

THE INSEAD CITIZEN

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Dear fellow MBA's,

As mentioned in the previous edition, one of the goals we set out for ourselves in taking over the Citizen was to establish a continuing communication channel for the MBA community at INSEAD. As we are now on issue 3, it looks like we are on the right track.

Based on the numerous responses we received to the previous edition, we have made some changes to the paper. The most often heard comment was that the articles were too long (apparently the current MBA student's attention span is as long as the time between two commercial breaks of a sitcom). As we are here to serve you, we have shortened the articles extensively. The second comment was that people would like to have a hard copy of the newspaper. Unfortunately we have not been able to find a sponsor willing to commit yet, although we will keep working on this and would off course appreciate any help we can get in this respect.

In this issue we have tried to group together the following themes: ethics and sex; independent job search and social life; biotech and the new Danish MBA director.

We hope you enjoy the fruits of our electronic looms.

Yours sincerely, The Editor

IS THE GRASS REALLY GREENER?

CROSS-CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS AT INSEAD – BY PILAR

Think you know it all about love & sex at INSEAD? Think again. This is why this newspaper was created in the first place: to tell you the truth about what happens on campus when we leave the classroom.

After a couple of weeks here you meet enough people to know that a lot of them are hooked up/going out/married with someone who is from a country other than their own. As a result, we wanted to understand better how international your love life really is. Here's the scoop:

85 males and 32 females from over 30 countries answered questions about their past relationship history in our survey about INSEAD's international love life (cheers!). In order to make things simple for the users and because everybody understands the word "relationship" differently, we defined three "relationship-types": "casual", "somewhat serious" and "committed".

While the definition of the first one is clear, the latter two are differentiated by the degree of commitment that the people make. How international we are should not only be judged by the number of countries we have worked in, but also by the level of engagement we are willing to make with people from different national and cultural backgrounds.

Indeed it is hard to think that INSEAD students, with their wide range of international professional experiences, and having lived in different countries, would still expect to end up with a person from their own neighborhood. Additionally, if you take into account that most of the single people at INSEAD are likely to get married (if they are not already) within the next 2 to 5 years and that half of us will go to work outside our own country of origin after the MBA, the argument is even more unrealistic.

The results of the survey sup-

port these ideas: 55% of the people that reported to have somewhat serious or committed relationships said that they were (or had been) together with someone from a different country. 35% of them have, or have had, a serious relationship with someone of a different religion. The average length of these relationships was reported to be over 3 years.

Some went as far as saying that people from their own countries were a "put off". The nationals that showed more interest in "experimenting" were British, Australians, American, Canadians and Italians. The more traditional were Indians, Portuguese, Germans and Brazilians.

Religious beliefs showed a varied picture too. Protestants, Orthodox, Hindus and people who reported to have no religious affiliations had the most relationships with people of a different religion. Catholics, Muslims and Agnostics, however, seem to stick to people with the

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HENRI-CLAUDE'S ETHICAL DILEMMA

LYE INTERVIEWS INSEAD'S MOST SENIOR PROFESSOR, HENRI-CLAUDE DE-BETTIGNIES

LYE – Henri –Claude, you are known as a professor with a great interest in Asia, especially with respect to Japan. How did this come about?

HCB – It started when I was at Berkeley doing comparative research on the attitudes of managers in 12 different countries. The data from Japan was very funny, so I decided to go to Tokyo for more research. I ended up spending 5 years there, teaching industrial sociology (in English!) at Riiiky University..

LYE – So then how did you end up at INSEAD?

HCB – Well my father passed away and I had to return to France. I chose to teach at INSEAD because it was a young school, very dynamic...I have been here for 35 years!

LYE – Wow, that's a long time! Are there any other faculty members who joined at the same time and are still here?

HCB – No, no (smiles) I am

the only one. It has been 35 years!

LYE – The grapevine says you are the « grand father » of this INSEAD campus in Asia. Is this true?

HCB - All successful projects have many fathers. But often, there is only one "grand father!" In 1967, following several years of observation of the region from Tokyo, I was acutely aware that a great dynamic was in the offing and that it would have consequences on a global basis. In 1967 when I joined

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IS THE GRASS REALLY GREENER? CON'D FROM PAGE 1

same religious beliefs or non-beliefs.

And now the stuff you were waiting for: the juicy stories! Regarding casual relationships, participant's answers were as varied as the range of nationalities they claim to have slept with. On average, students have had casual relationships with people from 6 nationalities, with a maximum of 23 nationalities for a person that claimed that the reason why he had engaged in so many casual relationships was because of "easier sex". Unfortunately I cannot tell you who this individual is (this was after all a totally anonymous questionnaire), who claimed

that he lacked the interest in engaging in more serious relationships because he wanted to continue to have lots of casual sex. Ladies, beware!

Apparently serial-casual-practitioners like to have "exotic conquests" and are "curious" globe-trotters. Most participants said that the reason they had not taken these casual relationships to a more serious level had been due to the fact that they had not found the right person or because they found themselves in a different country for work or leisure and engaged in a short-lived fling. Circumstantial sex it is then.

On a more serious note, people who

answered the survey reported to have had in their past on average, two somewhat serious relationships with two different nationalities. They also told us that when they engaged in this type of relationship with someone from a different country or religion, this presented challenges, but that these relationships were more enriching and more interesting. Participants said that they liked to learn about different cultures and countries through their partners, as well as adding an international perspective to their lives.

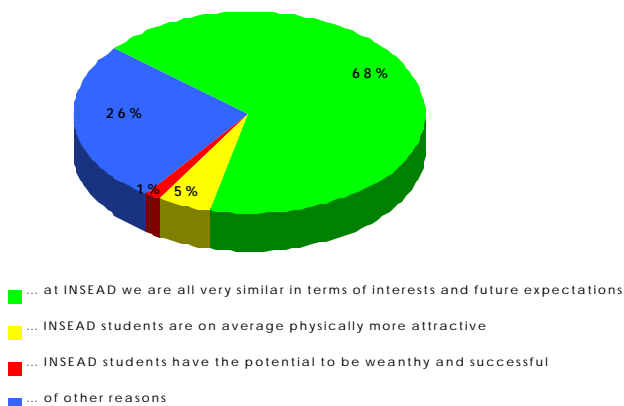
Only 15% of the people answered that relationships with people from a different country or with a different religion are more difficult.

The biggest problems seemed to stem from distance and logistics (oh, those long-distance relationships...), language or cultural obstacles and from communication issues or misunderstandings. Goes to show that the learning curve with this type of relationships can be a tad steeper.

Maybe sometimes some people do underestimate the importance of sharing a common ground with their partner when it comes to a lifelong relationship. 92% of people answered that they would happily engage in a somewhat serious or committed relationship with someone from a different background. But when we asked participants whether they had ever had a somewhat serious relationship that they did not take it to the "next level" (get engaged, marry, move in together) because of issues arising due to the different nationalities and/or cultures, a third answered yes.

However, there is hope: 66% of participants said that regardless of their current situation, they think they could find their ideal partner at INSEAD. So next time you sit in the class room and instead of listening to the lecturer you start wondering about your disastrous love life, look around: two in three people in the room think you could be the one!

If you think you could find your ideal partner at INSEAD, is it because...



First Commercial Biomedical Incubator Launched in Singapore Boost to Biomedical Entrepreneurial Development

Singapore – Oct 25, 2002: Singapore's first commercial incubator to seed biomedical and biotechnology start-ups was launched today by Becton, Dickinson and Company, Johns Hopkins Singapore and Singapore's Economic Development Board.

In addition, INSEAD, the top-ranked international business school with twin campuses in France and Singapore, will be collaborating with the joint

venture. MBA students from INSEAD's Singapore campus will be given opportunities to gain experience in start-up companies' operations, from technology assessments to developing business plans.

"This launch represents an exciting new opportunity for our students to gain first-hand experience of seed-stage start-ups, whilst benefiting from the expertise in this area of BD Technologies and Johns Hopkins. It is also exciting for INSEAD

to be involved in a project so clearly capable of making a positive contribution towards Singapore's development efforts in the fields of entrepreneurship in general and biotech in particular", said Professor Patrick Turner, Director of the newly created International Centre for Entrepreneurship at INSEAD's Singapore campus.

The first batch of INSEAD students will be working with Pro-metrics Biotech, a XXXX com-

pany identified by the BVC as its first incubation venture.

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INSEAD'S SOCIAL COLUMN

By PETER CLIFFORD

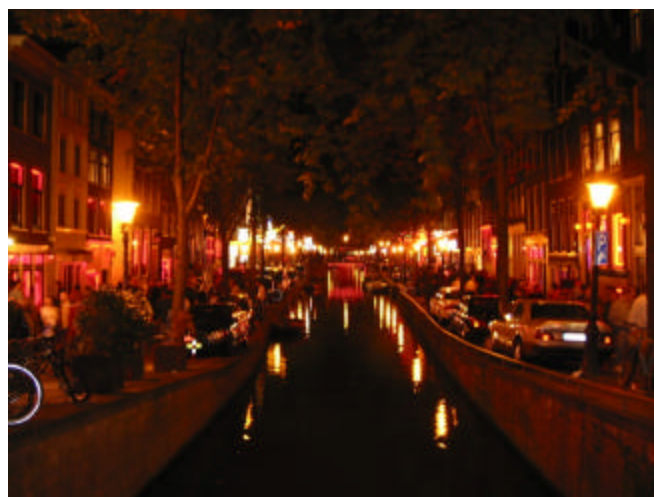
On the social front, the past couple of months have been full of incident. We've had the Cabaret, the Winterball, and four national weeks have done their countries' proud.

The Germans and Austrians will be remembered (by the few sober ones!) for bringing Oktoberfest to campus, which hosted a traditional German brass band (Blaskapelle) in a Munich style marquee. A serious amount of alcohol was consumed (2000 litres of beer were served up in 1 litre tankards) and there were many stories of people being found passed out in forest and sidewalks later in the night. A great night with

some very blurred memories!

Big Brother was cancelled but the Dutch succeeded in bringing us to Amsterdam ... where every consulting firm with an office in Holland pooled their resources to ensure INSEAD students could drink and eat for free for the whole weekend. They also paid for a superb barge trip through the canals with dinner and wine thrown in. We owe them a large thank you but we would ask them to throw a few job offers in with the food scraps next year!

The Arabs brought a rainbow of



Amsterdam canal during boat trip

colour to the campus during their festivities. We had Bazaar in-house with musicians, belly-dancers, hennah tattoo artists (there are still rashes being hidden on several bodies to this day!) and narguileh (water pipes). Belly dancing lessons and a competition with plenty of flesh on show were a big part of the on-campus fun.

They closed out with a fab party, where they transformed Château de Bellefontaine with 'Arabian Nights' decor. A three course dinner was served with wine, followed by a seriously fit belly-

Amphi A (rumoured to be held back by the administration because of a non-recruiting company presentation) but made up for it by bringing a group of their female compadres down to Vaux le Penil for a so called beauty contest. There were 12 of them in all and it has to be said that the contest became a more credible spectacle as the vodka cocktails flowed down.

Scheduled with lots of foresight, the Cabaret was given the uphill battle of having to draw performers and an audience the day after



Geiler Oktoberfest

THE INSEAD CITIZEN

Our Code: this paper do not reflect INSEAD policy.

WE aim to provide the INSEAD student community with a forum to voice their interests and concerns as well as a place for sharing experiences and opinions, and learning from each other and about each other.

At the same time, we acknowledge that every issue has at least two sides, and we will therefore strive to maintain a balanced discourse between different opinions and claims, and whenever necessary, give right of response.

The citizen will focus on constructive discourse and on issues – not individuals. Therefore any criticism will be built on facts rather than merely opinion and whenever possible, will be accompanied by alternative suggestions.

We will maintain complete editorial independence while striving to improve the INSEAD experience in a mature and objective manner.

The INSEAD Citizen is an independent initiative of the INSEAD MBA student community and is distributed free of charge to the INSEAD audience with permission of the MBA Office. The opinions expressed in

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Advertising information:

The INSEAD Citizen is published 8-10 times annually by the INSEAD student community and is distributed via email to 900 INSEAD students and 11,000 alumni. Starting with the next issue, the Citizen will accept advertising in order to finance its hard copy distribution on both INSEAD campuses. For more information, please contact Avi at: abraham.turetsky@alumni.insead.edu or +33.6.84.97.38.97.



Arab belly dancers

dancer, lots of dancing and heaps of people in Arabian-inspired costumes.

The Russians and Co. didn't manage to get Gorbachev to

the vodka swilling Russian party. The highlight for most was the uncanny resemblance of our own Daan De Vries to Pekka. He did a great job of imitating the infamous

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INSEAD'S SOCIAL COLUMN CONT'D FROM PAGE 3



The Ladies' Rugby Team in Action at the Cabaret

lurid glances which, it must be said, seemed to come quite naturally to him! The ladies's rugby team performed a fantastic ballet to the theme of Swan Lake, while the boys did their usual Full Monty stunt. Overall, the standard of the acts definitely exceeded all expectations who would have thought such framework orientated Sigma candidates could prove to be so artist and creative! The atmosphere throughout the evening was fantastic with a series of Mexican waves kicking off the event.

And then, of course, there was the Winterball, which will be paying its royalties to Lord of the Rings for some time yet. This definitely lived up to be one of the highlights of the INSEAD social calendar and Château des Condé proved to be a truly spectacular location. With the lack of interviews being offered right now, this gave everyone the chance to dress up in their best suits. The four course dinner was not short of top class and many ladies were overheard claiming that the "moist chocolate cake" was better than sex not sure

what conclusions to draw from this though! There were heaps of prizes on offer and almost every lady present took home some lingerie. Although the DJ was, to say the least, not very creative, at 5.00am there were still over a hundred people strutting their stuff on the Middle Earth dance floor, summing up the energetic buzz of the night.



The Russian 'Beauties'



Château des Condé

Ms. OB INSEAD'S AGONY AUNT ANSWERS ALL YOUR BURNING QUESTIONS

Dear Ms. OB,

In class, I cannot stop myself from contributing with stupid comments and brown-nosing the professors, even in courses with no class participation grades. I waste airtime like my life depended on it. My comments are as boring as the day is long and mostly irrelevant. While I realize I might come across as obnoxious, I like to hear my voice resounding in the amphi... can I be helped? Nobody talks to me anymore, not even the guys in my study group...

Yours.... you know me!

Yes, I know who you are...

I have indeed noticed you. In fact, everybody has. I suggest that if you have attention deficiency issues, you should join the vacuum-pack industry, they are al-

ways in need of air-suckers.

Yours, Ms.OB

Dear Ms. OB,

Once a well-built, athletic young man, I came to Fontainebleau in September with the strongest incentive to further build both my intellectual and my physical performances.

The first weeks here were absolutely amazing: France was indeed about the clichés I had in mind, and I started indulging in the "douceur de vivre" of INSEAD way of life: sunbathing on the campus lawn, enjoying cheese and wine binges... Until last Sunday, when I looked at myself in a mirror: Believe it or not, I have started to grow a nice soft cushion around my belly! I'm not even thirty! Let me tell you, I am

NOT a man of delayed decisions! And the very next day, I went straight to the piscine, craving a session of thorough, body-exhausting exercise. But to my surprise I was told: "Sorry Sir, you cannot wear

this kind of swimming suit here: Only Speedos are allowed, for hygienic reasons you will well understand."

Ms. OB, please help me: Is that right? Do I really have to wear these ridiculous, tiny "cache-sexe" to be able to swim back to shape?

Yours, Michelin-Man

Dear Michelin-Man,

I know what you're talking about. It is indeed true that French swimming pools would not let you in wearing a swim-short, considering you could be tempted to wander

around the city in the same outfit and then go swimming... But I really don't think it should bother you: Speedos look absolutely amazing! They nicely fit any figure, their bright colors underlining the most manly and attractive part of your body, conveying a laid-back yet dynamic image... they're definitely the ultimate French fashion contribution to the swimming world. So my advice would be to head straight to Decathlon at the Carrefour Mall, and find yourself a sexy, tight number. Let it be bright, let it be tight... just remember to shave properly before you dive!

Yours, Ms.OB

You can send all your burning questions to:

INSEAD-CITIZEN.Fb@insead.edu
Attn: Ms. OB

HENRI-CLAUDE'S ETHICAL DILEMMA CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

INSEAD as a young assistant professor, I was surprised by the European managers' ignorance of and about Asia but I had not much influence to get my vision of Japan and the Asia Pacific region accepted. I thought INSEAD had the responsibility to give MBAs and managers a correct map of the world, one that included Asia! I imagined the creation of a Centre - to produce and share knowledge about Asia, to network the business communities in both continents - would be a possibility, and became an activist for such project. It took 10 years. Only in 1980 the Board of INSEAD gave the green light to create the Euro-Asia Centre, and in 1985 after a successful fundraising, the EAC Building was erected. It taught me that when you have a vision, a great team, commitment and drive, you can move the INSEAD mountain. With the Euro-Asia Centre thriving, the seeds of the Singapore campus had been sown in the fertile INSEAD land, and the EAC's action lead my successors to father the campus in Singapore.

LYE – You must then see the Singapore campus as a dream coming true?

HCB – Not a “dream”, a “necessity”. If INSEAD wanted to walk the talk about being a global business school, “responsible” in implementing its vision, this bold move to create a campus in Asia was a natural step. It was a very bold, courageous decision to take, particularly at the beginning of the Asian crisis of the late 90s... Today the INSEAD campus in Asia is a thriving place that many competitors envy. It illustrates our “commitment”, our long term confidence in the region, and the entrepreneurial dynamism nurtured by our culture.

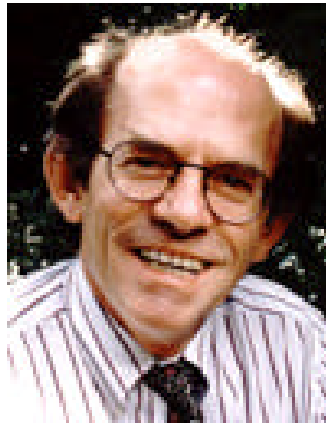
LYE – But don't some people worry about the challenges brought on by INSEAD's expansion?

HCB – You always have people who are afraid of their shadow. INSEAD had lived on challenge, and thrived in taking risks. We have taken many in the 35 years I have been in the INSEAD community. So far we have survived; we've succeeded and built the leading institution it is today. True, we are now facing huge challenges and our size compounds

them, even perhaps changing their nature. But with the size and the quality of our faculty, with our attempts to apply internally what we teach, with our visibility and support outside, with our leadership, I think we can go through the rough water ahead.

LYE – Would you move permanently to the Asian Campus?

HCB – Of course I would like to, but I have a ...partner, to use the politically correct term (laughs) Yes, I wouldn't mind, but my family is in Fontainebleau.



LYE – OK, you seem to be very optimistic about Asia. But why then do you now shift your professional interest from Asia to Ethics, joining the CSR bandwagon?

HCB – My interest in Asia has not disappeared, but INSEAD having taken over the Euro-Asia Centre, now enlarging its competence in

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The INSEAD Citizen reaches a highly attractive audience of 900 students, 11,000 MBA alumni and 9,000 executive alumni.

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Asia through research – particularly (hopefully) on this campus - whatever competence I had is now not in short supply. While keeping a very attentive eye to monitor what is happening in Asia, I can now devote more time to what will become “mainstream” in Europe (in 10 years) and in Asia (in 15 years): how to make the corporation, its leaders and managers behaving in a more responsible fashion. We have a long way to go, everywhere. It is a long road, very challenging again. Very painful.

LYE – Why “painful”?

HCB – You would think that today, when business magazines headline ethical issues, preach Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and discuss corporate governance models, there would be a great interest in “ethics” and much willingness to learn about “CSR”. Enron, WorldCom, Tyco, Vivendi are catalysts to this process, but in fact it is of concern essentially to CEOs, Chairmen, CFOs and non-exec directors as their new exposure to risk makes them shiver. Middle managers can be very cynical: their utilitarianism causes them to use bribery, for example, as a useful managerial instrument to get contracts in a highly competitive environment, “tax planning” and creative accounting relevant devices to deliver the shareholder value they are under pressures to produce, while the gospel of relativism makes them accept local customs as their managerial norm. Only at the MBA level, hope is more legitimate. Many of your friends have much intellectual curiosity, are increasingly concerned about society and wonder where we are going. To work with them is both a challenge and a delight.

LYE – How about CSR in Asia?

HCB – There are some good examples, companies like Siam Cement, Infosys, Wipro which have excellent CSR – they have done courses in CSR, even inviting government officials for them! But, ah, it has a long way to go in Asia, CSR is foreign and even Father Confucius would have trouble teaching it!

LYE – You seem to be a bit disillusioned! Using the Asian reverence for education, could one not teach ethics in business schools? Or in your opinion is it not possible to teach ethics at all in business schools?

HCB – Not really. I am suggesting it is very difficult to induce an in-depth reflection among managers and senior executives who rely upon many defense mechanisms to feel comfortable with themselves. “Ethics” deals with “sensitive” issues, with difficult choices and dilemmas. Managers claim to be prisoners of the corporate objective to create value, and have no choice other than to take the decision which will maximize shareholder value. You then realize how challenging the task is to open a reflection on alternatives and their consequences. Several colleagues - in the US - have given up the teaching of ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility in business schools. I happen to believe that this will change. Pressure from outside will induce/ “oblige” business schools to bring the reflection on CSR, corporate governance and sustainable development in the mainstream of management education. INSEAD is on its way, in that direction. This is a new challenge. For me, to be rewarding, challenges need to have the long view: yesterday, it was to bring Asia Pacific into the core of the INSEAD identity, today, it is to bring “responsibility” into the heart of the education process we are managing. INDEVOR shows it can start with MBAs.

LYE – Lastly, what are your plans for retirement?

HCB – Ah, officially the retirement age is 65, but then it is up to the Dean!

LYE – Oh one more question...

HCB – I thought you said “Lastly” just now...you know all you reporters are the same, always wanting more HAAAA

LYE – HAHA yes perhaps you are right, thanks for your time!

ALL ABOUT THE INDEPENDENT JOB SEARCH

Current students and alumni give their advice to those considering looking for a job on their own — By Avi

As P4 and P5 approach, the independent job search traditionally becomes an important part of the lives of many students at INSEAD. In stronger economic climates, independent searches tend to be the realm of only those students uninterested in traditional MBA industries, such as consulting and investment banking. However, in the current economic climate, the common sentiment among students now seems to be that expressed by one member of the current January promotion. "Don't count on on-campus recruiting, for career advice or for a job." As a result, it seems that most of the current senior promotion is conducting, or at least considering, independent searches. In order to shorten the learning curve for those now considering an independent search, the Citizen has decided to compile the feedback and advice of alumni and current students who are independent search veterans. We suggested that they cover the following topics:

Focus

"Of course, the art is to get the right level of focus," says Sean Jones, a July 2002 alumnus. "In the beginning, I looked at three different industry segments. I could only manage chemical in Europe for the job search." Nadim Saad, also a July 2002 alum, expresses the same common sentiment: "Even if you've got several interests, focus otherwise you don't know who to send applications to and you end up doing very little." Overall, the search veterans suggest finding the right level of focus, regarding both industry and geography, so that your base of target companies is large enough to find a job, but small enough to be covered effectively. Though individual circumstances may differ, this usually means focusing on one industry and one geography, though remaining open to opportunities outside of your focus area.

Using the Alumni Network

There is consensus among those surveyed that INSEAD's alumni network is very useful. The only reservations were expressed by those searching in areas without significant alumni coverage. "Results have been fantastic, although I could only find six people in the field I was looking in," says Rasha Al-Saleh, a student in the current January promotion.

Interestingly, those surveyed are quite divided as to the seniority of the alumni they contact. One current student recommends, "Carefully select the level/age of alumni (not too high, not too low)." However, another current student has been successful contacting only the most senior alumni in his target companies, noting that they are the most influential in their organizations, and are usually eager to help current students of their alma mater.

Most respondents have found that the best way to approach alumni is as recommended by CMS, that the first contact should ask for advice, rather than for a job. "[Use the first alumni contact as an] information gathering and entry point, to find the hiring manager and industry pulse," suggests one current student. Sara Foryt, a July 2002 alumna, agrees and says "informational interviewing is the best way to go about it if you really know what you want." In contrast, Sean Jones says, "I directly asked for a position in the company with the email and any help they could give in routing me to other people within the company who were interested. I attached a cover letter and resume on the first email." Though acting against the advice of CMS, he found that "50% of first contacts were successful in getting a response."

One current drawback of the

them are out on the job market as well," says Dekel Persi, a student in the January promotion.

Networking Outside of Alumni

"Yes! This is absolutely imperative," says one current student. "Relying just on alum contacts will only take you so far." Nadim Saad agrees and advises, "I think one underestimates the amount of people he can see with the limited amount of people he knows. One recommends you to the other, and it's a chain that can be very helpful!" However, one current student, interested in switching industries, laments that "where you want to go, you don't have a network."

Helpfulness of CMS

None of the survey respondents found CMS useful in finding contacts. However, one current student notes, "Honestly, I don't really think they can improve on the nitty gritty of the independent search, as that is what it is, independent." Many found that on issues other than contacts, CMS is quite useful. Sean Jones recounts, "They gave me salary info that helped my first targeting of industries." He also comments that "general interview info through Mary Boss was good." Despite this positive feedback, according to CMS, a smaller percentage of students are setting meetings with the CMS staff regarding independent job searches than ever before.

Perhaps the decreased use of CMS can be explained by the veterans' criticisms. One current student describes CMS as "understaffed. Only regarding OCR companies they provide useful information." A recent alum comments, "No one at CMS even knows that this niche (the alum's target industry) exists. Denise Couturier is the closest they have at CMS but she has about 50 different tasks, including focusing

so it's impossible to specialize." Outside of the independent search, one current student says, "CMS should be working a hell of a lot harder to get companies on campus." Another current student recommends, "They [the CMS staff] should spend 70% of their time on the road."

Other Tips and Tricks

"Start independent job search ASAP," says one current student. Sara Foryt agrees: "Time is incredibly limited at INSEAD and if you know what you want to do, why not expend more energy trying to get it?"

A few of the search veterans point to the difficulties in conducting job searches from Fontainebleau. "Realize that to do a thorough and good search you need to be in the geographic market you want to work in," says one of the current students. "The pressures of academic work at INSEAD coupled with living in backwoods France can be a challenge if you are looking for work outside Europe." Rasha Al-Saleh comments, "It is extremely difficult to search from Fontainebleau, so I'm putting off a lot of the work to post-graduation."

One of the current students surveyed summarized the advice of all the others, "Figure out what you really want to do, what's needed to succeed in that role, identify target firms, then network like hell getting as much information and contacts as possible in the industry."

Finally, on a positive note, Nadim Saad advises prospective independent searchers, "Never lose the faith, it's when you think that you really have no leads that something pops up!"

“STUDENTS ARE OUR STAKEHOLDER CUSTOMERS”

INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW MBA DIRECTOR INGER PETERSON BY CHAO

As I was looking for Inger's office for this interview I found out that the ground floor of the North Wing is a world of extreme gender inequality. Entering this remote corner of school from the MBA-male-dominated hemisphere, it seems as if one is tip-toeing in a sacred territory, say, a nunnery. In line with the offices of Brigitte, Catherine, Karen, Mary, Sylvan, Myrene there is the office for the new INSEAD MBA Director, Inger Peterson. I didn't ask Inger whether there is any man working in the MBA office, since I know that INSEAD is an equal opportunity employer. Maybe it's safer for MBA administration to put themselves so far away from the boisterous MBAs. Precious species need more protection, especially in this part of world that is called MBA Jungle.

Although located at this corner of the campus, of course Inger is not like an alien from Mars but Denmark. It is rumored that some Americans believe the two locations are actually the same place, but surely the INSEAD cosmopolitan students know where the Scandinavian country is. "Yes," joked Inger, "the Danes and the Finnish are very much alike, perhaps Pekka chose me because of our Scandinavian cultural background." "Sure," I nodded honestly, assuming that she was admitting how much she shares similarities with Pekka. Maybe having noticed my scared look, she added more words, "but the Danish culture is like the Mediterranean of the Scandinavian, we're more laid-back." Well, the last word sounds like what the INSEAD-ers like to hear about their MBA Director. True enough, Inger's job at INSEAD so far is neither Machiavellian, nor totally laidback.

As a new comer for a month, Inger has been talking to students section by section thus to learn more about her "customers". "Dialogue with the students is very important to me." Inger therefore decided to have direct talks with each promotion at least two to three times. As she pointed out, her job at INSEAD is to take care of MBA students from admission to graduation. It's like "working the operational side of the MBA Program," while Pekka, the MBA Dean, oversees the whole program especially the academic stuff, "the rest falls into my portfolio." Inger sees the process changing an applicant to an alumnus as a production progress. But she argues that INSEAD cannot treat this transformation as a pipeline work. "Otherwise we don't treat the MBA students like individuals." So her major job is to pay more attention to the students. "We must be able to put a name to a face," Inger speaks with a clear tone. Those grumbling MBA mass email writers might want to hear this by themselves. "Mass emails are great," affirmed Inger, "but we could communicate in more ways." Inger was referring to my question of the mass email system, which INSEAD community is very proud of.

After these spates of words, I couldn't help asking her what does she define her "Scandinavian character". She said before that the Scandinavians are "honest, ambitious, concentrate on tasks and do not waste time". And this time I heard the word I was waiting for. "I think I have a sense of humor." This may be the real power that has supported her to survive from the Scandinavian wind and the British rain. Born and educated in Denmark and then worked in the U.K., both enjoy world known reputation for their depressing weather, Inger has a cheerful smile. "But I can be very loud," Inger said

things don't move out fast. Well, that sounds reasonable. But I also hope she would not be too loud, for my own sake. As if to assure me, she said: " (primarily) I am a good listener."

That can be confirmed with her career track record. As the former executive education director of the London Business School, she had to be responsive and responsible at the same time. Then I asked her THE question, which every INSEADer was asked to answer for coming here. "So, tell me what is your greatest achievement to date?" Well, this is INSEAD; the MBA Director should have no exception. I eased my sense of guilt for asking such a cliché question. The launching of LBS-Columbia joint Executive program was her answer. She worked with her Columbia counterpart to turn this blueprint into reality. And "it was a very tough and difficult task." It reminded me of our last conversation. I teased her that INSEAD recruited her because we need her to use her executive program service to treat INSEAD MBAs. And it's true she does see her job as providing service. "Students spend much effort to be here now, we should make the experience work for the future." That's why she has been talking to students and wants to find out "what's going on around." According to Inger, MBA students are "stakeholder customers" for INSEAD as well as for the MBA program that she is taking care of.

"We all want INSEAD to succeed, and we should work together." This is the idea that Inger wants to communicate with the students. After all, she hoped the MBA program could turn the students into "alumni that INSEAD can turn to when needed." Ultimately it is to "make the network stay in form (lifelong)." I was a bit surprised while she explained her vision

of achieving this aim by smoothing the operational management of the MBA program. Sounds like the P.O.M bible GOAL. Hesitantly I asked her, "did you get an MBA degree?" knowing that might be another stupid question. I confessed to her that I was surprised with her using all those MBA buzzwords or frameworks better than me, a soon-to-be MBA holder. Inger didn't get an MBA, but a business education more humane instead: M.A. in Modern Languages from the Copenhagen Business School. I apologized diplomatically that I didn't mean all those business words are only created for MBAs. And she smiled forgivingly, "we people work with MBA programs also have a career, we are business people indeed." Fair enough. Under Inger's all-female-team-besides-Pekka future INSEAD students might experience the professional service previously only given to the Executives, Then my thoughts started wandering wildly: maybe INSEAD will give real perks other than free coffee and tea to MBA students. If we are the stakeholders, we need to see the dividends.

Looking out of Inger's window, across the lawn, there is the INSEAD bar area where free fruits are reserved only for the Executives. INSEAD hectic life is centered there. Then there is Freddy's bar. Crowded as usual. A bunch of macho people puffing cigarettes. Away from the piano, two men in shorts just came out from the squash court, radiating freshened (or flat-tened) libido, and looking around in vain. All of a sudden, some girl, surrounded by a group of not-adolescents-anymore men, bursts into laughter, in a way that deserves imprisonment in Victorian Age.

Well, guys, close your eyes and get ready to be mothered!

CUBICLE HEAVEN ... IF YOU'RE AN EXECUTIVE!

By Peter Clifford, Arndt Brockmann and Marc Gingras

It is often said that the quality of a restaurant is correlated with the cleanliness and overall appearance of the "facilities" – a.k.a. the bathroom, the toilet, the lavatory, the powder room, the dunny, the john, the jacks, or 'la becosse'. We were curious to see if this holds true for leading business schools and so we took a quick look at the "facilities" on three different continents: Singapore, Fontainebleau and Philadelphia (Wharton).



Check out the position of the soap dispenser. Many an INSEADER (on the job) has almost had a heart attack as someone washing their hands stretches over to get some soap

Wharton and Fontainebleau share the bronze prize.

Even though France is renowned for its cheese and saussisson, one would wish that such odours would not present themselves in the lavatory facilities on a regular basis. The lighting in a Fonti "cubicle" is similar to that on one of its famous dull winter's evening – it is near to impossible to read the National Week posters on the door in front of you, never mind the FT. Although it must be said it does keep any unpleasant wall stains out of the eye's reach.

For those who persist with their Swiss Army torch lamp, the administration has predicted your every move. In many of the cubicles, the door opens to within a couple of millimeters of the front of the bowl which makes entering

the WC a test of both balance and agility. After conquering this obstacle course, you are then faced with the impossibility of actually opening the paper in such a confined space.

On the positive side, things have certainly improved over the past year with the smart paint job that took place during August. Furthermore, Fonti's facilities offer condom vending machines which are a great service to the young teenagers from the local secondary school, who come by the bar to check their hotmail accounts for free. Fonti's cubicles also offer the added benefit of the "Neat Seat" (disposable toilet seat), which says more about the users lack of respect for others than anything else. This same lack of common respect is seen when people constantly miss the bins with their used paper towels.

The fact that the main Wharton building is newer gives it an edge over its French counterpart. Being very American, functionality rules the day, with no inclination towards luxury. Although the number of cubicles is quite high, the urinals are located at the back of the room, often requiring experience with American football or rugby maneuvers to get through the congestion near the hand washing area. Furthermore, the covered waste baskets often create a boundary for wet paper towels, resulting in a pile of garbage beside the original target. Toilet maintenance doesn't seem to be a



Wharton - basic but clean and very functional (like a good set of Penn financials!)

top priority and it was only recently that one urinal was out of order for over three weeks.

Coming in second place, Singapore's facilities incorporate all the desired elements of convenience, even displaying a touch of luxury: indirect lighting, fresh flowers, warm creamy colors, automatic air-fresheners, and spotless cleanliness. One has the distinct feeling of stepping into the well-maintained bathrooms of an upper-class hotel or restaurant. An army of service staff is in constant action to maintain the standard and make sure the tidiness does not drop. Small, yet intelligent details show the professional mindedness of the architect – a door stopper functioning as a hanger which is a real life saver for those in full business attire.

Like everything in Singapore, the bathrooms in INSEAD are extremely efficient. The lights are sensor controlled and switch on as you enter the doorway. The problem is that the timer has been set with efficient Singaporeans in mind and not us magazine reading Westerners who make up the majority of INSEAD's community. Those who prefer to read their favorite mag in the privacy of a cubicle are often shocked when they find themselves left completely in the dark!

Pipping Singapore to the post for the gold medal is none other than Fontainebleau's Executive Palace. The cubicles here have nice soft toilet paper, are spotlessly clean and even have a bowl of pot pouri and eau de toilette by the wash basins.

Let's hope we're not moving down the road to having the same rules



Singapore - always important to outdoor FBL with small details. Check out the fresh orchids and shining cleanliness!

implemented for "facility" cubicles as for study cubicles – i.e. "Cubicles with reserved signs are space reserved in priority for executive programs. MBA participants should make way for executive participants as soon as required." Such a procedure could lead to some very interesting confrontations indeed!

Of course, having two standards on the one campus is something that really gets to the MBA com-



The Executive cubicles have it all eau de toilette, pot pouri and soft paper towels

munity and with French week on the go one hopes that it doesn't end as a rally on the street.

One thing is for sure however – with a concerted effort at picking some of the low hanging fruit, Fonti's MBA cubicles could be improved significantly. With some more light, a touch of air freshener and a little more cleanliness (which the students could help with), one's private moments could be that little bit more like "Cubicle Heaven"!