Rohan Deshpande

Pittsburgh, PA · rohan.deshpande.test@example.com Applying to: MIT Sloan MBA, 2026-27

This is a fictional applicant written for this PrepMyRound sample. His employers, volunteer groups and colleagues are invented.

Program and round

- Full-time MBA, Class of 2029. Round 1, submitted September 29, 2026.
- Interested in the Sustainability Certificate.

Education and test

- **Penn State University**: BS Industrial Engineering, May 2020. GPA 3.38. Spring 2018 semester GPA 2.71 (see Additional information).
- **MITx on edX**: *The Analytics Edge*, verified certificate, spring 2025 (taken on evenings and weekends to strengthen my regression and optimization skills).
- **GMAT Focus Edition**: 645 (Quantitative 82, Verbal 80, Data Insights 81), August 2026. My first attempt in June 2026 was 605.

Resume

KEYSTONE THERMAL SYSTEMS, Pittsburgh, PA (Aug 2021 - present) *Residential and light-commercial HVAC manufacturer with about 1,900 employees and plants in Pittsburgh and Erie.*

Product Operations Manager, Heat Pumps (Mar 2024 - present)

- Lead a cross-functional team of 6 (quality, field service, supply planning and 2 analysts) for the heat-pump line, which brings in about $140M in revenue.
- Showed that 61% of first-year cold-weather failure claims came from 9% of installing contractors. With field service, designed the Keystone Certified Installer program. By August 2026, 212 contractors were trained, and certified installs had a first-year claim rate of 3.1%, compared with 7.4% for uncertified installs.
- Running a 40-home field trial of the new cold-climate model in Erie, PA (Jan 2026 - present). I coordinate with 3 contractors and track sensor data weekly.
- In Q3 2024 my compressor forecast double-counted warranty returns, which left $180K of excess inventory. I disclosed the error and added a reconciliation check, and we have had no repeats in 8 quarters.

Supply Chain Analyst, promoted to Senior Analyst in 2023 (Aug 2021 - Feb 2024)

- Built the first unified warranty-claims database in SQL from 3 systems (dealer portal, service CRM and ERP). It holds 48,000 claims dating back to 2018.

- Reworked reorder points for 300 service parts, which cut expedited freight by 27% (about $410K a year).
- Built a Power BI parts-availability dashboard that 30 managers use weekly.

GRIDLEAF ANALYTICS, Pittsburgh, PA (Jul 2020 - Jun 2021) *Seed-stage building-energy software startup with 14 employees.*

Data Analyst

- Built energy-benchmarking models for 60 commercial buildings.
- Laid off when the company shut down after failing to raise a Series A.

ADDITIONAL

- Volunteer fixer, Hazelwood Repair Café (2022 - present, about 6 hours a month). Repair lamps, fans and space heaters, and started a winter heater-safety table.
- Volunteer mentor, Riverside High School robotics team (2023 - present, 4 hours a week from January to April).
- Languages: English (native), Marathi (conversational), Hindi (conversational).
- Interests: tabla (studied for 11 years, stopped, then restarted lessons in 2025), slow half marathons (Pittsburgh Half 2026, 2:04).

Cover letter (300 words, addressed to the Admissions Committee)

Dear Members of the Admissions Committee,

In early 2024, our heat pumps were failing in Pennsylvania winters, and inside Keystone the argument was about blame. Quality engineering believed the compressor design was at fault. Our field service lead, Greg Halloran, was sure it was the installers. Each side had anecdotes. Nobody had the data, because the claims were spread across three systems that didn't talk to each other.

I had built the claims database as an analyst, so I volunteered to answer the question. The joined data showed that installer quality, not the product, explained most of the failures. That was the easy part. The hard part was Greg, who had run field service for 19 years. He read my first deck as an attack on his contractors and told my manager it was "a spreadsheet looking for a villain."

My manager gave me blunt feedback: the deck was too dense, and I had shown it to the VP before showing it to Greg. She was right. So I rebuilt the analysis with Greg, ride-along by ride-along, and by the end we were presenting it together. The certification program we designed has trained 212 contractors so far, and claims on certified installs are less than half the rate on uncertified ones.

I want an MBA because I keep reaching the edge of what an operations role can decide. Pricing, channel strategy and capital for electrification are decided by general managers, and I want to be one at a company that electrifies American homes. I am applying now because the Erie trial has shown me that the hardest problems in this industry are commercial, not technical. At MIT Sloan, I want to combine Action Learning labs with the MIT Energy Initiative, and to work with classmates who test ideas with data the way Sloan does.

Sincerely, Rohan Deshpande

Video statement (transcript, about 60 seconds)

Hi, I'm Rohan. On the second Saturday of every month, you'll find me at the Hazelwood Repair Café with a screwdriver and somebody's broken space heater. Most of what we fix is simple. I love it because people stay and watch, and they leave knowing a little more about how their stuff works. Last winter I started a heater-safety table after we saw three units with melted cords. Outside the café, I'm relearning tabla. I studied it for eleven years as a kid, quit, and restarted in 2025. I'm humbler and slower now, and I enjoy it far more. I also run half marathons badly but happily. At Sloan, I'd bring a fixer's habit: open it up, find out what's actually broken, and then explain it so people can fix it themselves.

Data visualization and explanation (short answer)

Chart: A Pareto chart of 1,214 installing contractors, ranked by first-year cold-weather claims. Bars show each contractor's claim count, and a line shows the cumulative share of claims. A second panel plots each contractor's claim rate against install volume, with certified contractors marked in blue.

Why I chose it: Engineering and field service were arguing over averages. A Pareto chart made the concentration impossible to miss: 9% of contractors produced 61% of claims. The scatter panel answered the obvious objection that these were simply the busiest installers. Several low-volume contractors had claim rates above 20%.

Takeaway: The product had a real weakness below 5°F, but installation explained most of the failures. Fixing installer training was faster and cheaper than redesigning the compressor.

My role: I did all the work myself. That included three weeks joining the claims data, matching contractor names across systems ("Bob's HVAC" appeared 7 different ways) and building the charts in Python. Greg Halloran checked my installer groupings against his field records.

Organizational chart

VP, Product (Dana Whitfield) → Director, Product Operations (Laura Brenner) → Product Operations Manager (me) → 2 analysts (direct reports). I also lead a dotted-line team: 1 quality engineer, 1 field service coordinator and 1 supply planner. Greg Halloran, Field Service Lead, is my peer and reports to the VP of Service.

Post-MBA goals (short answer)

Short term, I want to be a product or strategy manager at a heat-pump or building-electrification company. Long term, I want to run a business unit that makes electric heating the default choice for homes in cold climates.

Additional information

- **Spring 2018:** My father lost his job in February. I worked 25 hours a week in a campus dining hall, and my GPA fell to 2.71. Every other semester was 3.3 or above.
- **2021 layoff:** Gridleaf closed in June 2021, and I was unemployed for 7 weeks. It taught me to look at a company's runway and to keep my skills portable.
- **GMAT:** I retook the test after a 605 because Quant was my weakest area. I studied mornings for 10 weeks.

Recommender

- Laura Brenner, Director of Product Operations, Keystone Thermal Systems (my direct manager since March 2024).