

Chapter 12

Reflective and Dynamic in Style

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ABSTRACT

This chapter dives into the different components that weighted on the author's decision to pursue higher education in the United States. She compares business degrees in the US, Brazil, and Europe, explaining how each one has a different reputation in their own country and abroad. Bringing to the table a perspective of a born and raised Brazilian who was exposed to a diverse environment since an early age, she analyses the critical components included in choosing where to expand her academic career and provides both factual material and personal experience to support her decision of pursuing a business degree in the United States.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is written with the goal of exploring different educational systems around the world, with a heavier focus on higher level education on Business Administration in the United States, Brazil, and Europe. From the perspective of an undergraduate student at the College of Business at Florida International University, the author unpacks her first motivations that led to the academic choice and her affirmations on why it was the right one. Born and raised in Brazil, she also brings data to compare both systems, as well as her own perspectives on the topics at hand. The chapter follows a track of the reasoning for choosing Business Administration, how that connects to her roots and personal context, and how she then chose the United States as the country she would pursue this academic milestone in, all while incorporating both international cases and her own point of view on the subjects.

WHY BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Business is everything and everywhere. From the language people use, to teamwork abilities, to analytical reasoning, this field of study truly incorporates a great range of skills and experiences to prepare students for the real world. It is a course broad enough to allow you to explore any field out there, yet unique enough to be able to dive into specific segments and concentrate on those.

The argument that you can be successful without a business degree, backed up by the stories of the most famous and rich executives such as Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos, has been used too many times, and the Dean of the Kellogg School of Management, Sally Blount, disputes this common misperception. In her Bloomberg article: *Yes, the World Needs More MBAs*, Blount states that “Business is the cultural, organizational, and economic super force in human development”, referring to the intellect and critical knowledge that is gained through formal education (Blount, 2014). The professor makes an important point: though big names stand out for making it to big fortunes without a college degree, they stand out for a reason, as these paths are not easily followed. The skills of networking, leadership, management, and communication are heavily enforced both inside the classroom and the outside environment of college, and this was one of the many reasons why business was my chosen career path.

HOW AND WHERE IT ALL STARTED

As an international student, I have been exposed to a collection of unique experiences and realities, all of which shaped me into the global citizen that I am today. For context, I was born and raised in the capital of Brazil, Brasilia, a high economic power city that does not reflect Brazil’s overall reality. As a developing country, it still faces major socioeconomic and political issues, including the lack of investment in education, social inequality, and the deep poverty cycle. The lamentable conditions my country has been facing opened my eyes to a reality many choose to neglect. There is a long-term exhaustion that has split the country between those who still hope for a better tomorrow and those who completely lost faith in the possibility of change. Though I naturally alternate between the two extremes, I choose to use the harsh realities as a motivator to be part of a greater transformation. While the external setting seemed to be of a never-ending chaos, I lived a completely different reality from 8:00AM and 4:00PM. An opportunity was given to me through my mother, who by being a teacher at the American School of Brasilia granted me a full-ride scholarship to study at the most prestigious school in the district. Located in the capital of the country, my school had an enormous variety of cultural backgrounds represented through the students and staff. Having such an intense international exposure since an early age allowed me to grow up with an open mind to all kinds of diversity. Living between these two parallels opened my eyes to the privileges I have had and encouraged me to further seek the necessary skills in order to make an impact on the lives of those who unfortunately don’t have the same opportunities. This is what led me to study business in the United States.

THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

Despite attending an American School which undoubtedly focused on preparing students for higher education in the United States, I was never short on resources or motivation to either stay in Brazil or

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