

KASAC: A New Paradigm for Executive Education

Executive Education: Management White Paper

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Executive Summary:

Most of the current global academic and accreditation systems of management education require a major update in content, delivery and evaluation methods. Although the need to establish a set of minimum educational standards is justified, in our experience the current accreditation systems are highly bureaucratic, outdated, anti-competitive and inhibit innovation and advancement. IIM research revealed that spending two to three years in a traditional MBA program is becoming more costly and less relevant. IIM proposes a new business and management education paradigm that is experiential, accelerated, and modular. It provides students with a better return on their investment in time, effort and money, at the same time providing the economy with more effective managers. The new education model is designed for professional and organization development as an alternative to pursuing full-time academic MBA degrees.

IIM Management Education Model

The main goal of IIM education paradigm is to bring the world of business education closer to the world of business management. This is achieved by providing new executive-driven education as opposed to the traditional teacher-driven education. This is a major departure from traditional academic offers in educational focus, content and delivery. IIM's new executive education model makes the following critical shifts:

- From theoretical education to experiential education
- From passive (listening) to active (doing)
- From teacher-driven learning to student-driven learning
- From just in case (generic) to just in time (customized)
- From a teaching process to an advisory process
- From memorizing to brainstorming
- From question-based exams to project-based assessment
- From passing the tests to lifelong learning
- From knowledge transfer to knowledge creation
- From competitive learning to collaborative learning

IIM KASAC Development and Evaluation Model

IIM developed a five-dimensional model for executive education and evaluation called **KASAC**. KASAC is an acronym for **K**nowledge, **A**nalysis, **S**ynthesis, **A**pplication and **C**ommunication. This model is used as the basis for IIM executive education, coaching and evaluation process. IIM believes that for a CEO to succeed in today's complex business environment s/he should demonstrate mastery in all five areas:

1. Knowledge:

- Understanding of the subject-matter.
- The quality of the managerial decision-making process.
- Understanding of the context, text, subtext of business reports.

2. Analysis:

- Ability to identify opportunities and diagnose challenges.
- Ability to identify critical success factors and potential pitfalls.
- Ability to design sound evaluation criteria for decision making
- Ability to uncover driving forces, structure, relationships, dependencies, and situation variables

3. Synthesis:

- Ability to design an effective strategy/solution, taking into consideration the alignment of external and internal forces
- Solution innovativeness and “thinking outside the box”
- Solution feasibility (practicability)

4. Application:

- Ability to prioritize between strategic and tactical needs
- Ability to design/use measurement and control systems
- Maturity of the project management plan (including time, resources, budget, quality, risks, change, communication, procurement)

5. Communication:

- Ability to communicate and present to the stakeholders at each level (articulation of management ideas, professional documentation, business case/report writing and presentation)
- Leadership (ability to listen, learn, persuade, motivate and win the support of the stakeholders)

IIM Education Emphasis

What is important?

- Critical thinking and understanding of cases studies and applied management projects
- Attention to details in analysis and recommendations
- Ability to articulate ideas, create proposals and support adopted positions
- Maintaining to date knowledge on key industry changes

What is less important?

- Memorizing theories for passing exams

How Does IIM Management Education Compare to Traditional MBA Programs?

Although the body-of-knowledge of IIM's management education program might be shared with leading MBA programs, all IIM courses and projects have a customized and experiential-learning orientation rather than generic and theoretical-learning orientation. IIM management education programs vary substantially in learning content, delivery and evaluation methods. There are several leading institutes offering management course that are backed by well-respected resources, however, IIM's Executive Education programs differs from traditional academic MBA programs in the following aspects:

- IIM pioneered the "Executive-driven" management education model as opposed to traditional "Teacher-driven" education model.
- IIM management education content is success-oriented. IIM researchers study the works of the most successful companies, managers and influential management thinkers to identify their best practices, critical success factors and learned lessons. IIM consultants then incorporate research results into the management education program to provide students with the latest and most advanced thinking from the World's Leading Management Gurus. Some of the names include Adams, Dell, Drucker, Gates, Hamel, Kanter, Maslow, McKenna, Moore, Ohmae, Peters, Porter, Nonaka, Negroponte, Shapiro, and Welch.
- IIM education emphasizes critical thinking, problem solving and innovation far more than memorization.
- Learning assessments are project-based vs. quiz-based
- There is a "common" body of knowledge but there is no "fixed" body of knowledge" this is because of the continuously changing business environment (technologies, markets and organizations). IIM courses and projects address up to date industry challenges and opportunities.
- IIM advisor will save participant's time and efforts by focusing on best practices and providing sample deliverables, checklists, decision models, templates and resources.

How Does The Course Delivery Work?

- Each participant has an advisor as opposed to a teacher. The advisor's role is to help facilitate the participant's professional learning and development. In part, the advisor serves as a guide, coach or mentor. Sometimes the advisor will validate participants' management thinking and sometimes s/he will act as an opposition party who will critique, question and debate their management decision making. In either case, this is done to help the participants test and develop their critical thinking, decision making methods and communication skills.
- All courses are a combination of seminars and presentation materials. They provide a summary of the essential concepts, a selection of practical case-based readings, and project work with emphasis on critical thinking, decision making and managerial planning.
- There are no Q&A tests. Instead, the participant is assigned a real-world application project such as developing a new strategy or a business plan for a company of participant's choice.

Course Delivery Method

1. Customization Request: Agreeing with the advisor on the learning focus, course expectations, type of industry/company and assessment project
2. Reading Assignment: Understanding essential concepts (Knowledge transfer)
3. Case-study Assignment: Management issues analysis (Learn by example)
4. Project Assignment: Real-world best practices application (Knowledge creation)
5. Advisor Feedback: Reviewing participant's work and providing improvement advice (Development)

How Long Does It Take?

Each course takes 2-4 week to complete. A general management program takes 6-12 months. The time variation depends on the participant's knowledge and experience.

Why Is There A Substantial Difference In Learning Time Between IIM's Executive Education Program And MBA Programs?

- IIM Executive education is based on action-learning (AL)* model. It is focused on management application rather than academic theory, therefore it is more efficient, and takes less time to deliver
- Executive education is targeted toward professionals who already have professional business experience. Having a professional context makes learning faster and more effective
- Executive education encourages the use of past work experience in course case studies and project assignments, thus utilizing past effort for better and quicker understanding of the subject
- IIM advisors are seasoned management consultants who provide or guide the candidates to time-saving resources such as checklists, templates and specialized research/work portals

White Paper Notes:

- Action Learning (AL) is a form of "learning by doing" pioneered by Professor Reg. Revans about 50 years ago. For more information visit IIM Management Hall of Fame at: http://www.iim-edu.org/managementgurus/Reg_Revans.htm
- This paper does not address undergraduate management education, although several of its recommendations may also apply to undergraduate programs. The paper mainly addresses MBA and executive level education.
- License to use IIM model is granted for educational and commercial purposes provided that the user clearly credits "International Institute of Management" and provide a reference to IIM website (www.iim-edu.org).

About the Author

Med Yones is the President of International Institute of Management (IIM). IIM is a management best practices research and education institute. IIM has 55 universities and research partners in 40 countries. Mr. Yones is an international expert specializing in the global digital economy, business strategy, and leadership development. For more information about IIM, please visit <http://www.iim-edu.org>

What are IIM White Papers?

IIM white papers provide businesses and government leaders with a list of questions, terminology and discussion points that can be used to address emerging challenges and opportunities. IIM white papers are not academic research papers; they are succinct work documents designed for problem solving and communication by the leadership team. Depending on the scope of the paper, the document structure may include three to five sections: 1). A statement of the problem or opportunity 2). Analysis of root causes and underlying forces 3). Proposed solutions and 4). A checklist of best practices for solution implementation and change management 5). Notes and resources.

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