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University
Global Thinkers. Engaged Leaders.

CENTRE FOR
EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

Developing Business Acumen through Integrated Business Simulation

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Introduction

Growing number of companies today are looking for managers having integrated perspective of business in addition to their functional expertise. Managers with such a perspective understand the corporate objectives and align their functional strategies with organizational goals. Successful managers have broader understanding of the inter-relationship between various functions and how their actions would contribute, compliment and affect the other functions within the organization and to overall organizational goals.

Learning Methodology

Using a Computer Simulation, participants are placed in a business setting, where they would be starting up and running a company for one-and-a-half years (six rounds of decision-making). This is an immersive experience where participant teams will be competing head to head with other companies in a virtual marketplace. During multiple decision rounds of the Simulation, participants evaluate the market opportunity, choose a business strategy, evaluate the tactical options, and make a series of decisions with profitability in mind. Each team's decisions are combined with the decisions of the competing teams, and run through a marketplace simulator. The results are fed back to the players for the next round of decision-making.

The learning strategy is to gradually build the business and thus, gradually introduce new issues, which must be mastered by the participants. Each quarter or decision period has a dominant activity and a set of decisions, which are linked to it. These dominant activities take participants through the business life cycle from start-up, to development, to growth, and ultimately to near maturity. As they work through the business life cycle, new decisions and managerial content is phased in, as it becomes relevant to the current decisions.

Each quarter's activities not only result in new material being introduced, but also build upon the prior content so that there is considerable reinforcement. Business activities such as cash flow planning, value creation in product design, production scheduling, profitability analysis, and strategic planning and management require repetitive exercise in order to set them into the natural thinking process of participants.

The Simulation Exercise gives the participants, an integrated perspective of the entire business operation.

Activities in the Simulation Exercise

- Analyze market research data
- Plan and roll out a marketing campaign
- Design and price brands to appeal to different market segments
- Select and develop distribution channels
- Devise advertising campaigns
- Allocate scarce funds to R&D, manufacturing, advertising, and distribution
- Select and prioritize R&D projects, leading to new product features
- Negotiate strategic partnerships with competitors for new technology
- Initiate and defend lawsuits over false advertising
- Hire employees and set competitive compensation packages
- Schedule production and manage plant capacity
- Manage cash
- Negotiate equity and debt financing for new business development
- Compete head-to-head with other business teams
- Adjust strategy and tactics in response to operational and financial performance, competitive tactics, and customer needs

Learning Objectives of the Simulation Exercise

- Develop strategic planning and execution skills within a rapidly changing environment
- Crystallize the linkages between business decisions and financial performance
- Instill a bottom-line focus and the simultaneous need to deliver customer value
- Internalize how important it is to use market data and competitive signals to adjust the strategic plan and more tightly focus business tactics
- Develop teamwork across functions, opening up new communication links
- Promote better decision-making by helping you see how your decisions can affect the performance of others and organization as a whole
- Facilitate learning of important business concepts, principles, and ways of thinking
- Build confidence through knowledge and experience

Chronology of Events

Here is a brief list of the activities that you will undertake by quarter or decision period:

- **Round 1:** Invest personal savings to start up the company, organize the team into functional responsibilities, analyze market research, establish the firm's strategic direction, and set up shop (build a plant, design brands and open sales offices).
- **Round 2, 3:** Test market brands, prices, ad copy, media campaigns, sales staffing, and compensation package. Study the market's response, competitive tactics and the firm's own operational and financial performance and make adjustments in strategy.
- **Round 4:** Prepare a business plan and obtain financing from venture capitalists.
- **Round 5, 6:** Undertake an international rollout campaign based upon the business plan. Adjust the strategy to market opinion, competitive tactics and operational and financial performance and any unexpected economic developments that might occur.
- **Round 7:** Prepare a Report to the Board of Directors (investors) regarding 1) the firm's performance during the prior three quarters, 2) departures from the business plan and justification, 3) how well the firm is prepared to compete in the future, and 4) lessons learned.

Simulation Details

The Simulation was developed by Dr. Ernest Cadotte of Innovative Learning Solutions, Tennessee, USA. The simulation has been around for more than 25 years in 55 countries with over a million people having benefited from it.

Who should attend

The programme is ideal for members of middle management, senior management, SBU heads and CEOs.



FACULTY

Dr. Rajkumar Phatate

Dr Rajkumar is Professor & Head- Centre for Entrepreneurship & Innovation, at Mahindra University. He is a seasoned entrepreneurship trainer, educator and a lifelong learner; working in the field of entrepreneurship development for more than 30 years at the national and international level. Prior to joining Mahindra University, he was associated with Vietnam India Entrepreneurship Development Centre (VIEDC) at Hanoi, Vietnam, EDII Ahmedabad, MITCON and MCED in various capacities. In the last 30 years, he has conducted large number of training programmes in Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, China and India for entrepreneurs enabling start-ups and growth.

Prof. Phatate also practiced entrepreneurship, by starting and running a manufacturing enterprise named Rutuja Trimmings for 10 years, at Pune. He also serves as an Advisor to “Toe-Hold Artisans Collaborative (TAC)” which is a group enterprise of Kolhapuri footwear artisans, exporting footwear to USA, Japan, Italy, Korea and others. He is a founder member of ‘Entrepreneurs’ International’ which is an association of MSME entrepreneurs, in and around Pune region. He is a mentor to several start-ups and early stage companies.

Prof Rajkumar holds a B.Com, MBA (Finance & Marketing) and PhD in Entrepreneurship. He is a Certified Entrepreneurship Teacher from NFTE New York, USA, Certified MarketPlace Business Simulation Instructor, and a Certified CAPSIM Business Simulation Instructor.

Programme Details

Programme Dates: 29-31 January 2025

Programme Duration: 3 Days

Programme Fee: Rs. 60,000/- + GST Per Participant

About Centre for Executive Education

The Centre for Executive Education (CEE) at Mahindra University, creates and conducts learning programmes for working professionals, which are designed to provide timely and relevant knowledge, insights and perspectives, that help them progress in their current and future roles in organizations. By enhancing performance of executives, these programmes are aimed to positively impact the organisations that they work for.

Executive Education Programmes at Mahindra University span across multiple business disciplines, engineering & data science, and law, for different seniority levels, in various national and international geographical locations.

CEE's mission is to be a hub for engaging & beneficial interactions between business leaders and the academia. The centre works with some of the finest faculty in India and from leading Global Business Schools. Participants will have opportunities to learn from the innovative research and consulting experience of the faculty, wide experience of the peer group of learners, and from Industry practitioners who bring in strong domain knowledge.

About Mahindra University

Mahindra University, established in May 2020, is a multi-disciplinary global education and knowledge campus which offers industry-aligned curricula, a student-centered learning environment, and opportunities for international exposure. The University offers Undergraduate and Post Graduate programs in its five Schools namely Ecole Centrale School of Engineering, School of Management, School of Law, Indira Mahindra School of Education, School of Media and Liberal Arts. The University has been established in a sprawling, green, 130 acres at Bahadurpally in Hyderabad. The University provides students with a modern lifestyle and a unique multi-cultural immersion in a predominantly green campus. The Lecture Theaters, Seminar Halls and Syndicate Rooms deploy state-of-the-art technology, to impart a multi-media, interactive learning experience to participants. Executive Housing facilities on campus come with contemporary design, spacious & comfortable air-conditioned rooms.



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