PROMOTE YOURSELF

A GUIDE TO THE EXECUTIVE MBA PROGRAM
THERE COMES A POINT IN YOUR CAREER
when the path to the next opportunity is no longer obvious. At this point—and it varies from person to person—the strong functional skillset that has guided your previous success is no longer enough. The need to move beyond what you have been known for, to contribute and effectively lead at a higher level, is crucial. As is the need to reframe the challenges and opportunities on the table and see what others do not. At this point, to meet these needs, you must promote yourself.

THE EXECUTIVE MBA (EMBA) PROGRAM
at the UW Foster School is preparing the executives of tomorrow—and advancing the leaders of today—through an immersive, team-driven business curriculum that leverages students’ work experience to elevate the conversation and enhance the learning. The talented, experienced cohort, access to Northwest business leaders, an international immersion, and infusion of executive speakers into the classroom make this a unique MBA experience that will turn your aspirations into reality.
While the range of industries and job titles represented in the classroom is broad, one thing that unites EMBA students is their desire to be exceptional leaders. Our students, even those already in upper management positions, all recognize that prior success isn’t an assurance of future accomplishments. Furthermore, they’re united by a desire to apply what they learn with immediacy.

The average age of entering students today is 38, the same as it was for the charter class in 1983. Accordingly, there is a level of experience and perspective in the classroom that enables a sophisticated exploration of conceptual frameworks, as well as accelerated application of the learnings.

Entrepreneurs through Fortune 500 organizations are represented in the classroom from: manufacturing; technology; healthcare; real estate; financial services; not for profit and, recently, active and transitioning military.

One of the best ways to get a sense of the EMBA student experience is to hear from students. We’ve profiled three second-year students in an informal Q&A, and while their paths are completely different, their experience in the program is...well, see for yourself.
Which format did you choose (weekly or monthly)?
Weekly. I like the pace of meeting weekly and it helps keep me on track with the projects.

Give us a sense of your educational and career journey leading up to pursuing your MBA:
I graduated from UW with a degree in Health Informatics and Information Management and went to work managing informatics systems at Kindred Hospital.
I’ve stayed in the medical field and the majority of my time has been focused on the revenue cycle, compliance and informatics. Now, I work more in operations and business development/integration. I’ve always wanted to impact healthcare from an administrative, leadership role. I’m passionate about this because when I was in college I was in a terrible car accident, and as a patient I had a lot of time to think about the experience and how the providers and systems work to help you through trauma. I want to strive to make a difference in this space.

What was the tipping point for going back to school?
I felt like I was reaching a plateau in my career growth, and also I wanted to gain business acumen—an understanding of accounting, finance, marketing, etc. The idea of going back to school was terrifying. I had to ask myself, “okay, what’s stable and what isn’t right now?” and weigh my options. My job and family were stable, so school could be the X factor.

What stands out most in your experience so far?
I didn’t anticipate how much team projects would factor in! I’ve realized there is a method to how we learn and that we’re getting a lot of experience with people management and collaboration by design. It’s not just being on teams, but truly learning how to team. The caliber of people in the cohort is amazing—the best people you could learn with and from.

What do you plan to do with your MBA?
I would like to lead an organization, either as an executive for a firm or in starting my own business. I have a passion for people development and mentoring the next generation of leaders. I know that having my MBA will be the X factor needed for my next chapter.
Which format did you choose (weekly or monthly)?
Monthly. I am in a family business, so I really need to get away and immerse myself in the material for a concentrated period of time. I'm totally able to do that in the monthly format.

Give us a sense of your educational and career journey leading up to pursuing your MBA:
I started out in accounting, but our family has a business in government contracting. I liked the idea of being able to play across multiple disciplines in business. So I went to D.C. and jumped into a crazy, deep-end learning curve servicing government contracts for the Department of Energy. From there, I went into sales in the early days of wireless, and then onto finance with Morgan Stanley and Bear Stearns. Now I'm in the business of providing contingency workforces and vendor management services to government agencies. I am working on productizing IP that will vastly decrease timeframes for clients to get the staff they need when they need it.

What was the tipping point for going back to school?
I've got a lot of experience, but educating yourself on the latest business strategies is hard when you're on the small business side of things. I'm working on turning our services into products and I realize there is a lot I can learn about on how to do that—in the end, it's going to save me time and money, so the investment makes sense.

What stands out most in your experience so far?
The cohort-based learning and quality of teaching are truly excellent. In fact, I've already gone beyond what I knew about accounting and been able to fix how we were booking our revenues. It's everything from strategy and operations to the little hacks you pick up from your classmates. Also, the staff is a terrific group of professionals who can pull off things like a seamless trip to Panama and Peru—which is where I went for the international immersion part of the program.

What do you plan to do with your MBA?
It's already paying off huge with the changes I've made with the company. The program is helping me think through product strategy and flesh out my plan for being a first mover with the Department of Energy. I'd like to grow the business—and create a pipeline where our executive can attend the EMBA program, like they've done at Alaska Airlines.
Which format did you choose (weekly or monthly)?
Monthly. I like the concentration of class and group time.

Give us a sense of your educational and career journey leading up to pursuing your MBA:
I spent 12 years in the oil and gas industry, mainly on the supply chain side—developing global strategies for procurement end-to-end. I had an interest in exploring new industries, like technology. Then I received a recruitment call from Amazon and flew out to Seattle to interview, shocked to receive an offer in short order. But I was still hesitating because I was comfortable in my role, and Chevron had a project for me in London. My curiosity won out and I took the job at Amazon.

What was the tipping point for going back to school?
An MBA was sort of a bucket list item for me, but I didn’t see the value of getting one in an industry where I was well versed. I’d been at Amazon less than one year when I entered the EMBA program, seeking a broader understanding of business. In a new role, at a new company, in a new industry, going back to school made a lot of sense. I started the MBA application process on a lunch break and called my husband to say, “I’m going back to school.”

What stands out most in your experience so far?
The conversations are priceless. The thing that excited me most about the program is that the faculty appreciate how much experience is manifest by the working professionals in the room, and they teach with that as a component of the learning. It’s very real world and very easy to apply what you learn the next day. I’m excited by the network and the connections to businesses across industries. At first, I was surprised at how many people came into the program with specialized degrees (e.g. doctors, lawyers, engineers), but it makes sense—managing business is a distinct challenge.

What do you plan to do with your MBA?
My answer to that is very broad. The more experience I gain and the more I learn, the more I want to explore. The EMBA program has shown me that everything is in reach. It’s making me a better leader, improving my decision making, and putting my goals within reach.
The EMBA program at Foster is immersive. Unlike other MBA formats in which students must shift gears from work mode during the day to study mode at night, EMBA consolidates full-day class time on a weekly or monthly basis depending on which option you choose. Our students form bonds that are frequently maintained well after graduation, and the teams within a class take on the feel of personal advisory boards.

The program is built on a 21-month, integrated, general-management curriculum that emphasizes leadership development and strategic thinking as well as the application of decision-making tools. Current business trends, including globalization are integrated throughout the entire curriculum and within individual courses.

Each cohort completes courses together following a sequence beginning with foundational business disciplines, evolving into multi-disciplinary strategy.

Along the way you’ll experience a variety of teaching styles that create a challenging and dynamic learning environment. With opportunities for both individual learning and group involvement, students come away with a rich and valuable experience.
There are many reasons to pursue an MBA, but students choose a Foster EMBA for the following reasons:

**FACE-TO-FACE NETWORK**
—not only access to world-class professors and talented fellow students and alums, but also unparalleled connections to the Northwest business community. From the Corporate Governance class where students learn first-hand from business luminaries, to the Business Plan Competition capstone project that puts you at the hub of a vast entrepreneurial community.

**INTERNATIONAL IMMERSION**
—of course business is global. That’s why engaging with business leaders, government officials and academics in other countries is part of the curriculum. Students take a 7 – 10 day trip to selected regions around the world to enhance their global perspective.

**CONFIDENCE**
—to lead and maximize your impact, confidence is rooted in gaining deeper insights by learning and application, with a strong cohort for support. It’s also enhanced by the Business Plan Competition capstone, in which you simulate the start-up pitch of being an entrepreneur (or “intrapreneur”).
EXPERIENCE EMBA

Sit in on a class, join us for a coffee chat, or ask us to put you in touch with a current student or alum.

foster.uw.edu/emba

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