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EIPM: Our Priority Is to Link the Content with the Practical World

an interview with Elda Simonaska, MBA Program Director, EIPM

About Elda Simonaska

Elda Simonaska is MBA Course Director of the European Institute of Purchasing Management. She responsible for the design, development, recrutement and follow up of the MBA program. At the same time she is teaching in the MBA course, Tailor Made Programs for Companies and other Business Schools. Her areas of expertise include Strategy, Total Cost of Ownership, Make or Buy and Measurement of Purchasing Performance. Her previous experience includes purchasing management & Journalism.

What is the European Institute in Purchasing Management?

The European Institute of Purchasing Management is the European centre in executive education, action training, networking and research in Purchasing and Supply Chain Management. The Institute was created in 1990 in a time where purchasing was finally recognised as a strategic function, but was experiencing considerable lack of qualified resources in the field. The mission of the Institute was to fill that gap. Today we offer a wide range of products and services: standard short training, tailor made programs for companies (delivered world-wide in 7 different languages), networking activities such as roundtable and conferences and research, all of them dedicated to purchasing professionals. EIPM competitive advantage is based on continuous innovation, international environment, high quality service and proximity to industry.

What is your school doing to remain at the forefront of purchasing management thinking?

One of our main priorities at the moment is the development of the

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research in purchasing and supply chain. The EIPM research mission is to provide companies with leading edge thinking in purchasing and supply chain management, feeding at the same time the academic thought in those areas and our teaching activities with the final objective to translate research into action.

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On the other side, we work with external faculty from different management schools around Europe. Their experience and expertise is a precious input in our development efforts. Continuous investigation on changes in the outside world, participation in the networks of academics and practitioners, investments on training and development of our staff are some of other means we are using to remain in the forefront of purchasing management thinking.

Could you give us a brief overview of your MBA program ?

Our MBA is an executive part time program hold in 14 weeks over 18 months.

The objective of MBA is to train, in an international environment, outstanding professionals to become highly qualified executives with enhanced skills in purchasing and with a solid general management knowledge, which can lead them to other functions as well.

The MBA of the EIPM offers the unique opportunity in Europe to acquire a qualification, which combines both managerial and professional development simultaneously. It provides the opportunity to acquire concepts and skills through a combination of the theory and practice which is ideally suited to a working manager.

The EIPM MBA program recognises that the Purchasing function is evolving very quickly with growing opportunities in all market sectors. Following the programme of a typical Master of Business Administration in general management, the MBA additionally provides the specialised modules in “state-of-the-art” Purchasing and Supply Chain strategies, methods and tools.

Our priority is and has been to link the content with the practical world by having a very pragmatic approach to the training. Strategies and methods should have an immediate application to the real world. They are tested in permanence by the students, by working on the assignments immediately after the course. Their feedback and their remarks help in improving those links. From the other side, our clients (practitioners) regularly contribute with their ideas. Many of them are invited as guest speakers in different modules giving a “practitioner” point of view on different subjects.

In the advisory board apart of teachers and consultants, practitioners are involved.

Real cases and workshops run during the class help in realising those links.

Today our MBA counts over 100 graduates of 20 different nationalities and is experiencing a significant growth.

The programme has a limited annual intake of 20, providing participants with a rich exchange of experiences, visions, perspectives and Purchasing philosophies, all set against an impressive academic background.

A particular strength of our programme is the perfect balance between academic figures and international consultants who bring their industrial experience and “state of the art” expertise to the benefit of those participating.

The MBA has a modular structure (14 modules in total including final projects presentations) giving so flexibility to the programme. The participants have the possibility to complete the programme from 18 months to 3 years.

All the courses are run in English. Our students are most of the time sponsored by their companies. Most of them hold middle management positions in purchasing and come from very different industries. In average 12 different nationalities, mainly European are represented in each intake

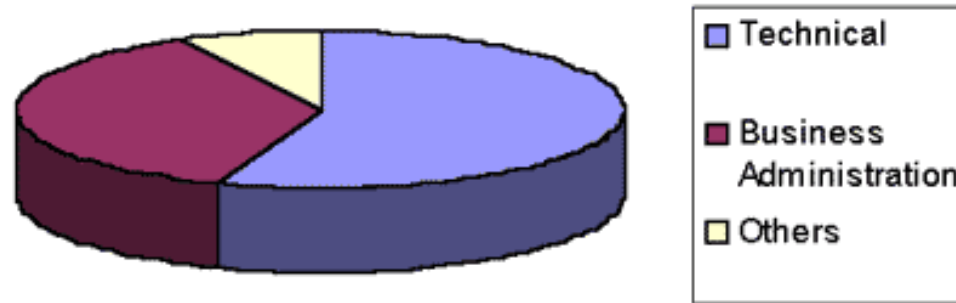
What is the profile of your participants?

Our MBA participant profile:

- a university degree and a minimum of three years of experience
- a managerial position
- an international experience
- entrepreneur/risk taker profile
- a wide range of interests

The majority of the students have either technical or business administration background as illustrated below:

MBA Participants Background



Since our students are working managers their professional experience varies from 7 to 29 years.

The diversity of backgrounds and cultures of participants is one of the main reasons participants choose our MBA. Most of our students have lived abroad and speak several languages. They represent different industries from service, food and beverages, chemical, pharmaceutical, consulting, automotive, high tech etc.. which makes the class the best place to benchmark and exchange.

What type of firm's employ your graduates?

Our graduates are employed in all the sectors of activities from automotive, high tech, Pharma to banking and consultancy. The main common characteristic of those companies is the worldwide presence.