

# EU Alumni Stories vol. 1

Our alumni achieve great things. They establish companies, lead businesses and are successful in all walks of life; no matter which path they choose.

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Over the past few years, the EU Alumni Relations Office has had the opportunity to contact and meet hundreds of alumni. We have welcomed them to events; invited them to our campuses to speak to students and give presentations; arranged collaborations with their companies; and strengthened our relationships with them through social networks. So much has happened since the relaunching of the new Alumni Association, we wanted to share what we have discovered about the members of our diverse and expansive network.

For some of you, it has been a long time since you graduated from EU. Perhaps you wonder where your former classmates are and what they are doing. This brochure is a small reflection of the EU alumni community. Here you will find a selection of people whose goals, values and passions have shaped their lives. For many, studying at EU was a turning point that determined their future career. Upon graduating, they made pivotal personal and professional decisions that have led them to where they are today.

As a result of those early choices, many of our alumni have traveled the world, pursued other studies, learned foreign languages and discovered new cultures. Others joined their family businesses or launched their own ventures – no doubt implementing the knowledge and skills they gained during their studies to do so. All these experiences helped them discover new career opportunities and make lots of valuable connections.

No matter what path they followed or where they ended up, the alumni featured in this brochure are all unique and successful in their own right. They all bring something special to our community; whether it's their professional expertise, life experience, pursuits or sense of humor.

I would like to thank them for sharing their stories with us. I hope you find this brochure inspiring and realize that no matter what path you take in life, happiness and success can come in many forms.

Sincerely,

**Anna Wlodek**

Head of the Alumni Relations Office



# Legacy

noun [le-gə-sē]

something that happened in the past  
or that comes from someone in the past

*As entrepreneur,  
pilot and author,  
Steve Saint says: “Your  
story is the greatest legacy  
that you will leave to your  
friends. It’s the longest-  
lasting legacy you will leave  
to your heirs.”*



# BART VAN STRATEN

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General Manager, Van Straten Medical  
Bachelor of Business Administration, 1994  
MBA in International Business, 1995

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## *EU Alumni Association: Chapter Leader for Netherlands*

**Is from:**

Netherlands

**Speaks:**

Dutch, German,  
English

**Has lived in:**

U.S.A.

**Has also studied:**

Commercial &  
Airline Transport  
Pilot License,  
National Aviation  
School NLS,  
FlightSafety  
Academy, U.S.A.

Bart van Straten didn't have a clear career plan when he started his BBA at EU in the early 90s. Two things were certain though: he had an affinity for aviation and a solid business foundation. After graduating, when he joined his father's medical supply business, Van Straten Medical, van Straten quickly learned that business and flying have much in common.

"As a pilot, before taking to the air, you must have a plan to get from point A to point B. The same thing is true for business, but there it's called strategy. Then if you meet a problem on your flight path, like a sudden storm, you have to avoid it, so you will also need a plan B. The same in business," he notes.

His father, Jaap van Straten, founded Van Straten Medical in 1975 after over a decade of experience working with another organization. Today they sell surgical products in roughly 30 countries.

Joining the family business had never been the plan for van Straten. After completing his MBA at EU and master's of international trade at Institut Cooremans, he opened a consultancy firm and became a commercial pilot. In 2000, he made a change and settled into the marketing division of Van Straten Medical while flying part time at a regional charter company.

This hobby has impacted van Straten's management style: "Specializing in something outside your business field teaches you to keep things in perspective, be objective and look at your business from a distance."

While still enjoying corporate flying, today van Straten is, along with his brother Niels, responsible for Van Straten Medical and several other medical companies. He takes it very seriously: "If a manager doesn't run his company well, makes the wrong decisions and the company crashes, they can still go home and have a warm, cozy dinner. If a pilot makes the wrong decision and the plane crashes, no one will be there to tell the story."





# **VERONIKA GORDEEVA**

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Deputy CEO of Marketing, CELER Ltd.  
Doctorate in Business Administration, 2013

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**Is from:**

Russia

**Speaks:**

Russian,  
English,  
basic German

**Has lived in:**

U.K.

**Has also studied:**

MA in Media  
and Cultural Studies  
at University of  
Sussex, U.K.,  
MBA & DBA  
at the Russian  
Presidential  
Academy of National  
Economy and Public  
Administration

Veronika Gordeeva is deputy CEO of marketing at her second-generation family business, CELER, a company that operates in a truly niche market: producing materials to protect pipelines.

“CELER produces special anticorrosion-coated fittings and sleeves for the protection of inner-welded pipeline joints. Our product is for pipelines with inner anticorrosion coating used to transport oil and gas.

“The main device we produce is the protective anticorrosion-coated sleeve of our own patented invention and construction. It was invented by my father who is the CEO and founder of the company. Thanks to the simplicity and perfection of our sleeve, we now enjoy about an 80% share of our market niche.

“In a niche market, expertise is very important as every tiny detail matters; so if you want to prosper, you should be knowledgeable in all aspects of your market. In order to succeed, companies need to tailor production to the needs of their customers. As they are your clients, you should follow their demands carefully. There is, however, always room to improve your product. Over time, we have improved the construction of our sleeve, introduced new services, strengthened our manufacturing capacity, increased productivity and improved quality by enlarging our production area and buying new equipment.

“We meticulously gather information about our clients’ demands and carefully analyze it; this way, we can anticipate the type and number of sleeves that should be produced, and always have enough units in stock and ready to be shipped. As a result, we are able to supply our clients with sleeves on demand. We are the quickest in our niche thanks to our extensive manufacturing capabilities and well-targeted stock resources. *Celer* means ‘quick’ in Latin. It reflects who we are and that’s why we chose the name.”



# ROCHELLE PEETOOM

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Creative Direction, Worldwide Education,  
Business Development & Expansion, Rob Peetoom  
Bachelor of Business Administration, 2013

**Is from:**

Australia

**Lives in:**

Netherlands

**Speaks:**

English, Dutch,  
Spanish, Catalan

**Has lived in:**

Netherlands,  
France, U.S.A.,  
U.K.

**Has also studied:**

Vogue Fashion  
Foundation Diploma  
at Condé Nast  
College, Design  
Management at  
Parsons The New  
School for Design

**Likes:**

Nutrition, cooking,  
photography, fashion  
and beauty blogging,  
singing, songwriting,  
golf, tennis, athletics

Rochelle Peetoom graduated valedictorian of her class from EU in 2013. Her degree added to her already flourishing entrepreneurial spirit. At the age of 18, she started a sterling silver jewelry line produced in Bali and distributed throughout Europe. With international fans like Paris Hilton, it was clear that this woman meant business.

In addition to having a natural affinity for business, Peetoom has also taken a lot of care in preparing for the business world. She first studied design management at the famous Parsons The New School for Design in New York and Paris. Later, after completing an internship at L'Oréal, finishing her BBA at EU and pursuing a Fashion Foundation Diploma at London's Condé Nast College, she decided to return to Barcelona and try a new and delicious venture.

In 2014, Peetoom, along with her business partner, Marta Dalda Bosch, co-founded Bon & Petit, a company that delivered ready-to-cook, healthy meals to people's doors.

"I wrote the initial business plan for Bon & Petit while I was still studying at EU, and knew right there and then that I would eventually set it up, because I always pursue things for a purpose and with an outcome. The success of Bon & Petit is greatly due to having found the right business partner: Marta. We complement each other perfectly and that is, honestly, half of the work done."

In 2016, after working on her own successful ventures for several years, Peetoom joined the family's international beauty business, Rob Peetoom, running the creative direction of the company.



# Virtue

noun ['vər-(,)chü]

morally good behavior or character

*The cardinal virtues are four traits recognized in the ancient Greek writings of Classical Antiquity, they are prudence, justice, temperance (or restraint) and courage (or fortitude).*



# STEVE RYNECKI

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Deputy Director of Economic Growth, U.S.A.I.D.  
MBA in Communication & Public Relations, 1995

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**Is from:**

U.S.A.

**Lives in:**

Ukraine

**Speaks:**

English, German

**Has lived in:**

U.K., Germany,  
Netherlands, Russia,  
Kazakhstan,  
Afghanistan

**Has won:**

World Bank  
Innovation Prize

**Likes:**

Traveling, historic  
preservation,  
cultural tourism

*Since graduating from EU, Steve Rynecki has worked with various UN agencies around the globe. He has extensive experience in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors and has traveled to over 50 countries.*

*What principles studied at EU have you remembered often in your professional career?*

I learned that international business requires flexibility, patience and open-mindedness. I embrace these principles and practice them on a regular basis.

*You've worked in the public, not-for-profit and private sectors, how are they different?*

The private sector, as you can well imagine, is very bottom-line driven. Shareholder value trumps everything. Non-profits tend to be more relaxed work environments, but that is really an illusion; they survive only if they receive external funding. I've worked for some non-profits where the only difference between non-profit and for profit is the absence of shareholders. Non-profits actually strive for surplus revenue, which is a lot like profit. Public sector work is driven more by the perception of doing good things for citizens. Anything that results in a public dividend is rewarded.

*What is your proudest accomplishment?*

Several come to mind, but perhaps the most enduring was my role in facilitating the Kingdom of Jordan's strategy to create 35,000 technology jobs by 2035. They exceeded that number several years ago, and Jordan is now recognized as a source of high-quality technology solutions.

*You've mostly worked abroad, do you have any tips for team building within diverse groups?*

Be sure to set the stage and let your team know, individually and as a group, the "ground rules" and the shared expectations required for a truly inclusive workforce. Sharing a "common vision" for diversity in the workplace makes corrections or difficult conversations easier as an agreement was made at the start.



# When Science Meets Business

José de Chastonay graduated from EU in 1998 and also holds a PhD in Medical Microbiology & Bacteriology from the University of Bern. His experience in both science and business has made him an expert in both fields; fields which he believes share some similarities.



*“Viruses are very canny; they can overcome many difficulties in a very short period. If a drug is focused on hindering one portion of the replication cycle of a virus, the virus can very quickly find a way around that. There are always obstacles thrown in your way, and a good business can find a way to circumnavigate them, overcome them and still reach their goal. Both a virus and a business use a similar method: a form of creativity.”*

José de Chastonay  
Chief Marketing Officer, Bachem Holding AG  
MBA, 1998  
Also has a PhD in Medical Microbiology & Bacteriology

*“Scientists have long grown into top managerial positions; not least because sound scientific knowledge is instrumental in developing innovative frame-breaking strategies that are vital to an enterprise’s competitiveness. Almost half of the board at BASF, the world’s largest chemical company by revenue to date, consists of people with scientific backgrounds. This relatively high representation among BASF’s top managers serves as proof that scientists represent a key element for a company’s long-term success.”*

Martin Schüler  
Director, ORGAFLUOR, S.L.  
Online MBA, 2013  
Also has a PhD in Organic Chemistry



*“As vital as it is for scientific research to be innovative and create new solutions, it is also important to be efficient, making good use of resources and opportunities. That’s where management plays an essential role. This is true regardless of the environment.”*

Michael Mihut  
Quality, Planning and Evaluation Management,  
World Health Organization  
Online MBA, 2015  
Also has a degree in Medicine



# Determination

noun [di-ˌtər-mə-ˈnā-shən]

a quality that makes you continue trying to do or achieve something that is difficult

*“Desire is the key to motivation, but it’s determination and commitment to an unrelenting pursuit of your goal, a commitment to excellence, that will enable you to attain the success you seek.”*

*Mario Andretti, World  
Champion Racing Driver*



# LAUREN ELLERMAYER

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Co-Founder & Co-President, Beyond Fifteen Communications  
Bachelor of Arts in Communication & Public Relations, 2007

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**Is from:**

U.S.A.

**Lives in:**

U.S.A.

**Speaks:**

English, Spanish

**Has lived in:**

Spain, Mexico

**Likes:**

Yoga, running,  
public relations,  
entrepreneurship,  
networking

*PR professional turned entrepreneur, Lauren Ellermeyer co-founded Beyond Fifteen Communications in 2009 in Southern California. In her words: "I love what I do. I have the most incredible business partner anyone could ever ask for, the greatest team of colleagues possible, and I work with some of the best clients and brands across the nation."*

*What is your favorite thing about your job?*

I love getting out into the community, networking and connecting with new people. I am a people person.

*What are the three most important components to run a successful PR campaign?*

Finding an intriguing and insightful news angle to promote; researching the correct media contact to present your news to; and pitching by actually getting on the phone and placing personal calls to the media rather than just firing off emails.

*What is the best way to build lasting relationships with clients?*

Aside from offering a valuable and effective product or service, it comes down to communication.

Maintain regular contact with your clients. Pick up the phone: clients are busy and it's naïve to assume they read all your emails. And ask the hard questions, like "are you happy with the service we are providing?" and "should we be doing anything differently to better meet your needs?"

*Any advice to students who want to start their own businesses?*

Do it! Start-ups and entrepreneurs are the future. As technology continues to eliminate more and more jobs, you'll need to be in control of your own destiny. Working for yourself will be the most challenging yet most rewarding experience you'll ever have.

*Any additional wisdom you would like to share?*

Be kind to others in business and in life. Things always have a way of coming full circle. Also, my dad always says, "your network is your net-worth." Networking is vital to success. Keep in mind it isn't about you; it's about what you can do for others. When you create valuable relationships for others, they are inclined to return the favor.





# BERNARD OCKERSE

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IT Consultant

Bachelor of Business Administration, 2009

**Is from:**

South Africa

**Lives in:**

Germany

**Speaks:**

English, German

**Has lived in:**

U.K.

**Has also studied:**

MBA at LSE

**Hobbies:**

Triathlon, Ironman competitions

*Bernard Ockerse began in finance and switched to IT and engineering. After working at Intel for many years, he ventured out on his own in the IT world.*

*You wanted to specialize in finance and graduated in 2009, when many bankers lost their jobs. Were you frustrated?*

Frankly, yes. But then I remembered a good friend's advice: be flexible, be innovative, and there is nothing that you must fear. So I changed to IT, another big interest of mine. Now I work at Intel. Dream job.

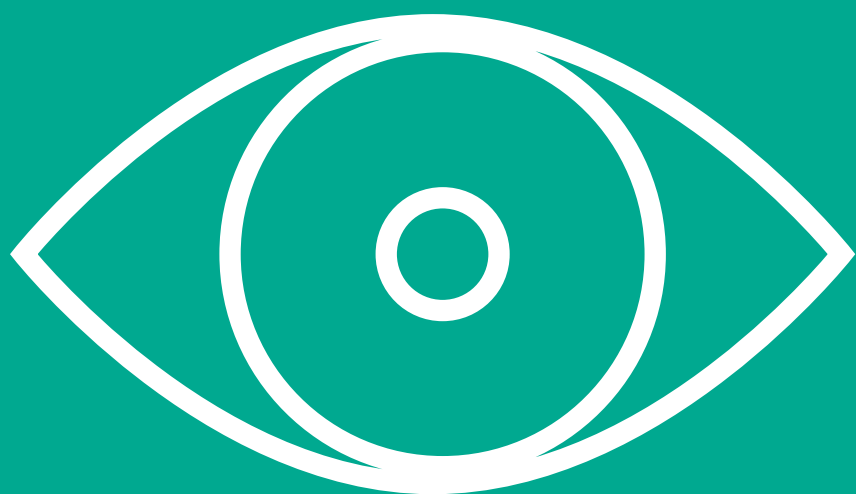
*Can you learn to be flexible or is it innate?*

You can learn it for sure. Just don't be afraid to move out of your comfort zone. This is something my parents always taught me and EU reinforced: you can do whatever you want, you just need to work hard enough at it.

*Is flexibility a privilege of the young?*

Maybe. I know older people who have made enough money to say: "I just want to play golf five days a week." I think that's in the past though. You always need to learn and move. The earlier you get used to that, the better. At first I wanted to become a writer. It worked well, I got published, but then I got interested in how money moves, and from there I went to IT.





# Finesse

noun [fi-'nes]

skill and cleverness that is shown in the way someone deals with a situation, problem, etc.

*Etymologically speaking, finesse comes from the French word which means “keenness”, “perceptiveness” and “sensitivity”. First used in 1528, the term encompasses the ideas of adroitness, precision, elegance and skill.*



# PATRICIA JORDÀ

Director of Corporate Strategy, Kantox  
Bachelor of Business Administration, 2010

**Is from:**

Spain

**Lives in:**

Spain

**Speaks:**

Spanish, Catalan,  
English, Italian,  
Portuguese

**Has lived in:**

Italy, Brazil, Mexico

**Has also studied:**

Executive MBA  
at IESE Business  
School, Executive  
MBA at ESIC: Business and Marketing  
School

**Has won:**

Best Business  
Plan for ESIC:  
Business and  
Marketing School

**Likes:**

Sports, films

*Patricia Jordà is a great believer in getting things done and stepping out of her comfort zone.*

*Do you believe in dreaming or doing?*  
I love questions that involve “how”. I don’t like people who only talk about how their lives *should* be. Life needs to be *done*. Every day, we have to make decisions; every day we have to do things, we have to create movement. I like questions such as “How can I achieve that?” The “how”, at the end of the day, is the most important thing. It applies to companies too; there needs to be a lot of strategic thinking. For example: “OK, I see we need to expand into Germany.” So “*how*” are we going to expand into Germany?

*How would you encourage people to “do”?*

For those people who want to step out of their comfort zone, my advice is to just start. Start doing *something*. Make a wish list of companies, think about people you’ve met in your life, write them an email and ask if they can help you. You don’t lose anything by writing an email and asking for help. I can assure you – there are good people out there who are available to help you leave your comfort zone, and who will help you with the how.

*How do you know when you are in a “comfort zone”?*

The comfort zone comes, I think, on the second day. The second day, you are in the same place and you are doing the same thing with the same people in the same way – and you are content. This is a comfort zone – you know the environment you’re in, the people you’re with. Leaving your comfort zone means facing new challenges and looking for new things in new places with new people.

*How would you advise students to approach their future careers?*

Make decisions that make you happy. There are a lot of jobs, there are a lot of people and there are a lot of things you can do. You just have one life; you have to enjoy it.

A professional headshot of a man with short, dark, wavy hair and a well-groomed beard. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. He is wearing a dark navy blue suit jacket over a light blue and white vertically striped dress shirt. The background is a solid, neutral grey.

# LUKAS FISCHER

— Strategic Account Manager for Retail, Footwear & Apparel, PTC —  
Bachelor of Business Administration, 2012  
MBA in International Marketing, 2015

**Is from:**

Germany & U.S.A.

**Lives in:**

Germany

**Speaks:**

German, English,  
Spanish

**Has lived in:**

Germany, U.S.A.,  
Peru, Switzerland

**Has also studied:**

Engineer of  
Economics at the  
Karlsruhe Institute  
of Technology

**Likes:**

Football, online  
marketing,  
e-commerce, group  
psychology, traveling

*Lukas Fischer keeps himself busy. After his second degree at EUI, he worked at Machinas, where he was involved in the Hugo Boss and Jack Wolfskin accounts. Now at PTC, he is steadily adding to his international profile.*

*Was there any EUI course that has had a particular impact on your career?*

Writing & Oral Communication Skills. It's unbelievable to see how one email or call can change your relationship with a client or co-worker. I still use the exercises from class in my head.

*What are the challenges in your field?*

Continually adapting to a very fast-changing industry.

*What makes technology important to the fashion industry?*

Originally, fashion brands were scared to enter e-commerce for fear it would draw sales away from their existing stores. However, many brands have successfully set up their online stores and are connecting these with their physical stores through social media.

*How has technology changed these industries?*

A decade ago, a Spanish customer had to go to a major city to buy a Hugo Boss suit. Today, customers expect to find a suit online, compare prices, read recommendations and get it delivered for free in just a few days.

*What technological changes are you most excited to see?*

I am curious to see how the 3D-printing industry will enter fashion. When will I be able to download a blueprint of a suit and print it out with the material I desire an hour before I graduate?!

*What advice would you give to companies wanting to improve their online image?*

Communication. Having a skilled team that understands a company's image and knows how to communicate it on different platforms makes a big difference.

*Any additional words of wisdom?*

Network. Walk up to a classmate you don't know, grab a coffee with them and give them the chance to surprise you.



# **FIONA GOMES**

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Web Operations Manager, Bank of Scotland

MBA with a double major in Leadership and Global Banking & Finance, 2012

## EU Alumni Association: Chapter Leader for Germany

**Is from:**

Austria

**Lives in:**

Germany

**Speaks:**

German, English,  
basic Spanish,  
basic French

**Has lived in:**

Spain

**Likes:**

Traveling, cooking

*Fiona Gomes has been working for the Bank of Scotland since 2012. Now web operations manager, she started out working in the company's communications department and believes: "A successful communicator empathizes with others and tries to see things from a different perspective."*

*What did you love about working in communications?*

I loved the fact that there was no typical day. Working in communications, you get an overall view of the business, and work with many different people. You can be the voice of your company.

*What makes communications within banking and finance unique?*

The industry is highly sensitive to economic and regulatory changes and as part of the service sector, it is also driven by intangibles like corporate reputation.

*Can you describe the Bank of Scotland brand in just a few words?*

Bank of Scotland in Germany is a relatively young online bank. It's a reliable partner for customers, based on simple and transparent products with attractive conditions.

*What are the current "hot topics" in banking and finance?*

Some revolve around technology trends and how to incorporate mobile banking as a regular delivery channel or developing a strategy around social media. Others relate to a new economic context; how to ensure future growth and sustainable profitability at a time of low interest rates, for example. A recent topic has been the question of technology architecture and the management of data.

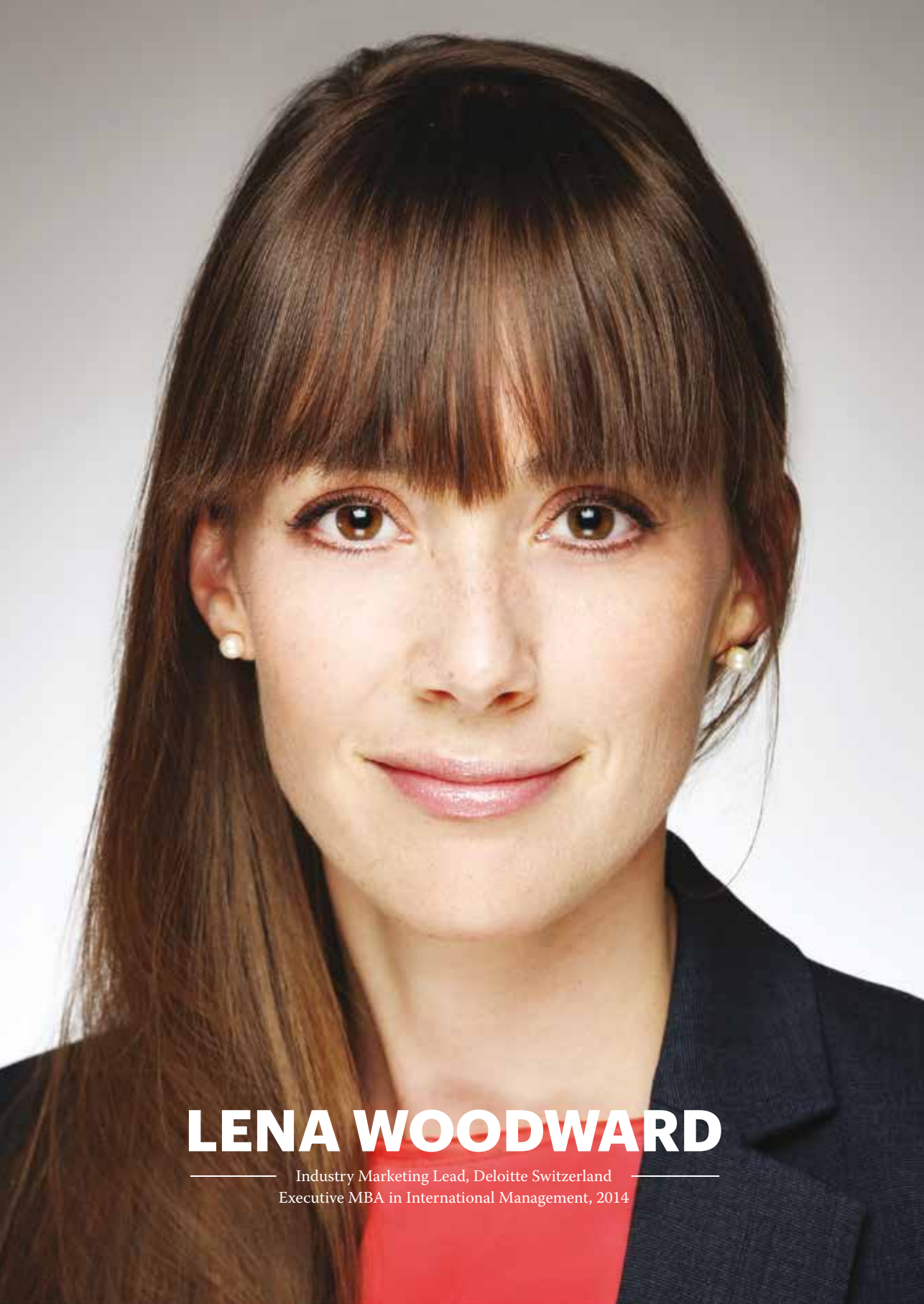
*What are three keys to developing a successful communication strategy?*

1. Know your audience;
2. Align your strategy with organizational objectives;
3. Deliver what you promise.

*What's the best piece of career advice you've ever received?*

Know what you are worth.





# LENA WOODWARD

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Industry Marketing Lead, Deloitte Switzerland  
Executive MBA in International Management, 2014

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**Is from:**

U.K. & Germany

**Lives in:**

Switzerland

**Speaks:**

English, German,

French, Spanish

**Has lived in:**

Germany

**Likes:**

Horseback riding,

playing the piano,

traveling

*Lena Woodward came to the EU Executive MBA program with extensive experience in both the private and non-profit sectors. Despite different business strategies, the sectors have similar core needs. As Woodward comments, "Both rely on collaborating... an NGO is just as much in need of an extensive network as a private company."*

*What has been your proudest career accomplishment so far?*

One of my proudest moments was helping one of Facebook's executive members get an access badge to the popular WEF Annual Meeting in Davos; very rewarding.

*What is the difference between managing relationships with clients and employees?*

The goal of the dialogue is usually the same for both: you need something from the other party. However, you are more targeted in your communication with clients.

*What are the advantages of being an EU alumna?*

As an active alumna, you are part of a global network one would not normally be part of. You can exchange valuable information, consult each other and find more networks in new places.

*Are you still in touch with anyone from EU?*

I am still in touch with many of my classmates and lecturers. We've established a great working culture and will remain in touch for (I hope!) many years to come.

*Give us three tips for successfully managing business relations.*

Networking and social skills: establish good contacts that lead to new contacts and opportunities. Being opportunistic: see beyond the daily business – the result can be positively surprising. A positive attitude: convey confidence and competence. Your work attitude is felt by everyone you do business with.

*What's your motto?*

Your attitude, not your aptitude, will determine your altitude.



# Evolution

noun [e-vē-ēlü-shæn, ē-və-]

a process of continuous change from a lower, simpler, or worse state to a higher, more complex, or better one

*Actress Nia Peeples said:*

*“Life is a moving, breathing thing. We have to be willing to constantly evolve. Perfection is constant transformation.”*



# IMRO RITFELD

---

Senior EDI Analyst, Amazon EU SarL  
Bachelor of Business Administration, 1994  
MBA in International Business, 1995

## EU Alumni Association: Chapter Leader for Luxembourg

### **Is from:**

Netherlands

### **Lives in:**

Luxembourg

### **Speaks:**

Dutch, English,

German, basic

French, basic Span-

ish, basic Italian

### **Has lived in:**

Belgium

### **Has won:**

Amgen Global Bravo

Award, Sterling Com-

merce Global Award

of Distinction, Ster-

ling Commerce Key

Contributor Award,

Sterling Commerce

Global Award

### **Likes:**

Golf, tennis, bas-

ketball, traveling,

movies

*Imro Ritfeld has a passion for learning, an appreciation for diversity and an ever-growing desire to meet interesting people. It seems quite fitting that he would find himself at a company where all those things collide: Amazon.*

*What does an EDI analyst do?*

Most of my work revolves around the automation of advanced business processes between retailers, third-party logistics and the Amazon finance, sales and warehouse departments in Europe, India, China and Australia.

*What are some of the most significant advances in e-commerce you have seen over the last five years?*

Speed: the speed of data transfers is still increasing each day. Also, the applications that make use of the valuable data (applications able to filter data on a per-person basis) are getting better at handling these huge quantities of information.

Every company needs to be able to be proactive and react to changes, developments and/or innovations.

*What has been the greatest technological innovation in the last decade?*

Additive manufacturing (3D printing); I think this technology will reshape the current methods of producing complex products.

*What advice would you offer to people who are resistant to new technologies?*

Innovation and new technologies are moving at warp speed, my only advice to them is try to understand what is happening instead of wondering what just happened.

*What is your definition of success?*

"To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded." Ralph Waldo Emerson.





# THOMAS RUSCHKE

— EMEA Facebook Marketing Partner Vertical Lead, —

Facebook Ireland Limited

Bachelor of Business Administration, 2012

**Is from:**

Germany

**Lives in:**

Ireland

**Speaks:**

English, German

**Has lived in:**

Germany, U.S.A.,

Brazil

**Was:**

2011-2012 EU

Munich Class

President

**Likes:**

Long-distance  
running, mountain-  
eering, skiing, sailing,  
traveling

*Thomas Ruschke's career has taken him from Mercedes and Microsoft to BMW and Facebook, combining his passions for social media and sustainability along the way.*

*The online world is expanding. How important is online reputation?*

In my opinion, we are in the midst of a reputation shift, both in business and on a personal level. Today our knee-jerk reaction to discovering a business is to google it – so much so that the word “google” has become a verb. We do the same on Facebook when we meet someone.

*Is offline marketing still relevant?*

Offline marketing will never be fully replaced; just as the real world will never be replaced by a virtual one. If you are trying to reach a demographically-broad audience for example, offline may be your best bet.

*What are you betting on in the future?*

My chosen career path reflects my vision of the future. Just as radio disrupted print and television disrupted radio, the Internet is disrupting traditional media. Internet users spend an average of one out of every four minutes on Facebook.

*How did your career path lead you to Facebook?*

My passion for all things Internet developed from a young age, learning MS-DOS, then later getting started with Windows 3.11 (remember that!). After graduating from EU, I helped both Microsoft and Daimler AG develop their global social media strategies and then spent two years preparing the global brand strategy and launching BMW i. Facebook later approached me as a result of my LinkedIn profile, and the rest is history.

*Where would you like to see your career go?*

I want to have a positive global impact. Not only in terms of general business metrics, but also with less tangible things like reducing dependency on oil or making the world a more open and connected place.

*What's been your proudest professional achievement thus far?*

There were several, one of them being successfully launching the BMW i brand, effectively validating the viability of electric vehicles for traditional automakers. But I have a feeling that my proudest moment still lies ahead.



# A Touch of Technology in the Working World

Sjaak Koole made history in 2002 when he and his then company, Prolin, helped launch the European cell phone revolution and make Blackberry phones popular. He sees technology as a useful tool that can greatly enhance day-to-day life.



*"I always have my (secure) smartphone with me; everywhere. People say 'isn't that too much?' I say 'no, it's not,' because I use it to the max, so I can combine my private and professional life very well. If the weather is nice, I can sit on the beach and I'm still in touch with my businesses. So you don't have to be in the office or in a certain place anymore. That's what mobile applications offer if managed well: quality of life!"*

Sjaak Koole  
Chief Operating Officer, PAYGM  
MBA in International Business, 1997

*“As a private banker, I am exposed to the changes in modern mobile technology in my everyday life, which can be both a blessing and a curse. It’s hard to keep your business and private life separate when you are able to check your emails all the time! But it does mean I am way more efficient, I have access to an almost unlimited amount of data within seconds. I’ve been using a smartphone for years now; I wouldn’t want to imagine how my life would be without it!”*

Nicolas Garski  
Private Clients International, Bank CIC  
Bachelor of Arts in Sports Management, 2006  
& MBA in Global Banking & Finance, 2010



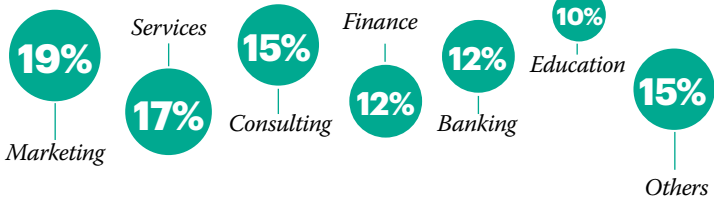
*“In the Southeast Asian construction industry, the skilled labor is inadequate. Construction technology is growing significantly to minimize labor limitation and maximize productivity while maintaining quality. However, technology comes with its own liabilities. It is not an absolute solution that can replace humans in order to improve productivity. A compromise, in which humans and technology can synergize to achieve the most benefit is the key success. Technology is a two-sided coin – use it wisely!”*

Supareak Charlie Chomchan  
Managing Director, Pacific Rim Rich Group Co., Ltd.  
MBA in International Business, 2003 & DBA, 2012

# 27,000 MEMBERS

FORM THE  
EU ALUMNI NETWORK

## SECTOR



## TOP COUNTRIES

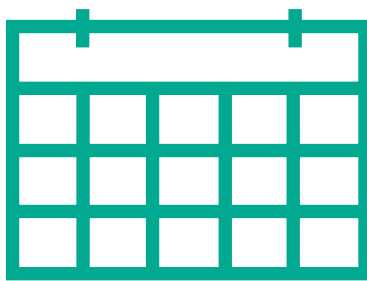
Australia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Vietnam



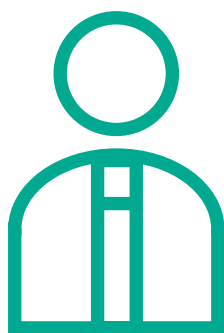
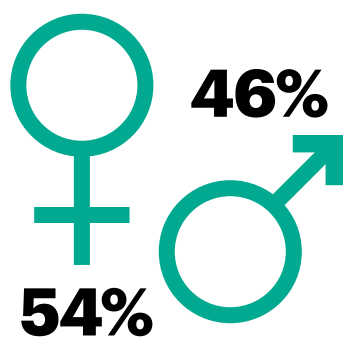
## DEGREE

**BBA** 45%  
**MBA** 32.5%  
**BOTH** 20%  
**DBA** 2.5%

## EVENTS



More than  
**20** events  
take place every  
year in more than  
**15** countries



**20%**  
of our  
alumni  
are  
**CEOs**

**3,300**  
EU alumni  
LinkedIn  
group  
members



**31%** are entrepreneurs



**20%** work in their  
family business

### SOME OF THE COMPANIES WHERE OUR ALUMNI ARE CURRENTLY WORKING



SONY

Deloitte.



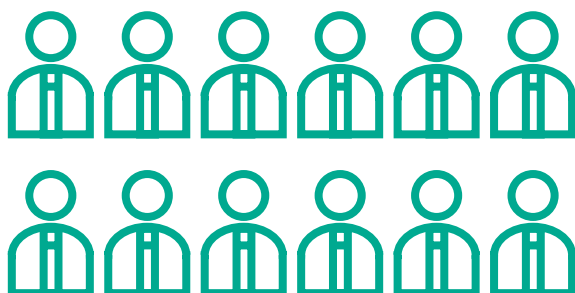
facebook



Kellogg's



CREDIT SUISSE



**89** members of the  
Alumni Association are  
Chapter Leaders

**3.5** is the average  
number of  
languages  
spoken by  
our alumni



**17** LinkedIn  
subgroups



# Accuracy

noun ['a-kyə-rə-sē, 'a-k(ə-)rə-]

the ability to work or perform without making mistakes

*Accuracy is a freedom from error or closeness to truth or fact, resulting from painstaking care or due diligence. Accuracy is usually judged by comparing several measurements from the same or different sources.*



# **DR. RAHAVAN SEETHARAMAN**

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CEO, Doha Bank Group  
Doctorate in Business Administration, 2013

**From:**

India

**Lives in:**

Qatar

**Speaks:**

English, Hindi, Tamil

**Has lived in:**

India, Oman, U.A.E

**Has also studied:**

CA from the Institute of Chartered Accountants, India

B. Com Gold Medalist

at University of

Madras, Certified

in IT Systems and

Corporate Management,

Specialization in Managerial

Economics, Honorary

Degree, Doctor of

Laws, 2012, Washington

College

**Has won:**

CEO of the Year 2011

in the Middle East at

the Europe, Middle

East and Africa

Finance Magazine

EMEA Awards,

Institute of Chartered

Accountants of India

CA Global Achiever

Award, 2012

**Likes:**

Theater, literature,

the arts, collecting

bow ties (he has over

2,000)

Dr. R. Seetharaman is the CEO of the Doha Bank Group, chairman of Doha Brokerage and Financial Services Limited (a Non-Banking Financial Services Company in India) and CEO of Doha Bank Assurance Company.

Dr. Seetharaman is a prominent personality in the banking industry of the Middle East, an economic expert who has achieved remarkable success for his contributions to banking, trade, investment, economics, social responsibility and philanthropy. His research on the effects of the financial crisis on the global economy and the significant measures taken under the theme of 'Global Governance' is highly acclaimed. He is also a chartered accountant and holds certificates in IT systems and corporate management. He is a recipient of multiple doctorates from leading universities.

Prior to joining Doha Bank in 2002, Dr. Seetharaman held executive management positions in three banks in Oman, handling all domains in banking. He started his professional career at Price Waterhouse before moving to the banking sector.

Dr. Seetharaman believes that continuous learning is vital to success in business and in life and as such, shares his experience and wisdom as a guest lecturer at several universities. On account of his passion for and dedication to this subject, he says: "I believe in contributing back to society in the form of knowledge, in order to create a better future.

"It is important that one creates a culture of continued education. Whether you are a professional, an entrepreneur or educator, you must update your knowledge base continuously. If as a society we have that conviction, we can grow further. Every company, every organization must recognize that continuing education is a necessity. When you do this with your co-workers, partners and governments, you create enduring relationships and value for all stakeholders."





# ALEX ESCARTÍN

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Chief Financial Officer EMEA, BCD Travel  
Bachelor in Business Administration, 1993

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**Is from:**

Spain

**Lives in:**

Spain

**Speaks:**

Spanish, Catalan,  
English, French,  
intermediate Italian,  
intermediate Portuguese,  
basic German

**Has also studied:**

MBA at ESADE

**Likes:**

Traveling with  
his family,  
discovering  
new places

*As CFO EMEA for BCD Travel, Alex Escartín is constantly crunching numbers. In his nearly 20 years of experience, he has seen the unpredictable variation of the global economy. He may be a numbers man, but he also appreciates the outdoors, mountain biking, running and playing tennis. He loves a good tune, and admits, "I cannot live without Spotify and my headphones."*

*How has finance changed since you entered the field?*

I entered the labor market when the global economy was booming. Markets were growing and consumption was high. At that time, we managed new operations abroad in low-cost countries and fast-growing economies. When the economic crisis hit, we had to adapt to a totally different way of understanding the business.

*Which market do you think is working best within the crisis?*

That would be Asia. They were the main world suppliers for consumer goods while our economies were still growing. When our consumption was affected by the crisis, their local consumption kept their economies growing.

*How has corporate travel been affected by current economic situations and how has BCD managed?*

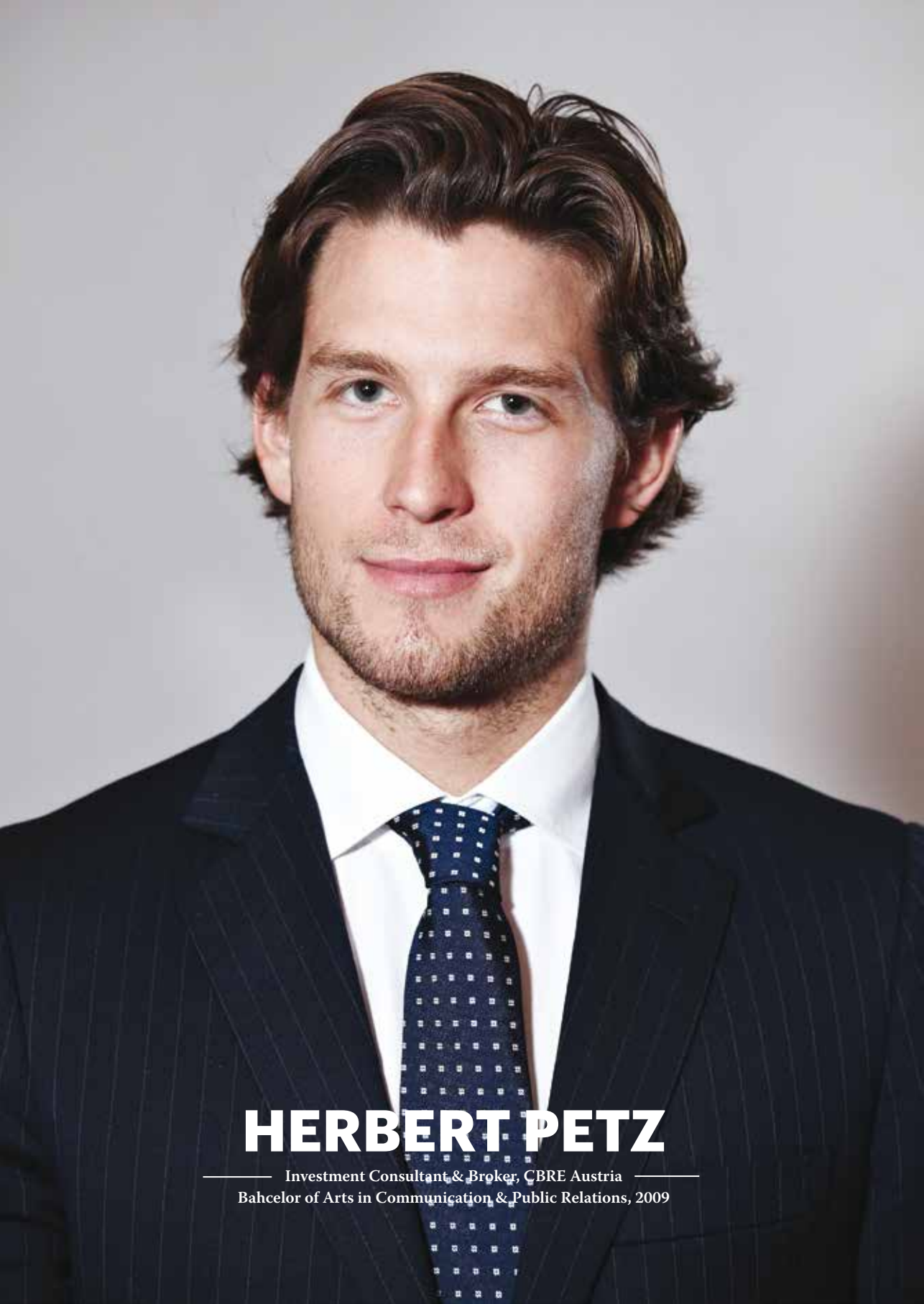
Travel bans, freezes and behavioral changes have all impacted the sector. I don't believe you can prepare for a crisis; your impact level and survival depend on your strategy and flexibility. In this case, BCD Travel decided to continue investing in technology – and that has paid off.

*What one piece of advice would you give students who want to go into the finance sector?*

If you want to reach a high position in finance, you need deep knowledge in all areas. Be patient; you can only get it by starting from the bottom and growing slowly.

*Would you rather be a stock or a bond?*

A stock. This is related to commitment; if you believe in a company, invest long term.



# HERBERT PETZ

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Investment Consultant & Broker, CBRE Austria  
Bachelor of Arts in Communication & Public Relations, 2009

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**Is from:**

Austria

**Lives in:**

Austria

**Speaks:**

German, English,  
French, Spanish

**Has lived in:**

Germany,  
Netherlands,  
Spain, U.S.A.

**Has also studied:**

Immobilienökonom  
(Real Estate Economist Certificate)  
at European  
Business School

**Likes:**

Ice hockey, golf,  
tennis, opera, art

*Herbert Petz is a strong believer in the German economy and is passionate about real estate.*

*Have you always been interested in finance and investing?*

I was always interested in interacting with people, but it wasn't until later that I realized how much real estate actually interested me. I started in valuation while living in Vienna, then moved to development in Chicago, spent a while with the MRG Metzger Real Estate Group and now I work with CBRE in Austria.

*What do you look for when investing in real estate?*

Two things: the financial part, where I look at the numbers and return on investment and yields; and the emotional part, where I look at the building, location and third-party use.

*Where is the best place to buy property at the moment?*

I would invest in cities where the economy is stable, where the city is popular and where the social demographics are bright.

*Which emerging market do you believe offers the most enticing investment opportunities?*

In the real estate sector I believe it is Germany. Due to the fact that the economy is very stable, the market, especially in the Big Seven (Berlin, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Dusseldorf, Cologne and Munich), is prospering and the prices are constantly rising.

*What has been your proudest career accomplishment?*

At MRG, we once sold a €180 million building in Munich, which was a very difficult and complex project.

*What one word would you use to describe yourself?*

Dedicated.

*Do you live by any inspiring words?*

You have to love and acknowledge what you do; only then can you be the best. "If you can dream it, you can achieve it." Zig Ziglar.



# **DANIYAR KUMEBAYEV**

---

Director of Finance, STS Holding, Astana  
Bachelor of Science in Business Finance, 2012

**Is from:**

Kazakhstan

**Lives in:**

Kazakhstan

**Speaks:**

Kazakh, Russian,  
English

**Has lived in:**

Spain, Switzerland

**Likes:**

CrossFit, chess

*Daniyar Kumekbayev studied on both the Geneva and Barcelona campuses. Following graduation, he went on to work as a tax consultant for audit giant KPMG, where he was recently promoted to senior level.*

*What does your job at KPMG involve?*

I act as team leader during client engagements. Our projects include reviewing tax liabilities; developing tax accounting policies and tax registers; and consulting on various taxation issues. As a team leader, I assign the work between the team members, supervise them and communicate with clients on one side and our managers on the other side.

*What is your favorite thing about working in tax law?*

Taxation requires you to have both technical skills and analytical skills. You have to analyze the situation, foresee the consequences and work out how to avoid these consequences or optimize the outcome. Analysis is definitely the most interesting part of the job.

*How do you see tax law developing globally in the future?*

As taxes are the main source of revenue for any government, the global trend is high pressure from the government's side. This situation pushes companies to invest in tax personnel and technologies. The tax consulting industry also sees an annual increase. I believe this trend will remain stable in the mid-term.

*Is there a particular piece of wisdom that you learned at EU that continues to help you today?*

Professor Lupsor told us that clients don't care for your fancy suit or your cool brand name; they want you to make money for them. I believe what he meant was that you should "always bring value to the client". For me, it has become the most important thing in consulting.

*What piece of advice would you give to current EU students?*

Talk to your professors and ask for real life examples, because they are much more valuable than any academic reading.



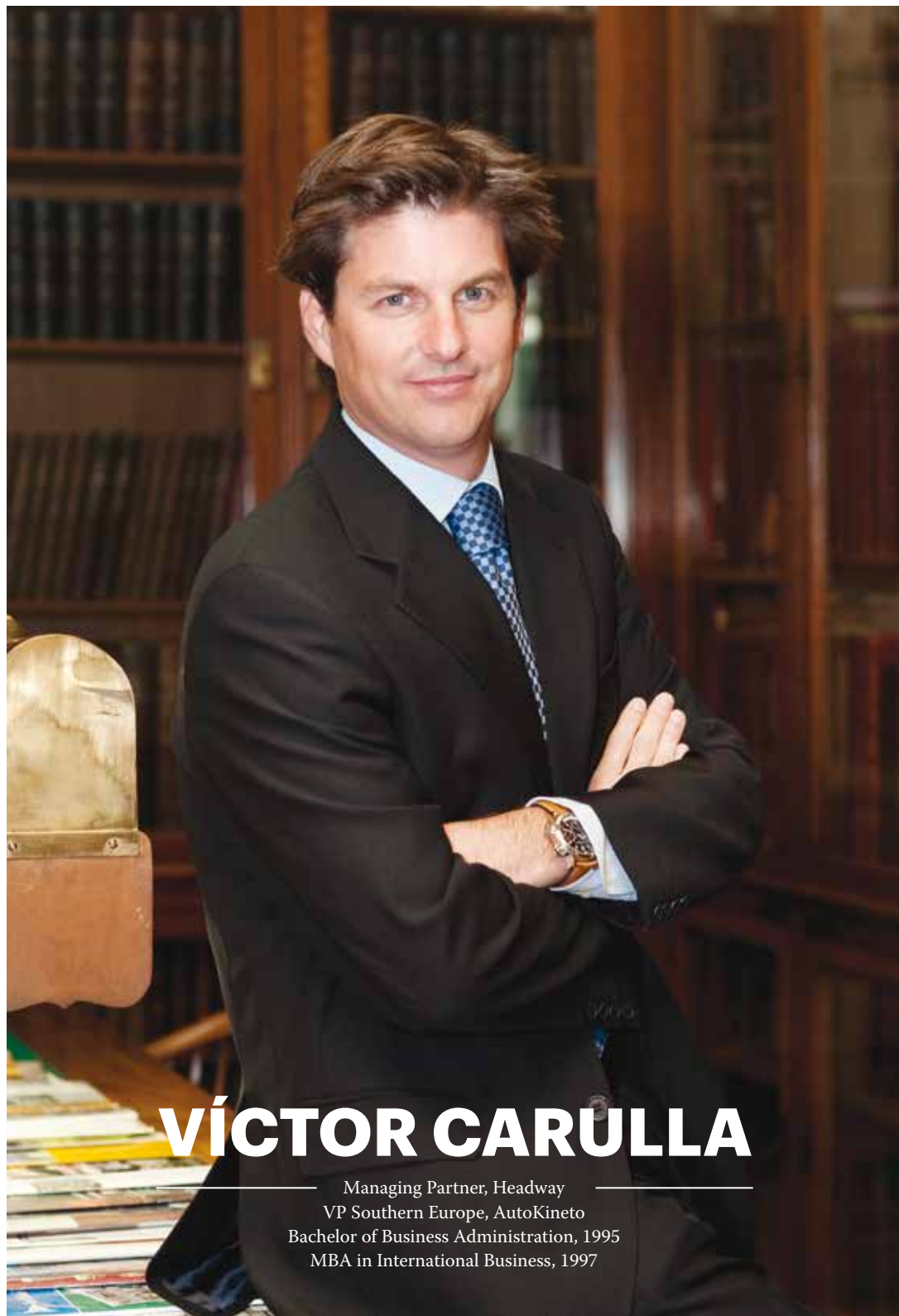
# Rigor

noun ['ri-gər]

the quality or state of being very exact,  
careful or strict

*French aristocrat and  
writer, Marquis de Custine,  
said: “The circumstances  
of human society are too compli-  
cated to be submitted to the rigor  
of mathematical calculation.”*





# VÍCTOR CARULLA

---

Managing Partner, Headway  
VP Southern Europe, AutoKineto  
Bachelor of Business Administration, 1995  
MBA in International Business, 1997

**Is from:**

Spain

**Lives in:**

Spain

**Speaks:**

Spanish, English,  
Catalan

**Has lived in:**

Switzerland, U.S.A.

**Has also studied:**

Advanced Management Program at ESADE

**Has won:**

Hudson Chairman's Award, 2005

**Likes:**

Off-road motorcycling, skiing, music, motor racing

*Víctor Carulla obtained his BBA at EU Barcelona and his MBA at EU Montreux and currently resides in Barcelona, where he is the managing partner at Headway, an executive search firm.*

*What made you choose a career in human resources?*

I actually started in the financial sector, but decided to move into a more commercial role. A multinational firm hired me to help them with the startup of their subsidiary in Barcelona. It was a great success and made me realize how important it is to get in touch with people in different companies, environments, situations, and how you can assess them for success; as a person, and as a firm.

*What is the best part of your job?*

I love getting to know different professionals and being a key player in their career strategy. There's great satisfaction in helping people who are lost in their careers. I assess them and help them find better jobs and recognition.

*How does recruitment at entry and senior levels differ? Does networking play a similar role?*

Networking is always important at all levels. For senior management positions, a network can give you a good entry point and an opportunity that wouldn't happen via a normal recruitment process. For entry level positions, it is key to play your cards right, to try to get to interviews through any channel.

*How can you tell who would make a good manager during an interview?*

There's no formula. However, you do find out how people have treated their stakeholders, how they have led teams, what they have done, what their expectations are and how they've overcome difficult situations, etc.

*Which brand reflects you, and why?*

Headway, of course. It stands for what I believe in: go ahead, move forward, use your head and follow your path. You must be flexible and adaptable, or you'll never survive.



# MARIE DE LAVAL

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Co-Founder & Managing Partner,  
Paxton Executive AB  
Bachelor of Business Administration, 1995

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**Is from:**

Sweden

**Lives in:**

Sweden

**Speaks:**

Swedish,

English, French

**Has lived in:**

U.S.A., U.K.,

Germany, France

**Has also studied:**

Bachelor of

Administration in

Economics & Finance

at Schiller Interna-

tional University,

Florida, U.S.A.,

French studies at

Sorbonne, Paris,

France

**Likes:**

Horseback riding,

golf, sailing,

traveling to France

*Marie de Laval is an HR expert. After completing her BA in Economics at Schiller International University and her BBA at EU, she went on to work as a recruitment specialist for various companies.*

*What made you choose a career in human resources?*

People, business and psychology as a combination have always interested me.

*What is the best part of your job?*

Finding the perfect match, wherein a candidate and the person hiring can develop both the business and themselves together.

*What trends have you seen in recruitment over the last five years?*

In Sweden, almost every business uses recruitment companies when they need to expand. Also, there has been more cooperation on an international scale, especially within the IT-management sector.

*What are the top three general qualities that recruiters are looking for in a candidate?*

Drive, structure, flexibility.

*Are there any general skills that people should work to improve?*

The way you introduce yourself!

And everyone should do more research about the company they're interested in.

*How should students balance a personal life on social media with their career goals?*

Make sure you don't expose aspects of your personal life that you don't think are appropriate within a working sphere in public. Researchers can google you.

*What are the biggest mistakes job-seekers make?*

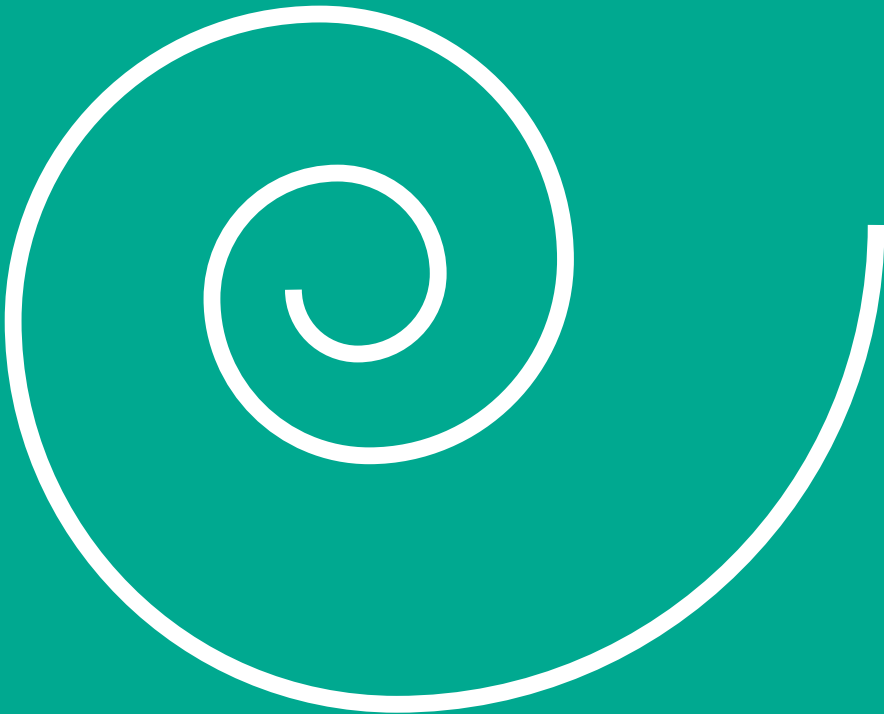
Talking mostly about their needs and wants, and not focusing on what they can bring to a company.

*What are recruiters looking to hear when they ask you about your future plans?*

They want to see if the interviewee has plans and how far they are looking ahead. It says something about what they dare to share and how high their tail is wagging!

*What is the right answer to: "Tell me about your weaknesses?"*

I really hope that question doesn't exist anymore! Maybe it can be rephrased as: "What do you try to develop on a personal level?"



# Spirit

noun ['spir-ət]

the force within a person that is believed to give the body life, energy and power

*Spirit comes from the Latin spiritus, meaning “breath”, but also “spirit, soul, courage, vigor”. As philosopher Bernard Williams said: “Man never made any material as resilient as the human spirit.”*



# **SIDDHARTHA TEWARI**

---

Sports Consultant, Aspire Management  
MBA in Sports Management, 2013

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**Is from:**

India

**Lives in:**

Spain, India

**Speaks:**

English, Hindi

**Has also studied:**

BS in Engineering

at JSSATE in New

Delhi, India

**Likes:**

Sports, including

cricket, tennis,

football

The main objective of any professional sports team is straightforward: climb to the top and outperform all opponents. This transparency and simplicity also best describes the business style of Siddhartha Tewari; a philosophy he developed while studying at EU in Barcelona.

“It is always better to be straightforward than to beat around the bush,” he says. “It might sound harsh, but it is the most helpful way. I recall moments of correction and criticism regarding presentations I gave in English which have helped me tremendously.”

Sports have always played an influential role in Tewari’s life. A sports enthusiast since childhood, he became his university’s cricket team captain in New Delhi, and also vice captain and captain of the school’s tennis team; even earning the title of state runner-up in the sport. He continued with sports while studying at EU, and formed part of Barcelona’s international cricket club. It seemed only fitting that he pursue a career that combined his passion for athletics and his business expertise. However, his path has not always been that clear.

Tewari initially studied engineering at JSSATE Academy. He cites Sir Alex Ferguson, former manager of Manchester United Football Club, as a source of inspiration and motivation for switching to a sports management career. “Ferguson took Manchester United from just a club to a revolution,” he says.

Today, Tewari works as a sports consultant with Aspire Management India. Established in 1996, Aspire Management is a global sports agency and consultancy business and offers services in football and rugby.

Tewari advises future graduates: “Keep calm, network in your field and the rest will fall into place sooner rather than later.” Quite simple really; just like his business style.



# Women Who Went for Gold at the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics

Ekaterina Artsybyшева has been skiing since the age of three. She added to her competitive experience as a professional downhill skier with a sports management MBA from EU and a role on the Organizing Committee at the Sochi Olympic Games.



*“I have gained incredible experience in the organization of world-class events. If you’ve never been part of something like this, it’s impossible to imagine the level of precision required in organizing such an operation and how difficult it is. You have to be very sure of what you are doing and you have to constantly coordinate your actions with the rest of the team. While working here, I’ve become even more organized, disciplined and precise. I’ve learned that the key to success is to make sure you know your area and discipline inside out, and to collaborate closely with others.”*

Ekaterina Artsybyшева  
Senior Manager, Organizing Committee Sochi 2014  
MBA in Sports Management, 2014

*"I arrived in Sochi in mid-July, and in August I joined the pre-opening management team at Radisson Blu Paradise Resort & Spa, Sochi. When we began, there were 10 of us. Although my main task was achieving sales and establishing the right brand perception and image for the hotel, I also assisted in lots of other areas and worked with lots of different people. It was challenging; we were the fourth Radisson Hotel to open in Sochi and we had to open at the same time as Swissôtel, Hyatt, Pullman and Mercure hotels. But guess what? We did it!"*

Emiliya Polat  
PR & Marketing Manager, Radisson Blu Paradise  
Resort & Spa, Sochi 2014  
MBA in International Marketing, 2013



*"All the skills I gained at EU helped me during the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, where I worked with volunteers. Subjects like Human Resources Management helped me understand how I should behave with them and Oral Communication Skills helped me prepare attractive and qualitative presentations and to feel confident when I presented them."*

Aleksandra Dorofeeva  
Supervisor, Winter Olympic Games, Sochi 2014  
Bachelor of Arts in Sports Management, 2015



# Drive

noun, ['drīv]

an inner urge that stimulates activity or inhibition; a basic or instinctive need

*In psychology, drive theory is based on the principle that organisms are born with certain psychological needs and that a negative state of tension is created when these needs are not satisfied.*



# **ARINDAM CHAKRABORTY**

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Key Account Manager, Mining, Michelin Australia  
MBA in International Business, 2006

---

**Is from:**

Australia

**Lives in:**

Australia

**Speaks:**

English, Hindi,  
Bengali, Assamese

**Has lived in:**

Singapore, India

**Has also studied:**

BS in Mechanical  
Engineering

**Has won:**

MICHELIN Australia  
Pacesetter &  
MICHELIN Australia  
(Earthmover)  
Pacesetter  
2011-2012

**Likes:**

Extreme engineering,  
music, fine arts,  
playing the guitar

*Key account manager in the mining division of Michelin Australia, Arindam Chakraborty has a passion for tires, but more importantly, for the Michelin brand. He has been with the company in Brisbane since 2010.*

*What does your job entail?*

I have regular meetings with strategic category managers, global group suppliers and corporate tire managers of various mining conglomerates. I also finalize and negotiate the supply phasing and volume in mining contracts nationwide. I do a few site visits on a local level and also interact with mining and maintenance managers to understand tire demand and usage.

*How does the tire industry continue to innovate?*

The tire industry, especially in mining, is very performance-competitive. A common mining tire in Australia can cost between \$35,000 and \$45,000. A typical mine, with average terrain and geography, can be very harsh on tires. The 40.00R57 size, for example, can only run on average for 8,000 hours (or 120km) in Australia. To improve these statistics and to ensure they perform better in harsh conditions, mining tires are continually being designed and tested. Michelin invests a lot in R&D.

*What are some common misconceptions people have about the tire industry?*

That tires are just black and round things.

*What is something every car owner should know when buying tires?*

If you happen to buy two new tires for your car, mount both of them in the rear axle. This reduces the risk of hydroplaning when it rains or when the road is wet.

*If you were to be any car, which car would you be and why (and what tires would you put on it)?*

Perhaps a Maserati Quattroporte with Michelin Pilot Sport 3s mounted!

*Words of wisdom for recent graduates?*

"Map out your future, but do it in pencil." Jon Bon Jovi.





# ALINE ANASTASSIOU

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Business Excellence Manager, Porsche Middle East & Africa  
Doctorate in Business Administration, 2014

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**Is from:**

Syria

**Lives in:**

U.A.E.

**Speaks:**

English, French,  
Arabic

**Has also studied:**

Bachelor of Business & Commercial Science at Damascus University, Syria,  
MBA in

Marketing at American University of Science Technology in Beirut, Lebanon

**Is also:**

First Lady Graduate from Audi Academy, a certified Sales Manager at Land Rover

**Likes:**

Horseback riding, swimming, cycling, reading

*Aline Anastassiou has gone from playing with her brother's toy cars to working for Porsche, with stops at BMW and Land Rover en route. The EU DBA alumna now has 10 years' automotive experience with global brands: four years at BMW and Land Rover as marketing manager, as well as four years at Audi as brand manager and later general manager, running the dealership with 75 employees.*

*How did your career in the automotive industry begin?*

I grew up in Syria, where I gained local experience, starting in telecommunications at Syriatel and later moving to BMW and Audi. I relocated to Dubai with Audi, and now work for Porsche Middle East & Africa (PMEA) as business excellence manager.

*What does business excellence entail?*

My current role involves creating the most professional sales organization in the region, through efficient tools, structures and processes that add value to the Porsche MEA importers and dealer network, as well as the PMEA departments.

*What attracted you to the automotive industry?*

It's very creative. Look at the cars we have today, with all this new technology, and compare them not just to classic vehicles, but also to cars built just five years ago – you can really see the difference.

*Is it still a male-dominated field?*

It is; and it was not easy to get into it, especially when I was working in Syria and wanted to be part of after-sales, where the real life experience in the automotive industry is.

*What would your dream car be and why?*

My dream car is the 911 Targa 4 in blue. It reflects my personality and combines performance, speed and high technology.

*What makes you happy?*

To live in peace and good health, and enjoy each moment in life.





# **ROGER SOLERGIBERT MORA**

---

Automotive Division Director (Spain & Portugal), Honda Motors, Europe  
MBA in International Business, 1994

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**Is from:**

Spain

**Lives in:**

Spain, Brazil

**Speaks:**

English, Spanish,  
Catalan, Portuguese

**Has lived in:**

U.S.A., U.A.E

**Has also studied:**

Bachelor of  
Business  
Administration at  
Universitat de  
Barcelona

**Likes:**

Astronomy, driving,  
running

Roger Solergibert Mora has a lot of experience in the automotive industry. He first worked at an automotive supplier then transferred to Pegaso trucks for a while until he began his career with Honda in 1992.

“I’ve always loved the car industry. It’s my passion,” says Solergibert. “Honda is a worldwide leader... the distinct difference lies in the respect that each worker is shown by the company. We are all associates.”

As the automotive division director for the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal), Solergibert oversees a team of four directors and eight assistants. On what it takes to be a respected manager, he advises: “lead, but be a team player, be entrepreneurial and recognize others constantly.” It is a challenge, but that is exactly what motivates Solergibert.

Solergibert anticipates changes to the industry, especially in the user-car interaction arena; he sees lots of development in the dialogue drivers maintain with their cars. He believes innovation is another of Honda’s greatest assets.

“Our HR department works constantly with associates in order to promote continuous change and development within the company. Honda is a leader in innovation, thanks to us, the associates. We strive to improve the business in all aspects: product, work environment, facilities, programs, systems, etc.”

Solergibert likes to draw a parallel between driving and business: “When you drive a car, you agree to some risks. You also have to respect the engine and other parts of the car in order to make the journey satisfactory and avoid failures and accidents. Business is quite similar in that respect.”

And it goes without saying, if Solergibert could be any car in the world, he would “beyond all doubt” be a Honda.



# Perseverance

noun [ˌpər-sə-ˈvɪr-ən(t)s]

continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure or opposition

*“I do not think that there is any other quality so essential to success of any kind as the quality of perseverance. It overcomes almost everything, even nature.”*  
*John D. Rockefeller*



# DR. KOEN WILMS

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Vice-President, 3M Asia Pacific

Bachelor of Business Administration, 1985

Doctorate in Business Administration, 1999

**Is from:**

Belgium

**Lives in:**

Hong Kong

**Speaks:**

Dutch, French, English, basic German, basic Spanish

**Has lived in:**

Netherlands, Germany, U.K., U.S.A.

**Has also studied:**

Master of International Management at Thunderbird School of Global Management

**Likes:**

Tennis, swimming, the stock market, charity support

Dr. Koen Wilms works for one of the most innovative companies in the world. Responsible for essentials like Post-it™, Scotch Tape, Scotch Guard and Thinsulate, 3M might be known for its miraculous products, however, Wilms believes it's actually the people who work for the company who make the miracles happen.

Formerly the managing director of 3M France, and now the vice-president of 3M Asia Pacific, Dr. Wilms can look back at a varied career within one company. "What I appreciate so much in 3M is the many diverse opportunities it has given me. It is a huge conglomerate, with 65,000 different products, a large international presence and numerous possibilities to move on; both upwards and sideways. That way, you grow as an individual, you learn, you work in different cultures and get to see so many places."

The 3M company philosophy is one of a kind. Arguably its most famous product, the simple yet effective 3M post-it™ note, is, according to Dr. Wilms: "a great example of the company philosophy." Hailed as "a minor masterpiece of innovation", this everyday office supply was in fact discovered by accident. The nearly 8,000-strong research team can devote roughly 15% of their time to out-of-the-box innovation. The message is: "Think out of the box and see what you can come up with! That atmosphere pervades the whole company and suits me thoroughly."

The human values that are important at 3M clearly align with Dr. Wilms' own values and priorities in life. The philosophy of one of the first 3M presidents, William McKnight, explains the idea in a nutshell, he believed: "Mistakes will be made by people, but management dictating what people should do is much more detrimental than letting people innovate and experiment. Give them freedom, let them learn, there will be mistakes and dead ends... but there will be fewer mistakes than when you run your company in an authoritarian manner and tell your people what to do."



# YOULIANA LYOUBENOVA

— Program Manager, Transition and Transformation, ABS, Enterprise Services —  
DXC Technology (a Hewlett Packard venture)  
MBA in International Management, 1999

**Is from:**

Bulgaria

**Lives in:**

Spain

**Speaks:**

English, Spanish,

Bulgarian

**Has lived in:**

Belgium, Italy

**Has also studied:**

BSc in Accounting

and Controls at

Economic University,

Varna, Bulgaria

**Has won:**

Hewlett-Packard

Most Valuable Player

Award, 2006

**Likes:**

Traveling,

painting, reading

Born in Bulgaria, Youliana Lyoubenova graduated with an MBA from EU in 1999. She started at the Hewlett Packard (HP) Brussels office that same year and has been with the innovative company ever since. She has grown from a process engineer to a program manager and has worked with many talented people from all five continents. Lyoubenova reflects on how working for a multinational company offers endless possibilities.

"I graduated from the EU Barcelona campus in 1999, during the dot-com boom. That same year, I went to a three-day job fair in Brussels. It was really impressive – we had 20-30 interviews with many companies, and I got four job offers. One from Fiat in Italy, one from a company called Eurolinks and one from Mango in Spain. HP offered me a position working in their European Coordination Center in Brussels.

"I think I chose HP in part thanks to EU. During the MBA program, we studied many business cases, and one of them was about HP culture, the weight they placed on customer importance, their values and then, of course, the technology aspect. It turned out to be absolutely the right decision and I have been there for 15 years.

"People nowadays tend to swap a lot from one company to another. But that's one of the benefits of working for such a large multinational: your job is constantly evolving. So much so that I have switched positions every couple of years, usually to something related to my old job, but new at the same time. There's this constant learning experience that keeps you motivated and interested in staying with the company. Especially one that offers interesting assignments, an international environment, great flexibility and an objectives-based working culture; something you don't get in many other companies."





# **DR. SANDER HERDEN**

—— Founder & CEO, Herden Holdings | Chairman of DCM Asia in Malaysia ——  
Senior Operating Partner Asia, The Riverside Company  
MBA in International Business, 1992

**Is from:**

Germany

**Lives in:**

Singapore

**Speaks:**

German, English,  
basic Korean,  
basic Chinese

**Has lived:**

Greece, Pakistan,  
South Korea, China

**Has also studied:**

PhD in Business  
Strategy at Kennedy  
Western University,  
California, and  
Singapore National  
University, Singapore

**Likes:**

Scuba diving, sailing,  
jogging

EU alumnus Dr. Sander Herden has developed a very successful, international career. He worked his way up from corporate development manager to global head of strategy at Siemens AG. In between, Herden has been a project manager, director of corporate development and CFO of Building Automation Global Service. He credits his success to his focus on the customer, his ability to work within teams and leading by example.

Dr. Herden loves working with people from all over the world and believes his time at EU in particular helped shape this appreciation for diversity. Openness and understanding of international teams, he notes, are key aspects of his management style.

Most recently, Dr. Herden has founded Herden Holdings, that provides expertise to private equity companies with investments in Asia and Pacific. The company helps investors manage risk and ensure their business plans maximize value.

His career has seen Dr. Herden take on positions around the globe: in Greece, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, China, Germany, Switzerland and currently Singapore. With such constant travel, it is difficult to imagine any sort of work and personal life balance. He has admitted that he could balance things better than he does, but his strong focus and motivation at work come from having fun.

His management paradigm comes from personal experience with both bad and good managers. He says, “I learned from the bad what not to do and the good I try to emulate.”

He says that the traits he appreciates most about his team members are open-mindedness, a strong work ethic and providing support.

Dr. Herden advises recent and future EU graduates: “Do what you love and you will be successful.”



# MICHEL MISEREZ

— Area Vice-President, U.K. & Ireland, Marriott International —

Bachelor of Business Administration, 1986

MBA in International Business, 1987

**Is from:**

Belgium

**Lives in:**

U.K.

**Speaks:**

Dutch, French,  
English, German,  
Spanish

**Has lived in:**

France, Spain,  
Netherlands,  
Hungary, Hong Kong

**Has also studied:**

Executive  
Development in  
Hotel Real Estate at  
Cornell University

**Likes:**

Golf, sailing, biking,  
involvement with EU

Michel Miserez always knew he wanted to go into the hospitality business. “My gut was telling me... the hospitality business is multicultural. I can travel, work with people from different backgrounds, learn other languages and see the world.”

In his current position as area vice-president with Marriott, he has overall responsibility for the operations of managed and franchised hotels in the U.K. and Ireland.

Miserez started working in the hospitality industry in 1990 after completing his MBA at EU. The university helped him attain traineeships in Paris with the Ramada Renaissance Group (today part of the Marriott Group), at their West Europe regional sales and marketing office. His first “real job” with Marriott was at the Paris Marriott Prince de Galles, on Avenue George V in Paris.

“As night manager, I had to know about everything: checking people in, playing concierge, carrying luggage, assisting security... but that is the best school. In my two and a half years there, I learned from the bottom up.”

Since he started, Miserez has held different positions in 10 different locations. He has been vice-president of finance for Europe; area finance director for the Japan, South Korea and Southeast Asia regions; opening director of finance for the Mallorca Marriott Resort and the Vacation Club; as well as opening director of finance for the Paris Marriott Hotel.

As to what has kept him with the company all these years, Miserez says: “At Marriott, people come first, like family. That has always been the case, for more than 85 years, since John Willard Marriott opened a root beer stand in Washington DC in 1927, which grew and became the foundation of what is now one of the largest hospitality management groups in the world.”

*EU would like to thank all the alumni  
who collaborated on this project;  
thank you for sharing your stories with  
us and being part of our extensive,  
global alumni network.*

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