- **What do you expect from a supervisor?**

Guide the overall work of my research, help me at the beginning of my work to switch to the correct track, provide me with feedback about the progress of my works, try to detect some mistakes or misunderstandings about technical aspects of my work, and help us to develop a very positive and convenient relationship me and him/her.

- **Describe your most rewarding college experience.**

Learning the English language, to highest levels of proficiency, was a very rewarding experience which - helped me open many doors and see many things previously unreachable easily.

- **Which value you have created? Who is using the result of your work?**

As I have mentioned in my SOP I have worked for ******* for 5 years from the time of graduation from university of *******. In this company I have been engaged in many research projects and the clients of the company have used the results of our works. Project and portfolio management, operations management are the main areas that I have worked in.

- **What mistakes did you make while working in your research**

When I wrote my first paper and then submitted it for possible acceptance and publication to an Elsevier journal, the referee feedback was really disappointing. He said that what you have developed was not new at all and someone else has worked on this case and even has provided a more extended approach for the same problem. Insufficient search for similar works can cause major loss of time and effort and this was a mistake that I made during my MS studies.

- **What is the relation between your previous words and my research area? Are you disjointed?**

I have worked in the area of game theory and I have used this literature for real world decision making. One of my published papers has used an approach based on utility function to optimize a portfolio of projects for an automobile manufacturing firm.

- **What was the procedure of your research?**
- **What was your research method?**

Referring to the real world for tangible problems in a given area of study to find an unsolved problem and then trying to understand the related works. Then I started to come up with a new approach for solving that problem and then making the approach happen by mathematical formulations. At the end was testing the proposed approach by numerical examples or real world applications.

- **Why do you want to work with me?**

You have worked in the area of operations management which is my favourite research area and you have used game theory approaches for dealing with the problems. Another thing which is of great importance for me is the applicability of you research in the real world. In the other words, you have referred to a real issue in the supply chain and tried to find a solution for it through your research. When I started to read one of your published papers at first I wanted to read the abstract but I continued to its introduction and even read its literature review. I mean that the paper was really interesting for me and I will enjoy working on such cases. Given that the PhD is a long track I really need to like my research topics and I believe that I can find something of real interest for myself if working on the mentioned cases.

- **From the date of graduation from MS program what have you done exactly?**

I entered the job market as a full-time employee in ************, a partner of the University of ******** in conducting research projects in the consultancy market. During the 5 years at this company I participated in different projects, mostly in the fields of business excellence and technology management. Despite enjoying creating value in the real world through application of knowledge, I was still interested in

academic works and managed to translate two books. My motivation to translate these books was two-fold: to compensate for a lack of reliable text in the field in my country, and to provide my company with an opportunity to document its experience as some case studies in the books for advertising purposes. During these years I never lost my relationship with universities: I conducted a research project in the area of "uncertain programming" in University of *********, and at the same time, taught the operations research at this institution to MBA students. One output of the research project is now published in an ELSEVIER journal and the other under review in a different prestigious journal.

- **military service+ book+ . . .**
- **Is there any problem about immigration works for you? Your military service?**

Yes. I have done research work for University of ******* instead of my obligatory military service term. This substitution is only available for talented students based on some national factors. My books are related to a research project that we conducted in the ********** and because of my ability in English language this was not a really hard work for me to translate them.

- **Why you did not start PhD after MS instantly?**

After receiving my MS degree I took the Ph.D. entrance exam and I succeeded to gain the second rank and received an admission offer, which I declined to accept. My decision had two reasons. Firstly, I believed that before beginning to pursue a Ph.D. degree I should be much more aware of the real application of my previous studies. Secondly, I was inclined towards studying abroad to see the world and to attend a highly regarded university.

- **Explain your work experiences in details. Duties/projects/relations/your responsibilities**

At ********* the mission of us is performing research work on behalf of University of ******* and providing consultancy services for industries. I have participated in many works but notably in the area of project management, operations management and productivity management for project based companies. My research duties were similar to RA positions in University of ********* and my consultancy roles included visiting managers of companies, understanding their problems and handing over the issue to the related division in **********. If the issue were given to my division then I started to explore the problem and hold sessions with managers and employees of the related company. Then based on my knowledge and experience I, in cooperation with senior members of ******** tried to propose a solution and then try to put it into practice.

- **What would be your goals after graduation?**

I hope to be a faculty member or a postdoc researcher at a renowned university in an English speaking country.

- **Why did you apply for our university?**

You university is one of the best universities in US and is located in a nice city with good weather conditions. Also upon exploring your school I thought that you have a proper research environment and I find some faculty members who could be my potential supervisors.

- **Why did you apply for US not other countries?**

I am familiar with the English language and US has one of the best job markets for PhD holders in the world. Besides US is a multi-cultural country that many racial issues has already been resolved in it.

- **What are your important personality traits (positive/negative)?**

From my own point of view, perseverance is the most important positive trait for me and insufficient patience is the most important negative personality trait for me.

- **Do you have any questions?**

Of course. As I have written in my SOP I will be really motivated if work on a real problem and especially a problem that someone will use the result of my research. I am a critic of some researches which take place in void. I do not want to raise an argument but I really enjoy working on issues that someone will benefit from its resolution. Now, my question is: is there such an opportunity available for PhD students at you university?

- **Explain your undergraduate/MS project for me in 5 minutes**

We did not have a final project in our undergraduate institution. But for my MS degree I conducted a final research project titled: **********. In this project I considered a firm that has limited resources including financial resources and limited key personnel and want to select from a potential projects pool. I used an approach based on utility theory to handle uncertainty in a context of mathematical framework. I tested the accuracy of my proposed approach with some numerical examples and a real case study. The result of my MS thesis is published in a journal and I can provide you with the related paper. The profit gained from the execution of projects was uncertain and also the resource needs of them were not clear beforehand.

- **What have you learned from your research project?**

I have learned how to conduct a research project, how to study the literature, how to prepare technical papers and so on. But I also learned from one mistake (mentioned above).

- **Do you have any experience or knowledge about ********?**

Through self-study I have read some books and I am not unfamiliar with some concepts of it like ********. Also I have some general knowledge about the different players in a ****** and their benefits and strategies. However I will need some PhD courses to prepare better and gain more in depth knowledge about the subject. Especially I need to study related math text books to be able to deal with the problems more efficiently. I am not claiming that I can start doing research instantly but I know myself that can learn the required background in one semester or two.

- **Explain the technique you used in your research project**

It was a mathematical technique based on ******** and **********. ***** is mathematical approach for handling problems in the domain of **********.

- **Will you bring someone or come alone?**

For the first year I will attend the university alone but I may bring my wife from the second or third year of my PhD studies.

- **Could you please mention the experimental techniques you used during the MSc thesis work?**

We used an automobile manufacturing company as a case study. I used MATLAB for coding and LINGO for solving mathematical programs.

- **Do you prefer experimental or theoretical work?**

I prefer some research works with direct applicability in the real world. So, I should say that I do not prefer pure theoretical works.

- **If you are offered the position and accept it, when can you start?**

Early September and at the beginning of fall semester I will be at your university.

- **What area of research are you interested in? You have worked very diversely and this is no good!**

It may seem that I have worked in a disjointed manner but in fact I have used the same tool in different contexts and for different problems. My research interest is Systems Modelling and Optimization, and Operations Management. I have used an approach based on ****** in this context for portfolio optimization, job shop scheduling and inventory management.

- **What was your contribution in that project?**

I proposed an efficient approach which was superior to popular modelling approaches like ********** but more accessible compared with recourse methods like two and three stages optimization. Also I provided some insights in the context of each problem solved like inventory management case.

- **Explain your teaching experiences.**

I have taught the operations research at ********* to MBA students as an invited teacher but also I have had many TA positions at ******.

- **Have you applied before? Why this year? Why you did not attend the previous year?**

Liking to have job experience and also I needed to complete my military service term.

- **How do you utilize your free time? OR How do you spend your free hours? OR What are your hobbies?**

I read news especially political news. As you know our country leadership has changed and now we have a president with moderate approaches. Also I like analysing the political behaviours and questionable actions.

- **Where do you see yourself after a few years from now?**

I see myself a faculty member in an English speaking country and in a prestigious university or a post doctorate scholar in a highly respected international institution.

- **What other commitments do you have?**

To provide for an acceptable life for my wife as my family.

- **What recent professional articles or books have you read?**

PMBOK and some articles in the area of portfolio management.

- **What do you believe to be the major trends in your intended career field at this time?**
- **What do you think is the most important development in the field over the past 25 years, and why?**

Consideration of dynamic changes in parameters in ******** and more widely inclusion of uncertainty. All of these will demand more complex models mathematically.

- **Tell me about a major accomplishment and how you achieved it.**

I think my verbal score with the percentile of ****** percent is a major accomplishment for an Iranian student. I have not seen any applicant from Iran with the same score. I had a really hard time for gaining competitive GRE scores. Also ranking as the fifth student in the national entrance exam for MS programs needed a really demanding effort.

- **Give an example of an ethical dilemma you faced and explain how you resolved it.**

Well I do not have any ethical dilemma in my mind at this time. Can you please provide me with a hypothetical example and ask me some ethical questions and I shall provide you with the reasoning behind my decisions.

- **Tell me about a situation in which you took initiative.**

This was in the course a consultancy work in the area of project management that we faced practical issues and I tried to resolve them by some initiatives. I linked the compensation of project manager and other staffs to timely reporting about the progress of their projects and based on approved procedures. Then they started to submit the competed forms in the project management system properly because they could be deprived their wage if neglected to take a proper action.

- **Tell me about a time you assumed a leadership role.**

I have not assumed a major leadership role but I have been the head of a research group to coordinate the tasks of 4 researchers in the automobile manufacturing case and for inventory management project.

- **Tell me how you handle stress.**

I do nit experience much stress because I am a calm person but when faced a very stressful situation I try to be realistic and reasonable to the extent that I can. This approach mitigates my stress effectively.

- **Tell me about a time you had a number of assignments due. How did you make sure you completed all of them on time and did a good job?**

I just try to do my best in such situations and leave the final result to happen based on available time. I will not worry about what that I cannot bring about. Instead I really worry about not trying appropriately and completely.

- **Tell me about a time you were confronted by a fellow student, co-worker, or a customer. How did you handle it to resolve the conflict?**

In fact I am not very successful in such cases but still try to explain everything logically and reach a win-win solution. If not possible I try to let the time resolve issues or more senior officials decide about the related case.