

Why we Should Never Stop Learning

“Learning is either a continuing thing or it is nothing.” This bold statement by **Frank Tyger**, columnist for *The Times* for 34 years, captures the essence of learning: it is ongoing. Professionals and managers must keep up to date through continuing education to adapt to an increasingly globalized world in which technology is constantly expanding. They always have IESE at their side to meet this challenge.





The fear of unemployment has been a constant of capitalist societies of the last two centuries. This anxiety is sometimes rooted in a succession of economic crises and other times in more structural and longer-lasting aspects like the emergence of new technologies or industries.

The work environment is changing at a pace that we have never experienced before, and entire professions and careers are expanding and contracting at an extraordinary speed.

And the changes won't fade when the economic situation stabilizes. As Prof. **Alfredo Pastor** explains in a recent article in the magazine *IESE Insight*, "The fact that employment isn't rising and falling in line with production, that the share of labor in the GDP shrink and that there are disproportionate drops in salaries and employment across different industries, indicate that structural changes are under way".

In this new environment, digitalization and automation are the main players, not only because they're determining the shape of the labor market for this new era, but also because they're evolving at a pace that's difficult for the majority of institutions to keep up with. "The return to economic normalcy – if it occurs – won't solve these problems," adds Prof. **Pastor**. "According to some studies, there is a real danger of routine work being taken over by computers or machines, given that it can be automated quickly and cheaply. One study suggests that in the U.S., this means that 47 percent of the 400 million jobs that exist in the country are at a high risk of disappearing."

Non-routine work is more protected, because it's much more difficult and costly to automate crafts and manual tasks or intellectual work that depends on creativity or social skills. "Some studies suggest that digitalization won't lead so much to the elimination of jobs as to the restructuring of tasks. Computers won't simply replace workers, but increasingly they will complement their

work. So, when technology is introduced, low-skilled employees will take on tasks that involve creative and social intelligence, and acquiring these skills requires a greater investment in education and training. In order to facilitate this adaptation, managers should stay alert and be as dynamic as the technologies that are revolutionizing the world," Prof. **Pastor** explains.

THE RISK OF EXCESSIVE SPECIALIZATION

- Managers have two responsibilities: on one hand, determining how the company should adapt to this new era marked by digitalization, and on the other hand, planning their own professional trajectories in order to adjust to the current context and fulfill their objectives.

According to Prof. **Antonio Argandoña**, although it may require constant effort, it's important not to lose sight of that second front. "A good example is the paradox of **Glenda**," he explains, "a manager who was so good that she became trapped in her position because no one wanted to lose her, but also because the skills that she had taken great pains to perfect for 10 years prevented her from acquiring the ones that she needed in order to take on more important roles."

Many managers lack sufficient time to design strategies for fulfilling their career aspirations when they pour themselves into tasks that have garnered them recognition for their work. So what can they do? "Develop as leaders in order to increase their impact," argues Prof. **Argandoña**. "Escape the trap of efficiency, draw on their multicultural backgrounds and take advantage of all the training opportunities."

ALWAYS ON THE LOOKOUT

- Given these circumstances, we can no longer take for granted that undergraduate or graduate education will be sufficient to sustain a career. And employees can't expect companies to invest in every facet of their development, given that mobility is the rule: people change jobs, industries and even careers with much greater frequency

There is a real danger of routine work being taken over by computers or machines"

Alfredo Pastor, IESE professor

“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever”

This quote from **Mahatma Gandhi** offers an important lesson on time management, a key challenge for managers who consciously plan their own long-term development while handling their companies' unrelenting day-to-day life. “For me time management is a genuine difficulty. I handle it with the help of a second line of managers whom I trust and to whom I can delegate,” says **João P. Costeira** (AMP '04 and GCP '13), COO of EDP Renewables in Europe and South America. **Alejandro Climent**, (EMBA' 10), general manager of Cobega, says that “many courses clash with board meetings, so I need to plan my training in advance, and I look for the programs that best fit my working schedule”. In a recent article in *Forbes* magazine, Prof. **Cosimo Chiesa** offers the key to efficiency and stress management: “Time management is in reality life management.” Prof. **Chiesa** explains, “We should determine what is most important in our lives and then learn to prioritize. The sad thing is that a lot of people spend most of their time doing things they don't enjoy and that aren't relevant to achieving their long-term goals.”

In an article published in the magazine *IESE Insight*, Prof. **Nuria Chinchilla** also addresses the topic of time management and the spread of hurry culture in the business world, asking herself, “Exactly where are we running to?” She argues that our schedule should be an instrument of “commitment to ourselves to build our lives. Our behavior reveals what's important to us.” The teachings of these two professors leave us a series of tips to help executives master the art of time management:

- 1 Prioritize.**
Specify our objectives, separating tasks that can be delegated from those that can't. One approach is to keep a time diary of all of our activities for an entire week. This will give us an outline of how we use our time, and we'll see whether or not it fits our priorities.
- 2 Plan.**
Start by dividing up and scheduling projects and tasks over the long- and mid-term, and then add in the easier or more routine tasks.
- 3 Set realistic and specific goals.**
Expecting too much of ourselves, being perfectionists, having unrealistic or unachievable goals, being too controlling, and refusing to delegate are a range of stressors that complicate time management.
- 4 Be proactive.**
A manager should act like an orchestra director and not like a marionette responding to external stimuli. Managing time proactively helps us detect and avoid time sinks.
- 5 Leave blank space.**
Schedule in breaks and avoid filling our entire workdays with tasks. Uncommitted time slots can act as a buffer for the unexpected.
- 6 Learn to say no.**
Learning to say no to something means saying yes to what really matters.

yes



NO



Managers should escape the trap of efficiency, draw on their multicultural backgrounds and take advantage of all the training opportunities”

Antonio Argandoña, IESE professor

than in earlier decades. We all need to be life-long learners in order to compete in this new economy. But where to begin?

Senior lecturer **Luis M. Calleja** has studied executive career trajectories, and he recommends, among other things, “discovering who we are and what we can do. And then doing it. It’s about figuring out our mission in life. What has traditionally been called ‘finding a calling.’”

According to Prof. **Calleja**, with the increased life expectancy and the variety of possible careers, “that search often leads us to consider undertaking a second career. The reason could be having made a bad choice in the past, or in the present, putting being before having, wanting to do what we really like, realizing that we’ve gone as far as we can go in our company, or discovering that we’re not well placed on the promotion ladder.”

Whatever the reason, the most important thing is “to be clear that we have to reject the idea that ‘If I haven’t done it by age 45, I’ll never do it;’ at that age, the best may still be yet to come. If we decide to make a professional turn, it’s not enough to choose something that merely seems interesting; it should be something that we’re passionate about. This is the only way we’ll be able to face this new beginning with enough energy and enthusiasm,” he concludes.

As multiple neuroscience studies have shown, the brain needs to be emotionally stimulated in order to learn and,

in addition, it learns best when interacting with other people. This is, to a large extent, the foundation of the case method. Prof. **Pedro Nuevo** ended one of his PDD classes admitting to his students that during his course he had tried to “get a smile out of them every 10 minutes and a belly laugh every 20.” The idea is to break the mold and leave monotony behind, capturing students’ attention through a key phrase, a striking image, or a provocative claim or by placing them at the center of the debate.

All of the students who have passed through IESE’s classrooms have had this experience. Using the case method is more popular than ever in education. The method is analytical, practical, team-oriented, participatory and open, enabling professors to apply many of the lessons from neuroscience that are informing the field of education today.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: ALUMNI LEARNING PROGRAM

- Aware of the importance of continuing education, the
- IESE Alumni Association makes a priority of providing alumni with tools to stay abreast of the latest trends. In this way, the Association supports managers along their career paths, offering them the most appropriate education at each step of their careers.

In the large portfolio of offerings, the Alumni Learning Program (ALP) particularly stands out. Each year, this



program organizes events, sessions and talks on the most significant trends in the global spheres of the economy and business, where attendees both learn content and take advantage of intensive networking opportunities.

These sessions are given by IESE professors and special guests in a range of cities around the world. SAP CEO, **Bill McDermott**, president and CEO of Estée Lauder Companies, **Fabrizio Freda**, and UPS International Americas Region president, **Romaine Seguin**, were some of the invited speakers at the last course's ALP.

In addition, alumni can follow many of these sessions via online broadcasting, no matter where they find themselves. This tool makes it possible for alumni to participate live, asking questions and answering online polls.

Last academic year, 226 ALP sessions were held in 29 countries with a total of 32,796 participants. Seventy percent were in-person sessions, while 30 percent were online. Moreover, 54 of the sessions have been made available to alumni as e-conferences. In the same year, IESE held a specialized Alumni Learning Series exclusively in online format. The series was conceptualized as a complete learning experience, accessible from any device and at any time, and it included ongoing development activities between sessions through a discussion forum and specific exercises.

Karin Nemec (GEMBA '11), founder of Imagination Lab, participated last year in the ALP Digital Series with the goal of learning about the latest trends in the digital transformation. "I love gathering new ideas to enhance my vision of innovation and discovering how other companies are breaking the mold of traditional business," she highlights. "The course was very well organized and I thoroughly enjoyed participating in the classes. Also, at that time I began to develop new disruptive ideas in the context of digitalization, like models for a shared digital economy that would contribute to reducing CO2 emissions and a global private digital bank designed for expats in Africa and China," she adds.

ONLINE KNOWLEDGE CAPSULES

● The Alumni Association is working on another tool for continuing education: the online knowledge capsules, coming soon exclusively via smartphone or tablet. Foundations of Innovation, which will be available on an educational app, will condense the core of IESE's knowledge on innovation into brief sessions taking no longer than ten minutes each to complete.

According to Alumni Association director **Javier Muñoz**, "Our goal in this case is to help alumni meet the key challenges of innovation in business through reading, observation, and the discussion of related content."

The school's knowledge portal, IESE Insight, provides alumni with more than 500 articles about business management and the latest research results. Each month Association members can read IESE economics department professors' take on the current economic situation. Finally, the new alumni app provides access to the school's latest research, as well as the Association's networking services.

FORGING A PROFESSIONAL PATH

● In order to help alumni guide themselves at decisive moments of their careers, the Association also offers a career advisory service, which includes face-to-face or online professional guidance sessions with the school's global network of consultants. **Bob Marino**, one of IESE's international advisors, explains that the best time to participate in this kind of session is "one or two years before you want to make a change in your professional career."

Once the sessions begin, true revelations emerge; for example, participants realize that they have more energy when their jobs are aligned with their values. Or they discover that they have more career options than they thought."

Christopher Golembiewski (PhD '03), consultant at Clearview Investment Partners, characterizes his



experience at the career advising service as very valuable. “The most important thing was realizing that I had several realistic options available to me and that I could address them systematically with the right strategy,” he notes.

THE PERFECT COMPASS AT A DECISIVE TURN

● When a manager sees a clear need to break free from the professional routine he or she is trapped in, it’s time to choose a new direction. To take this step, managers should reflect on their professional development in order to enhance their own leadership skills and to make decisions that will have a positive impact both on themselves and on their surroundings.

In this regard, management programs offer intensive skill development, but participants won’t properly incorporate these skills into their business practices unless they’re reinforced with personal support that makes it possible for participants to attain their goals.

For this reason, IESE offers managers an individualized analysis process, which it has developed through years of experience. “Today, learning to know yourself better is one of the keys of programs for management development. At IESE, we address this issue when the program has already been under way for a while and we see that it’s the right time to introduce the possibility of complementing academic course sessions with coaching,” notes **Alberto Ribera**, senior lecturer and academic director of the IESE Coaching Unit.

“This process usually begins with a thorough skills test, for which the school has pioneered its own diagnostic tool, the IESE Leadership Competences Assessment 360°. Based on the results, the coach helps the participant identify areas for growth, and together they design and execute an individual action plan, a process that takes three or four sessions,” explains **Ribera**.

IF YOU’RE NOT GROWING YOU’RE DYING

● Thanks to an ever-expanding range of specialized and personalized programs, IESE responds to the needs of managers from around the world at all stages of life and career, offering them a global vision of business and education centered on specific sectors and skills. The programs

cover everything from early career (the MBA student) to the most advanced phases (the senior advisor). On the way, they offer industry-based skills, management development and custom programs for companies with specific needs.

“The more progress I make, the more I realize that I need to expand my knowledge,” says **João P. Costeira** (AMP ’04 and GCP ’13), COO of EDP Renewables in Europe and South America. “The world is changing at a break-neck pace and our businesses are too, so it would be very short-sighted to think that just updating my knowledge on industry trends would be enough to enable me to be a good leader.”

“The first time I studied at IESE I chose the school because of its location and its international reputation. I needed a full perspective on business management. After a time, I joined my company’s board of directors, which took me from an Iberian perspective to being present in a dozen countries on three continents. That’s why I decided to participate in a second program at IESE, in order to acquire a global vision of the economic reality worldwide with a strong emphasis on cultural aspects,” he explains.

In addition to adapting its education to each step along a leader’s path, IESE is also focusing its efforts on innovative pedagogy. Through the Learning Innovation Unit (LIU), created in 2011, it studies changes in pedagogical models, which are hugely influenced by the advance of digitalization.

For IESE, incorporating digital resources into its programs is not an end in itself but rather a tool for going one step beyond. Thanks to blended models (online and in-person), which are already being introduced in some programs, a group can be prepared much more efficiently in order to bring out the best in each student in classroom discussions. For example, by making the material for the next session available to participants online. Or by giving them access to intensive lessons through a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to get them up to speed on program prerequisites, ensuring that participants start the course on a level playing field.

One of the most recent examples of this transformation are the changes introduced in the latest editions of the PDG program, which, while still committed to the case

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method and classroom interaction, has introduced significant innovations in order to adapt to the current needs of managers. Among other resources, the new modules incorporate case preparation video clips, found on the program's online platform. Also, cases available in audio format make it possible for participants to gain an initial familiarity with cases before they sit down to prepare

them. The online platform also includes schedules, content and tools for group discussion.

IESE's portfolio of focused programs also highlights its first hybrid programs (see side piece).

The MBA programs have also introduced new tools to improve the learning experience. Since its inception, the Global Executive MBA has combined in-person modules

Focused on education: quality for busy schedules

Education?

I don't have time

This is the immediate response of many managers when they think about expanding or updating their knowledge. Far from being an excuse, it's a reflection of very demanding schedules that make it frankly difficult to clear a spot for a new activity. IESE is fully conscious of this challenge, and in response, for the last 30 years the school has offered programs ranging from two to four days, each centered on a specific business topic. These are the focused programs.

New trends

These intensive courses are designed for managers, allowing them to immerse themselves in a specific topic, facilitating their access to continuing education and helping them enhance their skills. The programs are also a way of finding out about the latest trends in business management. The IESE professors who teach in the programs are in direct contact with the day-to-day realities of business, because in addition to teaching and conducting research, they also perform consulting work for companies.

Dynamic hybrid formats

Can you really learn in such a short time? Without a doubt this is an ambitious goal, which the school responds to by immersing the student completely in the program through a hands-on approach. Far from relying on lecture-based classes, the program favors the exchange of knowledge and experience among participants. The training activities include the combined use of the case method, role-play, simulations, video feedback and coaching sessions. Hybrid formats are also being incorporated into the focused programs. Programs like Liderando proyectos estratégicos (Leading Strategic Projects) and Winning Negotiation Strategies are taught in a learning environment

that combines online and in-person methodology in order to take full advantage of knowledge and action-oriented practices. Five focused programs incorporate these virtual modules. The virtual modules usually begin two weeks before the in-person one, with the goal of optimally preparing participants for the on-campus sessions. In some cases the virtual modules continue after the face-to-face segment. But technology is just a tool for achieving the program's goal: promoting significant change in the company and in the participant. Participants play an important role in this process, given that during the program, each participant develops his or her own personal action plan to put into practice the next day.

Personalized training itineraries

In addition, the school helps participants generate a training path that includes various programs and that leads to IESE's Executive Education certificate. With the help of an advisor, participants design their own personalized development plans in line with their individual interests and goals. The certificate is awarded to participants who complete at least four programs successfully.

In line with the internationalization of the school, the focused programs are available at more and more IESE sites. IESE's expanding portfolio has already made four programs available in New York and two in Munich.

IESE's focused programs are organized into **six key areas:**

- * **Strategic Management**
- * **Leadership and People Management**
- * **Marketing and Sales Management**
- * **Finance**
- * **Operations**
- * **Industry Specific**

MORE INFORMATION:

The upcoming focused programs are listed in the agenda of this issue (page 46). This information is also available at www.iese.edu/sfp

Know what?

The Alumni Association offers more than **220 sessions** of the Alumni Learning Program each year.

Activities designed to help alumni and members continue learning and growing as global leaders, such as talks on key areas in business management.

There are more than **500 articles** available through IESE's knowledge portal.

The *IESE Insight* portal gathers IESE research results. Each trimester, it publishes a magazine containing innovative ideas and interviews with the world's most important business leaders.

You have access to more than **50 e-conferences**.

Sessions available on video dedicated to the most recent trends in leadership and knowledge resources, with renowned speakers in the areas of economy and business management.

IESE offers **12 massive open online courses (MOOCs)**.

Through the Coursera platform the school offers two specializations, Foundations of Management (five courses) and Claves de la dirección de empresas (Keys of Business Management, one course), and six additional MOOCs.

We are building our first knowledge capsules on an **educational app**.

"Foundations of Innovation" will condense the core of IESE's knowledge on innovation into brief sessions taking no longer than 10 minutes each.

with online training. The Executive MBA has for the last two years offered the Executive Simulation (EXSIM), which enables managers to reinforce their knowledge and skills and the values necessary to manage their businesses responsibly and successfully. After training for months using the case method, students complement their perspective on management with a weeklong team-based simulation exercise. Similarly, the MBA features a Capstone Project, in which the students design solutions for real companies' real problems.

In terms of online education, IESE offers a wide range of MOOCs through the Coursera platform. In September, it added a new management course, Foundations of Management Specialization, which allows inexperienced professionals and entrepreneurs to familiarize themselves with essential management skills. MBA students were also able to participate in this MOOC before starting the program.

In addition to all of these practical applications, the school is also exploring new ways of addressing the field of omnilearning, "a concept that suggests that learning happens across various physical and situational contexts: classroom, home, workplace, customer site... The goal of this approach is to identify relevant learning moments in the different contexts and integrate them into a coherent learning journey. The classroom still plays a core role but becomes just one context out of many," explains Prof. **Evgeny Káganer**.

IESE alumni can always count on the school's support as they face new business demands and seek to fulfill their personal and professional aspirations. The Association is poised to help them move forward on their current career paths or forge new ones, with learning as a constant.

Omnilearning is a concept that suggests that learning happens across various physical and situational contexts"

Evgeny Káganer, IESE professor

