenating vacation to Malaysia, where I had the chance to explore beautiful places such as the beach and the iconic KL Twin Tower. Meeting new people and experiencing the world outside my comfort zone helped me understand that life had more to offer, and my journey wasn't over. After returning home, I resumed my dropshipping business, but I also realized the importance of furthering my education and improving my health.

In October 2019, I began taking IELTS classes and achieved a score of 5.0. As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded, I continued working on my dropshipping business and started incorporating regular exercise into my routine. In 2021, I took the PTE exam and scored 45.

By early 2022, my dropshipping business began to decline due to increased competition in India's market. Concerned about my future, I decided to acquire new skills, specifically in web design. I enrolled in a course at the Centre for Advanced Computers and Management Studies (CACMS), where I learned frontend technologies such as HTML,

CSS, JavaScript, jQuery, and Bootstrap. I found a genuine interest in this field, and despite my slowing dropshipping business, I remained committed to self-improvement.

In 2023, I took the Duolingo test and scored 75, showcasing my dedication to continuous learning. During this time, I also delved into coding and learned the Python programming language. It was while exploring coding-related content on YouTube that I came across a video by Professor Andrew Ng from Stanford University, discussing artificial intelligence and machine learning. This video ignited a newfound interest in me, and I decided to pursue studies in artificial intelligence.

I shared my aspirations with my family, and they were thrilled to see my enthusiasm for education reignited. They encouraged me to build a strong foundation in artificial intelligence, so I enrolled in classes at CACMS on August 3, 2023. I finally found my path, which I had momentarily lost back in 2018.

The purpose of this personal statement is to convey my journey over the past few years, during which I faced challenges and successes. While I made money, I often felt adrift, lacking a clear sense of purpose. Ultimately, it was my newfound coding skills and self-belief that emerged from those challenging years that have shaped me into who I am today. Thank you for reading my story.