

It might puzzle you as to why I, a business student, am applying to dental school. My mother and father, both entrepreneurs, have been in the hotel business for the last 20 years. They raised me to be a businessman who would someday take over what they had started. Since I was ten years old, I have helped my parents to clean rooms and manage our hotel. I grew up believing that this was what I wanted. This clashed, however, with my growing curiosity in dentistry.

As a child, I could not wait for my semiannual visit to the dentist. I always loved the free gifts: the toothbrush, the mouthwash, and the coupon for a free ice-cream cone at Friendly's. Furthermore, the array of instruments that the dentist had laid out was intriguing to me. As the years went on, I volunteered at different dental practices. One summer, I volunteered at The Family Dentist, a practice owned by Dr. John Doe. Being there was happiness to me: the friendly environment, the patients, and Dr. Jane Doe's willingness to show me how to diagnose and treat patients. Through these experiences, I was able to see what a career in dentistry really entails. By the time I was a sophomore in high school, my interest in dentistry evolved from a childish fascination to a profession I wanted to pursue. But how could I become a dentist? It was already decided that I was going to take over my parent's business and fulfill the dream they had for me.

In the fall of 2000, I entered Alpha University as a marketing major. Soon after my classes started, I began to question whether I had made the right decision. There wasn't anything in my business classes that captivated me. I obtained an internship at the late World Trade Center Headquarters of XXXX in New York City in the summer after my freshman year. I hoped this would help me to further explore the business world. Working at XXXX was an invaluable experience. It allowed me to see a different aspect of business. Most importantly, however, I learned that business was not satisfying to me and a career in this path was not something I wanted to do for the rest of my life.

A major turning point in my life came on Christmas Day 2001, the day I decided I was going to be a dentist. On this day, my father had two consecutive heart attacks. The cardiologist said that he needed a quadruple bypass, a risky procedure. The thought of losing my father was unbearably painful. Before the surgery, my father asked to speak to me alone. He began telling me what to do with our family business in case he did not make it through the surgery. He was putting me in charge of what he worked so many years to create. The idea of my running his business was becoming a reality, and this was my chance to give back to my family.

The doctor who would perform the surgery soon interrupted us and I remember looking at him with such reverence, for he held the fate of my entire family in his hands. Because of that doctor, the operation was a success and my father is in good health now. He did not just save my father's life or relieve my father from pain; he helped my entire family and relieved all of us from pain. I never appreciated the importance of helping another individual until I was the one being helped.

My father's heart attack brought me face to face with the conflict between my obligation to the innermost circle, my family, and my desire to help a broader community and beyond. I always believed that following my parent's wishes was my way of making a difference. It was not. I wanted to contribute to others, not just to my family. The circle within which I wanted to make a difference widened. I cannot imagine there being anything more satisfying or rewarding than helping a person in need. I knew right then that my aspiration to pursue a career in dentistry would allow me to achieve that goal.

Becoming a dentist is not simply fulfilling a childhood ambition; it is my way to improve the lives of others by promoting oral health and helping people with problems such as gum disease or tooth decay. Dentistry will also give me a chance to utilize my degree in business, if someday I choose to open up my own practice. Furthermore, I want to mentor aspiring dentists as Dr. John Doe did for me. As a start, I founded and am President of the Alpha University Pre-Dental Society. I have helped pre-dental students gain exposure to the dental field by organizing trips to different dental schools and inviting Dentists to share their experiences.

All my experiences thus far have been preparing me as a person and as an adult. I have spent the last few years exploring and challenging my inner and outer self. Finally, I have come to the realization that the person I want to be is the same person I loved to visit as a child, a dentist. I have worked hard to attain a large amount of exposure and I am now ready and capable of achieving my goal and making my dream a reality.