



ADMISSIONADO

CASE STUDIES – CHINESE APPLICANTS EDITION

Introduction

Every applicant is unique. Every journey is different. The ultimate destination, however, is the same for all: “success.”

When we get to work with our clients, our first task is to understand each individual’s strengths and weaknesses. Then, once we have a clear sense of all the puzzle pieces we have to work with, our task is to select **the right pieces**, and then assemble them in **the right way**. The goal is to develop a final picture that spells “Future Success” to the Adcom.

It’s never easy, but it’s always rewarding to inspire our clients to reach high and to help bring out the absolute best in them.

Enjoy this **Chinese Applicant Case Studies Edition**, where we review a handful of clients from one of the toughest demographics on the planet. Look for the specific adjustments each person needed to make, but also, the connective tissue binding them all.

Please Note: We take client privacy very seriously, and thus chose not to share people's real names. So, while “Phil” is a made-up name, the rest of the case details are 100% genuine, especially the part about his getting into HBS.

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **700**
Age: **26**
Industry: **Technology**

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **740**
Age: **32**
Industry: **Journalism**

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **740**
Age: **27**
Industry: **Energy**

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **740**
Age: **33**
Industry: **Finance**

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **760**
Age: **25**
Industry: **Consulting**

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **750**
Age: **30**
Industry: **Technical Consulting**

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **740**
Age: **26**
Industry: **Finance**

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **740**
Age: **30**
Industry: **Finance**

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **680**
Age: **29**
Industry: **Consulting**

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **740**
Age: **21**
Industry: **N/A (Goals in Education)**

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Nationality: **China**
GMAT: **770**
Age: **31**
Industry: **CPG**

#1 – Meet Peter, age 26. He's from China.

Biggest Strength

Impressive Scientific Achievements

Competitiveness of Demographic: **8**

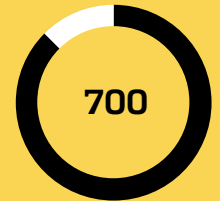
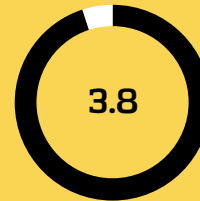


Biggest Weakness

Minimal Business Experience

GPA

GMAT



Industry

Technology

The Challenge

Peter had essentially NO business experience. He had never worked in a corporate position, started his own company, or managed any operation of any enterprise. Peter's entire career had been spent in school and in the lab, doing chemistry. He now wanted to go directly from his PhD into an MBA, something very few people do. To add to this challenge, he was near the bottom of the GMAT range for his target schools. We had to convince the adcom that Peter was serious about business, even though he had little evidence of prior interest in the field.

Possible Approaches

Despite his nontraditional background, Peter did have some leadership experience. He led a few interdisciplinary research teams, and was eager to make this the focus of his essays. The argument would have been something like "I might not have ever managed a budget or product, but I know people. My time leading research teams made me realize I like this aspect of my work the best, so I'm seeking an MBA to pivot to a more people-focused role." Sounds fine! But the problem with this approach is that leadership at school or in the lab is very different from leadership in a profit-making enterprise. Peter was dealing with students who had volunteered to work in his lab—he didn't have to negotiate salary, motivate interest in his project, manage a budget, cut costs, deal with HR issues, etc. In effect, the university administration was handling half the leadership role.

The Admissionado Approach

We recommended that Peter focus instead on how his scientific work related to his desire for an MBA. Unlike most newly minted PhDs, Peter had already earned a patent for a potentially very important advance in the material sciences. The technology had the potential to make a lot of money—if he could bring it to market. Fortunately, Peter was an [Advanced Planning](#) client. What was initially just a patent and some papers, could have become the nucleus of a business in the time between our first consultation and Peter's target application season. So, we pounced. We recommended he start laying the foundation for a company based on his tech. By attending conferences and applying for grants, Peter was able to make a compelling case that his tech was ready for the business world. Now he had a clear NEED for an MBA.

The Result

Peter was admitted to Yale, among other schools.

#2. Meet Max, age 27. He's from China.

Biggest Strength

Successful Social Entrepreneur

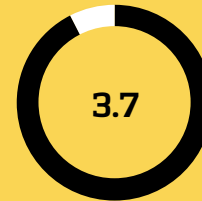
Competitiveness of Demographic: 9



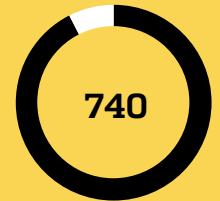
Biggest Weakness

Multiple Reapplicant

GPA



GMAT



Industry

Energy

The Challenge

Max botched his previous attempt at getting into B-school. He didn't realize how much work was involved, and applied way too late, rushing the process without any expert help. Zero admits. We reviewed his apps: Max had presented huge goals, without much evidence that he was likely to achieve them. We needed to make clear that Max was actually a highly credible entrepreneur, with the network and skill to deliver on his big vision.

Possible Approaches

Max's experience could be summarized in two stages: first, he worked in China at a big-name bank, then he left to work in Africa on a clean energy startup. Max felt that his experience in finance was more impressive. He had done quite well at a firm the adcom would recognize, rising rapidly to the highest possible level for someone without an MBA. He focused on that story in his prior applications, however, and it had not been successful. We argued that while the company was prestigious, it was also huge and full of other young professionals applying to exactly the same programs. Why should the adcom accept Max, who had left the firm, over someone who stayed and probably had a better chance of getting back in post-MBA? Answer: They didn't accept Max, and they wouldn't this time either unless we made a different argument.

The Admissions Approach

We built an admissions argument around what Max had been doing since leaving the highest rungs of Chinese finance. Rather than treat that move as a mistake, we encouraged him to own it [...]

{End Preview}

Want to be the next success story?

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