

MBA Classes with a Rock Star From Costa Rica

By Ioana Manoiu

One day, somebody had a genius idea: to create an MBA program for people who are neither in the mood, nor do they have any interest in pursuing such a program. People who are accustomed to an alert way of life, who need adrenaline and diverse experiences in order to come up with ideas.

How can one teach business administration to this group of people who don't even have the patience to sit for 10 minutes in a classroom? The solution is simple: offer them an experience-school. Start with classes held in the world's most beautiful cities – from New York to London, LA or Tokyo. Add highly experienced teachers, brought from famous business schools and creative classmates with a never-ending appetite for storytelling. All this packed together, while economy or accounting classes are crammed together between invitations to attend cultural events and presentations held by well-known professionals from different fields.

I recently came back from the first module. Before leaving, I had read the stories of industry-peers who had already gone through the program and I was expecting to find it a pleasurable experience. I was, however, surprised by the impact these first two weeks had on me. I learned about leadership, strategy, economy and accounting. Part of these things I already knew from personal experience, others I had read about, while still others were new to me and they got me thinking. Beyond all the business concepts I learned about concepts that are common to most MBA programs, the most important thing for me is the mood I brought back to the agency.

I am talking about that feeling that there are so many things to do, that the only limits are the ones we create for ourselves and that the impossible only exists if we choose to acknowledge it.

For days on end we talked about visionary leaders and about the way in which they succeeded to turn around companies that were apparently impossible to change. We talked about companies that had reached the very peak of success only to miserably fail one day, as a result of an uninspired decision or two. We analyzed our own behavior as leaders and we discovered in ourselves qualities and faults we never knew we had.

These experiences have helped me regain my enthusiasm and passion for trying new things and for making those changes that, for several reasons, I had been postponing.

On top of it all, I also got to meet some very interesting people – my colleagues from the most unexpected of countries and industries: Robert from Google NY, Marco from McCann Erikson Milan, Juan from a Colombian media trust, Veronica from Grey Belarus, Badih from MBC Dubai. And, surprisingly enough for a business school, Federico, a rock star from Costa Rica.

The school is called the Berlin School of Creative Leadership and the man with the genius idea is Michael Conrad. As for me, I am looking forward for the 31st of October – that's when the next module begins.

(from IAA Romania website - <http://www.iaa.ro/>)