

November 17, 2008 UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School Supply Chain Chat

Anshul_KFBS2010: Hi everyone! Welcome to the Supply Chain Chat of Kenan-Flagler Business School at UNC Chapel Hill. I am Anshul Agrawal, a 1st year MBA student, Class of 2010. Today we are very glad to have with us Andras Koch and Abhijeet Bharaswadkar, the President and Vice President of Global Supply Chain Club, Lily Nguyen, Raynor Duncombe, Amrinder Nandha, 2nd year MBA students, Wendy Dukes, a representative from our Career Management Center, Professor Wendell Gilland, a professor teaching Operations at UNC Kenan Flagler Business School and Peggy Tate, Assistant Director of MBA Admission. Please feel free to ask us any questions.

Ray D: Hi folks. Fire away with questions letting us know what you want to know more about!

Peggy T: Glad you are all able to join us today.

Amrinder_KFBS2009: Hi everyone. Thank you for being here today!

Lily N: Hi my name is Lily Nguyen. I am a 2nd year student and worked for P&G in Operations as well as a project manager in Pharma (Synthon Pharma and Quintiles) before coming back to school.

Wendell G: Welcome - glad to have you with us this afternoon.

Andras K: Hello Everyone! My name is Andras and I am president of the Supply Chain Club. I am happy to answer any questions you might have related to the club activities.

Abhijeet B: Hello everybody. My name is Abhijeet and I am a second year student at Kenan-Flagler. Feel free to ask any questions related to Supply Chain Management

Jeremy B: Thank you all for your time. I am tied into the automotive industry in Detroit, and see many flaws with its SCM. As a student at UNC, do you have the opportunity to go to various plants and manufacturers for a hands-on experience?

Lily N: Hi Jeremy, yes we do have opportunities throughout the year to visit other manufacturing sites. Most of these industry tours are coordinated by the Global Supply Chain Management Club. So far this year we are going to IBM, John Deere, Caterpillar, Revlon etc.

Andras K: The below pasted list details the activities the Global Supply Chain Club provides to students.

Presentations by business professionals

Field trips to visit related businesses

Case competitions with other top business schools

Help with academic course planning and certificate pursuing

Strong links with Office of Career Services

Help with job/internship search strategy and interview preparation

Alumni contact

Opportunities to participate in other club affairs.

Sameer: Hello Amrinder

Amrinder_KFBS2009: Hi Sameer!

Sameer: I am from India but have been in USA for 4 years now

A.J. K: Hi my name is A.J. Kramer a prospective student for admission in fall 2009. I appreciate the time you are taking today. I currently work for Square 1 Bank, a venture lending bank that focuses on lending to early stage and expansion companies backed by venture capitalists. My question is centered toward the supply chain management of our customers. What challenges do you see smaller/start-up company's facing in the coming years in regards to global supply chain management given the current economic condition.

Wendell G: A.J. - Regarding small companies in these economic times, there are a couple of issues they will have to face. There are often significant fixed costs associated with starting a relationship with a global supplier, so smaller companies may not have the volume to justify this investment. Additionally, as companies grow, they often have to transition their supply chain to one that has been outsourced (generally locally) to one where they directly undertake an increasing percentage of the supply chain activities, and so managing this transition presents an interesting set of issues.

Amrinder_KFBS2009: Hi everyone, please feel free to ask any questions that you have!

Sameer: Amrinder: I am a research scientist and have two masters degree(One from Michigan State University) in chemistry(different concentrations). I have no business background academically. My GMAT score is 680. Do you think I have a good chance?

Peggy T: Sameer, we look at individuals with a broad range of backgrounds and academic training as well as a range of GMAT scores. Our median GMAT for this year was 690. I would encourage you to apply!

Sameer: I am interested in Supply and Chain management. What companies recruit for this concentration?

Andras K: There are companies recruiting both on campus and off campus. Just to name a few: Johnson and Johnson, Delta Air Lines, Amazon, Wal-Mart, Dell, Target.

Jeremy B: Are you seeing a growing demand for a Masters in SCM? If so, is this demand coming from OEMs? The supplier base?

Wendy_KFBS_CMC: There is definitely a growing demand for MBA's who concentrate in Supply Chain...both from suppliers and OEMs. And it's a great choice to concentrate in given the market place!

approach.lee: Hello everyone my name is Donghyun Lee and I am a prospective student for next year. My job title is Supply chain manager in Telecom industry. I think there are many kinds of SCM. I want to know which subjects your classes usually study and what your speciality is?

Abhijeet B: Hi Approach! There are a variety of courses in Kenan-Flagler that give a holistic understanding of supply chain management. We do modelling, case analysis, industry tours, simulated games. Supply Chain Management Club supports the curriculum well by conducting recruiter chats, discussion forums, talk series. Kenan-Flagler's unique strength is its close knit community that encourages alums and students to interact frequently, almost in any field.

Sameer: Do you consider graduate level teaching as work experience? I have taught more than 350 undergraduate chemistry majors.

Peggy T: Sameer, our preference is for two years of full time work experience prior to our MBA program.

Krishna R: Hello all, I am a software professional in the Supply Chain Industry with about 8 years experience. I was wondering if the club also looks at technology initiatives in the industry or is this more geared towards the supply Chain itself.

Andras K: Krishna: The club focuses primarily on the supply chain/operations component of the activities it provides. However, we do have activities that have technology aspects. For example, we are doing a lab tour at IBM, visiting their Green Solutions Center and Retail Innovation labs.

Jeremy B: To the panel: What were your career backgrounds prior to enrolling into the Kenan-Flagler SCM program?

Amrinder_KFBS2009: Jeremy B.: I was an Educational Advisor at the Fulbright Commission in my home country.

Ray D: Jeremy - I came from a Finance and IT background. No previous Supply Chain experience before coming back for my MBA...

Anshul_KFBS2010: Jeremy B.: I was an entrepreneur in the energy industry before coming to b-school.

Abhijeet B: Jeremy - I came from process automation background with focus on heavy industries.

Sameer: Any panel member from Science background?

Amrinder_KFBS2009: Sameer: None of us on the panel are from science background but there are some with science background in our class.

Zongdi X: Hi, Andras, I come from UPS CHINA, and I am going applying :)

Andras K: Zongdi: That is great news! Congratulations and we hope you join Kenan-Flagler next year!

Sameer: What qualities do u look for from a non-business background applicant?

Peggy T: Sameer, we look at your academic background, work experience, leadership and other accomplishments to date as well as the career direction you are seeking.

approach.lee: what kind of simulated games? Is it commercial strategy games like Capstone?

Abhijeet B: Approach: The games are custom designed to help understand a group of concepts. Most of them are real-time games and you get a chance to evaluate and re-design your strategies that affect the performance of your supply chain.

A.J. K.: Anshul: Do you think the entrepreneurial background gave you a good foundation for working towards your MBA. I also have an entrepreneurial background.

Anshul_KFBS2010: AJK: It helps as it gives you a lot of leadership experience that b-schools value a lot.

Krishna R: How well connected is the club with the STAR initiative at Kenan Flagler. I really want to know more about the STAR initiative

Andras K: Krishna: The STAR initiative runs fairly independently from the club activities. The Consulting area is most involved in STAR. I did a STAR project this last spring and I had a great learning experience, focusing on the supply chain component of the project.

Sameer: I used to work with my dad helping him in his business. Does this count as business experience?

Ray D: Sameer - How admissions looks at working in a family business would depend a great deal on what type of work you were doing, and your involvement in the business. I'd suggest contacting admissions directly and discuss your work experience with them while you work on your application.

Zongdi X: Dear Andras, tks, my long term goal is CMO here, I will return to UPS. Do you think I can get some courses combined my marketing area and the supply chain solution?

Wendell G: Zongdi - Yes, many students choose to concentrate in both GSCM and marketing. There are several classes that meet requirements for both concentrations, so meeting these requirements does not require you to take the sum of the number of classes for each of the concentrations independently.

Amrinder_KFBS2009: Zongdi: I'm one of the students concentrating both in marketing and supply chain.

Ray D: Zongdi: I'm going to have concentrations in Supply Chain and Marketing as well. The two topics seem very disparate, but they have actually overlapped several times in classes.

Jeremy B: Has anyone from the panel participated in the Global Immersions program? Could you briefly share your experience?

Andras K: Jeremy: I did the India GIE last year. It was a tremendous learning experience. We have visited eight companies and we also learned about the local culture. It is a 12 day trip and is lead by a faculty leader who is very knowledgeable about the local business, companies and culture.

Sameer: For the international Panel members: Do I need a us citizen as co-signer for financial loan towards my MBA tuition?

Wendy_KFBS_CMC: SAMEER: Visit this link for more info on financial aid; or contact Susan Brooks <http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/programs/MBA/Tuition/aid.cfm#extra>.

Sameer: How can I leverage a MBA from UNC-KF in supply and chain management to land into Pharmaceutical or Biotech companies? Do you have any courses catering to my interests?

Lily N: Hi Sameer, I worked for Eli Lilly this summer and I recommend either taking classes at the school of public health or look into the Masters of Public Health and MBA dual degree. There are lots of opportunities in Pharma especially considering all of the companies that come on campus to recruit.

Lily N. Hi Sameer, my opinion is that Pharma companies really like candidates with a science background who have an MBA and solid work experience.

Zongdi X: Amirinder and Ray, what do you think should be focused on in our essays? Since I have so many to write :)

Ray D: Zongdi: Just make sure you tell your story in a way that highlights what your strengths are, and what you hope to accomplish with an MBA. There isn't a right answer

for the essays, other than being able to convey to the reader why you are a good candidate, and how the Kenan-Flagler can help you achieve your goals.

Amrinder_KFBS2009: Zongdi: Be yourself when answering the essays as well as the interview. Articulate your goals clearly and how you / your background and the MBA will help you to achieve the goals.

Krishna R: I am not sure I am connecting the dots here. Although I am into supply Chain software, my goal is to go into Venture Capital focusing on the mid market capabilities of the technology sector in this domain specifically in India. I am excited about KF because of its emphasis on Supply Chain which I have not seen in other top schools. Do you think my background and goal fit with what KF is looking for and what I am looking to achieve

Peggy T: Krishna, many of our students are changing careers and we have a strong entrepreneurship program in addition to supply chain. You would be able to leverage both your experience and your career interests at K-F.

approach.lee: I usually make some strategies specially in sourcing part. Next year when I go to UNC-KF,I want to apply to the games^^

Abhijeet B: Approach- :) eventually you will, once you are a part of Kenan-Flagler.

Sameer: Lily: Do you have any science background?

Lily N: Hi Sameer, I have a BS in Chemical Engineering

Sameer: Lily: Good to Know. Is the career switch worth the risk?

Lily N: Hi Sameer, what are you switching from?

Sameer: Lily: I have two master's degree in Chemistry and presently working as a research scientist (working on Bio-fuel project).

Sameer: Lily: I got my second masters degree from Michigan State University, Chemistry dept. I am working presently at Biochem dept , Michigan State University .

Lily N: Sameer, it really depends on what you are looking for in your career switch. Pharma companies do pay competitive compensations, however there is more flexibility in life and work balance in a university. Also there maybe more stability in a University as well given that Pharma companies are going through some issues with innovation and patent expiration in the next few years.

Sameer: Lily: Considering your points I would like to know what do you plan to do in your future?

Lily N: Hi Sameer, I have an offer to go back to Eli Lilly but I am also considering some local job opportunities (mostly in chemicals or pharma). The full-time search continues throughout the year.

approach.lee: Thank you Abhijeet. Is there any student whose job was in procurement part like me? I want to know whether my job experience is fit for KF.

Abhijeet B: Approach - Andras can answer your question better than I can. But as far as fit is concerned, it's really the character than the work experience.

Andras K: Hi Approach: I worked during the summer in procurement at Johnson and Johnson. My prior MBA background is different, however I was able to leverage many of the concepts and tools I learned during my first year. Is there anything specific you would like to know related to procurement?

Zongdi X: I c now, Amirinder:) tks:) and I will bring my husband to UNC, do you have the partner club for the other one?

Ray D: Zongdi: We do have a strong partner club that is active at Kenan-Flagler. (My wife has really enjoyed here experience with it.) There will be a chat on January 8th for people interested in the partner club (called Kenan-Connection).

Krishna R: I know that while entering into KF you would look at broad range of GMAT scores like how Peggy answered a question above. I think my drawback is also a lower GMAT score of 650. I heard that even after selection into the B School, GMAT will be a criteria during internship and final recruitment? How true is this?

Ray D: Krishna: I have found that a few career paths actually do care about GMAT scores. Predominately Investment Banking and Consulting. For other careers, the GMAT doesn't seem to matter at all. (I've never been asked it in all of my interviews.) So I can't imagine it will make any difference in a Supply Chain interview.

Krishna R: Thanks Ray, considering the fact that my goal is to go into Venture Capital which is closer to consulting you would think that it would impact my chances.

Ray D: Krishna: If you want to be on the Venture Capital side (lending the money) then GMAT scoring is more likely to matter. If you are just looking to get venture funding, then I don't see it making a big difference... Does that help? (Feel free to ask again if I didn't answer your question.)

Krishna R: Yes Ray, that answers my question and clarifies it better

Krishna R: I thank the Panel for the answers provided. I look forward to my visit to the school next week. Have a great day everyone.

Wendy_KFBS_CMC: SAMEER: Go Green! (Spartan alum here)

Sameer: Wendy: Go Green!!! Go White!!! Nice to see a spartan alum here.

Jeremy B: Wendell: I wish to incorporate the use of technology in my company in order to make it a leaner, more efficient operation. Will I learn to evaluate the pros and cons of such implementations in your class?

Wendell G: Jeremy - The role of technology is something that we spend some time discussing in class, but we do not get into the nuts and bolts of implementing an ERP system or the like. Rather, we talk more broadly about the benefits of greater communication within the supply chain and talk about ERP as a means to achieving this result. There are also some other classes within the curriculum that focus more directly on technology management.

Anshul_KFBS2010: Everybody: We will be concluding the chat in 15 minutes so please feel free to ask your questions.

Sameer: Lily: Can I get your email id? If you don't mind. If you do, don't reply to this message.

Lily N: Hi Sameer, The best thing is for you to send an email to mba_info@unc.edu and ask them to get in touch with me.

Sameer: Congrats Lily!

Lily N: Thanks Sameer!

Aarti_GMU: How does Supply Chain security work? What are the job prospects for it?

Wendy_KFBS_CMC: AARTI: As far as the Supply Chain job security goes, we've seen a focus on SCM to be a benefit given our current economic status...so there hasn't been a decline in SCM recruiting. Does this answer your question?

Aarti_GMU: Yes it does. Thank you Wendy. Another question I am currently a Admin of Justice Student and have a loss prevention background. How do I get in to Supply Chain or how do I get any experience?

Wendy_KFBS_CMC: AARTI: You will gain additional experience during your internship. What I've found is that if you know the industry, the players, the job responsibilities, you can get into SCM. The key is getting the internship to add that to your resume...then you can secure the FT job.

Zongdi X: Hi, Ray, one more question, my gmat is high, but working experience is only 3 years as senior account executive, will this considered to be a short working time and a drawback?

Peggy T: Zongdi X, we average five years of work experience. Your three years of experience should be fine, particularly with strong levels of responsibility.

A.J. K: I live in Southpoint (Right outside of Chapel Hill) and would like to come visit the school. With the holidays coming up any recommendations on the best time to visit to get a good feel for the B-school and the day to day activities of a student.

Lily N: Hi AJK, the best time to visit is Mon through Thursday. You will need to schedule a visit so that you can visit a class and join the tour. Here is the link. <http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/Programs/MBA/interviewsVisits/index.cfm>.

Jeremy B: Thank you all for your time. I look forward to meeting with as many of you as possible this Friday on my visit.

Wendy_KFBS_CMC: JEREMY: We'll keep our eye out for you.

Aarti_GMU: Wendy: Do you have any recommendation where to apply?

Wendy_KFBS_CMC: AARTI: Schools or companies?

Aarti_GMU: Wendy: Companies

Wendy_KFBS_CMC: For companies, we have a list a companies that recruit on campus <http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/Programs/MBA/careerServices/recruit.cfm>.

Wendy_KFBS_CMC: AARTI: More of your company strategy will be flushed out when you get on campus and meet with me. I'll coach you through the career search process.

Zongdi X: sorry to interrupt, but is there any of you also int'l students:)

Abhijeet B: Zongdi - I am an international student.

Amrinder_KFBS2009: Zongdi: I'm international.

Anshul_KFBS2010: Zongdi: I am an international student too.

Andras K: Zongdi: I am an international student. Do you have any specific questions we can answer in that regard?

Zongdi : will us, int'l applications, have anything special to submit or handle ?

Andras K: Zongdi: The only main difference is the TOEFL test required for international applicants.

Zongdi: to assure our employing after MBA with Visa qualified?

approach.lee: thank you Andras. Actually I am in procurement department in Korea Telecom for 7 years. I want to know what kind of SCM strategy KF focuses on. For example,

my company usually buy network equipment about 3 billion dollars in a year and it will increase now. it has big issue to not only save the cost but also consider quality,delivery....is this kind of issue or case study be treated in your class?

Anshul_KFBS2010: I would like to thank everyone for joining us today, and good luck with your applications. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at mba_info@unc.edu. We will be posting the transcript of this chat on the website in a week.

Ray D: Thanks, and good luck to everyone!!

Lily N: Bye everyone. Good Luck!

Wendy_KFBS_CMC: Thanks to everyone. Hope to see you next fall.

Amrinder_KFBS2009: Thank you everyone!

Wendell G: Best wishes everyone - we hope to see you here in the fall!

Abhijeet B: Thank you everyone for participating in this chat. Wish you all good luck with your application process!

Peggy T: Thank you for your participation and questions on today's chat.

A.J. K: Thank you everyone. Have a great day.

Andras K: Thank you everyone! If you have additional questions left unanswered feel free to contact us at the email address: mba_info@unc.edu