

# Welcome to 11th Edition of the MBA Newsletter

## China Study Tour July 2010

Nĩ hão!

July 2010 was our turn to participate in the renowned MBA China trip; reported in previous MBA newsletters as 'excellent', I can only confirm that it was a truly amazing experience.

During the 'Contemporary Issues in the International Environment' unit, we had learnt a great deal about China and as such the trip to Beijing connected very well with this. Our fully comprehensive program was a good mix of business, academic, cultural and leisure activities. Furthermore it was a great opportunity to get to know fellow students, which is a very important part of doing an MBA course.



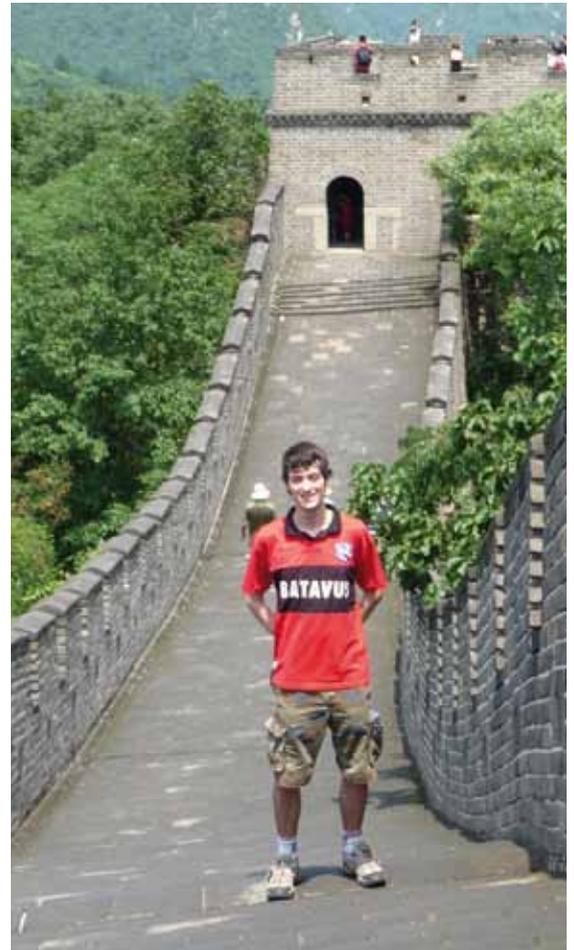
The sheer size of operations at the Beijing Hyundai Motor Company, with an output of about one car every 50 seconds! gives a good indication of the scale of business in China. A visit to laptop maker Lenovo, former IBM PC group, showed that the Chinese economy has more to offer than only 'cheap' mass production; their development capabilities and marketing strategy are absolutely world class.

Next, an excellent lecture by Ms Rosaline Zheng on doing business in China and the pleasure of a visit to the Beijing Normal University campus. The cultural differences were both remarkable and intriguing.

The company visits and lectures were completed by a whistle-stop tour including famous sites like Tian'an Men Square, the Forbidden City, the Great Wall and the National Olympic Stadium - better known as the Bird's Nest.

Enjoying the local food and traditions; Beijing night life and shopping opportunities – the thrill of paying too much for a Chairman Mao watch and haggling for a pair of 'genuine' Converse shoes with Nike insoles – completed our stay.

China is an amazing country; the size of economic activities is tremendous and scary in a way. The constant haze of air pollution in Beijing forces you to think about what will happen in the future, knowing that there are at least a dozen similar cities in China, which are only just starting to flourish. It will be curious to see how this will affect the world in the future.



# MBA Alumni Spotlight



In the position of Business Unit Manager within his organisation, with responsibilities for a team of 80 and turnover of over \$300 million, Mike Halley had a strong desire to progress to a General Management role, and, at the age of 35, returned to study after a 16-year gap and with no higher education qualifications. "It was clear that a postgraduate degree was an important tick in the box but also the breadth of an MBA was critical for this type of position." Amongst the benefits gained from the programme, Mike cites the growth in confidence of his own awareness of the first principles of core

business subjects such as strategy, innovation and HR. But it was also the people with whom he studied and who have now become really great friends. "The social side of our time on the MBA was special, we bonded as a group and still socialise now including golf, night outs and 'team MBA events'.

Mike has developed his business approach, becoming far more structured with the "...use of research and underpinning all decisions with first principles and the lessons learnt from Porter, Clayton Christenson, Malcolm Gladwell and many more."

When asked about his highlights from the course, Mike said; "To be honest there are so many... Beijing was obviously a milestone but MMU added so many elements to the MBA which... is truly world class. Patricia Rees really gets the balance between academia, the business world and the gap that needs to be filled... The experience has been priceless."

Mike states that the MBA was a clear reason that he was recently headhunted and he is now working for TOA Technologies [owned by Intel] in the position of Vice President across Europe and Middle East Africa. "The company felt the timing of the MBA in my career was really key. They acquired all my past experiences and up to the minute knowledge that can be disseminated across the organisation."

When asked if he would recommend the MMU MBA programme, Mike responded emphatically; "Simply, YES! and YES! Feel free to offer me as a reference for the next generation of either younger students or the mature ones like me who doubted their ability to complete the course but who with encouragement from Patricia, just went for it and never looked back. Thanks MMU!"

Mike Halley MBA (Class of 2010) Vice President [Europe] TOA Technologies

**Connected on LinkedIn? - Join the MMUBS MBA Alumni Group now!**

## Residential Weekend in the Peak District

The majority of FT MBA students of MMUBS come from varied cultural and educational backgrounds, so the two and a half days trip in the beautifully calm valley of Castleton was a good opportunity to let the students take time away from the formal and occasionally monotonous educational environment.



The objective was to understand each other and to learn to analyse, plan, execute and achieve the given objectives, individually or as a team.

We had a wonderful time, enjoying living in the quiet scenic hills and doing many activities, which involved challenges like abseiling, making and rowing a raft, stair climbing and map reading. These were activities that almost none of us had ever done before in our whole lives.

With objectives largely achieved, we came back with pleasant memories, which will be useful in tackling educational as well as organisational issues.



**Shamas Cheema**  
FT MBA cohort 8

# Benchmark for Business



MBA's and 350 executives from across

the business world attended an event held in Manchester hosted by Benchmark for Business with Dan Pink and Marcus Buckingham discussing strengths based approaches to leadership and management.

Daniel Pink and Marcus Buckingham are, without doubt two great public speakers full of anecdotes from their own lives, both professionally and personally.

Daniel Pink spoke of motivational techniques we can employ in our organisation in order to create a common purpose amongst workers and management. He emphasised that performance is linked to the level of employee engagement. Research shows that money does not matter as much as feeling 'part of' the organisation.

Marcus Buckingham showed us his technique of 'Power statement' in order to find what we really enjoy about our work; those specific activities in my job that provide me with that vague sense of learning and excitement, which indicate personal motivation and ability to excel.

Both speakers referred to this activity as 'being in the zone'. Marcus spoke of 'achieving mastery' and Daniel encouraged us to find what we enjoy doing, rather than just what we are good at.

Learning to identify our own strengths is often a difficult task. Marcus, who spoke in an exceptionally 'down to earth' and entertaining manner, sought to point out that it was the manager's job to capitalise on our strengths and convinced us that good managers find what is 'unique and capitalize on it'. He encouraged us to become that manager.

Speakers like Dan and Marcus have the ability to take us 'above the clouds' and show us that we have alternatives in our own organisations, which are not just 'in the sky' but also work on the ground. I hope to be able to say in the future that as an MBA student at MMU, I had the opportunity to have my own perspective shifted.

Daniel Toubkin PT MBA cohort 21



## Your Views are Valued

### Have you got any ideas for the MBA programme?

Any interesting stories, internet links, information, contacts or questions you would like to share?

If so, we would be delighted to hear from you.

#### Contact us on [MBA@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:MBA@mmu.ac.uk)

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# Business Games

A fantastic weekend was enjoyed by all in Cranage, consisting of lots of learning coupled with a good dose of fun!

Friday evening sessions focused upon Myers Briggs Type Indicators, elective choices and dissertation, before a lovely evening of networking and getting to know one another over a glass of wine...or two!

Saturday was a jammed packed day of learning. We were lucky enough to enjoy an insightful and thought provoking presentation by Michael Harvey of MJH Consultancy around unlocking growth potential in people and thus in business. It certainly opened our eyes to areas of people and business development that we'd perhaps not considered before.



We participated in a brilliant 'business game' led by the inspirational Gill Homan. In groups, we worked through a number of 'incidents' for our simulated organisations. The game stimulated much debate amongst our project groups and saw us wrangle between the difficult human perspectives of management

and the hard bottom line. It was especially interesting to see the effects our decisions had made to the future direction of our companies and I speak for all involved in the weekend when I say it was an eye-opening experience.

By Sunday the effects of working and playing hard were creeping upon us all, however we enjoyed a great, perceptive and amusing session on influencing people and networking from Gill, who brought the subject matter to life with events from her many years in industry. We were also grateful to have the direction of Stephen Taylor to discuss the subject of dissertation, a matter that is on all of our minds. Stephen was reassuring and clarified what was required for this critical piece of work.

All in all it was a weekend to remember for the learning outcomes, and equally the new friends and networks that were made outside the classroom! A big thank you to all involved in organising such a wonderful time for us.

Claire Croden EMBA cohort 2

## The Search is on for Manchester's Professional Innovater 2011

future pro.manchester 2011 Professional Innovator Challenge, aimed at recognising innovative flair in rising stars has now been launched!

Entrants will take part in a series of thought provoking challenges based on six of the key attributes of an entrepreneur, written by the judging panel of leading business experts and innovative thinkers.

The short listed entrants will then face an interview with the panel before the winner is announced on the 7th April.

future pro.manchester chairman, Miles Rothbury, said: "It's a great chance to network and test your ability against some of the brightest brains of our student community. It'll be interesting to see who emerges the winner!"

The Challenge is open to members under the age of 35 and Manchester's finest students and is supported by a full events programme over the next six months.

### For further details please contact:

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