



Prospective Student
Online Chat Transcript
Tuck Admissions Chat
with Indian Applicants
7/26/2016 10pm IST

Suds T'10: Hi Everyone, this is Suds Tirumala, T'10, Associate Director of Admissions and Regional Director, India and South East Asia. As a Tuck alum and a member of the Admissions Committee, it's my pleasure to welcome you to this webinar that's exclusively focused on applicants from India.

Suds T'10: The idea is to demystify the admissions process to the extent I can and try and answer as many questions as possible in the time we have. Hope you take advantage of the opportunity and get some of your burning questions answered. Also, make sure you [note the dates for the Admissions receptions](#) coming up in India over the next 6 weeks. Look forward to seeing you there.

Admissions Consultants

Avinash N Tumkur: I am not planning to use an admissions consultant. Will that put me at a disadvantage compared to applicants who do use such services?

Suds T'10: It's all about your story, your experience, and your communication skills. Showcase the real you in your application. Of course, the interview is going to be all you, so why worry about what others are doing?

Already Earned an MBA

Aditi Dubey: Hi Suds, Aditi here. I am presently employed with State Bank of India. I completed MBA in Supply Chain Management and IT immediately after undergrad. Is Tuck Business School receptive to students who want to apply for a second MBA?

Suds T'10: Hi Aditi, not sure what the actual degree you got was - PGDM or MBA. In any case, we think PGDM from some of the top schools in India (such as IIMs) is very comparable to an MBA. So we're not really able to consider these applications.

Application Rounds

Manasi: Hi Suds, thanks for hosting this event. I had a question about EA vs round 1. What is the difference between the two in terms of how the AdCom views applicants?

Suds T'10: There's no difference between EA round and November round other than the fact that in the EA round, the applicant is making a statement that he or she has taken the time to research the school, and that if given an admission, the person is taking up the offer of admission at Tuck. The Admissions Committee's criteria for reviewing applications doesn't change based on the round.

Avinash N Tumkur: I am very certain of Tuck being my first choice. Having said that, are there any caveats that I should be aware of before applying to EA?

Suds T'10: Avinash, the biggest caveat I can give is don't chase the deadline and submit a half-baked application. It's better to take the time to create an excellent application rather than push through a

deadline without making a convincing case.

Nihar Desai: Hi Suds. Thanks for answering our questions. I understand that for Tuck, applying in the Early Action round is not a binding contract. If so, what is the difference between Early Action and November round? I understand that in Early Action you do get results by December, but apart from this is there any advantage in applying in Early Action?

Suds T'10: Nihar: EA round is for someone who is sure they're coming to Tuck.

Application Review

Pallavi Dutta: Hi Suds, is there any difference in assessing Indian applicants as compared to the others?

Suds T'10: Hi Pallavi, short answer: No. All applications are treated equally and there is no difference when it comes to evaluating applications irrespective of where the applicant is from.

Arvind: What exactly do you give priority to in the Indian Applicants case i.e. GMAT, GPA, recommendation or essay?

Suds T'10: Arvind, we absolutely review every application holistically and the Admissions Committee doesn't get swayed by a number or a score. We expect the applicant to do a stellar job across all parts of the application.

Abhishek 2: How overrepresented is the Indian Engineer male demographic compared to the rest of the applicant pool?

Suds T'10: Abhishek, I think you're worrying about something you cannot control. I'd rather you focus on making your application as strong as it could be so you can shine through irrespective of whoever else is applying alongside you.

Karthik: Hi Suds, what major criteria influence the admissions? Is it GMAT, work experience, any outline?

Suds T'10: As mentioned earlier, it's a truly holistic process. No one attribute will seal the deal, but all together will make a compelling case.

Arvind: Do you have any fixed quota regarding the number of admission you have to take from a particular country?

Suds T'10: No. There's no formula we use for the admissions process.

Manasi: What are some of the common reasons you've denied an admit to applicants based on the interview process?

Suds T'10: Inability to communicate, not enough research on the school, not enough passion, not really able to articulate their vision, not being able to have a conversation, etc.

rumit: Hi Suds, can you provide us some idea about the average Indian GPAs for selected applicants?

Suds T'10: There's no specific metric I can give since everyone comes from such different backgrounds even from India. Just focus making your application strong!

Career-Specific Questions/Tuck Centers & Initiatives

Ankita: Hi Suds. What are the job prospects for someone interested in Marketing? How many alums from the last batch have been able to take this career path?

Suds T'10: Ankita, don't worry too much about what someone else has been able to do (that said, there are Indian students who've gone into CPG companies). Think more about what you want to do and take advantage of all that Tuck has to offer so you can get to the destination you've set for yourself.

Rutvik Karve: Can you tell us a little bit about FinTech initiatives at Tuck and if the program has specific strengths at this intersection?

Suds T'10: Please [reach out](#) to the Tuck Finance Club and the newly formed FinTech club for more details.

guest: Hi Suds, I am currently employed in the energy sector and post MBA I want to be associated with the sector, finally in the long term I want to get back to India and participate in shaping India's development in the sector. What opportunities do you think I can look forward to after the MBA?

Suds T'10: Plenty of them. Look up the [Revers Energy Initiative](#).

Sanjana: Hi Suds, its Sanjana. Thank you so much for this chat, I am interested in applying to your school for the MBA program starting fall of next year. I am into social sector and managing an NGO - I want to know about the resources available at Tuck for an admit in not profit sector/social sector?

Suds T'10: Look up [Center for Business and Society](#). All your queries will be answered.

Aditya: Hi Suds, can you let me know what specific courses Tuck offers related to public policy and global economics in their MBA program? I am a candidate with a socio-political background and am looking at a general management education with focus on the above mentioned areas.

Suds T'10: Aditya, there's an entire center at Tuck dedicated to [global business and government](#)!

Career Support/Visas

Ankita: Does Tuck have a career support team to help in internship and job hunt?

Suds T'10: The Tuck [CDO](#) is working day in and day out to help every single student land an interview and a job.

Rahul Rana: Hi Suds. I am a re-applicant and was waitlisted in 2015-16. My question regarding re-application has already been answered. But I have another question about the H-1B (lottery) issue. An alumnus shared that CDO might offer help to some extent in case someone faces visa issues. Can you elaborate more on how does the CDO actually help?

Suds T'10: H-1B is a systemic issue and not something specific to an individual or a school. The [CDO](#) being so personalized is always trying to see how best to help Tuckies far into the future. Every Tuck alum has the same level of access to the CDO long after graduation.

Community/Culture

Anuj: Hey Suds, We know that TUCK has a very small community. Normally during an MBA people would want to interact with more and more people just to enhance the spectrum of learning i.e. by leveraging the numbers and diversity. Basically what makes TUCK work?

Suds T'10: Anuj, focus on quality of the interactions and not merely quantity. Tuckies get back to you no

matter where they are in the world - they're so passionate about the school and what the experience during the two years meant to them.

Pallavi Dutta: We know that Tuck is a very closely knit school, but is an increase in class size expected for fall 2017?

Suds T'10: Don't expect dramatic changes in the class size.

Souvik: Hi Suds, I want to understand the culture of the school. What are the people like and what is the environment like at the school?

Suds T'10: Souvik, encourage you to come to the Tuck events coming up - you'll be able to get a personal feel for the Tuck culture and community.

Cost/Expenses

Ankita: Hi Suds. What is the total expense expected for a full time MBA student? This is inclusive of tuition and living

Suds T'10: The cost of the Tuck MBA is given [here](#) on the Tuck website.

Essay Questions

Akshat Kalra: Hi Suds, wanted to get an understanding of the second essay question, is it strictly a professional essay or can we include experiences from our personal life.

Suds T'10: Akshat: It could be any experience that's meaningful to you - professional or personal. We want to understand your motivations and how you evolved as a result of that experience.

Rutvik Karve: Hi Suds, Rutvik here. We met last year at the Tuck event. Thank you for hosting the chat. Can you tell me how the committee evaluates salary information? Should I explain a salary drop in the optional essay if it is due to a switch into an industry that pays lower?

Suds T'10: Rutvik, if you think it strengthens your case, by all means, go ahead.

vimal dhupar: I am a reapplication and the Tuck Admission questions for the 2017 applicants focus on global scenarios more than the previous year. Does that mean that students who have been on international projects will be preferred? What should be the focus of the essays?

Suds T'10: Vimal, you have to create your own focus based on your experience. We are not looking for a formula answer. We want to get to know you through your essays. So whatever your experience is, bring it out in the best way possible.

Vishal: Hi Suds, how important is it to have your career goals clearly defined in the application? For a lot of people an MBA is about exploring their options and I suspect a lot of applicants aren't entirely sure what path best suits them.

Suds T'10: Vishal, to the extent you can, you'll want to crystallize your career plans in the essays. Being vague there is not going to make the best impression on the committee.

Ankita: Hi Suds, in one of the essay questions the prompt mentions "Tuck educates wise leaders who better the world of business." What is Tuck's interpretation of this?

Suds T'10: Ankita, we want to know how you interpret it and tell us why you are the best candidate for admission.

GPA and Test Scores

Dheeraj Devata: Hi Suds, how does Tuck perceive GRE applicants? Is there an average score declared? Thanks.

Suds T'10: Tuck has only recently started accepting GRE scores so there's not too much history for us. GRE or GMAT, we expect the applicants to do well in all sections and be competitive.

Sahil: Hi Suds. This is Sahil Shah from Chennai. I have two questions to ask, if you don't mind answering them please. Firstly, is it true that students from non-IIT institutes are at a disadvantage or that they are not considered favorably? Secondly, my CGPA is 7.8 which as per conversion on 4 point scale is 2.7. Is there any way I can turn around this in my application? For example, would a high GMAT score convince the AdCom about my academic capabilities?

Suds T'10: Sahil, any number of Tuck students come from a non-IIT background. You don't have to worry about converting the CGPA for us - we're fully aware of the schools in India and appreciate what academic performance in a school implies. Again, focus on making sure your application is the strongest it could be and don't let things you can't control bog you down.

Aloy: Hi Suds, I am aware that an application is viewed in its entirety but if you can throw some light on how important undergrad scores are. Is there a minimum GPA below which applications are not considered?

Suds T'10: Aloy, the Admissions Committee reviews all applications and there's no minimum criteria we ascribe to any attribute.

Roshan Aslam: Hi Suds. Can a low GPA be compensated by other elements in the profile such as work ex., GRE/GMAT score, CFA, etc.?

Suds T'10: Aslam, make sure your overall application is the strongest it can be. If you've been able to demonstrate better quant skills in your career, that certainly puts you in a better light.

Pratik Chavan: Hi Suds, thank you for hosting this event, how do you see an applicant with a CFA (CFAI), CPA (AICPA) and CMA (IMA), with an average undergrad score.

Suds T'10: Again, holistic approach to application. Make sure you do well in your GMAT and whatever additional certifications you've taken up.

Shubhankar Tyagi: Hi Suds! Could you please throw some light on how recruiters (Consulting specifically) at Tuck perceive GRE score (vs. GMAT) of a graduating student?

Suds T'10: Please ask the [Tuck Consulting Club](#)!

Yasir: Hi Suds, Does AdCom treat students with multiple GMAT separately?

Suds T'10: Not sure what you mean. We routinely get applicants who've given GMAT multiple times and we take the best score.

Shamit Munjal: Hi Suds, given that the Integrated Reasoning section is relatively new on the GMAT, has Tuck begun considering the IR score actively while reviewing an applicant's profile in the admissions process?

Suds T'10: Shamit, it's another data point and not a deciding factor.

Interviews

Prateek Choudhary: Hi Suds! I am a reapplicant and would be applying to Tuck in the EA round. Since Tuck may or may not re-interview applicants, would it be perceived as a negative sign if I cannot go to the campus for the interview?

Suds T'10: Prateek, it's not a negative sign. Just make sure you do a great job on the application.

Baibhab: Hi Suds, good evening. In the whole application process, how important it is to visit campus or give face to face interview? Do either of these increase chances of an admit significantly, other aspects of profile remaining constant?

Suds T'10: Baibhab, the Admissions Committee fully appreciates the fact that international students are not able to visit the school for practical reasons. There's no stigma attached to not being able to visit the campus. Make sure you demonstrate your interest by attending the numerous Tuck events coming up around the country.

Nihar Desai 2: Hi, is it a big plus point if we visit the campus for a self-initiated interview? Does not visiting go against the candidate's chances?

Suds T'10: As mentioned earlier not visiting Tuck is not an issue if you're an international applicant. Make sure you come to the events to get a feel for the school and the community and channel the passion you see there into the application!

Letters of Recommendation

Shronit: Hi Suds, thank you for hosting this. For someone who comes from a family business would a director (shareholder, non-family member) be a suitable recommender? Considering it is a construction business clients and vendors do not work very closely.

Suds T'10: Shronit, I think director/shareholder is a reasonable recommender as long as there is no conflict of interest.

Sahil Bhatia: Can one Recommendation come from a vendor / a person from another business function of the same company (in case the candidate interacts with these people regularly)? How will Tuck rate that, provided one of the recommendations is from an immediate supervisor?

Suds T'10: Sahil, make sure the recommender is someone who is able to speak about your strengths and abilities well. That's what we're looking for. If you think these are the right people for you, go for it.

Arjun Swamy: Can I take a recommendation letter from a peer?

Suds T'10: If you're not having a recommendation from a supervisor, you'll need to explain why that's the case. Who else you get to recommend you is up to you. Assume the person knows you well enough to be able to write about you.

Rutvik Karve: I have a current supervisor who is extremely busy and travels internationally a lot. Also, I believe the former supervisor and colleague will be able to comment on my abilities much better as I worked with them longer. Can I use my former supervisor and a senior former colleague for recommendations, or is a current supervisor / current company's senior very strongly preferred?

Suds T'10: Explain in the application the reason for your choice of recommender.

Location (Regarding Networking, Recruiting)

Ramprasad: Hi Sudershan! Since Tuck is not located in a major city, how would you rate the exposure that students get towards industry? In terms of access, on-the ground learning etc.

Suds T'10: One word: Fantastic! This may require a longer answer whenever you attend the Tuck reception/coffee chat. Suffice it to say that Tuck's location is an excellent advantage. Recruiters and business leaders come to Tuck with the sole purpose of visiting the campus and not because they have other avocations or meetings to attend alongside recruiting. They're there for networking, breakfast, lunch, dinner, office hours, and finally interviews - enormous opportunity to interact and get to know the company and its culture better as much as the recruiter is interested in getting to know the candidate. If you should take one word away from this answer, it's "Access."

Ankit: Hi Suds... Given that Tuck is located on the east coast, should an aspirant who wants to build a career in technology avoid applying?

Suds T'10: Ankit, any large number of Tuckies call West Coast their home. A number of technology companies recruit from Tuck.

Qualities of an Ideal Candidate

Meraj Faiz: What is the most important thing in an application to Tuck, can you please shed a little light on the ideal candidate for the Tuck MBA?

Suds T'10: The ideal candidate for Tuck would be someone who is empathetic, who is collaborative, who has been able to take people along whether or not he or she has been in a leadership role, someone who is fun to be with, and is able to seamlessly mingle with people from different cultures and backgrounds, is able to take up responsibilities beyond what is expected, and is frankly, a great person to hang out with. Someone who is willing to push the envelope for self as well as for others around her/him.

BoomShaka: What would set apart a Tuck applicant from an applicant to any other top business school?

Suds T'10: Fun loving collaborative empathetic leader. See response to a prior question.

Reapplicants

Ashutosh: Hi Suds, thank you for hosting this event. What in your view is the best way to approach re-application? Thanks.

Suds T'10: Hi Ashutosh, Tuck loves reapplicants - the fact that they've waited for a whole year to apply again is itself a statement about how much they appreciate the Tuck community and what they've learned about the program. Assuming you've received feedback, we expect you to address all the points that were identified during the feedback and demonstrate that you've taken the feedback to heart.

Manasi: q2) How likely is Tuck to accept reapplicants? [Given that there is significant progress on the GMAT, extracurricular and professional front based on feedback provided by the AdCom last time around.]

Suds T'10: Manasi, Tuck loves reapplicants!

Prateek Choudhary: Hi Suds! As a reapplicant, I would need to submit one new recommendation. Can the new recommendation be from someone who has already given me a recommendation or is it

preferable to get a new recommender?

Suds T'10: We'll need a different recommender than the ones you've chosen already.

Recruiting

Krittika: Is it easy for an Indian student to get a job in consulting there - east coast/west coast. Thanks.

Suds T'10: Depends on how good you are. McKinsey, Bain, BCG, LEK, etc. recruit regularly from Tuck.

Avinash N Tumkur: I was interested in looking at top employers at Tuck. Is there a reason Tuck does not publish this?

Suds T'10: Please look up [hiring companies](#) on the CDO website.

Shamit Munjal: Hi Suds, does Tuck provide any flexibility in their class schedule for those students that have to travel for interview days and other recruiting events?

Suds T'10: Yes. Lot of it!

Simonil Rustomji: Hi Suds, what sort of support does Tuck provide to students who are recruiting off-campus?

Suds T'10: Plenty of support - the [CDO](#) is very personalized in its approach to each student!

Vedang Shriya: Hi. I understand the recruiting and applications for the internship begin in Nov / Dec, and the internship opportunity is a great way to find a post MBA career. Considering I am looking for a career shift, how practical / feasible is it to demonstrate to potential recruiters within 3 months that one has the skill set to take up an internship in a different career path?

Suds T'10: If you're good enough to get into Tuck, you're good enough to get out of it. Recruiters are looking for how you're able to solve challenges. Tuck has a unique policy in that companies that come to campus are able to shortlist only 50% of the slots for interviews and the other 50% are self-selected by candidates who are interested in that company. So everyone has an equal opportunity to pitch themselves as the right candidate for internship/job.

Scholarships

Himanshu: Hi. What is the criteria for scholarship and how to approach for the same?

Suds T'10: There's no special application for scholarship. All applicants are considered for one.

Sud's Tuck Experience

Anoop: Hi Suds, what would you say really differentiates the Tuck MBA from the rest? Why did you personally choose Tuck over any other potential school?

Suds T'10: I say this often: Tuck experience was a metamorphosis for me - similar to a caterpillar emerging from a cocoon as a butterfly! The entire community is rooting for your success and eager to help you. It's electrifying atmosphere where you're spending time with some of the smartest people in the world.

Manasi: Every Tuckie has wonderful things to say about Tuck. What made your Tuck experience special for you?

Suds T'10: Every single day was a revelation - it pushed me in more ways than one - and I developed as a person throughout the experience.

Apoorv Sharma: Hi Suds, what were your most challenging experiences at Tuck?

Suds T'10: I didn't think about it as a challenge, but more as an opportunity to do some things I've never done before in my life. It's the attitude that counts.

Anoop: Hi Suds, I know this is quite an open ended question, but could you elaborate on your professional and educational history prior to the Tuck MBA. Or alternatively tell us about the profiles of any Indian Tuckie over the last few years. Trying to get an understanding of the profile of Indian candidates that Tuck takes in. Is there a page I can use to contact these students/alums or read more about them?

Suds T'10: Please sign up on [Tuck Connections](#) to be connected to Indian students - that'll give you a broad feel for the community and students.

krutik: Suds, what are the top difficulties that you see Indian candidates face during their initial months of program?

Suds T'10: Nothing out of the ordinary. They're all excited about being at Tuck and soaking it all in, just like everyone else. It's a self-selecting program, so only a certain kind of individual and mettle will thrive in the community.

Teaching (Method, TuckGO, Onsite Global Consulting)

Ayush Awadhya: Hi Suds. Thanks for hosting this chat. Can you tell me more about the teaching methodologies followed in a routine Tuck MBA classroom?

Suds T'10: It's case-based, lecture-based, sometimes both, research-based (in an RTP seminar), and in some cases, your own aptitude based (such as in an independent study).

Sanjana: Hi Suds, my next question is how experiential learning as a method of teaching is adopted in Tuck? If possible what percent of each study methods is adopted by Tuck to teach MBA program to its students in 1st year?

Suds T'10: [Experiential learning](#) is intrinsic to [TuckGO](#). Please refer to the website. The core courses are mostly case-based and lecture-based.

Sudhanshu Kanwar: Hi Suds, How can we connect to professors at Tuck? I have heard a lot about Prof. Vijay Govindraján and his reverse innovation. It would be great if he comes to India for any of the event. It's a humble request. Would love to connect.

Suds T'10: I organize events around his visit every year - there was a mega event at IIT Bombay last year and there was a dinner with prospective applicants in Chennai last year as well. There's always opportunity to meet with [thought leaders](#) when they're visiting India. Praveen Kopalle had the mock-class in India last year as well (and in Shanghai this year).

Setu Saxena: Hi Suds, Thanks for taking the time for this session. Could you please tell us a little bit more about the consulting engagements at Tuck, especially what kind of international organizations participate in the onsite global consulting?

Suds T'10: Setu, there's plenty of literature and case studies on the [TuckGO site](#), please refer to that.

Work Experience and International Experience

roshan gummalla: Hi Suds, how does Tuck perceive start up experience as opposed to the same number of years in a corporate role.

Suds T'10: Roshan, focus more on the quality of the experience - what you have accomplished and under what constraints. That should do it more than which company and what role has one has been involved with.

Shronit: Hi Suds, how would you view work experience (25-40 hours/week) while doing undergraduate studies?

Suds T'10: Depends on what kind of work experience it is. We do consider internships as work experience.

Saurabh Pitkar: As an applicant working in a startup, where the work is focused on a local / national level, how is lack in international experience perceived by the AdCom? Can you suggest how applicants can fill this void?

Suds T'10: Have you worked with international clients whether or not you traveled there? How about investors? These are all valid opportunities to showcase your ability to work with people from different backgrounds and cultures.

ajay: Hi Suds...Thanks a lot for hosting this event...my question to you is - How receptive is Tuck towards candidates with high experience like 10 years - 12 years of work ex.? Are these candidates at any kind of disadvantage?

Suds T'10: Ajay: No specific disadvantage - be sure to explain what the MBA is going to do for you at this point in time. It's the same case with any applicant!

Sudhanshu Kanwar: Hi Suds, I have a very specific question. Sir, I am an India military applicant. I am at a natural break in my career which means that either I quit now and go out within next 3 months or I accept my next assignment. If I accept my next assignment I can't quit the military for next 2 years and being 30 now would be late to apply for MBA by the end of 2 years. As I am just back from previous deployment the earliest I can apply is 2nd round in January. So my question is that if I quit now then I go out by November end and then if I apply in January then there would be a gap of almost 2 to 3 months in my profile. I will take up a new job, but I believe that would affect my application as I would have entirely new role, new recommenders and new work. To be honest I would like to use my military recommenders rather than current supervisors at that time. How would admission committee view it?

Suds T'10: Sudhanshu, if you're able to explain the gap in the application, the Admissions Committee will consider it. From what you've written, I think it's all about how you communicate it to the Admissions Committee.

Rohit: Hi Suds, how does an applicant having quite a few years of work-ex stand a chance? Does Tuck have any sweet spots in terms of years of work-ex?

Suds T'10: Average work experience is 5 years. Minimum is 2 years.

Suds T'10: I think the torrent of questions has dwindled to a trickle. Thanks to everyone who came and asked all the questions you did. Some of them were repetitive, so hope your questions were all answered along the way. Good luck with the application process. Look forward to seeing you all in person at the events coming up around the country in the next few weeks. Good night!