



INSEAD

The Business School  
for the World®

ALUMNI PERSPECTIVES FRANCE



INSEAD

The INSEAD logo features the word "INSEAD" in a dark green, serif, all-caps font. Below the text is a horizontal line with a small, symmetrical decorative flourish in the center.

ALUMNI PERSPECTIVES  
FRANCE

“ Without action, the  
world would still be an idea”  
– Georges Doriot,  
INSEAD Founder  
(1899-1987)

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## From the Dean

It is my pleasure to present ***Alumni Perspectives***, a series that spotlights, by country, INSEAD's trailblazing alumni and pays tribute to the accomplishments of our exceptional National Alumni Associations (NAAs).

Less than six decades after its inception, INSEAD has topped the *Financial Times* global business school rankings two years in a row (#1 MBA in 2016 & 2017). High-calibre students from over 70 countries bolster their knowledge across three state-of-the-art campuses – in Fontainebleau, Singapore, and Abu Dhabi – as well as via exchange programmes with select institutions around the world. Our unparalleled global alumni network includes 48 NAAs, over 56,000 alumni, and spans 170 countries. The founders' bold and pioneering vision has become a reality.

As we celebrate this powerful international presence, and seek innovative responses to quickly evolving global challenges, it is essential that we invoke our school's extraordinary history. But it is equally important that we distil reflections from today's expanding INSEAD community, and draw upon them to reach our highest aspirations.

Within this series, you will hear from inspiring alumni whose journeys weave the very fabric of INSEAD's identity. Industry leaders, entrepreneurs and contributors to their communities, they have found exemplary ways to harness 'business as a force for good' at both a global and local level.

These featured alumni speak of a transformative experience at INSEAD. They also describe an enduring set of values that has guided them throughout their careers. They embrace diversity and embody a truly global mindset, born of intense multicultural immersion. Throughout the interviews, they express gratitude for the extensive support of their professors and INSEAD peers around the world, and encourage engagement in the vibrant Alumni Associations.

As Dean, I am fortunate to have heard many of these compelling stories first-hand. I believe they are worth sharing. Now, I invite you to discover them, and to learn more about INSEAD's living worldwide legacy.

Ilian Mihov  
Dean  
INSEAD



## Letter from the NAA President

Welcome to this first edition of *'INSEAD Perspectives: France'*!

I'm delighted to invite you to explore INSEAD's footprint in France, and to hear some of our alumni leaders' reflections on the INSEAD advantage.

As you have seen in the media, the relentless innovation and development of our School over the past decades has brought INSEAD worldwide recognition.

In addition to global prominence, INSEAD also enjoys a very privileged status in France, for several reasons:

- INSEAD was founded here over 60 years ago in 1957. Following the creation of two additional, state-of-the-art campuses in Singapore and Abu Dhabi, INSEAD invested heavily to renovate the original campus in Fontainebleau, bringing it to the highest level of modernity.
- While the INSEAD network is now strong around the world, in France, you can still meet the largest number of INSEAD stakeholders: students, faculty, staff, volunteers and alumni. Out of more than 54,000 INSEAD alumni globally, over 6,000 are currently working in France.
- The INSEAD Alumni Association France is the most active in the world, hosting around 250 events every year. A few examples are our instances of Global INSEAD Day (a day celebrated around the world by the INSEAD community) which in 2016 was attended by Dean Ilian Mihov, and the Global INSEAD Alumni Forum Europe hosted in Paris in June 2017.

Our events are a unique occasion to combine professional networking, social gathering and friendship, corporate conferences, business angel investment, knowledge sharing between entrepreneurs, career counselling, arts and lifelong learning.

An extremely dedicated Executive Committee, a fantastic Director – Thomas – and our formidable staff – Béatrice, Magali and Adeline – lead the active volunteers of the INSEAD Alumni Association France (more than 100 in total!) All are 100% committed to making our vision – to **Inspire, Grow and Connect the Alumni Community in France** – a reality.

The coming pages will introduce you briefly to some of our dynamic activities and alumni. Enjoy!

Amicalement,  
Jean-Marc Liduena  
MBA'99J  
President, INSEAD Alumni Association France







# National Alumni Associations

INSEAD has the most globally robust alumni network of any business school, with 48 active National Alumni Associations (NAAs), and over 56,000 alumni spanning 170 countries.

NAAs are typically established in countries where there are at least 100 resident alumni. Their purpose is to further strengthen the alumni community within that country, and to increase opportunities for alumni to connect on multiple levels with one another, the faculty, and the school.

While many other schools are able to claim an international alumni base, none have the breadth and depth of the global INSEAD network.



France Alumni Association Annual Event, Paris



## National Alumni Association France

### Inspire, Grow & Connect

#### **Diverse Offerings, Strong Engagement**

Every year, the INSEAD France Alumni Association organises around 250 events, which draw a total of over 3,800 participants.

#### **High-Profile Interactions**

Participants and speakers have included, among others: Carlos Ghosn, Hubert Védrine, Arnaud Montebourg, Clara Gaymard, and Pascal Lamy.

#### **Lifelong Career Development**

The 40 'Clubs' (with themes from 'Innovation & Design' to 'Retail, Consumer & Luxury Goods'), organise more than 100 conferences and 80 career workshops on three main themes: Job Search, Career Development, and Leadership Development. The 'Carrières' office further facilitates professional development for alumni via ample resources and tailored personal career counselling.

#### **Comprehensive Support for Entrepreneurs**

The 'Swiss Knife Committee' serves as an essential base for entrepreneurs, offering legal, strategic and financial advice.

#### **Extended Footprint**

Over 30 regional events cater to alumni around the country.

# History of the INSEAD Alumni Association France

## 1960:

Following the graduation of the first INSEAD MBA class, Jean-Marie d'Arjuzon (MBA'60) and classmates create the International INSEAD Alumni Association. As President, d'Arjuzon is responsible for INSEAD alumni activities in France, and lays the groundwork for the Association.

## 1966:

Florian Walewski (MBA'63) becomes President of the Association, which still functions informally.

## 1968:

Michel Gauthier (MBA'61) becomes President. The 'INSEAD France Group' (Groupe INSEAD France) is officially created.

## 1970:

Henri-Paul Mâle (MBA'65) becomes President and develops the Alumni Directory.

## 1971:

Successive Presidents Dominique Dupard (MBA'65) and Jean-François Pérard (MBA '68) give lasting structure to the 'France Group'. Pérard secures complimentary secretary service from his employer (McKinsey), while Dupard launches the 'Class Representatives' initiative, which Pérard leads personally.

## 1975:

The Association reaches 300 paying members.

## 1978:

Gérard Lacape (MBA'69) becomes President. With Henri Frisch et Dusan Radivojevic, Lacape initiates the 'International Career Service' or 'ICS' (further developed in the 80's by Christian de Joussineau and Victor Méreau). The Association also launches the 'Newsletter' and the 'Business Club' – the latter welcomes prominent figures like Raymond Barre and Jacques Chirac. Lacape creates the first permanent consultation structure with INSEAD (Alyette Vickery). By the end of Lacape's mandate, the Association reaches 1,000 paying members.

## 1983:

On 13 July, the statutes of the INSEAD Alumni Association France are written. They are subsequently signed by 12 prominent alumni. New President Bernard Courtaud (MBA '72) raises visibility for the Association by organising capital campaigns for INSEAD, targeting French business leaders. The 'Business Club' becomes a staple of the Association, thanks to the dedication of Evelyne Sevin and Pierre Fouques du Parc. The 'France Group' begins to play an essential role in mentoring the new National Alumni



Associations, as they are created around the world.

### **1988:**

Jean-Michel Foliot (MBA'64) becomes President. He digitises the office, reinforces the network of Class Representatives, and raises the profile of INSEAD alumni in France by creating 'l'INSEAD de l'Année', a prestigious event (Prime Minister Michel Rocard presides over the first edition). By the end of Foliot's mandate, the 'France Group' reaches 1,665 paying members.

### **1992:**

Bernard Ginet (MBA'71) becomes President. During this period, the number of industry Clubs, events, and staff multiplies. Gérard Rodach and Pierre Taillandier are instrumental in developing the 'Newsletter' into an essential tool for alumni connectivity. The INSEAD de l'Année', (renamed the 'Trophées INSEAD') has grown into a successful annual event. In addition, thanks to alumni efforts and to the tenacity of Treasurer Patrick Ollivier, the Association acquires its first offices, on Rue Médéric.

### **1999:**

Jérôme de Vitry (MBA'85J) serves as President,

succeeded in interim by Florian Walewski.

### **2002:**

Jean du Lac (MBA'85) and Alix de Poix (MBA'78) become Co-Presidents. De Poix later joins the 'International Council at Large', while du Lac is re-elected President and introduces participative management within the team, to handle the Association's growing responsibilities.

### **2005:**

The Association hosts alumni for an official 'Open House' in the newly acquired and renovated offices located on Rue de l'Arc de Triomphe. By the end of du Lac's mandate, the 'France Group' numbers 2,304 paying members (out of 5,222 total alumni living or working in France.)

### **2006:**

Jean-Philippe Grosmaître (MBA'99J) is elected President.

### **2010:**

During the 'Extraordinary General Assembly' held on February 11, the 'France Group' takes the official name 'INSEAD Alumni Association France'. On the same day, during the 'Ordinary General Assembly' Daniel Fulda (MBA'80J) is elected President. During the 2009-2010

period, 184 events are held. Fulda presides over the 12<sup>th</sup> 'Trophées INSEAD' held in the prestigious Hôtel de Ville in Paris.

### **2011:**

Gérard Lacape becomes interim President until November, when Jean-Marc Liduena (MBA'99J) is elected.

### **2017:**

Thomas Bittner elected as the new President of the France Alumni Association on November 22.

## France Alumni Association Events & Activities

### How to Make the World a Better Place

Over three dynamic editions of this event, the France Alumni Association was honoured to welcome as speakers and participants world-class INSEAD faculty, distinguished alumni, and emblematic leaders from across the world. The overarching theme emphasised three essential 'enablers' – diversity, digitalisation, and education – as well as encouraging and stimulating current and future leaders to use 'business as a force for good' in today's world. This unique annual Paris event, with its compelling focus, attracts the best and brightest leaders of today and tomorrow.







## Global INSEAD Day

In 2016, the fourth edition of this international event took place in an iconic art gallery in the heart of Paris. More than 300 alumni joined Dean Ilian Mihov to celebrate INSEAD, to network with fellow INSEAD graduates and purely to enjoy! NAA France President Jean-Marc Liduena took the stage to emphasise the key role of the Alumni Association in bringing together the global INSEAD community, while reinforcing key goals of the French NAA: to inspire the INSEAD community in France, to grow the strength of the INSEAD network through an ever-closer partnership with the School, and to connect INSEAD Alumni in France.



## Alumni Forum Europe

### Digital Transformation: A Force for a Better World?

In June 2017, the INSEAD Alumni Association France hosted 450 alumni from over 30 countries in three iconic venues – The Palais de Tokyo, the Palais Chaillot and the Automobile club de France – to discuss the following topics:

- The current and emerging technological trends and resulting major digital, social and technical disruptions;
- How these disruptions impact business models, leadership and management practices, employees and broader society;
- And finally, how businesses will translate these new possibilities into strategies, commercial success in the global market in terms of new innovative business models, jobs, education and life-long learning.



# La *France* dans l'économie globale








# 10 propositions pour une revitalisation de l'industrie française

Face à la montée persistante du chômage, des déficits, de la dette et du déclin continu de l'industrie dans l'économie française, le G17 s'est fixé trois axes de réflexion principaux:

- Identifier les 'fardeaux' qui entravent l'économie et les entreprises françaises.
- Proposer des mesures visant à éliminer ces 'fardeaux' et remettre les entreprises françaises sur un pied d'égalité avec leurs concurrentes directes provenant des grands pays industriels, à commencer par ceux de l'Union Européenne.
- Explorer comment les entreprises pourraient contribuer à la baisse significative et durable du chômage et du déficit commercial.



Ce rapport représente l'angle de vue de l'entreprise, porté par les hommes qu'elle emploie. C'est aussi un regard qui ne limite pas l'entreprise au marché français mais la considère en permanence dans son contexte de concurrence mondialisée; une dimension trop souvent ignorée des acteurs publics et sociaux français. Depuis des décennies, les parts relatives de l'industrie française dans la constitution du PIB et dans la population active sont en recul et n'ont été que très partiellement compensées par le développement des services. Les constats relatifs au recul relatif de l'industrie française, tels que le manque de compétitivité, sont pour la plupart déjà connus. Le G17 s'attache plus particulièrement à mettre en évidence la multiplicité des causes de la désindustrialisation – aujourd'hui toujours à l'œuvre! – et les responsabilités qui tiennent au comportement des chefs d'entreprise, des responsables syndicaux, des citoyens, des décisions et non-décisions des pouvoirs publics. Au-delà de la désindustrialisation du territoire français, le G17 pointe l'impact du déficit en PME et ETI. En effet, la France et l'Allemagne ont un nombre de très petites entreprises (TPE) et de grands groupes dont le ratio correspond à celui des populations des deux pays. Si ce ratio était maintenu pour les PME/ETI, il y aurait en France quelques deux millions d'emplois marchands en plus. Partant de ce constat relatif à des conditions spécifiques à la France, le G17 pense que pour tirer parti de ce gisement d'emplois, il est urgent que la législation, les normes, les réglementations, l'attitude de l'administration tiennent compte des spécificités des PME et ETI et les différencient enfin de celles des grands groupes. Du point de vue du G17, les initiatives prises par les pouvoirs publics depuis quatre décennies n'ont souvent

adressé qu'un volet du sujet et ont souffert à la fois de l'absence de plans d'envergure et du manque de prise en compte des impacts concurrentiels sur les entreprises. Fort de ce constat, le G17 propose un ensemble cohérent de dix propositions qui adressent les problématiques à la fois de la sphère du monde de l'entreprise et de celles à l'interface, à savoir celle du domaine social et celle des pouvoirs publics. A responsabilité partagée, devoirs partagés. Les préconisations vis-à-vis de la 'sphère économique', s'adressent essentiellement aux PME et ETI et distinguent trois niveaux: Premièrement, au niveau individuel, l'application systématique de la démarche stratégique trop souvent mise en retrait par les dirigeants de ce type d'entreprises. Deuxièmement, au niveau collectif, la participation aux 'filères métiers' de façon à être tirées par les leaders de la profession et profiter des 'effets de meute' en recherche, développement, formation, développement à l'étranger, et ainsi, faire mieux face à une concurrence intensive sur des marchés désormais mondialisés. Enfin, au niveau global, la concentration-rationalisation du 'millefeuille' de la représentation du monde entrepreneurial en créant des 'Maison des Entreprises' tant en France qu'à l'étranger qui regrouperaient les missions, compétences et moyens aujourd'hui disséminés et trop souvent redondants. Quant à la « sphère sociale », le G17 propose de structurer le dialogue social autour d'un organe unique de représentation du personnel : tout dialogue direct et responsable est un gage d'efficacité. Si travailler davantage est incontournable pour cesser de se constituer un handicap de compétitivité par rapport aux autres pays, l'augmentation de la durée annuelle du temps de travail doit être accompagnée d'autres dispositions comme une nouvelle approche sur les heures supplémentaires et l'organisation du travail.

Enfin le redéploiement de l'apprentissage est préconisé pour remettre la France au niveau des pays voisins. Concernant la 'sphère publique', le G17 propose une refonte de la fiscalité des entreprises, des actionnaires et des transmissions. La fiscalité des entreprises sera essentiellement basée sur le résultat au travers de l'IS et l'IRS – nouvel impôt sur le résultat à percevoir par les régions – et seront supprimées la plupart des taxes assises sur le Chiffre d'Affaires ou la masse salariale. La CFE – Cotisation foncière des entreprises – sera maintenue. La fiscalité des actionnaires et des investisseurs sera mise en cohérence avec l'objectif de revitalisation de même que des mesures pour faciliter le développement et la transmission des entreprises patrimoniales, 14 % seulement des entreprises françaises étant transmises à la génération suivante, contre plus de 50 % pour les autres pays européens. Les hommes et femmes auditionnés pour leur expérience de management d'entreprises implantées tant en France qu'à l'étranger – et donc quotidiennement en prise avec les avantages et inconvénients du contexte français – ont unanimement émis des souhaits de refonte du Code du Travail, de flexibilité, de stabilité législative et réglementaire, de simplification administrative et normative... Le G17 a voulu se limiter à dix propositions, de mise en œuvre simple et rapide, dont chacune prise séparément est certes nécessaire mais totalement insuffisante pour provoquer un choc de confiance et débloquent des comportements figés depuis trop longtemps. La mise en place de ce bloc de dix propositions ne vise pas

à engendrer une révolution mais à mettre en place un processus. Ainsi réduire la pression fiscale libérera du pouvoir d'achat pour les particuliers et améliorera la compétitivité et la marge des entreprises. Cette relance de la consommation des particuliers permettra aux entreprises de reconstituer leurs carnets de commande. L'élimination simultanée des freins à l'embauche que constituent la législation sociale, les seuils... facilitera le redémarrage des embauches. Simultanément, les mesures de taxation des revenus qui reconnaîtront le risque d'entreprendre et la nécessité de rémunérer les investisseurs, incitera les décideurs à investir. C'est donc un processus qui permettra de réamorcer la croissance, développer des emplois en milieu marchand et redonner de la confiance aux Français.

Face à l'objection des Politiques qui voudraient que la France soit impossible à réformer, le G17 met en avant le fait que les entreprises françaises conduisent avec succès, depuis des décennies, des processus de réforme pour affronter victorieusement une concurrence mondialisée. Le G7 met aussi en avant le fait que cela suppose une vision – et non une idéologie –, une pédagogie pour la faire partager, une méthodologie pour la mettre en œuvre, de la détermination, du courage et de la constance pour la conduire. Enfin, la nécessaire prise en compte que le temps de l'industrie n'est ni celui du politique, ni celui des médias: du stade de développement à sa mise en œuvre jusqu'à la rentabilisation des investissements, le temps industriel correspond à un quinquennat pour des produits de grande consommation et en multiples de

quinquennat pour des biens d'équipements. Cela impose de la part des politiques au pouvoir, de prendre les décisions en temps voulu – même si les résultats seront au-delà du quinquennat – et d'obtenir un consensus de long terme de l'ensemble des parties prenantes.

L'analyse de l'acceptabilité des propositions par les diverses parties prenantes met en évidence que toutes ont beaucoup à gagner et peu à perdre. Dans la mesure où les parties prenantes ont une responsabilité partagée dans la situation actuelle de la France, il y a urgence à ce qu'elles changent leurs logiciels de pensée et de fonctionnement, ceux-ci ayant démontré depuis des décennies leur incapacité à inverser la spirale négative en cours. Un projet cohérent, bien expliqué, bien conduit est un projet gagnant pour toutes les parties prenantes concernées. Donc pour la société française.

*Rapport écrit par Aldo d'Incau (MBA'71) et Jean Cantoni (AMP'89 Oct) avec le soutien très actif de Didier Groz (MBA'71), Alain Pujol (MBA'91J) et Jean-Christophe Fritsch, membres du G17, Groupe de réflexion d'Anciens élèves de l'INSEAD.*

# France

in the global  
economy








## 10 proposals for a revitalisation of French industry

Faced with the persistent rise in unemployment, deficits, debt and the continuous decline of industry within the French economy, the G17 has set three main focuses for reflection:

- Identifying the 'burdens' that impede French economy and business.
- Proposing measures to eliminate these 'burdens' and to set French companies on an equal footing with their direct competitors from major industrial countries, starting with those in the European Union.
- Exploring how companies might contribute to a significant and lasting drop in unemployment and trade deficit.



This report is presented from the perspective of such companies, led by the people they employ. It is also a standpoint that does not restrict companies to the French market, but which instead lastingly considers companies from within their context of global competition; a dimension that is too often ignored by French public and social actors. For decades, the relative shares of French industry in the constitution of GDP and in the active population have been declining and have only been very partially offset by the development of services. The findings about the relative decline of French industry, such as the lack of competitiveness, are for the most part already known.

The G17 is particularly interested in highlighting the multiplicity of causes of deindustrialisation – still active and pertinent today – and the responsibilities for such relating to the behaviour of business leaders, trade union leaders, citizens, and the decisions and non-decisions of public authorities. Beyond the deindustrialisation of the French sphere, the G17 notes the impact of the deficit in SMEs and mid-cap companies. Indeed, France and Germany have a number of very small companies and large groups whose ratio corresponds to that of the populations of the two countries. Were this ratio maintained for SMEs / mid-cap companies, there would be some two million more commercial jobs in France. Based on this observation of conditions specific to France, the G17 believes that in order to take advantage of this source of employment, it is urgent that legislation, standards, regulations and the attitude of the administration take account of the specific attributes of SMEs and mid-cap companies and subsequently differentiate them from those of large groups.

From the perspective of the G17, over the last four decades, government initiatives have often

addressed only one part of the issue and have suffered both from a lack of major planning and a lack of awareness of the competitive impacts on businesses. With this in mind, the G17 proposes a coherent set of ten proposals to address the issues of both the business world and those at the interface, namely those within the social field and the public authorities.

The recommendations concerning the 'economic sphere' are mainly aimed at SMEs and mid-cap companies, and distinguish three perspectives. First, from an individual perspective, the systematic application of the strategic approach, too often impeded or ignored by the leaders of these types of company. Second, from a collective perspective, participation in the 'professional sectors' to be driven by the leaders of the profession, and done so as to profit from pack effects in research, development, training and expansion abroad, thereby coping far better with the intense competition in now-globalised markets. Finally, from a general perspective, a concentration-rationalisation of the myriad articulations of the entrepreneurial world by creating Business Centres, both in France and abroad, in order to bring together the initiatives, skills and resources which are presently scattered or displaced and too often redundant.

As for the 'social sphere', the G17 proposes to structure the social discourse through a single body of worker representation: any direct and responsible dialogue is a guarantee of efficiency. If working more is unavoidable in order to cease remaining at a competitive disadvantage compared to other countries, the increase in the annual duration of working time must be accompanied by other provisions such as a new approach to overtime and

work organisation. Finally, the redeployment of apprenticeship is recommended to put France back at the level of neighbouring countries.

Concerning the 'public sphere', the G17 proposes a recasting of corporate, shareholder and transmission taxation. Corporate taxation will essentially be based on profit collected by the corporation tax and through a new tax on profit to be collected by the Régions – while most of the taxes based on sales revenues and payroll will be phased-out. The corporate tax assessed on the rental value of properties will be maintained. Taxation of shareholders and investors will be consistent with the goal of revitalisation, and measures implemented to facilitate the development and transmission of owner-managed companies, with only 14% of French companies presently being passed on to the next generation, versus more than 50% for other European countries.

The men and women who were auditioned for their management experience of companies established both in France and abroad – and therefore in daily touch with the advantages and disadvantages of the French context – have unanimously expressed the wish to recast the Labour Code, and to push for more flexibility, more legislative and regulatory stability, as well as administrative and normative simplification.

The G17 wanted to limit itself to ten proposals, all simple and fast to implement, and each of which, when taken separately, is certainly necessary, but totally insufficient to cause a confidence boost; as well as to unlock

behaviours that have been frozen for too long. The implementation of this set of ten proposals is not intended to generate a revolution, but to establish a process. Thus, reducing the tax burden will boost the buying power of individuals and will improve the competitiveness and margin of the companies. This boost in household consumption will allow businesses to fill their order books. A simultaneous phase-out of the freeze on hiring, social legislation, thresholds and so forth will re-stimulate recruitment. At the same time, income taxation measures that recognise the business risk and the need to pay investors will encourage decision-makers to invest. It is thus a process that will reinitiate growth, develop commercial jobs and restore French people's confidence.

Faced with the objections of those politicians who would like France to be impossible to reform, the G17 points to the fact that French companies have successfully carried out reform processes to face globalised competition, and done so winningly, for decades. The G17 also highlights the fact that this presupposes a vision – not an ideology – and a pedagogy with which to share it, a methodology with which to implement it, and the determination, courage and consistency to carry it out.

Finally, there exists the need to consider that the time of industry is neither the same as that of the political sphere, nor that of the media: from the stage of development up until implementation, and then beyond to the profitability of the investments, industrial time corresponds to a five-year term for consumer goods and to multiple five-year terms for capital

goods. This requires the politicians in power to take decisions in a timely manner – even if the results are expected after the five-year term – and to obtain a long-term consensus of all the stakeholders.

The analysis of the acceptability of the proposals by the various stakeholders highlights that all have a lot to gain and little to lose. Since stakeholders have a shared responsibility in the current situation of France, it is urgent that they change their thought-patterns and functioning, as they have been demonstrating their inability to reverse the downward spiral for decades. A coherent, well-explained, well-conducted project is a winning project for all relevant stakeholders.

*Report written by Aldo d'Incau (MBA'71) and Jean Cantoni (AMP'89 Oct) with very active support from Didier Groz (MBA'71), Alain Pujol (MBA'91J) and Jean-Christophe Fritsch, members of the G17, a think tank of INSEAD alumni.*



# INSEAD's Global Community

This satellite map reflects INSEAD as the most diverse, international business school in the world.

The dots represent clusters of more than 56,000 alumni across 170 countries who transcend boundaries, nationalities, languages, and cultures to do business in new and exciting ways, every day. With 48 National Alumni Associations, INSEAD has both an unparalleled global reach and a strong local voice.

With integrated campuses in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, and alliances with top institutions spanning the globe, each individual student at INSEAD benefits not only from a cutting-edge business education, but also from intense cultural exchanges beyond the classroom.

A key driver of INSEAD's excellence – our faculty – also come from every corner of the world. International thought leaders in their fields, they are widely recognised for their groundbreaking research, innovative teaching methods, and award-winning business cases.





WORLD MAP LEGEND:

- Alumni
- Executive Education Participants
- National Alumni Associations
- INSEAD Campuses

In addition, over 150,000 professionals hailing from six continents have attended INSEAD's leading executive development programmes – subsequently bringing back nuanced perspectives and proven best practices to their companies, communities, and countries.

Today more than ever, INSEAD's vision of 'business as a force for good' is essential in developing thoughtful, passionate, skilled, and value-driven global business leaders.

**3,311**  
MBA

**230**  
EMBA & EMFin

**41**  
PhD

**2,758**  
Executive  
Education

Alumni Chapters:  
Paris, Lyon, Marseille and Bordeaux

**6,340**  
INSEAD Alumni  
based in France

\*As of September 2017

# Alumni Reflections

At INSEAD, diversity goes far beyond the number of nationalities per class. It's a genuine, continuous and spontaneous series of encounters. With 159 nationalities represented, our alumni are citizens of the world.

In the words of one graduate, INSEAD students 'experience the world as it ought to be', and become dedicated to extending that experience through their subsequent life and career choices – in their own countries, as well as internationally.

This aspect of the INSEAD culture is an invaluable asset for today's leaders, who must think and act both locally and globally, in an increasingly hyper-connected world.

The following featured alumni are representative of the INSEAD mindset and qualities – demonstrating authenticity, originality, and passion for making a global impact at a local level.



## Agnès Lemarchand

MBA'84J

Non Executive Director

Saint-Gobain – Solvay – BioMérieux – CGG

Agnès Lemarchand currently serves on the Board of Directors of Saint-Gobain, Solvay and BioMérieux. She is ex Chairman/CEO of Lafarge Chaux and ex Executive Chairman of Steetley Dolomite Limited. Agnès has 30 years of international leadership experience in industries including chemistry, energy, and biotechnology. She was a member of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, third assembly of the French Republic, and in 2015 she founded Orchard, dedicated to advising and financing startups primarily in the field of deep-tech technologies. Agnès is senior adviser in the global non-profit "Hello Tomorrow", which empowers and connects deep-tech enterprises worldwide, and is also active in NGO 'Pour un sourire d'enfant'. She also holds an MSc in Biochemical Engineering from MIT and an Engineering degree from ENSCP.



**What were you doing before your MBA, and what drew you to INSEAD?**

I started my career in the chemical industry, working for Rhone Poulenc in France as a production manager. I had gaps in my management experience and wanted to reinforce my business knowledge. The INSEAD MBA program complemented my engineering background, and I knew it would significantly boost my career.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD gave them the opportunity to jump from a local business environment to a global business career. Was this the case for you?**

Absolutely. After my MBA I went back to Rhône-Poulenc, where I oversaw the acquisition of a biotechnology business. Following the acquisition, I was named CEO of the company in the US, in order to capture opportunities in the world's fastest-growing biotechnology market. This was a major advancement in my career that would probably not have been possible before my MBA.

**Looking back at your experience in the study groups during the programme, what stood out the most for you?**

The extremely multicultural experience. Diversity is a key concept at INSEAD, and has been essential to my career – especially in a world where business is now global. Living together with other students also helped us build strong links, making the INSEAD network all the more robust.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD was 'transformational'. Would you say the same?**

My year at INSEAD was indeed a unique experience. It deeply impacted not only my career, but also my personality and my open-mindedness.

“ You can learn a great deal – on both a personal and professional level – from every other student in your promotion.”

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

Business knowledge, significant career advancement, and lifelong friends.

**Which classes influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Strategy and Marketing. I realised that value creation for stakeholders starts with a robust strategy.

**For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD and the global alumni community?**

It's all about networking. It is always a pleasure to participate in dinners with other alumni, to get involved in discussion groups, and to stay in contact with INSEAD friends.

**How would you describe INSEAD's values?**

Open-mindedness and a taste for excellence.

**What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

Take advantage of the full range of what INSEAD offers – not only the academics, but also all the extracurricular activities, and the multiculturalism. You can learn a great deal – on both a personal and professional level – from every other student in your promotion.

## Ahmad Hassan

MBA'88D

Partner, Technology & Digital Transformation  
Heidrick & Struggles

Ahmad Hassan is a Partner in Heidrick & Struggles' Paris office, leading the Technology and Digital Transformation Practice. The holder of two US patents in digital imaging and transmission, he has been involved in building and developing leadership teams to turn around public and private-equity-owned companies, and to foster innovation and change. Prior to leaving corporate life for executive search, Ahmad was an executive with AT&T, where one of his last roles was to lead Service Delivery for the Network Outsourcing Division across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. His early career was with IBM, where he spent 10 years in sales and consulting. Ahmad is a co-leader of Career Development for the INSEAD Alumni Association France.





### **What do you consider the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

Besides the lasting friendships, the self-confidence of having a diverse toolbox. To be successful in an international career, one needs to be comfortable working across cultures, and effective in dealing with a wide variety of viewpoints. I cannot think of a better environment than INSEAD to get that experience.

### **Do any examples come to mind?**

I believed that I had a multicultural perspective before INSEAD, until I met my extremely culturally diverse study group. During an early 'Survival in the Desert' game, we were one of only two groups who actually scored better individually than as a group! We held an 'emergency meeting' to change how we interacted with each other, and learned how to respect one another's opinions, and trust one another's judgment. This has stayed with me throughout my career.

### **What were you doing before INSEAD, and how did your career evolve after graduation?**

Thanks to my INSEAD experience, I evolved from an IT engineer – with working experience in only one country (Egypt) – to roles in IBM in the UK, and AT&T in France and the US. I came back to lead a business across Europe, which would have been inconceivable if I had stayed on my original career trajectory in one country. INSEAD was a truly transformational year.

### **Which class influenced you the most?**

Organisational Behaviour. Professor Michael Brimm opened my eyes to the 'hows and whys' of human behaviour. This has been invaluable to succeeding as an Executive Search and Assessment Consultant.

### **What makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

The diversity of both the student body and the professors. Unlike at other business schools, here is no one nationality or culture that dominates.

“ INSEAD was a truly transformational year.

### **How have you been involved with the alumni community, and do you see a common set of values or mindset, despite the diversity?**

Even though the MBA programme is only 10 months long, it is such an intense experience that it creates bonds that can last a lifetime. Despite moving countries – and continents – I was always able to connect with like-minded alumni within the network. Over the past five years, I have also become actively involved with the Career Services of the Alumni Association France. The alumni I have met over the years have a global mindset. Unrestricted by national boundaries, they are comfortable living and working anywhere in the world.

### **What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

Do not overly focus on grades. Open your mind to new ideas, learn new skills, make connections, develop friendships, enjoy the experience and stay in touch with the alumni community!

## Albin Jacquemont

MBA'92J

Executive Vice-President and CFO  
Altran

Albin Jacquemont joined Paris-listed Altran Technologies – a global leader in engineering and R&D – in 2016, as Executive Vice-President and group Chief Financial Officer. He previously served as Finance Director of Darty plc, achieving quick results by launching a cash enhancement programme, and providing support for the IPO. Prior to that role, from 1998 to 2011 Albin held several senior roles at Carrefour, including Group Financial Controller and CFO of Carrefour France, during which time he contributed to the turnaround of this €35bn business. He also served as CFO of Lyonnaise Communications at Lyonnaise des Eaux from 1992 to 1998. Albin started his career at Arthur Andersen, and also holds a degree from Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris.



### **What drew you to INSEAD?**

The quality of the professors, and the unparalleled international network.

### **Which class or professor influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Some students (including myself, to be honest) regarded Organisational Behaviour (OB) as a kind of 'distraction' from classes with harder themes. As you progress in your career, however, you realise that technical skills or knowledge become a less important factor of success than understanding the environment, inspiring people and being able to make an impact. Michael Brimm's OB course brought us an enduring awareness of that.

### **What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

Besides lifelong friendships, INSEAD gave me clarity of vision: to know – and be comfortable with that knowledge – when I'm right, when I'm wrong, and when (sometimes!) I don't know.

### **How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

The diversity of the student body (I'll never forget convening for the first time with my

study group), the quality of the academics, and the connections to global companies were all instrumental.

### **Did INSEAD influence you personally, as well as professionally?**

Besides impacting my own career, it also influenced to some extent the education of my children.

“ INSEAD values are about pushing boundaries, be it the way you view the world, or the way you see yourself.

### **For you, what's the best way of staying connected to INSEAD?**

By giving back – both time and financial support – and of course attending alumni reunions!

### **A consistent theme for alumni, from across classes, is that they feel they left INSEAD with a set of values. How would you describe those values?**

INSEAD values are about pushing boundaries, be it the way you view the world, or the way you see yourself.

### **How has INSEAD's alumni network been important to you?**

The INSEAD network has opened many doors for me, including when I was working in London for Darty.

### **In your opinion, what makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

INSEAD is 'the business school for the world'. The one-year MBA format is also something that makes a difference.

### **If you could give one piece of advice to a current MBA student at INSEAD, what would it be?**

Enjoy every minute; engage with as many of the INSEAD community as you can. There is no need to focus too early on the job search, anyway you will land a good one!



## André Terrail

MBA'11D

Owner & CEO

La Tour d'Argent

André Terrail joined the family business, La Tour d'Argent, in 2003, succeeding his father in 2006 and opening up a new chapter in the history of this illustrious establishment. As tastes and lifestyles of the upcoming generation have evolved, he has brought about many changes, all the while meeting the demanding requirements of the clientele and respecting the restaurant's heritage. He oversees two fine dining restaurants, including one in Tokyo, as well as a Bistro and a bakery. A dual French and Finnish citizen, André also holds a degree from Babson College and is passionate about hunting, fishing and polo.



### **What drew you to INSEAD?**

It had been a lifelong dream. From the time I was studying in Boston, I remember visiting the website and being fascinated by the dual campus proposal, the cosmopolitan environment, and the global perspective.

### **What were the greatest things you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

An unparalleled global network, a toolkit that will serve you well – no matter your line of work – and lifelong friendships! While we studied hard, we also found time to ride professional racehorses, dive in Malaysia, celebrate Halloween in Hong Kong, taste wines in Champagne, and participate in an improvised polo match!

### **How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

INSEAD is an intense, concentrated multicultural environment that forces you to become more tolerant, flexible, open-minded, and self-aware. The diversity of our study group – which included a Brazilian consultant, a Turkish banker, a Vietnamese marketing expert and an Indian engineer – was exceptional.

### **Which class or professor influenced you the most?**

Professor Theodoros Evgeniou and his Statistics class 'Uncertainty, Data, and Judgement', which became a somewhat philosophical course on how to deal with uncertainty. None of us will forget his motto: 'Trust your gut feeling!'

### **Many alumni say that INSEAD was 'transformational'. Would you say the same?**

Totally. After six years at my family firm, following in my father's footsteps as a restaurateur, I needed to take a step back. INSEAD was much more than that; it was a transformational experience that changed my attitude and the way I work.

### **For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

I co-chair the Alumni Retail, Consumer & Luxury Goods Club with Marie-Laure Mine. It's a great way to meet new faces from the entire INSEAD community. The five-year class reunion was also exhilarating!

### **How would you describe INSEAD's values?**

Excellence with humility.

### **How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

Out of the blue, I have contacted an endless list of alumni around the world (especially in France and Japan). They have all been willing to help me advance my business and my vision in one way or another.

“ **INSEAD values?  
Excellence with humility.**

### **If you could give one piece of advice to a current MBA student at INSEAD, what would it be?**

Don't hesitate to take advantage of the collective amount of knowledge and experience available among your fellow students; for those 10 precious months – it's free!

## Claire Vidal

EMBA'08D

Vice-President, Sales & Marketing  
Parrot We.ar

Claire Vidal spent 12 years working in marketing communications for Valeo, managing a complex organisation as well as enhancing the innovative brand image of the company. Following INSEAD, she successfully launched Red Carpet Paris, a world premiere in shoe accessories: the first luxury insoles for high heels, combining comfort and glamour in stilettos. The brand has expanded in this niche market, with prestigious customers such as Galeries Lafayette (Paris, Dubai and Beijing), Fred Segal, and Manor. An avid traveller and entrepreneur, Claire is now focused on a disruptive project at Parrot Inc. in Los Angeles, as the VP of Sales and Marketing for a new start-up.





**What were you doing just before you decided to pursue an MBA? Where were you?**

I was Director of Corporate Communications at Valeo, one of the world's largest and most successful automotive suppliers, based in Paris. My role was global, and I was in charge of the brand and corporate image of the company.

**What drew you to INSEAD?**

I needed a turnaround, and wanted to build my business knowledge to expand my career. In particular, I wanted to work on my leadership skills, and INSEAD was the best school for that, thanks to the unique Leadership Development Programme (LDP). Going back to school after 10 years of working experience, and managing a demanding daily career while studying, is a real challenge. I was only ready to take on this challenge if it was at the best school to fit my goals, so I only applied to INSEAD.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD gave them the opportunity to jump from one type of career to another. Was this the case for you?**

Before attending INSEAD, I had been working for a number of years at a global company at a high

level of corporate responsibility. After INSEAD, I became an entrepreneur and launched my own business, using all the knowledge gained during the EMBA.

**When you think back on your time at INSEAD, what immediately comes to mind?**

The fact that every single day, I was amazed at what I was learning — not only from the excellent professors, but also from my classmates, who shared their vast experience.

**Some alumni like to reminisce about their study groups – the multicultural perspectives, heated discussions and rewarding collaborations. What stood out from your study group?**

During the Executive MBA, we work in particular with our LDP group. Eight years later, we still conduct our LDP sessions once a year, to reflect on where we stand in our careers, and coach each other on the next steps. Some of my classmates also became mentors for my current business, and advisors for my career in general. INSEAD creates lifelong friendships, as well as support for your business.

**“ INSEAD changed my life, empowering me to take control of my career and launch my own business. It gave me the self-confidence to know I can reach goals and take on new challenges.**

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD EMBA? Business knowledge? Career advancement or redirection?**

All of the above. INSEAD totally changed my life, empowering me to take control of my career and launch my own business. It gave me the self-confidence to know I can reach goals and take on new challenges.

## Eric Labaye

MBA'87J

Senior Partner and Chairman  
of the McKinsey Global Institute  
McKinsey & Company

Eric Labaye is a Senior Partner of McKinsey & Company, and Chairman of the McKinsey Global Institute. He works extensively for clients in the telecom, media, high-tech, and energy sectors. Eric initiated and co-led McKinsey's 'Women Matter' research programme, which promotes gender diversity in senior management, and received the Lowell Bryan award for his impactful contribution to the professional development of women in the firm. He has served on several prestigious economic commissions, and is a Member of the Board of Telecom ParisTech, the International Advisory Board of ESSEC, and the Board of Advisors of the School of Public Affairs of Sciences Po. He also holds degrees from École Polytechnique and Telecom ParisTech, and received the Henry Ford II award, graduating with the top GPA in his INSEAD class.



**What were you doing before you decided to pursue an MBA, and what drew you to INSEAD?**

I was an engineer at the French Direction Générale des Télécommunications (now Orange) in New York, and decided to broaden my skills by doing an MBA. I got an offer to join the McKinsey fellowship programme, which included studying at INSEAD.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD gave them the opportunity to jump from a local business environment to a global business career. Was this the case for you?**

INSEAD gave me the tools for a truly global career, helping top management clients transform and take advantage of worldwide business opportunities. It also helped me lead internal teams at McKinsey, which operates as 'one firm' globally.

**When you think back on your year at INSEAD, what immediately comes to mind?**

The INSEAD study groups, anchored in concrete case studies and multiple group interactions. It's very different than the

traditional French educational approach, so the learning curve was steep. Aligning diverse backgrounds and cultures was a (very rewarding!) challenge that prepared me for the daily dynamics of a global firm.

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

INSEAD allowed me (coming from an engineering education) to rapidly build business knowledge on multiple fronts, and to learn to navigate in a multicultural environment. It also exposed me to the latest thinking on essential business topics including strategy, finance, and marketing.

**Which class or professor influenced you the most?**

Professor Manfred Kets de Vries – his views on leadership and his advice that 'life is not a rehearsal'.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD was 'transformational' or 'the best year of my life'. Would you say the same?**

INSEAD was clearly an outstanding year: making close friends, broadening my perspectives on business – and meeting my wife!

**What's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD, for you?**

Class reunions, INSEAD Alumni Association events, and following INSEAD on LinkedIn. Staying connected allows me to broaden my perspectives on the latest topics through events or direct connection with other alumni.

**A consistent theme for alumni is that they feel as though they left INSEAD with a set of values. How would you describe those values?**

Teamwork, excellence, and openness. The truly multicultural environment at INSEAD embodies the European ideal.

“Aligning cultures and diverse backgrounds was a (very rewarding!) challenge that prepared me for the daily dynamics of a global firm.”



## Frédéric Mazzella

MBA'07D  
Founder  
BlaBlaCar

Since pioneering the idea of BlaBlaCar in 2004, Frédéric Mazzella has led the company to become the world's largest long-distance carpooling community. Frédéric champions BlaBlaCar's vision of a people-powered travel network enabled by trust and technology, and is passionate about high social impact solutions. As a regular speaker at leading international conferences and in the media, he sheds light on the fast-changing mobility landscape, entrepreneurship, global marketplaces, and building trust in online communities. Prior to founding BlaBlaCar, Frédéric worked as a scientific researcher at NASA (USA) and NTT (Japan). He also holds a Masters in Computer Science from Stanford and a Masters in Physics from École Normale Supérieure (France), and is an accomplished classical pianist.



### **What drew you to INSEAD?**

As I started my entrepreneurial venture, I realised I needed a business education to complement my scientific education in maths, physics, and computer science. INSEAD's entrepreneurship-focused curriculum stood out, as did its one-year format, which was less intimidating for a young and impatient entrepreneur. I used BlaBlaCar as a case study in every class, and pitched my idea to anyone who would hear it!

### **When you think back on your year at INSEAD, what experience immediately comes to mind?**

The Business Venture Competition, which allows students to pitch ideas to a jury of investors and accomplished entrepreneurs. I loved it so much that I participated twice! My first attempt was in June 2007 with Nicolas Brusson (MBA'07J), who became BlaBlaCar's co-founder. We came in fourth, and decided to take the challenge again in November – when we won! Building the business plan and learning how to pitch our idea to investors was invaluable (personal thanks to Professor Felipe Santos), whilst winning the competition sent me the signal that we were on the right track.

### **What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

The case studies we worked on revealed insightful benchmarks of challenges faced by early-stage companies (from financing to product development to partnerships). This reassured me that encountering problems is not only normal, it's actually essential to the whole adventure: an entrepreneur's value-add is solving problems. INSEAD prepared me for an entrepreneurial career by giving me a frame to address the many dimensions of my project.

### **Which class or professor influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Professor Peter Zemsky's class, and learning about Blue Ocean Strategy. I am delighted that the class now includes a BlaBlaCar case study! Professor Pierre Chandon (Marketing) also gave us essential tools that I used when rebranding the company (including choosing a name based on our 'point of differentiation'!)

“ Building the business plan and learning how to pitch our idea to investors was invaluable.

### **Many alumni say that INSEAD was 'transformational' or 'the best year of my life.' Would you say the same?**

Definitely! It was a true turning point for me personally and professionally. I have only one regret – I can't do it again!

### **For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

INSEAD is very present in my life in the form of the alumni that I have kept as friends or who have become part of the BlaBlaCar adventure. Beyond that, I attend alumni events, and engage with professors and students to share our experience.

### **If you could give one piece of advice to a current MBA student at INSEAD, what would it be?**

Make the most of the year by living it fully and engaging with as many of your fellow students as you can – alumni are the 'gift that keeps on giving.'

## Hadi Zablit

MBA'00J

Senior Partner & Managing Director Paris  
The Boston Consulting Group

Hadi Zablit is a Senior Partner and Managing Director in the Paris office of The Boston Consulting Group (BCG), leading the automotive practice in Western Europe and South America. Since joining BCG in 2000, his experience has covered all areas of innovation, with a focus on R&D transformation projects, from strategy to implementation. Hadi is the European leader of the innovation topic within the operations practice, and the co-author of multiple influential reports, such as BCG's 'Most Innovative Companies' report series. Prior to joining BCG, he worked for Renault, including as Product Manager in charge of the Mégane line worldwide. He also holds MScs in engineering from École Polytechnique and École Nationale des Mines de Paris.





### **What drew you to INSEAD?**

Two of my brothers attended INSEAD, which gave me a significant understanding of the programme, the environment, and the diversity. I did not apply to other schools.

### **Many alumni say that INSEAD gave them the opportunity to jump from a local business environment to a global business career. Was this the case for you?**

INSEAD is a 24x7 international experience. The learning covers the diversity of business approaches, behaviours, customs, humour, ethics, friendship and even table football rules. Interacting along all those dimensions with so many different nationalities has been essential to taking my career in a very international direction.

### **When you think back on your year at INSEAD, what immediately comes to mind?**

My first child was born during INSEAD, and my wife and I enjoyed sharing the experience with other INSEAD families, on campus and off. We did not need to make a trade-off between MBA and family.

### **What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

The multicultural experience. There's no majority nationality, but instead a unique melting pot of cultures. At the end of the intense year, you feel you are an international citizen – some might even say an INSEAD citizen!

“ INSEAD is an exceptional platform where you can test anything; it's up to you to dare.

### **Would you say that INSEAD was 'transformational'?**

Definitely. INSEAD is an environment where you can fully unleash your potential. It puts you on a track where you can continue to accelerate. In fact, INSEAD is the initiation of a continual transformation.

### **Is INSEAD's global alumni network important to you, and how do you stay connected?**

The global reach of the INSEAD network is very relevant and real. I've worked in 30 countries, meeting alumni in every single one. I stay

connected by following the school's news, and by co-leading the INSEAD Club on Innovation and Design, by recommending INSEAD and by maintaining the lifelong friendships!

### **How would you describe INSEAD's values?**

First, the spirit of entrepreneurship: after INSEAD you feel equipped to test and attack any type of business opportunity. Within consulting, I feel empowered to launch new initiatives, invent new approaches, go differently to market, and choose partners with diverse backgrounds. Secondly, business ethics – even beyond the lens of my own cultural evaluation.

### **What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

INSEAD is an exceptional platform where you can test anything; it's up to you to dare.

## Jean-Marc Liduena

MBA'99J

Senior Partner, Consumer &  
Industrial Products Leader  
Deloitte

Jean-Marc Liduena is a Senior Partner at Deloitte – leader of Consumer & Industrial Products practice in France – and a member of the Executive Committees of Deloitte Consulting and Monitor Deloitte. With over 20 years of experience in consulting and top management, Jean-Marc is often featured in the media, and is a regular keynote speaker. Before joining Deloitte in 2014, he was a Vice-President at Unilever, and a Partner or Principal at Bain, Booz and Roland Berger. He has worked across five continents, and also holds an MSc in civil engineering from École Spéciale des Travaux Publics. President of the INSEAD Alumni Association France, Jean-Marc sits on the ExpoFrance 2025 Founding Board. He is married to Cecile, and they have four children.



### **How did your career evolve after graduation?**

INSEAD gave me an essential career boost – from local to global, and from marketing to finance to general management – via a fast-track programme at Unilever, a multinational where I could apply all the INSEAD learning!

### **What experience comes to mind immediately when you reflect back on INSEAD?**

The birth of our daughter Maylis just after P3 exams – which included Macroeconomics, memorably taught by a young Professor named Ilian Mihov (now the INSEAD Dean!)

### **What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

Learning to partner, negotiate, collaborate, socialise and make friends with people from around the globe was absolutely unique. My study group was so diverse that it was a triumph to finish the Organisational Behaviour (OB) exam without fighting physically. This was fortunate since one member of our group – a formidable former US Navy officer – could have proven dangerous in close combat!

### **Which class or professor influenced you the most, and did you leave INSEAD with certain convictions?**

Professor Marcel Corstjens (Marketing) and Professor Henri-Claude de Bettignies (Business Ethics). The latter helped me reach a personal conviction: that the role of business goes beyond maximizing shareholder value – it is to make the world a better place. I also developed my personal leadership style, to ‘inspire and connect’.

### **What makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

In January 2015 (even before INSEAD was ranked #1 business school in the world by the *Financial Times*), I was interviewed on what made INSEAD unique and outstanding. My answers have not changed today: INSEAD has a clear vision, a superb brand, solid funding, a fantastic faculty, a strong alumni network, and an entrepreneurial spirit – and I would add to that list a unique heritage of ‘French flair’.

### **For you, what’s the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

As President of the INSEAD National Alumni Association in France, I am convinced that the

best way to stay connected to INSEAD is to be an active member of the alumni community. The alumni ‘family’ offers innumerable exciting events, warm gatherings, precious support, and lifelong friendships and learning. Last year, for example, we had around 250 alumni events in France.

### **What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

Give back to INSEAD, and get involved – with time, passion and generosity! And never forget to help make the world a better place.

“ The alumni ‘family’ offers innumerable exciting events, warm gatherings, precious support, and lifelong friendships and learning.



## Karien van Gennip

MBA'95D

CEO

ING Bank France

Karien van Gennip was named CEO of ING Bank France in 2015, after serving in various leadership roles at ING. Prior to joining ING, Karien was a member of the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament (2006-2008) and served as State Secretary for Economic Affairs / Minister for Foreign Trade (2003-2007), with responsibilities for bilateral and multilateral foreign trade, entrepreneurship, regional policy, investment climate, and consumer policy. She began her career with McKinsey & Company in Amsterdam and in San Francisco. Karien is a Board Member of the International Chamber of Commerce, and in 2008 the World Economic Forum elected her 'Young Global Leader'. Married with four daughters, she also holds a Masters Degree from Delft University of Technology.



**What were you doing just before you decided to pursue an MBA, and what drew you to INSEAD?**

I was at McKinsey working as a Fellow. My goal was to supplement my engineering degree with a strong business education, and also to learn to work effectively with people from around the globe.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD gave them the opportunity to jump from a local business environment to a global business career. Was this the case for you?**

INSEAD helped me become more internationally oriented, with more nuanced understanding of various cultures, a multi-dimensional approach, and a true belief in diversity.

**Some alumni like to reminisce about their study groups – the multicultural perspectives, heated discussions and rewarding collaborations. What stood out from your study group?**

I have very fond memories of working into the wee hours with my multicultural study group on a paper or case study, but still finding the

time and energy for a vibrant conversation or a lively late-night dinner. Our philosophy was ‘work hard, play hard!’

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

Lasting friendships and a truly European perspective, as well as a love for France!

“ **INSEAD essentials:  
cooperation, ambition,  
and an open mind.**

**Which class or professor influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Two excellent classes come immediately to mind: Management Accounting: ‘numbers can talk...’ and Negotiation, particularly ‘getting to yes’. I will never forget the lessons learned during one particular round of negotiations that I lost!

**For you, what’s the best way to stay connected to the INSEAD community?**

Definitely attending some of the myriad Alumni Association events, and visiting campus periodically, in order to be inspired by the dynamic new generations of INSEADers.

**A consistent theme for alumni, from across classes, is that they feel as though they left INSEAD with a set of values. How would you describe those values?**

Three INSEAD essentials: cooperation, ambition, and an open mind.

**In your opinion, what makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

INSEAD is unique because it gives you the opportunity to live in an exceptionally international environment, with people of extremely diverse backgrounds – each of them very ambitious – and to build up a reservoir of practical knowledge.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD was ‘transformational’ or ‘the best year of my life.’ Would you say the same?**

Absolutely! Go do it, and follow your passion.

## Maja Torun

MBA'07D

Managing Director

Citi Investment Banking

Based in Paris, Maja is in charge of Investment Banking coverage and origination for large French Corporates. Her role encompasses strategic and financial dialogue with companies across M&A, IPO, capital increase and financing topics. Maja has a broad range of transaction experiences ranging in size from €100M to €50B, across corporates and private equities. Most recently at Citi, she has been advising Essilor on its cross-border merger with Luxottica, and Carrefour on the IPO of its Real Estate subsidiary Carmila. She joined Citi in 2016, having previously worked at Deutsche Bank, at Merrill Lynch (in the M&A advisory team), and as a strategy consultant at BCG (Boston Consulting Group). Maja also holds a degree from Warsaw School of Economics.





### **What drew you to INSEAD?**

Through my BCG work, I already had a fair share of exposure to various strategic and operational topics and as a graduate of an Economy Master I already had an academic background in business, so INSEAD was a way for me to put that existing background into perspective of world-class academic thinking and the views of a set of multicultural and diverse peers. It also allowed me to step-back and reflect on my future and the professional profile I wanted to create, which made me decide to enlarge my skill-set by shifting my career from Strategic Consultancy into Investment Banking, where I still successfully operate today.

### **When you think back on your year at INSEAD, what experience immediately comes to mind?**

INSEAD is full of leadership workshops to discover one's personal management style – in one of those we had to design a protection to preserve an egg while dropping it from the roof of a building – a fun but also challenging experience, where after the group discovered we have no engineer and no scientist among us, my peers turned to me saying, we now

need a consultant. Making decisions and structuring group thinking when faced with uncertainty has been since then a permanent part of my professional life.

### **How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

INSEAD's aim is to shape international leaders by putting every topic into perspective of global implications through the eyes of a diverse peer group and a curriculum designed across 3 campuses. For me, observing the INSEAD community was equivalent to experiencing a sociologic sample of the world today.

### **Which class or professor influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Surprisingly, I was impressed by the accounting class by Professor Jake Cohen who shared my passion to structure thinking and made an interesting experience of a topic which usually would not particularly appeal to me. On the other hand, I also enjoyed INSEAD's soft-skills curriculum, which I believe gave me the confidence to create my own management style and the necessary maturity to make it evolutive by improving on my mistakes.

“ **In my professional life, I often think back on INSEAD learnings when running cross-border transactions.**

### **How would you describe INSEAD's values?**

INSEAD leaves its graduates with similar values: respect for others, welcoming differences, seeking creativity through openness to various views and overall humbleness. Most INSEADers like sharing their thoughts on the world and debating for hours about geopolitics, business and life – this leads to passionate debates among Alumni years after graduation and makes INSEAD dinners a pleasure, even among people who initially do not know each other well!

### **If you could give advice to a current MBA student at INSEAD, what would it be?**

Use the opportunity offered by INSEAD to take the time to step-back to redefine thoroughly the next step that is right for you as there is no one-size-fits-all career.

## Maria Grazia Solimene

MBA'04D

Independent Senior Advisor

An Italian national from Rome, Maria Grazia Solimene recently served as Marketing Director and Board Member for Chaumet. She spent the majority of her career in France – first as a student at ESSEC, then as a consultant for Accenture, and finally as a marketing and sales executive for the LVMH group. Passionate about luxury and retail, Maria is currently senior advisor for luxury companies, groups, and private equity investors. She is primarily in charge of securing business deals, and looks after product strategies as well as sales and business development. She and her partner Patrice Lamothe, MBA'04D, currently live in Paris together with their daughter, Junie.



### **What drew you to INSEAD?**

The promise of a school that was truly and fully international – in terms of students, alumni, and professors – and the possibility to study on three campuses, in three completely different parts of the world.

### **Many alumni say that INSEAD helped transform their careers. Was this the case for you?**

In my case, INSEAD helped me to literally leap from middle management in consulting into a much more executive position in the industry I was passionate about: retail.

### **Some alumni like to reminisce about their study groups – the multicultural perspectives, heated discussions and rewarding collaborations. What stood out from yours?**

To be fair, the group work was quite a challenging part of the MBA, as all group participants were ‘born leaders’. There was a definite necessity for each of us to first manage our own egos, in order to make discussion and productivity possible. This was an absolutely excellent training for future executive committee experiences!

### **How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

By showing the power of diversity and collective intelligence in solving complex business issues, and the importance of surrounding oneself with a wide variety of cultures, personal histories and values.

### **Which class or professor influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

A kind of magic combination of Professor Pierre Hillion’s Finance classes, Professor Horacio Falcão’s Negotiations course, and Professor Douglas Webber’s International Relations module.

“ **INSEAD helped me leap from middle management into a much more executive position.**

### **Many alumni say that INSEAD was ‘transformational’ or ‘the best year of my life’. Would you say the same?**

INSEAD was definitely a ‘pillar year’ for my professional and personal development. Much of the person that I am today is because of what I experienced then at INSEAD.

### **For you, what’s the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

One fantastic way is via the active National Alumni Associations. I enjoyed the Singapore and London clubs, and today, I am a regular participant in the Paris chapter. The strong friendships developed during the MBA do not end at graduation – and the alumni network often translates into new friendships as well!

### **How would you describe INSEAD’s values?**

First: Internationalism as a way of life, society, and business. Second: critical thinking with empathy. And last but certainly not least: infinite curiosity and optimism.

### **If you could give one piece of advice to the current INSEAD students, what would it be?**

Enjoy this precious time and make the most of it – on your own terms!



## Michel de Rovira

MBA'04D

Co-Founder

Michel et Augustin

Michel De Rovira is the Co-Founder of innovative French food company Michel et Augustin. Founded in 2004 as the passion project of two friends, the company has grown to a €50M business with sales in 20 countries through retail partners such as Carrefour, Starbucks, and Sodexo. Michel began his professional career in banking and consultancy, working for Crédit Lyonnais in New York, and for L.E.K. Consulting in the Paris and Boston offices. He also holds a diploma from École Supérieure de Commerce de Paris (ESCP) and the CAP Pâtissier (a pastry-making degree). Married with four children, Michel mentors young start-ups via the Réseau Entreprendre, and sits on the board of the Lazare Association, which provides housing and support for the homeless.



### **What drew you to INSEAD?**

The many alumni I met, and the intense one-year MBA experience. It was an obvious choice for me.

### **When you think back on your year at INSEAD, what experience immediately comes to mind?**

Our extremely multicultural study group, and heated discussions that brought excellent results! Jose Maria the Spanish investment banker based in London, Erica the Chinese-American consultant, Chirag the Indian entrepreneur in family business, Isabel the Portuguese commercial banker (and mother of cute twins) and Steven, the German-Canadian-American banker. Amazing people who became close friends; we have been attending one another's weddings ever since.

### **What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

All the exposure to entrepreneurship! I entered INSEAD planning a corporate career in a large food or pharma company, and left convinced to take the entrepreneurial path instead. With

Augustin, we actually launched the Michel et Augustin brand before graduation! INSEAD was a breakthrough year for me, and I'll always be grateful.

### **Which class or professor influenced you the most?**

Professor Pierre Chandon, who taught us with such passion about brand-building – something we think about every day at Michel et Augustin. I believe I recall every single case we studied with him. Professor Ron Adner's passion for innovation was also inspirational.

### **A consistent theme for alumni is that they feel as though they left INSEAD with a set of values. How would you describe those values?**

I'll always remember Professor Henri-Claude de Bettignies' 'triple test' for any ethical decision. After making the decision: 1) How will you see yourself in the mirror tonight? 2) How would you feel if your decision made the front page of the national newspaper? 3) How would it feel to explain this decision to your child?

**“ I entered INSEAD planning a corporate career, and left convinced to take the entrepreneurial path.**

### **How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

Meeting other INSEAD entrepreneurs has been a constant inspiration: Frédéric Mazzella of BlaBlaCar, Victor Augais of UrbanSoccer, Philippe Houzé and Nicolas Houzé of Galeries Lafayette. Spending time in person with fellow alumni at our class reunions, as well as at the alumni forums, is always a huge pleasure.

### **What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

Take this time to consider all career opportunities. Not only the recruiters who are most visible, and not only the one you wrote about in your essay. Try a new path!

## Pierre Fouques Duparc

MBA'89D

Global Leader – Technology Practice;  
Managing Partner, France  
Boyden

Pierre Fouques Duparc is the Managing Partner, France, for Boyden and leads the Global Technology Practice Group. He has deep expertise in technology and consulting, and an impressive track record of recruiting for C-suite positions, with an emphasis on high-performing CXOs for technology companies and partners for consulting firms. Prior to Boyden, Pierre served in senior roles at Capgemini Consulting and in Coopers & Lybrand, and worked in Credit Lyonnais in New York. He also holds an engineering degree from École Nationale Supérieure des Télécommunications de Paris, and serves on the INSEAD France Alumni Board and as President of the Supervisory Board.





**What were you doing just before you decided to pursue an MBA? Where were you?**

I was working at Credit Lyonnais in New York, in the IT department.

**What drew you to INSEAD?**

I was looking to potentially transition out of IT by getting an MBA, and I remember reading an article calling INSEAD 'the Rolls Royce' of business schools.'

**When you think back on your year at INSEAD, what experience immediately comes to mind?**

Definitely the emphasis on group work, as well as the very social atmosphere and some excellent trips with fellow students. The Organisational Behaviour class also made a lasting impression on me.

**Some alumni like to reminisce about their study groups – the multicultural perspectives, heated discussions and rewarding collaborations. What stood out from your study group?**

There were some brilliant fellow students in my own group. I tried to listen and learn from them as much as possible – and to avoid slowing them down!

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

First, the multicultural experience and the lifelong friendships. Second, career redirection. Third, access to a very powerful and global alumni network.

**How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

The INSEAD degree is well known around the world, which opens up career options far beyond one's own country.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD was 'transformational' or 'the best year of my life.' Would you say the same?**

Definitely. For me INSEAD was a 'rebooting year' as I entered the next phase of my career. I only wish it would have lasted longer!

**How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

For me the INSEAD alumni network (including the INSEAD Alumni Association) has been extremely important, both professionally and for lasting friendships. A fellow INSEAD graduate always remains a friend – even if you have not seen him or her in 10, 15, or 20 years.

**In your opinion, what makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

The extremely strong European network sets INSEAD apart from the top American MBA programmes.

“ A fellow INSEAD graduate always remains a friend – even if you have not seen him or her in 10, 15 or 20 years.

**If you could give one piece of advice to the current INSEAD students, what would it be?**

Make the most of every day (and spend as many weekends as possible on campus with your fellow students), because the year flies by!

## Philippe Houzé

MBA'74

Executive Chairman,  
Galeries Lafayette Group

Philippe Houzé is the Executive Chairman of the Galeries Lafayette Group, a family-run company with 120 years of history in fashion, retail and commerce. He began his career with Monoprix in 1969, later serving as Chairman and CEO. Named 2015 'International Retailer of the Year' by the prestigious American-based National Retail Federation, Philippe is also an active stakeholder in the French economy. He is personally committed to sustainable development, including extended involvement in the regeneration of town and city centres, and also serves the INSEAD community as a Director, chairing the France Council. Married with three children, Philippe is a Commander of France's Legion of Honour, and holds prominent roles on multiple corporate boards.



### **What were you doing before you decided to pursue an MBA?**

While I had studied political sciences, I was always attracted to commerce and retail; I started in a practical capacity – as store manager assistant. It was a direct way to take on responsibility and gain concrete experience.

### **What drew you to INSEAD?**

I met an alumnus who very convincingly told me 'INSEAD is the best programme'. It probably didn't hurt that my first interviewer was (INSEAD Founder) Claude Janssen.

### **Some alumni like to reminisce about their study groups – the multicultural perspectives, heated discussions and rewarding collaborations. What stood out from yours?**

Our study group was extremely multicultural – Swedish, English, Swiss, Lebanese, Hungarian, and French. The mix of strong characters, enriched by diverse track records in finance, marketing, law, strategy, and more, made for a very dynamic combination.

### **What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

The ability to diagnose situations and formulate concrete proposals. Developing my strategic thinking and taking into account the importance of organisational behaviour also readied me to manage complex situations. Not to mention the lifelong friendships, developed further during jogs through the Fontainebleau forest, 'INSEAD Cabaret', and the unforgettable trip to Iran, invited by the Shah.

“**INSEAD helped me develop and strengthen my personal mantra as a CEO: 'Create value, while upholding one's own values'.**

### **In your opinion, what makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

INSEAD reached #1 world ranking thanks to unique strengths: its one-year MBA, its three campuses, its groundbreaking approach to digital, its philosophy of 'business as a force for good', its 80 nationalities per class, and its entrepreneurial mindset.

### **For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

Participating actively in the Alumni Association and coming back to campus for specific courses. One in particular, 'Avira', with Henri-Claude de Bettignies, changed my professional life. It enabled me to become the leader of one of the most sustainable retail companies in France – Monoprix – by launching the first organic products on the French market. I also highly recommend attending reunions – one of the best occasions to come back to campus!

### **A consistent theme for alumni, from across classes, is that they feel as though they left INSEAD with a set of values.**

#### **How would you describe those values?**

INSEAD helped me develop and strengthen my personal mantra as a CEO: 'Create value, while upholding one's own values'. My own essential values are boldness, authenticity, frugality and resilience.



## Sami Rahal

MBA'99J

President Elect France and Africa,  
and Managing Partner Financial Advisory  
France  
Deloitte

A member of the Deloitte France Executive Committee, Sami Rahal is currently the Managing Partner of Financial Advisory in France, and will become CEO of Deloitte France and Africa in June 2017. He joined Deloitte in 2006, and has held a number of top management roles. Rahal started his career in the audit function in 1991. Promoted to the Ernst & Young Audit Partnership in 1999 after two years in New York and his INSEAD MBA, he then moved to Corporate Finance, which he co-founded. He also holds an engineering degree from Institut National Polytechnique de Grenoble (INPG) and a Masters Degree from ESSEC, and is a chartered accountant. He and his wife Ghislaine have two daughters.



**What were you doing just before your MBA, and what drew you to INSEAD?**

I had just returned from New York to Paris. My career had been fairly fast-track and linear, but I wanted to pause and reflect whilst creating further career options. Choosing INSEAD was a no brainer: it has an excellent ranking (now #1 in the world!), an outstanding faculty, world-class campuses and curriculum, and is the sole one-year programme with a true cultural diversity.

**What part of your INSEAD experience immediately comes to mind?**

The challenging intensity and fun of the first two periods. It was exhilarating: managing an unusual level of information at high speed, and working with brilliant, highly energetic groupmates from around the world. INSEAD transformed me as a person and deeply impacted my career.

**Which class or professor influenced you the most?**

Professor Anil Gaba (Decision Sciences) gave us a powerful framework to make and evaluate decisions, while taking into account the big picture.

**“ INSEAD is a powerful global network of leaders. It makes things happen.**

**How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

Working within the INSEAD environment, you become very conscious of cultural biases, and learn to adapt very quickly to any situation. I spent years structuring and executing M&A deals, and I know how important the cultural aspects can be. Internally, the ability to navigate a global firm, interact with partners and clients from all geographies, embrace the big picture, and understand different businesses have all been essential to my career development. Still today, I nurture and encourage diversity in our firm and our teams.

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

INSEAD helped me confirm my initial career path with confidence. Beyond the business knowledge, the friendships and connections are also invaluable assets; the ability to bring the right people around a table to resolve a complex case or structure a deal is a key ingredient of success.

**How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

INSEAD is a powerful global network of leaders. It makes things happen. I give and take: I connect people, I hire graduates, I support my qualified managers' and partners' applications to INSEAD, and I partner with INSEAD alumni to cement deals and partnerships. The INSEAD network has no frontier.

**What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

Take time to reflect on your own personal objectives, your values, and what you want to achieve in life. INSEAD will have a deep impact on you; it will refine your values and goals, and will help you shape a highly successful career.

## Yann Lechelle

MBA'01J

Chief Operating Officer  
Snips.ai

Yann Lechelle is Chief Operating Officer (COO) at Snips.ai, specialising in on-device artificial intelligence and context awareness. Over the past two decades, from Paris to Los Angeles, via Cambridge and New York, he has been leveraging technology to unlock business opportunities in various fields, from financial markets with real-time trading platforms to digital art on new media. As an entrepreneur, Yann has founded or co-founded companies whose products have reached hundreds of millions of end-users globally. As a key shareholder, he has contributed to the growth and exit of five companies. As an advisor, board member and angel investor, he is tracking the progress of innovative new business ventures. Yann is a co-founding member of France Digitale, and an Entrepreneur-in-Residence at INSEAD.





**What were you doing just before you decided to pursue an MBA? Where were you?**

I was in a senior position at an internet infrastructure company based in New York, following two subsequent M&A deals at the peak of the internet 1.0 bubble. Coming from a pure software engineering background, my experience as a manager was limited. Despite the title and obscene salary (NYC, circa 1999!), I could feel the ceiling prompting me to reassess my general skill set and consider a career pivot.

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

INSEAD gave me an accelerated business training for my burgeoning entrepreneurial endeavours, plus lifelong friendships, and a connected mesh of like-minded global players. INSEAD also reinforced my ability to perform in a constantly connected and globalised environment.

**How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

Unlike the international career I had prior to INSEAD, after graduating I chose a life of

entrepreneurship, based out of Paris, with limited travel constraints. Nonetheless, my subsequent projects and ventures all inherently dealt with international or global markets, as we connected to over 100 million mobile end-users globally, in 13 languages.

**For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

I believe we, as alumni, have a collective fiduciary duty towards INSEAD, to ensure that the brand remains highly valuable for each of us. Staying connected in one way or another is the best way to sustain a virtuous circle. There are many ways to do so: by contributing time at the student recruitment level (interviews, referrals), the academic level (lectures, case studies), or the alumni level (mentoring, Alumni Associations), by meeting up regularly with classmates, and by donating regularly. Every one of those acts adds to an exponential value curve that will reinforce our initial investment.

“ INSEAD gave me an accelerated business training for my burgeoning entrepreneurial endeavours.

**How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

The alumni network was a key factor in my decision. I decided to go the entrepreneurial route right after graduation, and I repeatedly discover alumni peers in my business activity, across industries, geographies and positions. This network facilitates a number of business interactions, reduces frictions, and accelerates understanding.

**In your opinion, what makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

The international environment, the one-year programme, and the exceptional alumni network make for a killer combination.

**What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

Take a chance to explore your preferred path, even if it isn't the obvious choice at the time. There are myriad ways to value and leverage your year spent at INSEAD!

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