



Chicago Booth Essays

01. How will the Booth MBA help you achieve your immediate and long-term post-MBA career goals? (250 word minimum)

02. Chicago Booth immerses you in a choice-rich environment. How have your interests, leadership experiences, and other passions influenced the choices in your life? (250 word minimum)

Length: There is no maximum length, only a 250 word minimum. We trust that you will use your best judgment in determining how long your submission should be, but we recommend that you think strategically about how to best allocate the space.

<http://www.chicagobooth.edu/programs/full-time/admissions/apply/essay-questions>



Thomas

01. How will the Booth MBA help you achieve your immediate and long-term post-MBA career goals? (250 word minimum)

Km 25 (Why MBA) and Km 26 (Why Schol X or Y)

02. Chicago Booth immerses you in a choice-rich environment. How have your interests, leadership experiences, and other passions influenced the choices in your life? (250 word minimum)

Dear Chicago Booth Admission officer,

I appreciate your concern about introducing the values of Chicago Booth. Actually, I must confess that I was already familiar with such values. From what I observed during my visit to the campus and my previous research with Booth alumni, the school is proud of the combination “**CHALLENGE ASSUMPTIONS / ANALYZE EVERYTHING / LEAD WITH CONFIDENCE**”, am I right? To help you get to know me better, I want to tell you **THREE STORIES** from my life of which I am proud. That's it. No big deal. Just **THREE STORIES**.

The **FIRST STORY** is about defining problems.

I strongly believe that people are prepared to solve their problems if they are better defined. One of my main tasks in the equity department at XXX is to criticize business models. Although I felt bothered by the apparent paradox of being a good analyst and critic, I had never done anything to change my employer's business model (“the cobbler's children go barefoot”, right?) The feeling bothered me, since I grew up in a family that values the transformational power that only Knowledge can provide. Among many examples, I like to mention my grandfather. Since his life-long partner died six years ago, my grandfather decided to leave the city and move into a small ranch up in the mountains. Besides gardening and walking, he studies math. With the support of online courses, he decided he would finally study, something life prevented him from doing. After all, at age 16 he quit school to work and support his mother and three younger brothers. Trying to rescue the time he lost, a couple of years ago, thus, he started his math program by reviewing arithmetic - he will soon get to Calculus. Although many people find this motivation somewhat strange, his effort makes total sense to me. They do not know the history of my family. With quite a few people, my parents included, following the teaching career, I learned through observation something that is very dear to me: the power of Knowledge in changing people's lives. Inspired by my grandfather, I will explain how I proposed and tested new ideas at XXX, my current employer. The probability of increasing the assets under management of XXX, my current firm, reminded of what my previous employer experienced. I had studied the trade-off between liquidity and pricing, so I could predict serious consequences from such unsettling move. Naturally, productivity should soar and demand that we have scalability. No one asked me for it, but for two months, I put aside two daily hours in order to analyze my employer through the eyes of an investor. Hours of extra work enabled me to create a new model to measure productivity. “We have always done that way. Let's stick to it, ok?” - My boss and co-workers' view confirmed that it is just easier to follow what is established. My argument was “what worked in the past may not work in the future - let's define the problem to fit a new reality”. The modus operandi was to play a fire fighter - answer the demands of a problem that had been defined in the past. Finally, my boss welcomed my studies and invited me to test them. He even insisted that I have a junior analyst to help me with what he called “Thomas's Experience.” After successful empirical implementation of my model, I grew further aware of the leader's role in redefining the way team members must define problems.

The **SECOND STORY** is about questioning.



A new situation or an unfamiliar subject always challenges me to get to know first the WHY behind the WHAT. My usual approach is to find out whether the established WHAT makes sense. I also attempt to test its validity through analysis that, I believe, goes beyond the ordinary view. My dad helped me explore my natural creativity as a child. In the backyard, he kept a small study where he did some carpentry work. At age 12, I had already made a few stools and a bedside table. My father's treasured collection of tools always fascinated me. I think one thing of the things that really separates us from the high primates is that we're tool builders. When I was 14, I read a study that measured the efficiency of locomotion for various species on the planet. The condor used the least energy to move a kilometer. And humans came in with a rather unimpressive showing, about a third of the way down the list. It was not too proud a showing for the crown of creation. Thus, that didn't look so good. Then, somebody at Scientific American had the insight to test the efficiency of locomotion for a man on a bicycle. And a man on a bicycle blew the condor away, completely off the top of the charts. I am fond of the greatest tool so far invented by humans: the scientific methodology in the approach of problems can change the history of mankind. Tool plus imagination equals multiple possibilities. Professionally, I have visited and analyzed companies in diverse industries, and I have observed that people will sometimes overlook an opportunity when they cannot understand how (and WHY) a given company or sector works. That is why I believe in the need to go beyond what the average view on the subject is. At the beginning of my professional path, I used to give too much attention to know how different my view was from the average and why. Gradually, I was able to see that I had to go much deeper into my research. Reaching a few undesirable results, I started to notice the need to follow closely what I was researching. I had to delve into foundations of each company rather than obtain just a superficial view of its business model. I had adopted an insider's view in order to understand how different the company's view was from the general view. What, how, and where the company sold would give me full understanding of the company and its placement in the market. I would also be in the position of enjoying the opportunities coming from misconceptions of the average view. As an example, I studied XXX, a clothing manufacturer, in detail. Its limited distribution and considerable number of stores, this company looked more like a retailer. Although it runs the stores and controls the retail process, this company places itself in the consumer goods category. In my initial analysis led me to look for reasons for the company's low profitability. Scrutinizing the fashion industry, I discovered that the issue was in the clothing collection rather than in operations. I also understood that the problems with the garment models offered had little to do with the company's capacity to see what clients enjoyed. The company had failed to notice that worldwide - the fashion trend had adopted completely new styles (a former high school classmate who nowadays is a renowned clothing designer in Rio gave me this insight). Investigating even more, I realized that this company had clear conditions to manufacture clothes and accessories in a trend other than their core competencies, and that such trend was actually temporary. I have eagerness to "think outside of box" and consider new possibilities.

The **THIRD STORY** is about sharing.

Astronomy is a passion. I still remember seeing the first episode of Carl Sagan's series Cosmos. At age 10, I was fascinated with the sky and the world above. My heroes in childhood were always scientists who used their intellectual prestige to change the world. Ten years later, I would further explore the theme when I signed in to the astronomy club in the college I was attending as an exchange student in XXX, Europe. Through this community, members could share their knowledge with the general public. I was so excited that I sought a similar club to join as soon as I went back home. However, I found nothing similar in Brazil, so I searched the Internet and found like-minded people who welcomed my idea of setting up a club. Working as their catalyst, I founded the Cosmos Astronomy Club. I enticed my new friends to let strangers use our telescopes and be stunned by the wonders of the sky. We also delivered presentations in parks and public schools. We could do more, I thought. The public deserved broader knowledge. I would have to convince others to welcome my idea of teaching lessons on my favorite subject. Despite my slim chance of success, I spoke to the management of XXX, my university. We would provide the community with free scientific education, I explained in order to earn support. They lent us a small classroom on Saturday mornings. As a teacher for the last four years, I have drawn valuable lessons from my classes



and learned from my students. Today our more than 60 students per semester can enjoy astronomy and astrophysics courses. To ensure the sustainability of our project, I trained more teachers.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to know each other.

Thomas