

## Original Essay

Fordham Essay Topic:

*Describe your professional progress to this point as well as your short-term and long-term career goals. How do you expect Fordham Business to benefit your future career needs? (750-1000 words)*

MY PAST:

I began to walk on the path I have been on for the past 8 years near the end of high school, during the under-graduate application process. Business studies looked to be as a whole a way to engage my passion for competition achievement and creativity in a lucrative fashion. My mind was made up at the age of 17 in this respect. I decided to attend Hofstra University and Marketing was my area of concentration.

College was an amazing time. With my culturally diverse classmates, I worked in groups to tackle case studies, build ambitious business plans, assist local businesses, and enter dialogue with corporate entities. It provided a good base to build upon, and it was with full confidence that I left the ivory towers of higher education and sought my future in the business world.

In 2002, the economy was at a low following the burst of the Internet bubble, and it was not an optimal time to be looking for a job. People were taking corporate positions that were beneath their level of experience and the way to a brighter tomorrow seemed blocked. Therefore, I took an unorthodox step and made a move towards the non-profit world, accepting a position as a Marketing Assistant at Nepal United.

It turned out to be a true boon.

Most of my initial superiors were advertising agency veterans, and it is through their guidance that I learned the tools of the non profit Marketing trade: direct mail, crafting proposals, and desktop publishing. Even more important, I learned the intangible skill of professionalism, including how to talk on the phone with clients/donors, how to conduct oneself in the office, and how to convey criticism without offense. I established working relations with twenty-seven regional offices across America.

## Original Essay (page 2)

### MY PRESENT:

After a period of a year and a half I was promoted and took on more responsibility. Nepal United is part of a worldwide fundraising network, and the American arm is the most successful. The Marketing Department is the face of the company. I have played my part in our nationwide dialogue.

The most intriguing projects I worked on involved interpreting numbers and mapping past and future trends for the direct mail program, which required both creative and analytical skills. The direct mail program parses a database of one million names, the largest Nepalese donor name database in the country.

An important part of my job is to develop ideas for the organization's national advertising campaign, and then bring those ideas to fruition. I have written copy and laid out ads that have appeared all around the country. For example, I worked on ads for the Caravan for Democracy program, which brings influential speakers from Nepal to talk on college campuses regarding the political climate. Past speakers included the current King of Nepal, Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, when he was acting in an official capacity.

However, as I became more integrated into NU I came to the realization that Nepal United was more of a job and not a career. To truly excel in the non-profit arena one must eventually make the switch to fundraising, and this is not where my passions lie. While I wholeheartedly agree that who you know is important, terribly important, I don't want the focus of my existence to be soliciting others for money no matter how important the cause.

So, I reevaluated the path that I was on, and that is why I am applying to Fordham University's MBA program. With the knowledge and network I plan on building at your institution I can reorient myself and place myself on a career path where I can rest assured that if I put in the time and the effort I will reap the recognition I crave.

### MY FUTURE:

I To look at my past experience is to see that I have built a solid base of skills within Marketing, but to stay within this comfortable field is to stagnate. It is crucial that I learn more about Finance. To attain Marketing skills is crucial, but to attain skill in the field of finance is equally important. I would compare the two complimentary skills to running an efficient household. Finance and Accounting helps you keep your house in order. Marketing tells the world how clean your house is, and how to reach you if they want to know how to clean theirs.

## Original Essay (page 3)

When it comes to predicting my future, I would have to say that's impossible. That's one of the reasons that I wish attain a graduate degree in business, so that the possible professional paths I take may be divergent and prosperous.

I see myself in Asia working in an import/export business.  
I see myself in New York's financial district climbing the corporate ladder.  
I see myself going into business for myself and adding character to this city, which I love so much.

The reason I look towards your institution with so much hope is that Fordham will help me translate my knowledge and skill set into the corporate language. . My dearth of experience in the "for-profit" corporate world is in my opinion a detriment to my marketability and general completeness as a business person.

In the long-term, business wise, my career goal is to achieve success as an independent businessperson. The ideas and plans I have now are sound, there are so many niches in this world that can be filled by a proactive mind.  
What I need is the know-how, the contacts, and the capital to carry out my plans.

The course I choose at Fordham, is something that will most certainly define my life as surely as the choice I made when I was 17. I look forward to continuing my education at Fordham in what will surely be another stop in a lifetime of learning.

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# Reviewed MBA Essay

## Vault Essay Editor's Opening Comments:

Let's be honest. This essay needs a lot of work - but it's nothing that can't be salvaged. First, the question does not get answered in a specific manner. It's not clear what you, the applicant, needs to do, why an MBA is necessary, or why that MBA should be attained at Fordham. Frankly, I'm also unclear on what your previous work experience entailed. Next, it's awkwardly written. There were a few grammatical mistakes, but the main problem was with the overly wordy phrasing. Plus, it has a weak opening paragraph; it tells the reader nothing. Lastly, you need to do a better job selling yourself as an MBA student. There are no clearly-defined goals. The qualifications are insufficiently described, i.e. there is no evidence of intellectual capacity or success at work. Also, the expressed desire for money and recognition make you sound immature. See my comments below and get cracking!

### Fordham Essay Topics:

Describe your professional progress to this point as well as your short-term and long-term career goals. How do you expect Fordham Business to benefit your future career needs? (750-1000 words)

I began to walk on the path I have been on for the past 8 years near the end of high school, during the undergraduate application process. Business studies looked to be as a whole a way to engage my passion for achievement and creativity. My mind was made up at the age of 17 in this respect. I decided to attend Hofstra University and marketing was my area of concentration.

College was an amazing time. With my culturally diverse classmates, I worked in groups to tackle case studies, build ambitious business plans, assist local businesses, and address corporate entities. It provided a good base to build upon, and it was with full confidence that I left higher education and pursued my future in the business world.

In 2002, the economy was at an ebb following the burst of the Internet bubble, and it was not an optimal time to be looking for a job. People were taking corporate positions that were beneath their level of experience. Therefore, I took an unorthodox step and made a move towards the non-profit world, accepting a position as a Marketing Assistant at Nepal United.

It turned out to be a great experience.

Most of my initial superiors were advertising agency veterans, and it is through their guidance that I learned the tools of the nonprofit

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**Comment [M1]:** While I think it's good idea to structure the essay in a "past-present-future" format, try to do so with out the headers.

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MY PAST: ¶

**Comment [M2]:** This opening sentence is a little awkward and wordy, but it doesn't grab the reader. See my comment at the end of this first paragraph for more detail.

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**Comment [M3]:** While healthy competition is good, b-schools want people that play nicely with each other, i.e. people that aren't overly competitive. Use the word sparingly.

**Comment [M4]:** You don't want to make it seem that your interest in business is primarily monetary. Schools want to see that you want to achieve, innovate, etc.--not get rich. Stay away from words, such as lucrative, that make it sound like you're pursuing only financial gain.

**Deleted:** competition

**Deleted:** in a lucrative fashion

**Comment [M5]:** Make everything sound positive! In other words, you CHOSE to attend Hofstra, as opposed to ... [1]

**Deleted:** Marketing

**Comment [M6]:** This whole first paragraph probably needs to be ... [2]

**Comment [M7]:** This last phrase--"enter dialogue with corporate entities"-- ... [3]

**Deleted:** enter dialogue with

**Comment [M8]:** "Ivory towers" conveys a sort of detached privilege ... [4]

**Deleted:** the ivory towers of

**Deleted:** sought

**Deleted:** low

**Comment [M9]:** Remember--positive! There's nothing you can't overcome ... [5]

**Deleted:** and the way to a brighter tomorrow seems ... [6]

**Comment [M10]:** Especially since you'll be reworking the preceding ... [7]

**Deleted:** true boon

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marketing trade: direct mail, crafting proposals, and desktop publishing. Even more importantly, I learned the intangible skill of professionalism, including how to talk on the phone with clients/donors, how to conduct oneself in the office, and how to convey and accept criticism. I established working relations with twenty-seven regional offices across America.

After a period of a year and a half I was promoted and took on more responsibility. Nepal United is part of a worldwide fundraising network, and the American arm is the most successful. The marketing department is the face of the company. I have played my part in our nationwide dialogue.

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However, I came to the realization that Nepal United was not a place where I would be able to fulfill my ambitions. To truly excel in the nonprofit arena one must eventually make the switch to fundraising, and this is not where my passions lie.

So, I reevaluated the path that I was on, and that is why I am applying to Fordham University's MBA program. With the knowledge and network I plan on building at your institution I can reorient myself and pursue a career that challenges me.

I To look at my past experience is to see that I have built a solid base of skills within Marketing, but to stay within this comfortable field is to stagnate. It is crucial that I learn more about Finance. To attain Marketing skills is crucial, but to attain skill in the field of finance is equally important. I would compare the two complimentary skills to running an efficient household. Finance and Accounting helps you keep your house in order. Marketing tells the world how clean your house is, and how to reach you if they want to know how to clean theirs.

When it comes to predicting my future, I would have to say that's impossible. That's one of the reasons that I wish attain a graduate degree in business, so that the possible professional paths I take may be divergent and prosperous.

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Comment [M11]: Schools will be much more interested in your maturity regarding the acceptance of criticism. Don't worry, it won't make it sound as if your job performance is worthy of criticism.

Comment [M12]: Give a little more detail here. What exactly does "established working relations" mean? If it's a simple phone call, then 27 might not sound so impressive. Explain WHY 27 offices should be considered impressive.

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Comment [M13]: What did this responsibility entail?

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Comment [M14]: I'm not sure what this means. What, exactly, was your part? This is awfully vague. Remember, be as specific as possible when describing your job. It sounds like you did some really interesting things that aren't coming across. Also, the explanation of the JNF should probably go earlier in the essay, when the company is first mentioned.

Comment [M15]: Again, it's good to explain what the direct mail progr... [8]

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Comment [M16]: This senten... [13]

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Comment [M17]: You don't ... [15]

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Comment [M18]: Yikes! Be... [17]

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Comment [M19]: I get what ... [18]

Comment [M20]: This is wh... [19]

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Comment [M21]: Predicting ... [20]

I see myself in Asia working in an import/export business.  
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What I need is the know-how, the contacts, and the capital to carry out my plans.

The course I choose at Fordham, is something that will most certainly define my life as surely as the choice I made when I was 17. I look forward to continuing my lifetime of learning at Fordham in what will surely be another invaluable experience.

#### Vault Essay Editor's Closing Comments:

There are a few things that MUST get included in a business school essay that are missing from your draft.

First, you need to have clearly-defined goals. While it's true that a majority of b-school students don't know what they want to do, you can't show that kind of ambivalence. I'm not advocating dishonesty—you just need to pick a career path that is of interest to you and focus on it. Preferably, it should somehow tie in with past work experience.

Next, there is nothing specific about Fordham in your draft. Schools want to know that you are serious and have done extensive research. Mention some specifics about the program, such as classes or organizations. There has to be something beyond geography that attracts you to a school. As I mentioned in the comments, this essay could be written for any school.

Lastly, there need to be concrete examples of successes or lessons learned in prior work environments. You need to show that you are prepared for the next step in your career because of what you have achieved so far. Most of your descriptions of work at the JNF are somewhat vague. Brag about yourself, but do so with quantifiable measures.

On the positive side, I really liked the structure of the essay. It all just needs to get tied together. In other words, you need to connect the dots. Start with a brief attention-grabbing story that explains how you got on your path at age 17, then go on to explain how everything you have done and plan to do are on that same path (even if

**Comment [M22]:** Pick one of these! Whichever works best with your previous experience may be the best to choose. But you HAVE to have a singular path for essay and interview purposes.

**Comment [M23]:** Is this really what you want from the school? Or is it to gain knowledge and add to your skill set? They may be concerned that you can't already speak the "corporate language".

**Comment [M24]:** There may be a different way of saying this. "An MBA can better prepare you to make the switch to the for-profit world...."

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**Comment [M25]:** This whole paragraph is VERY vague. What are your ideas and plans? What are the niches you have discovered? This tells them nothing about you.

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**Comment [M26]:** This paragraph could have been written about ANY school. There needs to be a focus on what, specifically, draws you to Fordham and what you bring that will be unique to that program.

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you will be changing careers). The crucial parts are explaining what that path is and why Fordham will be crucial to help you on your way. Do that, and you'll be in good shape!

<b>Page 1: [1] Comment [M5]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:59:00 PM</b>
Make everything sound positive! In other words, you CHOSE to attend Hofstra, as opposed to simply going where you were accepted.		
<b>Page 1: [2] Comment [M6]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
This whole first paragraph probably needs to be restructured. You've got the right idea though! You're trying to explain that your interest in business started at an early age, but it doesn't command the reader's attention and it won't separate you from the pack. <u>Everyone</u> applying to b-school either has a passion for business or a desire to learn more about it. Maybe start with an brief anecdote about something that drew you to business, if you have one. Go beyond saying you wanted to engage your passion--explain WHY that passion is there in the first place. Remember, the opening paragraph is more than just the start of your career chronology--it sets the whole tone. Make them understand how your "path" began and how it will be leading you to success!		
<b>Page 1: [3] Comment [M7]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
This last phrase--"enter dialogue with corporate entities"--seems unclear and weaker than those that preceded it. I'm not sure exactly what you meant by enter dialogue, but it needs to be strengthened (was it consulting? networking?) or eliminated.		
<b>Page 1: [4] Comment [M8]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
"Ivory towers" conveys a sort of detached privilege. The paragraph does a good job of explaining the real world experience you got in college, and using "ivory towers" may belie that.		
<b>Page 1: [5] Comment [M9]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
Remember--positive! There's nothing you can't overcome! No matter how true this may have been (trust me, I know what you mean), you don't want to make it sound like you were somehow giving up.		
<b>Page 1: [6] Deleted</b>	<b>Marcy Lerner</b>	<b>8/30/2006 11:08:00 AM</b>
and the way to a brighter tomorrow seemed blocked[M1]		
<b>Page 1: [7] Comment [M10]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
Especially since you'll be reworking the preceding paragraph, this sentence needs to be moved to the beginning of the next paragraph. It was a little awkward standing alone, and the use of the word boon compounded that.		
<b>Page 2: [8] Comment [M15]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
Again, it's good to explain what the direct mail program does, but I'd like to hear more about what YOU did. Is there an example you could use? Were there any specific successes or innovations?		
<b>Page 2: [9] Deleted</b>	<b>Marcy Lerner</b>	<b>8/30/2006 11:17:00 AM</b>
all around the country		
<b>Page 2: [10] Deleted</b>	<b>Marcy Lerner</b>	<b>8/30/2006 11:17:00 AM</b>
, when he was acting in an official capacity.		
<b>Page 2: [11] Deleted</b>	<b>Marcy Lerner</b>	<b>8/30/2006 11:18:00 AM</b>
as I became more integrated into NU		
<b>Page 2: [12] Deleted</b>	<b>Marcy Lerner</b>	<b>8/30/2006 11:18:00 AM</b>
was more of a job and not a career		
<b>Page 2: [13] Comment [M16]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
This sentence needs to be reworked. First, it sounds like you did excel in the non-profit sphere and you don't want it to sound like you weren't successful. Maybe simply mention that non-profit work tends to focus on fundraising and that isn't necessarily suited to your strengths (creativity, analytics, etc.). Also, what ARE your passions? They need to be mentioned.		
<b>Page 2: [14] Deleted</b>	<b>Marcy Lerner</b>	<b>8/30/2006 11:19:00 AM</b>
While I wholeheartedly agree that who you know is important, terribly important, I don't want the focus of my existence to be soliciting others for money no matter how important the cause.		
<b>Page 2: [15] Comment [M17]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>



You don't want to knock a particular line of work, and don't focus on the importance of who you know. While it may be true in some regards, b-schools want people that create their own success, not rely on connections.

<b>Page 2: [16] Deleted</b>	<b>Marcy Lerner</b>	<b>8/30/2006 11:20:00 AM</b>
<b>and place myself on a career path where I can rest assured that if I put in the time and the effort I will reap the recognition I</b>		

<b>Page 2: [17] Comment [M18]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
Yikes! Be really careful here. Recognition should be the LAST thing on your mind. You want to put in time and effort to achieve something or follow your passions. Schools want to see applicants that want to succeed and contribute, not gain recognition.		

<b>Page 2: [18] Comment [M19]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
I get what you're saying here, but I'd phrase it differently. Something like "I want to gain dexterity in finance and accounting to complement my existing skills."		

<b>Page 2: [19] Comment [M20]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
This is where you really need to start tying the pursuit of an MBA to what your goals are. You don't need the household analogy. Explain why, given your goals, finance skills will be necessary.		

<b>Page 2: [20] Comment [M21]</b>	<b>MBA-E06</b>	<b>8/29/2006 5:03:00 PM</b>
Predicting the future is something you need to do in a b-school app. Or, at the very least, you need to make an educated guess. So, pick a path and explain how you will stay on this path--you simply can't say that there are a variety of divergent paths. There has to be focus, whether you actually know what you want to do or not. Also, again, stay away from words that imply an interest in money.		