THE SMIB MAG
2019 - 2020

10 YEARS AFTER...
ESSEC BUSINESS SCHOOL, 
THE PIONEERING SPIRIT

ESSEC is a graduate school with programs ranging from Bachelor to PhD, a wide range of Masters programs including our flagship Master in Management and Global MBA programs. ESSEC also offers executive education and custom training designed and developed on-demand for our partners from the private sector. ESSEC holds the “Triple crown” of accreditations for global business education: EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA.

At the core of the ESSEC learning experience is a combination of excellence and distinctiveness. ESSEC’s unique educational model is based on education by experiences, that foster the acquisition of cutting-edge knowledge with the development of know-how and life skills. At ESSEC, we aim to empower students and give them the keys to imagine, create, lead and have a positive impact in the business world of tomorrow that will be more complex and changing ever more rapidly.

ESSEC is a world-school. Our International campuses in Asia-Pacific and Africa are dual gateways that allow students to really immerse themselves into different cultures worldwide and develop genuine expertise about business in those regions. They allow our school to build deeper alliances with academic, private and public partners in those regions that are growing at an accelerated pace and will be leaders of economic growth in tomorrow’s world. ESSEC has built a network of alliances with academic partners worldwide so that its students’ learning journey is a true international one.

ESSEC is a school with French Roots that trains responsible leaders. Being a responsible leader means being able to see beyond business as usual. Responsible leaders are able to value long-term benefits over short-term profits; they are able to blend corporate performance with employees’ well-being. To prepare its students for the world of tomorrow, ESSEC’s pedagogy seeks to awaken and develop creative and critical thinking, together with the learning-by-doing method. Responsible leaders are those who can see the broader picture.

ESSEC is a full ecosystem at the crossroad of rigorous and relevant research, innovation, business and society. At ESSEC we believe in bringing research and companies into the classroom, we also believe that learning doesn’t end with a degree: learning at ESSEC means becoming a life-long learner and joining a close-knit community of more than 60,000 Alumni all across the globe.

Created in 1907, ESSEC Business School today is a world-school with French roots. Its purpose is to give meaning to the leadership of tomorrow and have a global impact.

Vincenzo Esposito Vinzi
Dean and President of ESSEC Business School

Key figures

60,000 graduates worldwide
4 campuses in Cergy, Paris-La Défense, Singapore and Rabat
218 partner universities in 45 countries
2,000 degrees awarded each year, including 1,600 at graduate level
6,660 students in full-time undergraduate and graduate programs
10 international students
124 nationalities represented
+100 student organizations
60,000 graduates worldwide

Learning and research chairs
30
Double degree programs (26 international, 6 national)
32
Permanent faculty of 37 nationalities including 21 emeriti professors
163
Managers in executive education
5,000
Partner companies in education and recruitment
+500
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**EDITO SMIB**

“ I remember when I was a SMIB student this Strategy professor telling us that you build strategy over 10 years, and tactics over 10 months. While the SMIB was created in 1996 so 24 years ago, this SMIB Mag was first released in 2010, so it worth an effort to try to understand how our alumni who were featured in the magazine have strategically managed their career! They were happy to share their insights about how the program made them different and turned them into proud members of the SMIB family sharing important values aligned with the program and school values: Open-mindedness, Boldness, Authenticity/Trust, Responsible and Business-oriented. We’re happy to share with you their stories and recommendations to current and future SMIBs! You’ll also be happy to learn that SMIB is growing like a tree with many branches but with solid roots. This made us reach #3 position worldwide as Best Master in Management (QS Ranking) in 2020. Thank you all for your involvement in the program, and let’s keep building a strong SMIB Family with fresh graduates (Class of 2018-2019) and graduates-to-come (Class of 2019-2020)!”

Anne-Flore Maman Larraufie (Ph.D)
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Academic Director of MS SMIB
(Cergy - La Défense - Singapore)
After my engineering studies, I started my career in the Purchasing department of Bouygues Construction group. My objective, typical for student with technical background, was to shift to a more business-oriented track while leveraging the technical background I have acquired through my studies. Those first two years were eye-opening for me and confirmed my willingness to pursue a true business career across different industries. I, therefore, decided to join the ESSEC SMIB program, which gave me the opportunity to work in both a small boutique firm and a global consulting giant. Joining the SMIB was undoubtedly one of the best decisions and no-regret moves I have made in my career so far, for two main reasons: the diversity of profiles I had the chance to live and work with, but also the wide range of professional opportunities and options offered.

I met student peers with so many different backgrounds and objectives, creating a fantastic emulation among us to push ourselves into finding the right track and career choices to fully leverage our SMIB formation.

The economic situation 10 years ago
2008 was a unique year to be at the SMIB. With the global financial crisis unveiled, we were all much more focused on our finance courses as concepts and theories developed were suddenly becoming very real to us. This context also changed the way we apprehended our post SMIB opportunities, namely internships in industries suffering such as banking and consulting to a certain extent. In my case, I had to compromise on my initial ambition to join M&A and had to develop alternatives such as Consulting. While many consulting firms temporarily stopped hiring or even internships, smaller fast-growing firms were still looking for talents to support their secured pipeline of work. Overall, the consulting sector did not suffer much from the financial crisis as companies were more than ever looking for support to further reduce their operating costs and pivot their business in those decisive moments.

Joining the consulting sector
There are many ways to join a consulting firm after the SMIB and my best advice is to stay open to several career options and understand how this could benefit in building your overall story of “why consulting.”

For my part, I joined Factea - a small Strategy boutique in Paris right at the end of the SMIB and was then hired by Accenture in Paris after 2 years to join their Supply Chain practice. My previous experience in the industry, even short, was highly valuable for my consulting career take-off as it allowed me to rapidly establish credibility with clients. This is something to consider when thinking about consulting: when is the right timing to move and should I benefit from an operational experience before?

My work as a consultant
I am working now as a Senior Manager at Accenture Strategy, New York, within the Supply Chain Operations & Sustainability Strategy practice. Most of my time is spent on managing strategy projects related to profitability improvement for C-Suite clients in the Consumer Goods and Life Science industry. I recently completed a successful post-merger integration for a major Beauty company, supporting directly their Sourcing & Procurement function and the COO. In this project, we had to support a merger of equal size companies which brought additional complexity in the strategic recommendations we could provide in terms of organization and operating model design. Our teams were also supporting in parallel the identifications of synergies that were critical for the deal success.

Consulting in the United States
I have had the opportunity to work both in France, many west European countries and in the United States, and the work culture is quite different. It is going to sound very “cliché” although I find that Americans have overall a strong business sense and extreme rigor in managing business operations. French business culture focuses towards more creativity, agility and pragmatism. With that, mixing both is very interesting. I learn to be a solid business operator, and I encourage my teams to think out of the box, not take any processes for granted and work differently. The lifestyle that comes with consulting is also not the same. Indeed, even though consulting firms are established in all major American cities, forming a critical size team in a specific field of expertise usually requires gathering staff from other offices. That’s why employees travel to their client’s location in another city from Monday to Thursday evening, whereas in France, most of the strategy consulting work happens in Paris. With this lifestyle on the move, more flexibility is allowed and working from home on Fridays is common.
À la suite de mes six mois de stage, j’ai décidé de concilier mon background scientifique avec l’objectif était de Karistem Consulting. Je me suis spécialisée plus aujourd’hui suite à son acquisition par RH ainsi que d’organiser des événements pour mon équipe, avec l’aide de mon assistante, car « une équipe heureuse est une équipe performante » !

J’ai donc rapidement décidé de me diversifier vers des postes en laboratoire, dans la chaîne de production ou encore dans la recherche, ce qui ne m’intéressait pas trop. La mauvaise coté des petites structures, c’est que l’on a vite fait le tour. Au bout de trois ans, j’ai donc commencé à chercher de nouvelles opportunités, et c’est là où j’ai été contactée par un recruteur anglais. J’ai été embauchée dans Cello Health, toujours dans les études de marché en pharma, mais j’avais l’opportunité de travailler à l’échelle internationale avec de plus gros clients. Une autre dimension ! Aujourd’hui, après cinq ans, je suis business manager à « Imperial College Health Partners (ICHP) », une entreprise qui s’occupe d’implémenter des innovations dans le système de santé anglais. Je manque une équipe d’excellents analystes qui m’ont appris et analyses de données et des projections économiques.

Parcours
Je suis diplômée de l’Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Chimie de Montpellier en 2008 en ingénierie chimique avec une spécialité en biochimie. Pendant ce diplôme, j’ai décidé que je n’allais pas rester dans le secteur à proprement parler car cela me dirigeait surtout vers des postes en laboratoire, dans la chaîne de production ou encore dans la recherche, ce qui ne m’intéressait pas trop. J’ai donc rapidement décidé de me diversifier en optant pour un master en marketing ou en business international. J’ai candidaté à plusieurs écoles et j’ai été acceptée à l’ESSEC et à HEC. J’ai ensuite choisi l’ESSEC car j’avais eu un meilleur feeling avec les personnes avec lesquelles j’ai passé l’entretien. J’ai été séduite par l’ouverture à l’international du programme et de l’ESSEC, que je n’ai pas retrouvée dans les autres écoles. J’ai été attirée par le fait que l’on puisse choisir de faire un semestre à l’étranger. J’ai donc passé un semestre à l’ESSEC à Cergy et un semestre à Thunderbird School of Global Management en Arizona. Je suis ensuite rentrée à Paris où j’ai intégré Factea, un cabinet de conseil qui n’existe plus aujourd’hui suite à son acquisition par Karistem Consulting. Je me suis spécialisée dans les hôpitaux puisque l’objectif était de concilier mon background scientifique avec ma formation en management et stratégie. À la suite de mes six mois de stage, j’ai décidé de quitter l’entreprise avec laquelle j’étais et j’ai intégré Kantar où j’ai découvert une discipline que je ne connaissais pas du tout, les sondages et les études de marché. Après 9 mois, j’ai quitté Kantar pour intégrer une boîte d’études de marché spécialisée dans l’industrie pharmaceutique, Vivactis. J’y suis restée pendant 3 ans où j’ai beaucoup évolué et grandi car nous étions une petite équipe ce qui me donnait l’opportunité de faire beaucoup de choses et me procurait l’autonomie dont j’avais besoin pour avancer.

Pourriez-vous nous parler de votre poste actuel ?
L’Imperial College Health Partners est une entreprise financée par le gouvernement anglais qui a pour objectif d’aider à intégrer l’innovation dans le système de santé et les hôpitaux anglais. Un exemple de ce que nous faisons : étudier le fonctionnement d’un service dans un certain hôpital et implémenter les nouveaux modes de gestion du personnel ou encore intégrer au sein de l’hôpital une nouvelle application qui permet aux patients de suivre leurs résultats. Mon équipe est focalisée sur l’analyse des données et nous avons la chance de bénéficier d’une base de données correspondant à 2,5 millions de patients. Ces informations permettent de faire des analyses très poussées et sont évidemment très encadrées par les lois de protection des données. Nos équipes de statisticiens vont ensuite pouvoir élaborer des modèles qui permettront d’anticiper l’impact de différents événements tels que la survenue d’une vague de froid en Octobre par exemple. Moi en tant que Manager, j’ai plus un rôle de superviseur. Ayant déjà été à leur place quelques années auparavant, je suis à même de savoir les difficultés qu’ils peuvent rencontrer et les aider à les résoudre. Je m’occupe également de l’aspect financier et RH ainsi que d’organiser des événements pour mon équipe, avec l’aide de mon assistante, car « une équipe heureuse est une équipe performante » !

êtes-vous les seuls à avoir accès à ces données ? quid de la protection des données des patients surtout suite à la rentée en vigueur du rgpd ?
Je dirais oui et non ! Ces données que nous exploitons appartiennent aux hôpitaux et nous sommes justement dédiés à ces hôpitaux, c’est pour cela que nous y avons un accès privilégié. D’autres personnes ou entreprises peuvent y avoir accès en passant par un process assez complexe, notamment un panel qui va décider de la pertinence de l’usage qui en sera fait. Ce panel peut par exemple rejeter un projet s’il estime qu’il ne présente pas de bénéfice pour la structure hospitalière ou le système de santé en général. Il peut aussi décider que l’entreprise financée par le gouvernement anglais qui a pour objectif d’aider à intégrer l’innovation dans le système de santé et les hôpitaux anglais. Un exemple de ce que nous faisons : étudier le fonctionnement d’un service dans un certain hôpital et implémenter les nouveaux modes de gestion du personnel ou encore intégrer au sein de l’hôpital une nouvelle application qui permet aux patients de suivre leurs résultats. Mon équipe est focalisée sur l’analyse des données et nous avons la chance de bénéficier d’une base de données correspondant à 2,5 millions de patients. Ces informations permettent de faire des analyses très poussées et sont évidemment très encadrées par les lois de protection des données. Nos équipes de statisticiens vont ensuite pouvoir élaborer des modèles qui permettront d’anticiper l’impact de différents événements tels que la survenue d’une vague de froid en Octobre par exemple. Moi en tant que Manager, j’ai plus un rôle de superviseur. Ayant déjà été à leur place quelques années auparavant, je suis à même de savoir les difficultés qu’ils peuvent rencontrer et les aider à les résoudre. Je m’occupe également de l’aspect financier et RH ainsi que d’organiser des événements pour mon équipe, avec l’aide de mon assistante, car « une équipe heureuse est une équipe performante » !

difference est plus grande que ce que l’on pourrait croire. En passant de Paris à Londres, je pensais partir d’une grande ville à une autre ce qui fut loin d’être le cas. Comparé à Paris, Londres est une « Superville » ! L’adaptation a été compliquée même pour moi qui suis habituée au tumulte parisien. Et puis les températures sont complètement différents, nous sommes plus méditerranéens, les anglais sont plus germaniques, tout sera naturellement plus structuré et personne ne sera complétement direct, non par hypocrisie mais c’est juste comme ça que ça se passe de ce côté de la manche ! Evidemment on y est confronté au quotidien dans la vie professionnelle. Par exemple, à mes débuts ici, j’avais du mal à comprendre les directives vagues de mes managers. Ici pour te demander de faire quelque chose ou de modifier ton travail on te dira souvent « A ta place je ferais comme ça », ce qui peut paraître comme une option, mais ça ne l’est pas en réalité ! Après en passant moi-même à des postes de management, j’ai dû encore une fois m’adapter. En me reprochait souvent d’être trop directe, et en même temps, lors de mes passages à Paris, mes proches trouvaient que je tournais trop autour du pot. Compliqué tout ça ! Finalement, je dirais que le « Mindset » est complètement différent, que ce soit dans l’éducation ou dans le monde professionnel. Pour l’aider à te développer, ici on va plus te pousser, te donner des outils et des directives pour t’emméler tout en étant porté sur le bien-être et le développement. En France, on sera plus porté sur la performance et le bien-faire, on aura tendance à « t’enfoncer » pour t’aider à avancer.

Pour finir, aujourd’hui, dix années plus tard, que vous a apporté le SMIB ?
Beaucoup de choses positives ! Après une formation scientifique, le SMIB m’a permis d’élargir mon socle de connaissances. Que ce soit durant mon semestre à l’ESSEC ou à Thunderbird, j’ai pu m’ouvrir à des notions proches de la réalité de l’économie et de la société grâce aux

A BIG FOUR SENIOR MANAGER

By Ghislain de La Bretesche

Nicolas Calvet
KPMG Advisory, Paris

Parcours
Avant d’intégrer le SMIB, j’ai été diplômé de l’école Centrale Nantes en 2008. J’ai dans un premier temps hésité à m’orienter dans la finance ou dans le consulting. La crise de 2008 ayant diminué le nombre de postes proposés en sortie d’école, j’ai finalement décidé de m’orienter dans le consulting à partir de ma 3e année.

J’ai éprouvé, à la fin de mes études d’ingénieurs, le besoin de m’ouvrir à de nouveaux sujets et de nouvelles matières et ainsi suivre le Mastère spécialisé SMIB de l’ESSEC.

J’ai par la suite commencé ma carrière chez Orga Consultants (devenu Sopra Steria) en conseil en management où j’y suis resté pendant 2 ans et 8 mois. Tout m’intéressait dans ce cabinet en termes de missions, mais j’avais la volonté de rejoindre un cabinet d’envergure internationale et l’envie de travailler sur des projets plus grands. Je suis donc parti chez KPMG France, cabinet dans lequel je suis toujours.

Pourquoi le SMIB vous a-t-il plus ?
J’ai véritablement apprécié l’ouverture que ce mastère m’a apportée. En effet, j’ai beaucoup travaillé en groupes avec des personnes de nationalités différentes et cet aspect multicultural me sert encore dans mon travail d’aujourd’hui. J’ai également aimé le fait de pouvoir « networker » avec des étudiants de formations différentes

Comment comparairez-vous la situation économique d’il y a 10 ans à celle d’aujourd’hui ?
Il y a 10 ans, tous les secteurs étaient assez frileux suite à la crise de 2008. L’embauche dans le domaine de la finance avait diminué. Aujourd’hui, on sent que la situation s’est détendue, bien que depuis 1 ou 2 ans, certains secteurs comme le consulting se resserrent de nouveaux.

Quels sont vos conseils pour les étudiants qui veulent intégrer un cabinet de conseil ?
Tout d’abord, il est très important d’avoir une grande motivation et de s’être bien renseigné sur ce secteur. Postuler dans le conseil demande beaucoup d’investissement (notamment pour les études de cas lors des entretiens). Ce sont uniquement les gens bien préparés qui passeront. Pour les anciens ingénieurs, avoir réalisé un stage dans l’industrie peut être un atout lors des entretiens et permet de se différencier. Je pense qu’il est préférable de débuter dans le conseil dès la fin du mastère, mais le choix du Cabinet est également important, car il peut constituer une carte de visite très valorisante.
What was the reason of your inclination towards pursuing a discipline in strategy, management and international business specifically in oil & gas sector? Please tell us the story of how you realized it to be your sector of choice.

Strategy is the main skill in oil & gas because it is linked to geopolitics and international relationships. Oil & Gas is an international business since oil & gas producers are mostly the US, Russia and CIS, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and Australia. As a manager of an international oil company, I found the SMIB Executive Program as the perfect choice for me.

What kind of challenges one has to deal with while working in oil & gas/energy sector?

I would like to mention few challenges here:

• A cultural one: Oil & Gas producing countries, Oil & Gas importing countries as well as banks and capital markets all have various cultures. As a result, it is very important to be familiar with these cultural differences, to respect them and to deal with them.

• A financial one: Oil & Gas implies large amount of funds to be raised and structured.

• A political one: Most of the oil & gas producing countries are under dictatorships and/or in wars.

• A geopolitical one: Some projects are excellent on paper but will never happen for geopolitical reasons, i.e. the relationships between some countries, some tribes, some ethnic groups, etc.

What are the challenges faced by oil & gas sector today? What kind of strategies are being adopted by these companies to cope with these challenges?

Or what do you see happening in the world of oil & gas in the future?

There are several challenges:

• In most of the oil & gas producing countries, civil or even military conflicts can happen anytime. The ongoing happenings today in Iraq, in Libya and in Venezuela are some of the examples.

• Although the demand is still growing, the offer is becoming increasingly important. For instance, US has difficulties to find buyers for its future LNG which in turn impacts the prices of Oil & Gas and on the financing of the oil & gas projects. Oil & Gas is no longer so attractive for banks and capital markets. A lot of Oil & Gas services companies have gone bankrupt in the US.

• There competition for clean and green energy is becoming more and more intense.

Why did you decide to join ESSEC Masters in Strategy & Management of International Business? How did you find that the program aligns well with your professional goals?

It was at the time when I moved to Paris and wanted to gain stronger educational skills. As I explained the SMIB Program fits exactly to what I have been seeking.

You are often invited as a guest speaker at ESSEC for some professional seminars as a part of the course. As the theme of our magazine this year is “10 years of SMIB Mag”, how do you think MS SMIB has evolved over these years? What aspects of the program you consider have been the most valuable that contributed immensely towards your professional or personal growth?

I think the way SMIB has always adapted in accordance with the economic, financial, technological and business needs of the times has been a great aspect of this program. I consider it is the reason that it has been able to maintain a top ranking in the best Master programs worldwide.
“It was an intense experience”

Mr. Gilles Gaucher-Cazalis, today CFO of Philip Plein, was a consultant when he first joined the SMIB, managing to take the courses while working on a project in parallel, which meant long nights and weekends of hard work to keep everything on track. However, Gilles is very passionate about the SMIB and is all praises about his time at ESSEC and describes it as an amazing experience to share knowledge and receive feedback from colleagues coming from all types of backgrounds and industries, especially the professors that were, in fact, professional lecturers mostly with a large path to share. That was the main difference from the boring curriculum of usual college and master courses.

He has no specific memory that comes out the next breakout is the key to success. Innovation is in everyone’s minds and figuring out the next breakout is the key to success. When it comes to the Digital World, Gilles is categoric, fashion business is more and more about digitalization, e-commerce, consolidation of online payment and data usage. Companies need to be aware of this and make the switch. Business is not done in the same way anymore: all processes are online especially daily-life activities. Innovation is in everyone’s minds and figuring out the next breakout is the key to success.

He has just one advice for present and future SMIB students: “Be aware of your core competencies and find new challenges, you have to remain yourself while focusing on what makes you different. Bring new ideas to the market, have an element of differentiation but always remain yourself. But most of all: Give time to network, exchange and share experience.”

A FRESHER POINT OF VIEW...

ABOUT INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

By Shilpi Bansal

Arnaud Gaab
Intern at Total, Paris

Background

I am a SMIB alumni from 2019 batch and by nationality I am French. I studied engineering in chemistry and physics in Strasbourg with specialization in polymers and materials. During engineering, I did an internship at ECPM, Germany, consisting of 20000 people in Research & Development. The internship confirmed the choice that I did not want to contribute to technical role in future. This was the precise reason for me to choose SMIB program at ESSEC which can help to open fresh opportunities for me.

You worked as a competitive analyst at Total, for this position what are your roles and responsibilities?

As a competitive analyst at Total, I contribute in the marketing front. The work is integrated in marketing, logistics and supply chain department. To be precise, it is more about the strategic analysis of logistics and performance of Biofuels. I also worked on development of competition observatory for the gasoline market. On top of that, I also created new tools for off reporting of the activities. I designed some innovative reporting system in excel format from the data in SAP, it reduced the time by a factor of four.

How did the SMIB at ESSEC impact your career?

By the SMIB at ESSEC, I developed several skills such as accounting, finance, marketing, strategy etc. These skills were very helpful to understand projects during my internship. I also developed certain soft skills such as how to give a good report and presentation, how to behave in the global company, and how to interact with the people. These skills helped me to groom my personality, which is an essential part of the corporate culture.

How can you explain that what is the role of strategy in the oil and gas industry?

Market of the fuels is declining but the energy markets for electricity and gas are developing gradually. So, the strategy to develop new markets and to be the main actor in the domain of mobility is a big challenge for the oil and gas sector. Strategy is also important for any company to do competitive analysis to define business and corporate unit strategy, market analysis, define and execute technology strategy, manage portfolio, resource and risk, improve production, construct environmental strategy etc.

The Total’s slogan is “committed to better energy”, how far is it contribute towards climate protection?

If we talk about fuels, it emits more gas than petrol. Gas is cheaper and more efficient than oil, has low carbon effect and thus less effect on pollution. Electricity will be the energy of the 21st century. To meet the increasing demand, Total is targeting 25 GW of renewable electricity generation by 2025. It could be achieved by investing heavily on solar energy as it is fast- growing source with boosting advantages: it is clean, abundant, flexible, & efficient. To diversify the energy mix, company is also investing in bio energies, hydraulic and wind energy. They also focus on distribution of electricity by gas and distribution energy for car.
If I ask to give an advice to the students, what it should be? "My advice to the students would be to enjoy the adventure of life and SMIB to the maximum. In addition to that, try to grab all the opportunities to make contacts and leverage ESSEC alumni network. After SMIB, for the students like me who want to expand their domain and had technical background will have great opportunities. They can leverage their technical skills and business acumen by exposure through SMIB to get more options to work.”

ABOUT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Robin Frohlich

Parcours

Résumer mon aventure SMIB à cette seule envie serait finalement difficile car c’est au final bien plus qu’ajouter une top school sur un CV. Nous partageons notre passage avec des personnes tant intéressées qu’intéressantes dans leurs convictions et l’opportunité nous est donnée de rejoindre une famille issue de tous les horizons du globe (cela s’applique encore plus pour ceux qui ont choisi comme moi un parcours à l’étranger durant le cursus), c’est sans doute ce qui, au-delà de la formation de qualité, me ravit le plus. La réussite n’est jamais acquise mais je reconnaîtrait volontiers que le SMIB m’a donné la capacité et le recul nécessaire pour évoluer rapidement au fil de mes premières missions, là où j’aurais sans doute mis bien plus de temps pour arriver au même constat sans cela. Je ne compte même plus les fois où j’applique certaines méthodes ou certaines anecdotes professionnelles échangées sur les bancs de l’école. Le SMIB est pour moi un gage d’assurance et de familiarité avec les principes professionnels.

Fort de cette double compétence Business/IT je gère pour le compte de Thales la structure d’avant-vente pour les projets de transformation du système d’information du ministère des Affaires Sociales. Ces deux années après la diplômation (2018) m’ont surtout permis d’avoir un regard intéressé sur les changements qui s’opèrent dans le monde IT et de voir à quel point les travaux qui sont entreprenus ou en passe de l’être sont structurants pour le futur des entreprises. Le principe de la digitalisation vers l’efficience n’est plus à discuter, il est en revanche moins évident à mettre en œuvre concrètement en termes de profitabilité immédiate, d’autant plus dans la transformation et la modernisation des infrastructures.

Ce constat ensuivant et la volonté de créer me poussent aujourd’hui, avec trois associés, à entreprendre la mise à disposition d’une telle solution. Sans pouvoir détailler le modèle, nous souhaitons aider à concentrer d’autant plus les entreprises à la création de valeur sur leur système d’information, qu’elles puissent s’affranchir des limitations techniques (devenues parfois un vrai casse-tête tant financier qu’intellectuel) à travers une nouvelle maîtrise, tout en leur ouvrant la porte de nouvelles sources de profit.

Avec un design finalisé pour notre produit, les prémices de cette aventure sont en place. Quant à la question pourquoi devenir entrepreneur, je ne pense pas que ce soit l’affaire d’un statut, d’une volonté d’émancipation du salariat, pour moi toute personne qui se pose la question « comment faire mieux » et qui essaye d’y répondre est un entrepreneur. J’ai sans doute attrapé le virus en école d’ingénieur quand on créait une société autour d’une solution de paiement par empreinte digitale. À l’époque je n’avais pas la situation qui me permettait de poursuivre au-delà de l’idée mais l’esprit est resté, la volonté de créer et d’apporter quelque
chose est toujours intacte. J'ai retrouvé cette ouverture d'esprit dans les murs de l'ESSEC. On me pose d'ailleurs souvent la question « mais faire le master spé à l'ESSEC, ça valait le coup ? » Ou le coût ? Je ne sais jamais vraiment duquel ils parlent, cependant ma réponse est toujours la même : « vraiment ». Cela dit si j'avais un regret à exprimer, j'irai sans doute voir l'étudiant que j'étais pour lui dire d'en profiter encore plus, profiter des concepts présentés, des modèles, des enseignements, des infrastructures et des personnes présentes quotidiennement pour approfondir bien plus les domaines qui me plaisent. Alors à tous les SMIB actuellement à l'école, profitez-en un maximum, gardez cette ouverture d'esprit qui fait notre marque de fabrique et préparez-vous à réfléchir au-delà de cette phrase que vous haitez sans doute tout autant : « On a toujours fait comme ça ». Bon courage à tous.

About Banking Inspection

Anna Sardarian
Inspector at Banque Postale, Paris

Background
My academic career took place in two phases: I first joined the University of Paris II Panthéon-Assas where I completed my first four years of law studies. I also studied a semester in Milan at Bocconi University during my third year of my bachelor's degree, in the context of an Erasmus program. This experience reinforced my attraction for the international. I therefore decided to take a Master 2 at the University Panthéon-Sorbonne, specializing in international and European business law, which was completely relocated to Bucharest.

• After this Master 2, although the legal subject I had studied for 5 years was of great interest to me, I had difficulty projecting myself into the legal profession. So I wanted to study in a business school in order to open myself to other opportunities and that's when I became a SMIB student.

What did you like most about the SMIB?
• I liked several things of the SMIB advanced master: first of all, I was obviously attracted by the international aspect of the master’s degree, all classes taught in English, and the diversity; meeting students from all over the world. I also appreciated a lot the fact that this specialized master provides a broad and very professional (partly practical) teaching.

Why did you choose to start your career as an Inspector?
• I never thought I would work in the banking sector... I discovered the job of Inspector during the Career Day thanks to a SMIB alumni, which made me want to take the entrance exams for different banks' General Inspection. I found in the profession of Inspector several characteristics that I was looking for: a regulatory aspect, analytical and writing skills to use, group work, regular changes in the topics covered and work teams, and also a work-life balance. This last point is not specific to all banks and is one of the reasons why I chose to join the General Inspection department of La Banque Postale. Other reasons are mainly: the values of the bank in which I find myself, as well as the quality supervision and benevolence that I felt from the staff during my recruitment interviews.

What's your advice for SMIB students?
My advice to students who want to become an inspector is, firstly, not to be afraid to take the entrance exams, and secondly, to choose a bank that suits them! It’s important because the working environment has a real daily impact.
Introducing Stratngo Consulting in few words

Stratngo Consulting is an international pro bono association that provides consulting services to NGOs, in the field of financing strategy, communication improvement, project management and much more. It was created in 2015 by SMIB students and has not stopped to evolving since. Today, Stratngo Consulting has built a strong team of forty members including eight board members, coming from three different advanced master programs, with an aim to fulfill seven missions and one research project this year. Our team is also culturally diverse in order to support our partnerships with the different NGOs located in France or abroad.

What are our objectives?

Stratngo Consulting has three main objectives.

The association’s first aim is to help NGOs improve their performance by gaining skilled advice from external consultants. In fact, a team configuration was put in place to make sure the NGOs’ needs are fulfilled in due time: a team of four consultants is led by a project manager. At the beginning of each mission, our consultants define a clear timeline for the project steps and deliverables.

The association seeks motivated, self-driven students who would like to gain work experience and build capacity in the undeserved NGOs. Therefore, we make sure our consultants are enthusiastic about their daily routine. The eight board members play a crucial role in the development and sustainability of the association by coordinating the work driven by the different teams, looking for partnership with new NGOs, taking care of other activities like financing, communication and event planning. Furthermore, our main objective is to support the research team in their study report about the use and analysis of unprocessed data by governmental bodies.

Have you been to any of our events?

If you have not been around lately, we have you covered! We are also excited about the rest of the events coming up in 2020. You might have missed the very popular and first edition of Stratngo Case Challenge which took place during three evenings in November and December 2019. During the events, twenty-five teams tackled real-world issues in the field of NGOs. Although the competition was fierce, the case challenge was mainly the opportunity to get a deeper understanding of the skills tested in a business challenge. Being confronted to a professional jury and getting one step closer to real world tasks of a consultant, was a great first experience for the participants. The event was not particularly targeting any field of studies and any student ESSEC was eligible to take part in the battle.

Our second event of the year is HELP, EAT, SMILE’N GO, a Christmas crowdfunding planned in early December. We joined our efforts with SMIB for Smiles to organize the food sale and tombola.

Internally, Stratngo Consulting preserves the college spirit by organizing regular parties and team building activities. A weekend getaway is even planned in February 2020 for all members. We cannot wait for the second edition of the Stratngo Case Challenge in March 2020 and let us not forget about the study team presentation in May 2020, a highly interesting event where the final research outcomes are shown in front of a whole audience of alumni, students and NGOs.

What’s next?

As we work for positive and sustainable outcomes, we count on students’ eagerness to drive the association further! Want to work on real-life missions of an NGO, or even gain experience in management, marketing, communication, finance…? Keep reading and learn about some of our partner’s missions in amazing locations.

Join us in 2020!! All you have to do is apply in September 2020 to the consultant or board member position of your choice. The current team will be contacting you shortly to know about your motives, preferences and provide you with further information. Find out more about our latest events and activities by following our facebook and/or linkedin page. Now that you know us, our team will be happy to know more about you and answer all your inquiries.

Continuing the legacy

“Stratngo Consulting was created in 2015. At this time, we were looking for ways to put in application what we were learning at ESSEC as student. It wasn’t possible to apply to the Junior Essec or Essec Initiative association. We noticed that NGOs however have real needs and few budgets for hiring consultants. With friends (Hamza, Marie-Pierre and Aymane), we thus decided to create Stratngo Consulting which aim is to provide strategic consulting services to non-profit organizations (growth strategy, performance improvement, cost structure, development of new offers, international development, strategic marketing, etc.). Since the creation, the association is growing each year thanks to members and alumnis. From now, almost 20 projects have been launched in a large number of countries and more than 100 students already contributed to the association.”

Jacques Delaplace, co-founder of Stratngo Consulting
SMIB FOR SMILES

L’esprit pionnier – The pioneering Spirit! This mascot of ESSEC Business School substantiates its constant urge to stay at the forefront with a pursuit for global excellence. The worldwide presence of notable managers and exceptional business leaders is a vivid manifestation of some core founding values upon which this pioneering spirit has been strengthened.

It has enabled the school to produce dynamic professionals who are not only well-acquainted with business & managerial prowess but are also driven by a strong sense of responsibility towards social causes prevailing across the globe. In order to fulfil this purpose, the school has disseminated Humanism and Responsibility as its fundamental values which have been a springboard for some ambitious humanitarian ventures led by its students.

Propagating happiness by alleviating sufferings of the dejected and bringing smiles on their faces has been a driving force behind the formation of SMIB for Smiles in 2013 and all of its proceedings over these years. We completely understand the world is in a dire need for individuals who possess a willingness to share and motivation to contribute towards the greater cause of human solidarity. A team of 25 compassionate MS SMIB students, including 5 members constituting board positions for the year 2019-2020, make a robust community striving to help social organizations for execution of their goodwill missions. We share a profound sense of involvement to support the charitable missions aiming to ease the plight of underprivileged strata of the society.

From providing access to children deprived of education to uplifting living conditions of those fighting the ordeals of hunger and homelessness, SMIB for Smiles has planned partnerships with NGOs and associations working on the same missions. Our very first activity for this year consisted of assisting Le Maillon, a social grocery store based in Cergy, in their food collection drive at Auchan.

Through collaboration with Stratngo- a pro-bono consulting association of SMIB, we arranged Christmas charity events “Help, Smile’n Go” & “Eat, Smile’n Go” that included a food sale and tombola. With an enthusiastic participation from both teams and a keen interest shown by ESSEC students, it turned out to be a quite eventful day enabling us to achieve great results. In addition to that, partnerships with associations such as Enfants du Mode, Défi Plaquettes, Secours Populaire along with a volunteer activity with an NGO during SMIB Business Trip to New York City are some examples of forthcoming projects for the year.

FOCUS ON THE ASIAN STRATEGY CHALLENGE (ASC) AT ESSEC, ASIA-PACIFIC CAMPUS

This 6-month consulting mission is the best way to put in practice all soft and hard skills needed to become a qualified consultant. Students have to act as a real consulting team, under the supervision of an ESSEC coach, on a mission that is proposed by a company or an economic cluster located in APAC. Both the company and the coach grade the students and can eventually pursue the collaboration through an internship or job offer... This mission is complimentary from the school side, with companies invited to give whatever they want, to contribute to the SMIB development. This year’s projects are diverse and reflect students’ field of interests.

The DHL Team: Topic: Ideation on robotics to disrupt the supply chain

Elhabane Yassine, Théophile Le Bizec and Yu Zhang’s mission is to help DHL to implement a new service that they want to provide to their clients who sell robots. DHL enjoys its worldwide logistic network and sustainable client’s relationships to become a sales assistant and distributor for robotic companies who want to expand their business in APAC and overseas.

This consulting project has the huge advantage to be very open which let us some liberty of thinking and acting.

Our involvement in this mission goes from market research, data analysis, pricing strategy to the creation of a support that will convince the potential customer. We had the opportunity to visit the DHL Innovation Center and we will attend some clients meeting to sell this service. it is definitely a very interesting experience that allows us not only to better know the robotics industry but also to network with the major players in this field.
The Dior Team (Perfumes & cosmetics)
Topic: Chinese Traveler’s Customer Journey

Pauline Glever, Léopold Mathieu and Rebecca Mosseri’s mission was to understand the behavior of Chinese travelers and how to leverage on digital tools to effectively target them during pre-travel. To begin with, the team must ensure that a luxury brand like Dior is present at key digital touchpoints of Chinese travelers. To do so, the team must make an in-depth study of the Chinese traveler’s different consumer journeys with a focus on their complex digital ecosystem. Moreover, Dior wishes to understand how to stand out amongst the rest in this digital environment whilst ensuring overall brand image. Thus, the team will analyze how others luxury perfumes & cosmetics brands advertise on digital media and how they engage with Chinese travelers.

Chinese travelers are in fact becoming a key segment to seduce for many industries as they make about 80% of travel retail, therefore it is interesting to make a deep dive into their complex customer journey. However, it comes with challenges: first we must understand who are the Chinese travelers? Data constraints make it difficult for both brands and us to know exactly who they are, where they go and so on. Then, we must understand what their journeys looks like, keeping in mind that the Chinese customer journey is way more complex than any other consumer in the world in terms of touchpoints, contents and expectations. It is valuable to understand the specificity of their journey but also which current trends are shaping the future of their ecosystem and experiences. Moreover, we find it very interesting to analyze how luxury brands can express themselves using digital without jeopardizing their brand image.

The team will also conduct a competitive analysis and extract best-practices. The team will finally present an action plan for Dior to enhance its engagement with Chinese travelers making the best use of the numerous digital touchpoints present in the customer journey. Chinese travelers are in fact becoming a key segment to seduce for many industries as they make about 80% of travel retail, therefore it is interesting to make a deep dive into their complex customer journey. However, it comes with challenges: first we must understand who are the Chinese travelers? Data constraints make it difficult for both brands and us to know exactly who they are, where they go and so on. Then, we must understand what their journeys looks like, keeping in mind that the Chinese customer journey is way more complex than any other consumer in the world in terms of touchpoints, contents and expectations. It is valuable to understand the specificity of their journey but also which current trends are shaping the future of their ecosystem and experiences. Moreover, we find it very interesting to analyze how luxury brands can express themselves using digital without jeopardizing their brand image.

Dior

The DECATHLON Team
Topic: Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the offer range for Climbing and Mountaineering in Decathlon South East Asia and Australia

Quentin Dauplais, Grégoire Leclercq and Louis Charlet: We are three students from business and engineering backgrounds. We chose this project because we like sports and the values supported by the company. Moreover, the topic interested us, and we felt that our work will bring to them a real answer to their need. Indeed, after the first meeting with the company, we understood that the climbing market is not well-known by SIMOND, the climbing brand of DECATHLON. We began our study market in Singapore: competitors, locations to practice climbing, competitors, climbing events, survey, etc. The aim of our study is to do this kind of work for all the Asian countries and Australia. At the end of the project, we are going to be able to advise them in their strategy to increase their market shares and create a real community of climbers.

Thanks to this consultant assignment, we can have an overview of what are the tasks entrusted by consulting firms, we are improving our way to work in group, and we have a privileged relationship with the company. It is a real opportunity for us to understand how a company can work and the issues they must deal with.
A WORD FROM PROFESSORS

Ashok Som
Professor of Global Strategy,
ESSEC BUSINESS SCHOOL

“"I have been teaching the SMIB Program for over 15 years now. I like the group of students as they are focused to achieve their objective within one year. Over the years the program has become more robust in content and focus. The students visibly get benefit from the program as many get immediate placements after their internship in the companies where they do their internship. They also keep in touch with their alma mater. Overall my experience has been highly satisfactory with this program.""

Cédomir Nestorovic
Professor of Geopolitics at
ESSEC Business School

“I have been teaching in the SMIB program from the very inception (from the first cohort). It was a completely different program because it was tailored for engineers who came for one-year training in management. So, all students were engineers, all of them were French and all of them were male. Because the program was very successful, the demand was higher and higher, so today it is one of the most important MS programs at ESSEC and beyond. At the beginning it was easy to address the classroom because it was homogenous, so we knew what quantity and quality of materials and knowledge we have to provide. Today, the classroom is much more diverse not only in terms of nationality and gender but also in terms of academic background. I teach geopolitics and the majority of students do not have prior knowledge about the subject. However, there are always a couple of students who studied political science before, and I must accommodate all kinds of profiles. Same thing when you teach marketing and some students already have a bachelor or master’s in management or in marketing. Or when you teach finance and some of them already have a degree in finance. It is fascinating to see the rise of diversity and changing expectations from students year after year. The interaction with students is very rich because of that and this is what gives pleasure to teach. Hopefully we will have another 20 years to celebrate:)"