

## MBA SPECIAL

(Publicity)

# MBA rewards hard work, commitment

## International degree programs provide training, knowledge multinationals seek

By JAMES YELLOWLEES, PH.D.

The commitment, in terms of time and resources, needed to successfully complete an MBA degree or equivalent can be substantial. But what are the benefits?

For those who wish to participate in an international executive MBA program in Japan, the McGill MBA Japan and Temple University Japan programs provide excellent value and benefits for participants and graduates.

According to Phil O'Neill, the McGill Japan program manager: "MBA holders are commanding a premium in the job market in Japan. For most positions within foreign companies, an MBA holder can command a 20 percent premium in terms of salary. This premium is not as high as in some other countries, but it is extraordinary in terms of compensation leaps in Japan."

O'Neill also provided a cautionary note. "Expectations are high, however, and it is important for the MBA holder to use his/her knowledge and mind-set to create value with the team and organization."

So, it is clear that although recent MBA executive program graduates in Japan can expect substantial increases in compensation levels if they are working with foreign-capital firms in Japan, the expectations are also high and it is very important to perform at levels that meet those expectations to justify the higher compensation levels.

One challenge that remains for employees of many Japanese firms is getting the firms to adjust compensation levels for MBA holders to levels close to those offered by foreign-capital firms, and to make the MBA holder fully appreciated. However, this is changing, especially in Tokyo.

As the economy is generally strong in Japan, the employment market is very strong for bilingual



**GEOPOLITICS PROFESSOR Soonu Kochar (third from right), India's former ambassador to the Netherlands, Argentina and France, is pictured with students at Nyenrode Business University in the Netherlands.**

Japanese MBA holders, as well as non-Japanese with strong Japanese-language skills.

O'Neill pointed out an interesting development in the employment market. Female MBA holders in particular are in high demand at foreign-capital multinational firms in Japan.

"Basically, qualified women are in demand for a number of reasons, but the most important reason is because of the perception that they have special insight into Japanese consumers," he said. "Women tend to be very active in exploring new lifestyles in Japan, and an understanding of Japanese consumers and trends is considered to be vital by an in-

creasing number of employers in Japan."

The interest in corporate social responsibility within foreign-capital firms in particular, and increasingly within progressive Japanese firms, is affording female MBA holders new opportunities. It is also becoming increasingly important for employers to be viewed as being truly progressive in terms of providing equal male/female employment and advancement opportunities at managerial levels.

Another tangible benefit, O'Neill pointed out is: "At the moment, there is a great deal of activity in the mergers and acquisitions area in Japan. Studying to-

ward an MBA gives an individual the vocabulary, some of the tools, and an understanding of the motivations and strategies behind M&A deals."

The perception of employers is that graduates of leading MBA programs will be strong in terms of overall conceptual knowledge, and system and operational know-how.

The AGSM program in Sydney, Australia, provides excellent opportunities for female MBA degree aspirants, and affords participants opportunities to develop new perspectives and career opportunities, and strong and unique networks.

Richard Tanner, a graduate of the AGSM MBA class of 2006 and a product manager at Johnson & Johnson in Florida, said: "Through the AGSM, I have realized my goal of changing careers and have joined a leading global company. I found that the MBA was a personally transforming process. I made lifelong friends and the program enabled me to not only learn about business but to learn more about myself."

AGSM MBA graduate Tom Davis, a senior manager in e-commerce marketing at Sirius Satellite Radio, said: "Because the global economy is being shaped by many Asian countries, such as Japan, China and India, having an MBA degree from an international program has been invaluable. I decided to pursue my MBA at the AGSM to have international business experience and to study alongside peers from all over the world. Returning to New York with an international degree has provided my career with new perspectives and endless international opportunities that would not be available had I not joined the AGSM program."

The HULT MBA program in Boston, Massachusetts, is a unique international program that attracts talented participants from

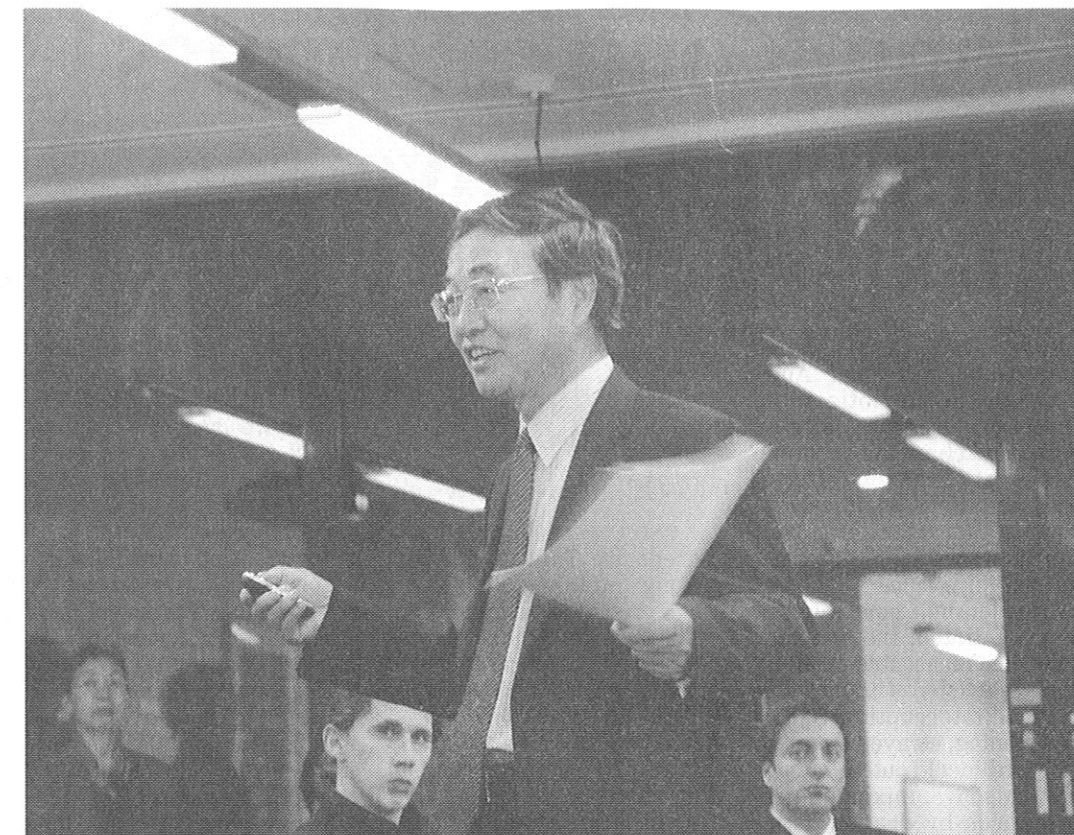
all over the world. It provides participants with regular opportunities to meet representatives of leading multinational firms to discuss career prospects, and arranges for work terms upon course completion.

HULT MBA graduate Gregory M. Allard, senior vice president and general attorney at the Liberty Mutual Group, said, "The superior quality of learning that takes place in HULT's internationally focused MBA program and the practical, dynamic, hands-on curriculum, combines with students who possess significant business experience, to produce a pool of exceptionally talented managers who are well prepared to support the corporate world at every level."

Shoko Suzuki, a graduate of the class of 1998 and director of marketing at Dell Japan, said: "HULT's one-year intensive program was a great fit for me. I found that the school made an extra effort to make sure that I had all the advantages I needed to land a terrific job after graduation. Through my MBA degree and education, I was able to command three times my pre-MBA salary upon graduation."

The IE MBA program in Spain enjoys an excellent reputation with employers and boasts good results for employment upon graduation. According to program official Bud Lake: "From the 2006 class, 85 percent of the graduates were employed within three months after finishing the MBA. Average salaries outside Spain were approximately €65,000 (\$70,000 or ¥5 million). For graduates who found employment in the United States, United Kingdom and Switzerland, starting salaries were about €100,000 (\$115,000 or ¥8 million).

"Of our graduates, 20 percent joined finance/banking, 23 percent joined (strategy) consulting firms, and the rest, FMCGs, in-



**ACCENTURE JAPAN Chairman Masakatsu Mori speaks at Anaheim University's Akio Morita Learning Center in Tokyo's Minami-Aoyama district.** ANAHEIM UNIVERSITY PHOTO

dustrial goods, pharmaceuticals and NGOs while others established their own ventures."

Nyenrode Business Universiteit in the Netherlands offers a highly international full-time MBA program and its graduates often find employment outside of their country of origin. A number of students decide to stay in the Netherlands, where many globally known firms, including Nike, Asahi Glass, Epson, Omron and Cisco, have their European headquarters. Dutch multinationals like Philips, ING, Shell, Organon, Akzo Nobel and ABN Amro regularly recruit Nyenrode graduates. In many cases, graduates will almost immediately work on a pan-European or global basis and have the opportunity to move to other countries as they progress within their chosen companies. Nyenrode is well known for teaching entrepreneurship and the university maintains a business incubator on its campus for companies started by graduates doing

business from the Netherlands.

According to program adviser, Peter Amaczi, the U.K. is a particularly popular destination for Nyenrode graduates, especially for those who pursue careers in finance or consulting.

Nyenrode is among the 50 global business schools whose graduates automatically qualify for U.K. work permits.

Japanese Nyenrode MBA graduates who decide to return to Japan typically work for multinational companies such as IBM or Ernst & Young, or work in international business for major Japanese companies such as Itochu or Hitachi.

Nyenrode provides strong career/employment support, and students are guided throughout their studies by dedicated career-service professionals who

help them identify how they can best focus themselves to achieve their career goals and position themselves as potential employees to their target companies. According to Amaczi, "The Nyenrode MBA program also includes a compulsory two-month consulting project with a company, and our students often receive job offers as a direct result of their initial assignment."

Obtaining an MBA requires tremendous effort, commitment and sacrifice, both financial and personal, but the benefits can be substantial, if one selects the right program and takes full advantage of the infrastructure and opportunities.

To learn more about these programs, please visit the Global Daigaku.com site at [www.global-daigaku.com](http://www.global-daigaku.com)

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