

# Law Personal Statement

The concept of Flow, as named by psychologist Mihály Csíkszentmihályi, is the mental state in which a person is fully immersed in an activity, where the challenge of the task and the skills it requires match at above-average level, and one experiences a feeling of energized focus, motivation and enjoyment in the process. People experience flow in different ways, for example while painting, writing, and playing a sport or an instrument.

When I first read about flow, I wondered if I had any hobbies or passions that elicited such flow experiences. What came to mind were the many nights I spent at Thomas Cooper library during my undergraduate years studying for a test or writing a research paper absorbed in my work, losing sense of time and feeling oddly satisfied. At that very moment I was only focused on reteaching myself let's say basic macroeconomic models, fully motivated in working towards the goal of understanding the concepts and feeling a sense of joy as I was progressing and grasping the material. While learning about cost-push inflation may not be one of the happy moments I think of when reminiscing about college, the intellectual challenge along with the feeling of enjoyment it elicited provided an intrinsically rewarding experience distinct from the reward of a good grade or diploma I would eventually receive.

After college, I accepted an entry level position at a commercial real estate firm based in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area. But, while there was much to learn in this to me unfamiliar field of property management, none of it required true critical thinking or the type of learning challenges that were always present while growing up and going through the school system. I naively realized that not every career, even if it required a college degree, would provide such intellectual challenges and continuous learning opportunities, which recently had been lacking in my life.

I decided to take matters into my own hand and as I have always been an advocate for environmental conservation, I expressed my eager interest in the firm's new initiative to pursue environmentally responsible and resource efficient building operations. I enthusiastically volunteered to research and learn about green buildings, energy efficiency, and federal, state, and local building-related environmental laws and regulations. Upon approval of my supervisor I took the LEED Green Associate test, a professional accreditation certifying knowledge of green building technologies, best practices and the LEED Rating System. My enthusiasm and interest didn't go unnoticed and I became the project manager for the firm's first green building certification. I found myself in a state of flow drafting and implementing new policies for building tenants and vendors, finding answers to all the questions my coworkers had on the subject and analyzing various data that tracked our progress toward increased energy efficiency.

While I was and still am very interested in environmental conservation, the challenges I had enjoyed over the past months were not, no pun intended, sustainable and my position would return to being management focused.

For the past year and a half I have been a paralegal in the Financial Services Group of Dechert LLP. My experience has undoubtedly confirmed my interest in practicing law and that I would enjoy the day to day work of a lawyer. Continuous learning, research and critical thinking are not just opportunities available but requirements of the job. It is comforting to see that partners who have practiced law for many years and are experts in their field still build on their knowledge. I enjoy our weekly practice group meetings and listening to the discussions that convey thoughtful analysis and a true interest in the topic at hand. I regularly find myself in flow, such as when I was given the opportunity to write the first draft of a set of board minutes. Even though it was Friday night, I completely forgot the time as I was reading the complex board materials, googling unfamiliar terms and reviewing the partner's notes. Completing such an assignment is truly rewarding in itself and provides satisfaction that even outweighed getting a raise. This has me convinced that law school is the right choice for me as I find purpose and enjoyment in the actual tasks of practicing law apart from the idea or the big picture, such as advocating clean energy policy.

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