

HOW TO GAIN BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

Summary: In this Q&A article, learn how to get the most out of your business school experience.



Question: I'm 22 years old, and I have a B.A. in anthropology and French. I'm considering a career in business and I'd eventually like to own one. I'm also interested in the financial industry. What type of job should I pursue before I apply to business school? Is gaining experience in the business world more suitable than going directly to school?

Answer: You can make the most out of either scenario, and there are success stories to illustrate the value of each course of action. Generally, however, you're in a better position to reap the full benefit of a business-school education if you have some experience to draw from.

Gain exposure to the business world through an entry-level or administrative position in the financial industry or in a small-business environment. The greatest challenge for a liberal arts graduate is getting a foot in the door. Start with informational interviews to narrow your focus and to begin developing a network. Consider family and friends who may be in a position to suggest names and opportunities. Don't neglect alumni contacts. They may prove to be your most useful source of information and connections in financial and entrepreneurial circles. Spend time at your college career center to polish your resume-writing and interviewing skills.

Working in the business world will give you a greater clarity of purpose and should also help in your decision about which M.B.A. program will best suit your needs.