



# global focus

The EFMD Business Magazine

A GLOBAL FOCUS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

## Excellence in Practice

Outstanding and impactful partnerships between  
businesses and educational organisations



# The Excellence in Practice Award

## Introduction

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At a time when budgets are extremely tight and companies have to cope with a complex and increasingly unpredictable environment the effectiveness of investment in management and organisational development – as with all other budgets – is under the highest scrutiny. The effectiveness of programmes and initiatives from corporate universities, academies and other corporate learning organisations have been under the microscope.

Today the challenge is to achieve more with less. Questions such as the effective transfer of learning into the workplace and the alignment of programmes with corporate strategy have received high attention.

These observations by EFMD within its membership have been corroborated by a recent comprehensive survey carried out by the Swiss Centre for Innovation in learning (SCIL) in co-operation with EFMD.

Hence the Excellence in Practice Award 2010 hit a strong chord when putting the main emphasis on impactful programmes developed and deployed in co-operation between corporate learning organisations and external partners.

With membership in both the management education community and the corporate world, the focus on excellence in collaborative programmes comes naturally to EFMD. Over the last two decades learning and development (L&D) partnerships have grown not only in number but also in effectiveness and quality in areas such as executive, professional, organisational or talent development.

As a consequence EFMD decided some four years ago to launch the Excellence in Practice (EiP) Award as the European flagship award in this field. Since 2007 the EiP Award has grown in prestige and recognition.

Despite the significant workload associated with the submission, close to 40 case studies were entered for the 2010 competition – a record number. The quality of the cases was very high in general, which made the task for the international jury satisfying and challenging at the same time. The cases clearly showed state-of-the-art operational and management excellence.

The L&D initiatives also demonstrated how they were aligned with corporate strategy and evaluated the various facets of impact on the business. In addition the diversity of this year's winners clearly

  
**40**

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demonstrated how the continuous mutual learning of both partners is important for enhancing skills, developing and motivating people, and for providing a creative learning environment.

I would like to thank all those who submitted a case as well as the jury panel for their excellent work. I would also like to encourage those who were not selected this year to participate in the future. It is the nature of such competitions that winning slots may be missed by a short margin.

Congratulations again to the winning teams – and enjoyable reading to those who are interested in learning more.

**Richard Straub**

**Director**  
EFMD

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# Engineering the future MAN, WHU and Saïd Business School

German business school WHU and the University of Oxford's Saïd Business School in Britain worked with the MAN Group – one of Europe's leading industrial players – to open up new horizons globally and create leadership capabilities for the future

Look in the rear-view mirror on Europe's motorways and the chances are you will see a MAN logo on the truck or bus behind you. The MAN Group is one of Europe's leading transport-related engineering companies.

If you had to name one company enshrining the traditional virtues of German industry – a solid market position sustained over a long period on the back of a powerful reputation for technological excellence – MAN would undoubtedly be a leading candidate.

MAN, though, is increasingly reaching out to the wider world. Half of the company's workforce now operates outside Germany. Alongside its direct sales overseas MAN has recently added heavy vehicle subsidiaries in the fast-growing markets of Brazil and China.

A prime challenge for MAN, therefore, was to achieve a culture change that would transform it from a German to a global company. MAN identified three goals:

To refocus from local limited goals to more challenging international ones

To share the necessary strategic understanding and knowledge throughout MAN

To equip executives with the vital "soft" skills and intercultural competencies to deliver the company's new global agenda

To achieve these, MAN realised it needed to mobilise a broad range of resources and invited bids from business schools internationally to deliver its General Management Programme (GMP). The outcome was a new three-way partnership between the company, Oxford's Saïd Business School and the WHU-Otto Beisheim School of Management, resulting in a radical re-launch of the programme under the academic direction of professors Gerd Islei and Lutz Kaufmann.

## Real-Time Responsiveness

The first step involved a process of deep immersion. Members of the partnership came together in a series of workshops to beat out a fresh and challenging basis for the programme. Participants, meanwhile, were being carefully screened and selected taking into account their leadership styles, strengths and weaknesses, with the

€200m

Over the period in question MAN successfully made cost savings of some 1200 million as result of the collaboration



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*The financial crisis put added emphasis on value-based management, excellence in execution and the effective use of working capital*





partnership team again working in close collaboration.

But as global economic woes mounted in 2008 and MAN subsequently engaged in major organisational restructuring, new challenges presented themselves. The financial crisis put greater emphasis on value-based management and the effective use of working capital. Organisational restructuring in turn brought into greater prominence the need for tighter strategic alignment and integration. All these challenges needed to be – and were – addressed as the programme evolved.

**Outside-In, Inside-Out**

The GMP is an established part of MAN’s development portfolio, preparing participants to become future leaders within the Group. When the MAN-Oxford-WHU partnership took responsibility for the programme, it was given a new focus, with the experience of the programme conceived as an individual journey of transformational learning, progressing from external challenges out to a personal action agenda for the future (see Figure 1).

The programme is delivered in two modules, the first at Saïd Business School in Oxford drawing on an array of thought leaders to explore the “big picture”, internationally and strategically, the second at WHU in Vallendar, focusing more specifically on issues of execution, enterprise and value creation within MAN.

Individually centred learning has been key, right from the pre-programme stage through coaching during the modules, the contextual sessions intended to broaden the individual participant mindset, and then through inter-module team workplace projects - the results of which are formally presented to MAN’s Management Board at the conclusion of the second module, with the best presentations receiving a prize.

Participants are also required to make commitments to camera, outlining their future goals and the action plans needed to fulfil these. The programme is therefore both company-tailored and participant-centred.

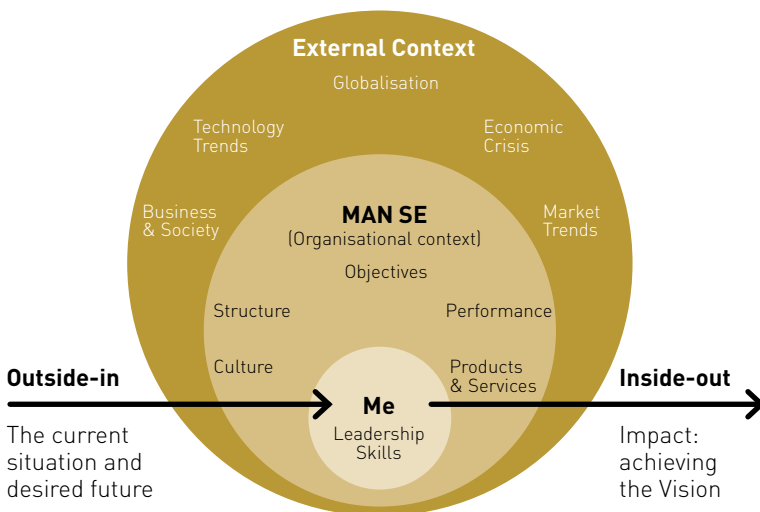
**An Upward Continuum**

From the outset the MAN-Oxford-WHU programmes were designed to connect different management levels, with intensive commitment and involvement of senior management and the Board seen as fundamental.

In 2009 the partnership, on the basis of its success with the GMP, was also awarded the contract to deliver the company’s Executive Management Programme (EMP), which targets executives immediately below Board level. The programme provides, therefore, an avenue to take the GMP transformational initiative to the heart of the strategic conversation inside the company.

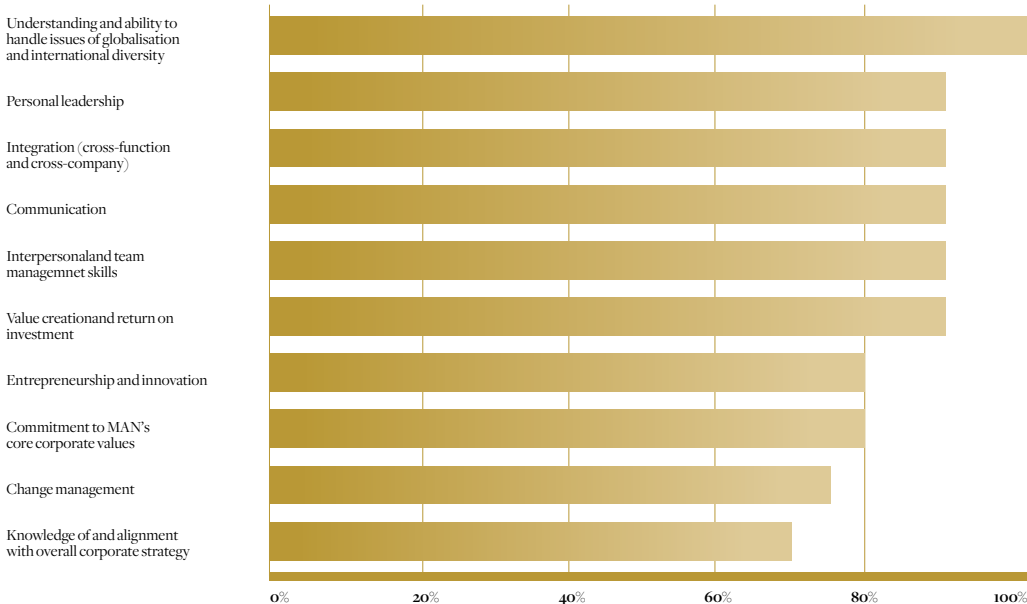
Again a two-module programme was devised. The first, delivered in Munich in 2009 to coincide with the Group’s annual meeting, was entitled “Managing the Present from the Future” and encouraged participants to strengthen their

Figure 1:



Special supplement | Global Focus Vol 04 | Issue 03 2010  
**Engineering the future**

**Table 1:**



ability to respond adaptively to emerging challenges.

Board members framed the debates, faculty supplied models and insights, and delegates then pursued key issues in team workshops – the programme concluding with workshop findings and the agreement of action plans. The second, held in Oxford in 2010, explored the leadership dimension of these issues and the contribution MAN's top executives make.

**Bottom-Line Impact**

The programmes have had a major transformational impact (see Table 1). Surveys of participants since the first programme in 2008 have identified striking improvements in learning and behaviour. Across the range of initially identified target attributes major improvements were recorded on average in over 85% of cases.

In addition, a range of successful corporate initiatives are being pursued, all of which were to a large degree catalysed by the

programme, especially the team workplace projects it set in motion. These developments include MAN's CSR programme, its "Global Footprint" and several workplace projects such as its initiative to optimise the use of working capital.

By now 200 executives from 13 different countries and all business areas have participated. Overall, the Oxford-WHU programmes have helped turn MAN around at perhaps the most difficult time in the company's 250-year history, not only binding the organisation together more effectively in a time of turbulent change and developing new agility in the face of economic challenge but also opening up new horizons globally and creating leadership capabilities for the future.

"The Oxford-WHU programmes have given my managers a wholly different set of perspectives on the globalised world in which



