

Ambition

MBA Refresher Event – 11 October 2010

The MBA Refresher event was the first of its kind (and hopefully will be the first of many) organised by the Association of MBAs: a 'Members only' event, completely free to attend and fully CPD certified. It was a full day event held at the Strand Palace Hotel on 11 October. We aimed to give our members who had graduated a while back a chance to attend lectures on topics that may not have been covered at the time when they were doing their MBA. We brought in some of the top business school lecturers to present on the day and the response from our members was overwhelmingly positive: 'Very useful, very productive day'; 'Great choice of speakers, excellent facility!'; 'I really enjoyed the event yesterday– it was very useful and though provoking'. The MBA Refresher generated such interest that it was fully booked in the first day of announcing it to our members. If you have missed out this time around, please accept our apologies and we hope you will be able to join us at a future similar event.

The opening session was presented by Dr. Marc Jones from Ashridge Business School, who did an excellent presentation on The Global Political Economy and the Practice of Strategic Management. He covered things such as the contradictions of globalisation, who the stakeholders are, and the global gigatrends

currently shaping the business environment.

He was followed by Professor Vince Mitchell of Cass Business School, who made an engaging and entertaining presentation on Digital Marketing, clueing the audience up on the latest trends, such as mobile marketing, social media, blogs, Twitter and viral videos. He showed delegates videos demonstrating how augmented reality works, how to make a memorable viral video and started the presentation by saying 'If you take away one thing with you today, remember that all media will become interactive in the next three to five years.' Richard Hayes, a '98 Aston Business School Graduate, had very positive feedback about this session: 'It's been really good. The one I found most useful so far was the session about mobile marketing. Talk about impact! If you didn't think mobile marketing was coming, you cannot go away from here and not know how big this is.'

After networking over lunch, the participants were reunited to discuss an interesting case study with M&A specialist Professor Scott Moeller, of Cass. The group examined the takeover of Abbey National by the Spanish bank Santander. Those present had a chance to do some group work and report back on their findings, much like in an actual MBA class. Scott Moeller had some eye-opening insights about

the world of Mergers & Acquisitions and Joint Ventures, bringing to the table his experience of running the M&A Research centre at Cass Business School.

In the final session, speaker Dr. Bernd Vogel,

[continued on page 2](#)



CONFERENCE

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Have feedback on Ambition?
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of Henley School of Management, focussed on the energy in an organisation and how to manage that in order to get the best out of people. He challenged our audience's assumptions about leadership and left them with some interesting take aways about 'how

to collectively mobilize a team's emotional, cognitive and behavioural potentials in pursuit of common goals.

To conclude our write up of this event, we will let our members tell you what they thought of it themselves:

Testimonials:



"I found it really interesting; I'm here out of interest, not

because the subjects are a speciality, but to get my brain working. It's doing something for your personal development".

(1992 Warwick graduate Diane Walker)



"For me it was a great opportunity, as a refresher, great to hear people talk about strategy.

Also it's an opportunity to get different perspectives and network with people other than contacts from your alumni association."

(Arthur Weiss, Westminster Business School graduate, 1993).

"It was a learning event for me. We don't spend enough time making ourselves a better person to do our day job. It's nice to have a day out to improve yourself. It's been brilliant; all speakers have been very illuminating, very different topics, different style. I think it's been worthwhile. I'll definitely come to other events, I think if you are a member of the Association, the amount you put in is the amount you get out, so I intend to put a lot in."

(Nina Slingsby, Leicester University Graduate, 2008)



Here is some more feedback we got via email:

"Just a quick line to say thanks for the day yesterday - very thought provoking with an obvious opportunity to repeat. I thought the day really added value to membership benefits and I thought it was a good balance between theoretical and practical."

Kevin Price, Bradford graduate, 1983

"A great initiative, well organised and an excellent event which was appreciated by all the people I met."

Duncan Bratt, Warwick graduate 1991

"I wanted to thank you and your team personally for making the event such a success. It was an engaging and thought-provoking day and, hopefully, more will be arranged in the future."

Philip Needham, Henley graduate, 2000

Thank you to everyone who attended on the day. Based on this feedback, we aim to organize similar events in the future and we will post further information on our website and in our usual communications when it becomes available.

Strategies for entrepreneurial success

By *Professor Andrew Burke*,
Director of the Bettany
Centre for Entrepreneurial
Performance & Economics

Whether you delve into business school research or scan the press, you will find a consistent picture of what defines entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs exploit new opportunities and in order to do so they challenge the norm, they are innovative and they take risks. They often revolutionise industries overturning long established technologies, business models and dominant firms. So in terms of entrepreneurial performance, there is a widely held view that the objective is to be more entrepreneurial than anyone else.

Successful entrepreneurs solve the last 10% rather than the first 90% of the innovation problem.

As a result, budding entrepreneurs feel compelled to look for a breakthrough 'big idea'. Images of light bulbs and figures shrieking 'Eureka' frequently appear on marketing material aimed at entrepreneurs. Among the

plethora of management texts and 'I did it my way, so can you' books for entrepreneurs, they are encouraged to be highly innovative and to do things differently – after all, doesn't competitive advantage require differentiation from competitors? They are told to be ambitious and to have the courage to take on the associated financial and career risks. One government quango for entrepreneurship even argued that British entrepreneurs do not take enough risks.

While this picture gives a reasonably accurate account of the actions of a typical

entrepreneur, it is misleading if you are interested in the ingredients of successful entrepreneurial strategy. As we know, most entrepreneurs are unsuccessful. Typically, more than half of business start-ups fail between four to five years after start-up. Of those that survive, only a small minority, around 4%, become successful (whereby the owner is demonstrably more affluent than they would have been in employment). One of the aspects that distinguish these entrepreneurs from the rest is their approach to strategy.

So what makes a successful entrepreneur's

“Successful entrepreneurs solve the last 10% rather than the first 90% of the innovation problem.”

KNOWLEDGE

approach to strategy different? There are two distinct features. Firstly, usually unknowingly, entrepreneurs embrace rather than reject corporate strategy. Successful entrepreneurs alter archetypal entrepreneurial strategies in a manner that is akin to a conscious attempt to accommodate some of the winning ingredients of corporate strategy. Secondly, successful entrepreneurs will often trade off or tone down the archetypal brash entrepreneurial behaviour for a more civilised version. The outcome is an entrepreneurial strategy that is a winning formula for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial corporations alike.

So what are the lessons for owner and corporate managers who are intent on pursuing an entrepreneurial strategy? We have identified four common approaches shared by successful entrepreneurs.

1. Solve the last 10% of the innovation problem

Being the best innovator is not the objective. Successful entrepreneurs solve the last 10% rather than the first 90% of the innovation problem. The timing or order of an entrepreneur's innovation is important. Successful entrepreneurs are rarely the first to introduce an innovation to the market. Their contribution is usually marginal compared

by adapting Apple's innovation so that it could work on DOS. As a result, Microsoft and not Apple went on to become the dominant supplier of icon/click driven computer software operating systems.

While Apple co-founder Steve Jobs used to dismiss Microsoft's innovative contribution as marginal, it wasn't long before he went on to adopt Bill Gates' winning 'last 10%' strategy. When Apple launched iTunes it was able to learn from entrepreneurial companies such as Rio Player that had already launched a digital portable music player with content available from a website (RioPort). Apple solved the last 10% of the player problem by providing a more slick operating and cool looking handheld device (iPod). Likewise, it was able to convince record companies to support its music content website iTunes, simply because 90% of that battle had already been won by earlier web content innovators. Companies such as MP3.com had already – at considerable cost – overcome the legal, regulatory, technological and marketing costs associated with the emergence of an online music market.

2. Reform rather than revolutionise

Revolutionising business rarely requires revolutionary innovative steps. Most successful entrepreneurs are reformers not

encapsulated these qualities in a quirky branded retail product that captured the consumers' imagination. Low-cost airlines and internet travel sales preceded Ryanair, but their combination and application in Europe has transformed the airline landscape. It also benefited from the failure of Europe's first low-cost airline, Laker Airways which was subjected to predatory pricing. Learning from this lesson governments and regulators offered more support and protection to Ryanair in order to make sure that history did not repeat itself.

Likewise, blog software and self-managed personalised websites were not brought to market by Facebook, but this venture customised these technologies to meet the social networking desires of a primarily student market. The key to success in all of these ventures is not consistent with the archetypal revolutionary entrepreneurs who break the rules of business. Instead, here are entrepreneurs who reform rather than revolutionise.

3. Agility – being able to change strategy and tactics

Successful entrepreneurial creativity is an ongoing process which enables entrepreneurs to change their mind. Business ideas come from having an idea to solve a consumer problem and/or a new application for a technology/innovation.

In both cases many other people will have been in the same situation and have had the same thoughts, so entrepreneurs can usually bank on similar ventures launching at the same time. Sadly, many promising entrepreneurs waste their time trying to keep their 'unique idea' secret when what they should be doing is putting it into action. The reality is that many other ventures will be doing just that with the same idea. Furthermore, successful innovation develops and improves as part of an iterative process that requires putting the idea into practice. In essence, the development and refinement of the basic idea into a fully fledged entrepreneurial strategy emerges through an 'into action trial and adapt or proceed' approach.

Did you know that the original name for Cobra Beer was Panther? The name change resulted from a negative customer reaction to the pilot launch of Panther in Indian restaurants. Later as the business developed, Cobra Beer discovered that one of their supposed unique selling points – the fact the

"Many promising entrepreneurs waste their time trying to keep their 'unique idea' secret when what they should be doing is putting it into action."

to the totality of the final innovation. So why then are they successful? The answer is because their marginal contribution to innovation solves the last remaining part of the consumer problem and as a result has a dramatic commercial impact.

For example, in innovation terms Apple is mainly responsible for developing the mouse/click and icon driven computer operating system. However, the snag for consumers was that this system was only available on Macintosh computers while most computers were based on DOS (Disk Operating System). Microsoft solved the last 10% of this problem

revolutionaries. Instead of light bulb flashes and shrieks of Eureka, most successful entrepreneurial ventures make modest innovation contributions. If you take a look at the dominant firms in entrepreneurial markets such as the Virgin Group, Innocent, Ryanair and Facebook, you will typically find that successful entrepreneurial ventures did not introduce massive innovation steps. Their innovation is more continuous and built on an existing innovation platform provided by other firms.

For example, healthy natural smoothies were around for decades before Innocent

beer was made in India – was not important to customers. This customer insight led the company to decide to brew closer to their European customer base.

Entrepreneurs also learn from other ventures. Customised greeting card business Moonpig.com decided to use TV advertising only after observing how this advertising medium had been successful in raising sales of a smaller rival venture. In this sense entrepreneurial strategy is similar to corporate market-driven innovation strategies, whereby innovation occurs more continuously in smaller customer-driven innovative steps. Likewise, it is agile and allows entrepreneurs to change their mind and strategy. Successful innovation is not typically a Eureka event, it is a process.

4. De-risk before taking risk

Successful entrepreneurs neither embrace risk nor rely exclusively on courage to take risk. Instead they minimise risk to acceptable levels by using corporate finance strategy. That is not to say that entrepreneurs are experts or even understand corporate finance but they

do understand its underlying logic or intuition. They adopt strategies that allow them to hedge and spread risk.

Successful entrepreneurs rarely throw all of their financial resources at the first mention of the business idea. Instead, they will use just enough finance to achieve the nearest performance milestone and then adapt the business idea based on that experience.

If performance is poor then the entrepreneur still has resources to try something different, perhaps even another new venture, hence why they can spread risk across a portfolio of ventures. Likewise, it allows entrepreneurs to hedge their strategy, only committing to a strategy after getting market feedback while at the same time holding back finances for a plan B. The same approach enables entrepreneurs to 'create their own luck' and 'be opportunistic' as it holds finances back for the unforeseen. Therefore, these strategies not only de-risk the venture but they enhance innovation performance.

Approaches such as these are the reasons why companies like Organic Apoteke who

initially targeted the UK market were able to change their approach when US retailers Wholefoods and Macy's showed an interest in selling their skin care products in America. The same approach was used by the Virgin Group to spread risk and build a portfolio of businesses across diverse markets. In fact, successful entrepreneurs will have a close relationship between their risk management and innovation strategies as each enhance the other; whilst boosting the overall performance of the venture.

What all these case studies show is that successful entrepreneurs adopt more corporate strategy and corporate finance principles than commonly assumed. It is not what entrepreneurs do that distinguishes success from failure but how they do it. Entrepreneurship inevitably involves innovation and risk taking but how these are managed and executed is the difference between entrepreneurial strategies that fail and those that succeed.

For further information contact the author at andrew.burke@cranfield.ac.uk

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NETWORKING

The Business Case for Sustainability

Tuesday, 02 November 2010

Region: Yorkshire
Location: The Edge, Endcliffe Village, Sheffield S10 3ED
Speaker: Joanne Pollard, CEO, CO2Sense
Time: 18.00 for 18.30 speaker, 19.30 light buffet and networking.
Free event

Why attend this event?

- Is sustainability a fad, if just by considering some of the issues your organisation could save millions?
- As one of the many SMEs around Yorkshire and Humber – how would reduced energy and other initiatives help your bottom line?
- As taxpayers, would we prefer to pay less when public sector organisations think about and act on their costs?

Come along and find out about the business benefits of sustainability and how your organisation can save money – especially important in the current economic context and important given the public sector changes.

CO2Sense Yorkshire's role is to help organisations prosper and grow in the new Low Carbon Economy. To create demand, their teams and partners support enterprises large and small across the region in using and reusing their resources more efficiently, cutting energy costs and reducing emissions.

When it comes to creating the supply, CO2Sense also helps companies in the environmental sector to start-up, grow and launch new green products and services. They also research and develop new markets and help businesses access funding and grants.

Our speaker will share some great stories

Joanne Pollard, CEO, CO2Sense



of success in an entertaining and thought provoking manner. You will leave the session enthused and intrigued by the possibilities.

Gala Dinner 2010

Thursday, 04 November 2010

Region: London
Location: Millennium Hotel London Mayfair, W1K 2HP
Speaker: Lord Michael Hastings of Scarisbrick, CBE
Time: 7pm, drinks reception, followed by dinner.
Cost: £150 + VAT for an individual ticket
 £1,200 + VAT for a table of ten

The Association of MBAs' Gala Dinner is a prestigious gathering of business school leaders, distinguished MBA alumni, corporate contacts and journalists in a formal, yet relaxed, setting.

This year's event will be held at the stunning Millennium Hotel in London's Mayfair.

Following the dinner, we will be announcing the winner of this year's MBA Student of the Year Award, sponsored by *The Independent*.

This year's guest speaker will be Lord Michael Hastings of Scarisbrick, CBE. He is KPMG's Global Head of Citizenship and Diversity. Previously the BBC's first Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, Michael is also a non-executive Director of British Telecom (on the Board for Responsible and Sustainable

Lord Hastings of Scarisbrick

Business) and a Trustee of the Vodafone Group Foundation.

Michael represents KPMG International on the Global Corporate Citizenship International Committee of the World Economic Forum and the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, and became a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Council on Diversity and Talent in 2009.

In January 2003, Michael was awarded a CBE in recognition of his services to crime reduction, including 15 years as Chairman of Crime Concern. He was formerly an adviser to Lord John Stevens QPM, the former London Metropolitan Police Commissioner and served on the Commission for Racial Equality. Michael was awarded the honour of an independent peerage to the House of Lords by Her Majesty The Queen in 2005 and is now a member of the Communications Select Committee.

Again in 2005, Michael received the UNICEF award for his outstanding contribution to understanding and effecting solutions for Africa's children.

This event already has 100 confirmed guests. Some of the delegates present represent Merrill Lynch, Pall Mall Capital and Brett Cook Consulting, among other



corporate guests. There will also be a number of high profile business school leaders present. Members are welcome to attend.

To book or if you have any questions about this event, please contact Audrey Galibert, Business School Services Manager, at a.galibert@mbaworld.com or call +44(0)20 7246 2651.

To book for these events visit www.mbaworld.com/events

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

You Can Now Gain CPD Points by Attending Our Events!

We are pleased to announce that the Association of MBAs is now a member of CPD and our events can be submitted for CPD certification. You can gain valuable CPD points by attending such event, please check the individual event page in advance, those which have obtained certification will be clearly marked by this logo.



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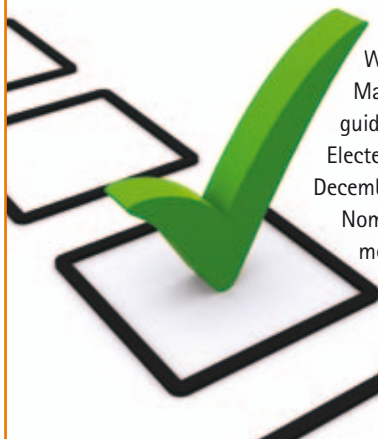
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Elections for the International Management Board – Cast Your Vote!

We are seeking two new members for the International Management Board (IMB) of the Association of MBAs to help guide and develop the Association's strategies and policies. Elected IMB members will serve a three-year term, starting from December 2010.

Nomination packs have been sent out to all graduate paid up members and voting opens on 10 November. Please don't miss the opportunity to have a say in the way your Association is run by casting your vote and choosing your Board! Voting closes on 1 December and the two new members will be announced on Wednesday, 8 December 2010.



Do we need management guilds?

The tantalizing idea of professionalizing management (*)

Santiago Iñiguez de Onzoño, Dean IE Business School

Historically, management has never attained the status of a formal profession, in the sense of setting up a guild or association by managers. In large part, the reason why there are no managers' guilds is due to the flexibility and presence of management throughout such a wide range of activities. Would it really make much sense for the head of a hospital's surgery department, the partner-director of a law firm, the founder of a high-tech start-up company, and the CEO of a consumer products manufacturer to create their own guild or any other type of association? They are all managers, and it may be that some of them have MBAs, but their shared professional interests would not extend much beyond ideas on how best to manage a budget or to motivate their workforce. In all likelihood, they are going to be more interested in learning all there is to know about their respective professions—medicine, architecture, law—and applying these techniques, tools, and ideas on management within the framework of these professions.

Indeed, the need for management in all activities has helped drive the growth of management studies, along with the appearance of so many new business schools and the decision by professionals from diverse fields to take an MBA. It has also prompted some sociologists to predict that business studies will form part of the syllabus of primary schools in the future, in the same way that literature and mathematics has up until now.

Nevertheless, returning to our point, the presence of management in so many areas makes it very difficult to meld the many different executive fields into a single profession, one that stands out from the rest of the applied professions.

That said, there is a stream of thinkers that advocate in favor of the professionalization of management. As I said in previous articles and at different meetings, the arguments in favor of the professionalization of management are:

1. *The keeping out the under-qualified argument*

that is, to prevent those without the necessary training and skills from practicing certain trades and careers. In the case of medicine, professionalization means that doctors have been trained sufficiently to carry out their job. But as experience shows, keeping out those who are not properly qualified doesn't mean that some patients won't seek the services of those providing alternative medicine anyway. At the same time, there is a conceptual question here. In fact, it is virtually impossible to determine who should be kept out of the management "profession". What about entrepreneurs, the most authentic representatives of management, men and women who, in the best sense of the word, are rule breakers? Do we foresee setting up formal accreditation procedures for entrepreneurs to join the management profession? Would they only be considered professionals when their startups had proved to be a success over time, or would they be allowed in even if their businesses had failed? The answer to such questions is obvious: there is no point in professionalizing entrepreneurs.

2. *The necessary skills argument.* Closely linked to the above, this argument says that professionalizing management would guarantee that those in charge of organizations have the necessary skills to carry out their tasks. The tendency for multinationals to recruit MBAs indicates that business school graduates possess certain skills and that they have developed certain abilities that will increase their likelihood of being successful managers. But once again, we find a number of respectable exceptions to this rule, notably in the form of successful business people who have no formal education. That said, my main objection to the argument that managers must possess certain skills is that a qualification obtained in the past doesn't necessarily enable anybody to face all the challenges of the future. Which is why business schools always

insist that continuing the learning process throughout a management career is a *sine qua non* for success, even for entrepreneurs.

3. *The improving professional practices argument.* A popular one this, arguing that the professionalization of management would not only promote a more ethical approach to doing business, but also result in better management practices. In effect this would be akin to managers taking an oath, or making some kind of commitment to society, as is the case with other professions with an ethical code. Lawyers, for example, sign an ethics code when they join their respective bar associations. That said, in the case of the bars, as with the guilds, these ethical codes are based more on sticking to technical principles associated with a profession than on any wider-reaching values.

Codes of conduct are to be found throughout the business world, even if management is not a rule-bound profession. The majority of chambers of commerce around the planet have ethics codes and mechanisms for expelling members that do not abide by them. A great many businesses, particularly multi-nationals, also have codes of conduct. In this sense, I believe that the eventual professionalization of management would not add much to the already existing process of self-regulation that has spread so rapidly and widely throughout the business world in recent years.

For their part, many business schools have codes of conduct that must be adhered to by those attending their MBA programs. However, establishing the exact nature of a manager's responsibility beyond that of creating economic and social value, along with the use of reason to resolve moral dilemmas, would be a tantalizing and controversial exercise.

4. Finally, a less persuasive argument, but one implicit in the idea of professionalizing management, and certainly the protectionists' goal, would be to regulate the activity.

BUSINESS SCHOOL NEWS

The creation of associations or guilds for managers would involve granting licenses and authorization to practice their profession, and eventually the requirement of belonging to a specific association. Such a solution would be in nobody's interests, and furthermore, would be counterproductive in terms of creating value.

We need to advance the process of making management one of the noblest of jobs. In my opinion, professionalization is not the way to do this and would be a step backward; something that many jobs and sectors have already consigned to history. In sum, rather than look to the past for answers by reviving guilds, we need to come up with new ways to help advance creative and socially committed management in the future

(*) This is an abridged version of my article "Should Management Be a Profession?", *Global Focus*, Vol. 4, Issue 2, 2010

Santiago Iñiguez de Onzoño is the Dean of IE Business School. He holds a Degree in Law, a PhD in Moral Philosophy and Jurisprudence (Complutense University, Spain) and an MBA from IE Business School. He was a Recognised Student at Oxford University, UK.

Santiago has worked as a management consultant and has played an active role in the field of quality control and development of management education in Europe. He is member of the boards of EFMD (European Foundation for Management Development), GFME (Global Foundation for Management Education), the International Management Board of the Association of MBAs, the European Advisory Council of AACSB International and the Awarding Body of EQUIS (European Quality System). He also serves on the boards of several prestigious academic bodies around the world, including Peru, Malaysia and China. He has been portrayed by the *Financial Times* as "one of the most significant figures in promoting European business schools internationally".

He is Professor of Strategic Management at IE Business School. He has published several articles and case studies on business management. He is also author and co-author of several articles and books in the field of moral and political philosophy. He is co-editor of www.deanstalk.net, a blog focused on management education issues.

Report from our Latin America Conference for Deans and Directors

Between 29 September and 1 October 2010, the Association held its seventh annual Latin America Conference for Deans and Directors.

This year the event took place in Viña del Mar, Chile, and was kindly sponsored by ESE Universidad de los Andes, Universidad Adolfo Ibañez, Universidad de Chile, Universidad del Desarrollo and Universidad Tecnica Federico Santa Maria. The conference was also supported by the *Financial Times*.

The keynote address came from Santiago de Iñiguez de Onzoño, Dean of IE Business School, who gave an overview of the opportunities and challenges for Latin American business schools in a multi-polar world. When asked by one

Chilean business school director what were the greatest challenges to Latin American business schools today, Professor Iñiguez replied that there was 'a need for business schools in Latin America to improve their global visibility, and to use networks like the Association of MBAs to convey to the rest of the world the excellence of business education institutions in the region'.

Other key topics discussed included the development of research in Latin American business schools, creating environments for the development of entrepreneurship and innovation, research on and teaching of business ethics in the Latin American context and the teaching of corporate governance.

Over 50 senior figures from Latin American and European business schools attended the event, and the reception and dinner organised by our host schools provided relaxed opportunities for networking. The 2011 Conference will take place in Peru, dates to be confirmed soon.



Thank you for your contribution!

We would like to extend a huge thank you once again to all MBA graduates who have completed the recent Accredited MBA Career Survey. We received over 1,000 responses worldwide and work is now underway on compiling the report. This should be published before the end of the year. All members, and respondents with a valid email address, will receive a complimentary PDF copy, with which to benchmark career development and spot the latest trends in the MBA employment industry. As in previous years, the report will also provide a valuable tool in the Association's engagement with international media to promote the value of the accredited MBA.

News from the Research & Consultancy Centre

The Intake & Graduation Survey 10–11 report will be published later this month providing all stakeholders with the latest trends in recruitment and graduation at accredited programmes internationally. Covering the MBA, MBM and DBA, this report will especially be of value to business schools looking for the latest data to enhance their marketing and admission operations.



New Accreditations

Lingnan (University) College, Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, P R China

BOOK REVIEW



How to get a job you'll love by John Lees

Review by Janet Davies,
Editor myexecutivecareer.com
and mygraduatecareer.com

If you're graduating this year, the current news headlines about graduate employment prospects can seem pretty depressing. There's no two ways about it, it's tough out there. As an MBA student, you've probably already made some decisions about your choice of career but if you have any lingering doubts about your direction then 'How to get a job you'll love' could provide just the inspiration you're looking for. If you're sure about your direction, but you're not so confident about how to get there, you'll find it equally helpful. It's hard to write a career advice book that appeals to everyone but John Lees has broken his latest volume up into useful bite-sized pieces that you can dip in and out of according to your needs and circumstances. There are also chapters on what to do if your career details and although you are almost certainly not in that category now, it nevertheless makes for interesting reading. I firmly believe that when it comes to your livelihood, a 'prevention strategy' is always preferable to a curative one.

Preparation exercises such as 'Discover your career hot buttons', and mapping out your 'House of Knowledge' are useful ones to complete before you begin the process of applying for a new role. Both external and internal recruiters are looking to find the 'best fit' and lowest risk candidates to put forward for consideration. Being confident about what you're selling and why any employer should want to buy you in particular is an often rather underestimated consideration. No doubt you've put a great deal of time, effort and money into completing your MBA, so it makes sense to put

a similar amount of effort and professionalism into choosing what role you want, and what kind of organisation you'd like to work for.

Once you've decided what role and which organisations(s) and sector you're targeting and you have your personal value proposition all mapped out, you need to start getting interviews. I never cease to be amazed how little effort candidates (at every level of seniority and qualification) seem to put into understanding the recruiters perspective when it comes to shortening their odds of being selected and so I particularly liked John's chapter on interviews and how to survive them. Sections on 'Reading the clues' and 'Hiring winners' are refreshingly practical, honest and sensible.

Any process that relies on a mix of technology and human intervention is bound to be hard to predict and capricious at times. However, being prepared for the obvious as well as the curved ball is what John is really good at prepping his readers for. When you understand his explanation of the six-point structure at the heart of all interviews you'll be able to practice some properly convincing answers. If you can't, then maybe that job isn't really for you after all! You usually only get one shot so you have to make it count and, should you get your dream employer to the point of making you an offer, he offers some solid tips on how to get yourself the best compensation deal on offer.

The internet has created a revolution in terms of the ways that technology can aid your search for that perfect job, however, you also have to keep in mind that real people buy real people so John offers some sage advice on dealing with social media and recruitment technology. As the editor of a portfolio of

career websites I get to review much of what's hot and what's not, online. I am all too aware of the great advantages, as well as the pitfalls, of online career development resources and what sorts out the winners and losers when it comes to using them so I was pleased to see a section in John's book titled 'Why the internet won't save your career'.

All in all, this is a value for money read and well worth the cover price.

About the reviewer

Janet Davies is the co-founder and editor of a portfolio of popular career advice websites – myexecutivecareer.com, mygraduatecareer.com and newlifefnetwork.co.uk. A business graduate, she enjoyed a spell in both finance and HR management before moving on to senior executive roles in sales and marketing with organisations such as American Express, NatWest, Ogilvy & Mather, Credit Suisse Private Banking and the HR Services consulting practice at PricewaterhouseCoopers.

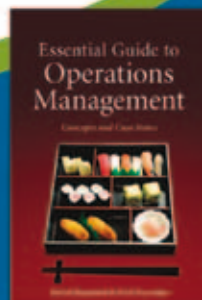
She has a wealth of experience in the field of talent management and leadership development as well as being a seasoned speaker on people management and a respected business writer. A sought-after media spokesperson, Janet has contributed to numerous features on career matters in *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Times*, *The New York Times* and *The Sunday Times*. She is a regular guest on both BBC and commercial radio at a national and regional level and has also appeared on BBC Breakfast and 'This Morning'.

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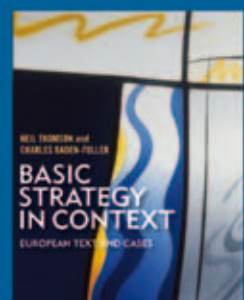
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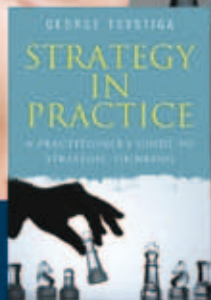
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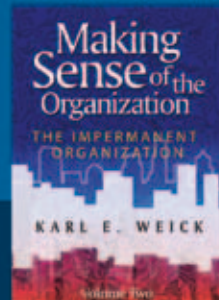
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PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Dates For Your Diary: October–December 2010

OCTOBER 2010	REGION	EVENT
27 October	Midlands	<p>"Maximising value on the sale of your business" Speakers: Doug Garforth & Peter Lowman Following on with the successful series of talks at Aston we offer another opportunity to network with excellent people before and after an interesting presentation.</p>
NOVEMBER 2010	REGION	EVENT
02 November	Yorkshire	<p>The Business Case for Sustainability Speaker: Joanne Pollard, CEO, CO2Sense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is sustainability a fad, if just by considering some of the issues your organisation could save £millions? • As one of the many SMEs around Yorkshire and Humber – how would reduced energy and other initiatives help your bottom line? • As taxpayers, would we prefer to pay less when public sector organisations think about and act on their costs?
03 November	London	<p>Strategic Speed: Reduce Time to Value and Increase Value Over Time Speaker: Jocelyn Davis, EVP Research & Development, Forum, and co-author of Strategic Speed. 89% of leaders believe speed is critical to sustain their business, and yet only 42% believe they are faster than their competition. This gap has enormous implications for business leaders, as faster companies enjoy 40% higher revenue growth and 52% higher operating margin.</p>
04 November	London	<p>Gala Dinner 2010 Speaker: Lord Michael Hastings of Scarisbrick, CBE The Association of MBAs' Gala Dinner is a prestigious gathering of business school leaders, distinguished MBA alumni and journalists in a formal, yet relaxed, setting. This year's event will be held at the Millennium Hotel in London's Mayfair. Following the dinner, we will be announcing the winner of this year's MBA Student of the Year Award, sponsored by <i>The Independent</i>.</p>
09 November	South West	<p>Reconnecting Banking and Values – the most important relationship in banking Speaker: Lady Susan Rice, Managing Director, Lloyds Banking Group Scotland Lady Susan Rice will share her vision for banking in the future. Susan will outline her perspective not only on how the industry might be shaped or re-shaped in the coming years, but also on the way she thinks it should operate. Susan will contend that what Bankers do matters greatly, but how they do it matters even more.</p>
13 November	Thames Valley	<p>Ashridge MBA in a Day Our 'MBA in a Day' information event helps to bring the Ashridge experience alive. This event includes live teaching sessions, a tour of Ashridge and a Q&A panel with faculty, current students and alumni.</p>
18 November	South West	<p>Management of Change in Business Speaker: Dr Mike Kinski, Operational Managing Director, Terra Firma Capital Partners Ltd</p>
30 November	London	<p>A Networking Event for People Who Hate Networking Events! Speaker: Devora Zack</p>

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