

Sample SOP for MBA in Germany: Manufacturing Background

Applicant profile: Karthik Menon, 6 years in plant operations, moving into general management

Sample motivation letter of about 750 words for a German MBA programme (abridged)

Subject: Motivation letter for the International MBA programme

I have spent six years making a factory work and two of them discovering that engineering alone cannot decide what a factory should make. I am applying to your MBA programme to close that distance deliberately.

My professional record is operational and measurable. As Production Engineer and later Assistant Manager at a components manufacturer supplying the automotive sector, I owned a line producing precision housings. In my fourth year I led a changeover reduction project across three machines, cutting setup time from 96 minutes to 41 and releasing roughly 300 hours of annual capacity without capital spending. The method was standard, the difficulty was not: the operators had run the old sequence for eleven years, and adoption required rebuilding trust before rebuilding the process.

A second project tested different ground. When a European customer imposed new quality documentation requirements, I coordinated between our quality team, two suppliers and the customer's engineering contact across a five-month qualification cycle. We retained the contract, which represented about a fifth of our line's volume. That work put me in front of commercial questions I had never been trained for: pricing, contract terms and the cost of a compliance decision.

Leadership came before the title did. During a nine-week period when our shift supervisor was on medical leave, I ran a team of twenty-four across two shifts, managed the schedule and handled the payroll disputes I had previously only observed. Two decisions I made were wrong and I reversed both publicly. The team's output held, and I learned more in those weeks than in the year around them.

My engineering degree gave me the analytical base for this work. It gave me nothing on capital allocation, market strategy or organisational design, which is precisely the gap the programme addresses.

Your programme fits for three concrete reasons. The operations and supply chain specialisation matches my strongest evidence rather than discarding it. The company consulting project places student teams inside real firms, which is the format I learn fastest in. The programme's industry partners include manufacturers I have supplied indirectly for years, and I would like to see those operations from the other side.

Germany is the deliberate choice. The industrial base I have worked at the edge of for six years is concentrated here, and the standards my customers imposed on us were written by German engineering practice. Studying management inside that ecosystem is not a detour from my career; it is the shortest available route through it.

After the MBA I intend to move into plant or operations management with a manufacturing group in Europe, and then into general management with responsibility for a business unit. I bring a factory floor's worth of evidence and the willingness to be corrected, and I would welcome the opportunity to bring both to your cohort.

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