

IRANIAN BUSINESS SCHOOL PROJECT

Quarterly Newsletter



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Introduction

There are many problems that you can just throw money at and you may be able to solve them quickly. Developing a solid and world-class business school isn't one of them. While having access to financial resources allows one to build the required physical infrastructure, it cannot solve the most fundamental challenge facing such a school. At the root of success for an academic institution is its faculty and developing a world-class faculty takes time and energy (and of course, money). In addition, building the proper administrative support is also critical to the success of the school and its programmes. In other words, we must pay close attention to the human resources that are at the centre of IBS.

The leadership of IBS is well aware of this critical aspect of building the foundations of the School. We aim to provide superlative business education to the brightest young people in Iran, and this requires that we have a top-notch faculty educated at the best schools in the world. Several approaches for finding and training the right faculty are being considered. Through partnership with some of

the best business schools in the world, we aim to provide a platform for the continuing education of our faculty. These partnerships will also give our faculty the research collaboration opportunities they need to stay at the cutting-edge of their fields.

It is common knowledge that the economic conditions and the business climate in Iran are different from many industrialised and developed countries. Adopting well known theories of business and economics to our conditions is a challenge that can only be met by people well versed in the fundamentals and at the same time, intimately familiar with the local conditions. This is one of the major areas where IBS can have a real and major impact on the business climate of Iran.

So, if you are working on your PhD in a top business/management school and are interested in exploring vocational possibilities at IBS, we would be delighted to hear from you. Together we can fulfill our shared vision for IBS.

Project Progress Report

IBS Finished 2009 by Appointing Executive Dean

The amazing dedication and support of an army of volunteers made 2009 a very productive year for the Iranian Business School (IBS) Project. The year started with a highly successful fundraising event followed by the appointment of a Board of Governors and the School's first honorary President, and was concluded by the appointment of an Executive Dean. Throughout the year, the activities of various committees continued with outstanding achievements, in particular for the Fundraising and the Academic Committees.

With the countdown to the first programmes to be offered by IBS – scheduled for Autumn 2010 and going ahead as planned, Dr. Zahed Sheikholeslami was appointed as the School's Executive Dean. Zahed, who is currently the Director of the Project Based Learning Institute, has been a member of the IBS Academic Committee since 2008 and a major contributor to the development of the School's academic plan. He brings a wealth of international experience in both business and academia to the IBS Project, offering the optimal mix of talent and expertise to direct the post start-up phase of IBS.

With a first degree from Sharif University, Zahed has obtained his Masters and PhD degrees from the University of Iowa before starting a career in business, eventually becoming the President of Flomerics Inc., a leading US company in the field of thermal analysis of electronics, where under his stewardship, the company's revenues grew ten-fold. As a director at CalPoly over the past few years, he has been instrumental in developing the institute's strategic plan and managing the college-

wide educational and research facilities. He has also defined the relationship strategies of California Polytechnic with industry and has developed programmes in entrepreneurship education.

Zahed will now coordinate the work of the IBS Academic Committee, leading to the launch of the Executive Education Programme later this year, while also assisting with the setting-up of the campus in Tehran and hiring the faculty and administrative staff.

The Executive Committee of IBS are delighted to announce the appointment of Dr. Zahed Sheikholeslami as the School's first Executive Dean and look forward to working with him in fulfilling our future vision for IBS.

The beginning of 2010 was marked by the second IBS Project Annual Fundraising Event, which comprised of a dinner, raffle and exclusive auction of Iranian art at London's Dorchester Hotel. This event provided an opportunity for the Project's founders and team of more than 40 volunteers to both build further awareness of the Project and its progress, as well as raise funds to support IBS's ambitious endeavour.

The event also boasted a prominent line up of speakers involved in the Project, including Dr. Alinaghi Mashayekhi, the President of the School. A number of global business leaders including Mr. Omid Kordestani, Senior Advisor to the Office of the CEO and Founders at Google, who gave the evening's keynote speech, were also present. A full report of this very successful fundraising event will be provided in the next issue of the IBS Project Newsletter.

Higher Education in Iran

Iran to establish and run higher education centres

"The new code for constitutional amendments by not-for-profit higher education institutes and their surveillance guidelines and procedures has been submitted by the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology to the Supreme Council on Cultural Revolution for approval", the Director General for Free and Not-For-Profit Higher Education of the Ministry announced. According to the new code, these institutes will have the phrase "Non-Governmental" in their designations in lieu of the older "Not-For-Profit". Another aspect of the code mandates the establishment of an independent 'Organisation for Non-Governmental Higher Education Institutes'. The organisation will be authorised to handle such responsibilities as surveillance, extension approval, inspection, and permit issuance related to these institutes. It is said that the code is to be executed as the substantiation of Item 44 of the Iran's Constitution and that it will help lift most of the problems private sector firms currently face in this field of activity.

UNIDO supports to run Management Courses in Iran

The Asian Cluster & Network Development Foundation is planning, with the support of UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization), to organise short courses on business cluster development and management

targeting senior Iranian managers and experts from export-oriented firms. The major courses on the list include:

- Export Consortia
- Value Chain Analysis and Optimisation
- Cluster Development Policies

Sharif University and the University of Calgary to offer a joint graduate programme

The programme has been designed at the request of the Ministry of Oil and is to be held exclusively for managers and experts from that Ministry. The programme will have two preparatory and mainstream modules.

The preparatory module will include a set of four courses, the first of which is intended to create the capabilities necessary for pursuing education in an English-speaking milieu. The other three courses are prerequisite courses in master programmes and are aimed at familiarising students with project management concepts and procedures.

The second module involves a set of 10 courses adapted from the Project Management Programme offered at the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Calgary, Canada. The students will also be required to submit a research thesis as part of the requirements for graduation.

Hedge Fund Founder John A. Paulson Gives \$20 Million to NYU Stern

NYU Stern recently announced that alumnus John Paulson (BS '78), Founder and Chairman of hedge fund Paulson & Co., Inc. has given a gift of \$20 million to NYU Stern. John Paulson's gift will endow two faculty chairs – the Alan Greenspan Chair in Economics and the John A. Paulson Professor of Finance and Alternative Investments – as well as provide significant support for the School's Concourse Project, a major facilities renovation currently underway, and scholarship aid for undergraduate students.

A member of Stern's Board of Overseers, Paulson said, "NYU Stern, like other universities, faces financial pressures in the current environment and relies on the support of its alumni. I am grateful for the education I received at Stern. My hope is that this gift will advance the School's mission as a global leader in business education and economic research, as well as provide scholarships to gifted students with financial needs."

The Stern School will apply \$5 million of John Paulson's gift to support two endowed faculty chairs. The first chair is named for alumnus Alan Greenspan (BS '48, MA '50, and PhD '77), leading economist and former Chairman of the US Federal Reserve Board. The second chair, named the John A. Paulson Professor of Finance and Alternative Investments, is held by Professor of Finance Lasse H. Pedersen, who is the first John A. Paulson Professor. Professor Pedersen's research focuses on how liquidity risk affects security prices, trading, funding, and risk management, its relevance highlighted by the recent liquidity crisis in the global financial markets. Scholarships for undergraduate business students will be funded by \$4 million of the gift. These high-merit, high-need students will be known as Paulson Scholars.

The remaining \$11 million of the gift will support the Concourse Project, the School's most significant

campus renovation since the consolidation 20 years ago of the undergraduate and graduate programmes in buildings on Washington Square. In recognition of Mr. Paulson's generosity, the School has named the first floor lobby of Tisch Hall and the School's auditorium in his honor.

Indian School of Business launches Executive MBA

The Indian School of Business (ISB) is to launch an Executive MBA (EMBA) - an MBA for working managers - in June 2010. The programme has been developed with input from two of ISB's founding partners, the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and the Kellogg School at Northwestern University, two of the top EMBA providers in the world.

The Hyderabad programme will be offered part-time over a period of 15 months and is designed for executives with an average work experience of 15 years. The PGPMAX - Post Graduate Programme in Management for Senior Executives - will be 15 months in duration with participants attending classroom sessions of six days every six weeks. The EMBA will also include an international immersion programme in which participants will attend classes at Kellogg and Wharton.

The concept of an EMBA is a novel one in India. "Indian industry is growing rapidly and needs more leaders who are well versed in general management to be able to lead and sustain this growth," says Deepak Chandra, Associate Dean at ISB, "but the reality is that the industry faces a severe crunch of such talent and needs to groom high performers to move into such leadership positions."

ISB's Dean Ajit Rangnekar believes the programme will prove popular in the Indian market, "consistent feedback from the industry leaders over the years revealed the need for developing a leadership pipeline, and this has been the driving force for us to create this ambitious programme. I am confident that PGPMAX too will break new ground in management education in India", he said.





An Interview with Dr. Zahed Sheikholeslami: "Iran must become the recognised centre of excellence for business education"

In his role as the Executive Dean for IBS, Dr. Sheikholeslami will utilise his over 25 years of experience in the industry and academia to contribute to the success of the Iranian Business School, as it embarks on an ambitious plan to become a leading institution of business education in the region.

Zahed has conducted many seminars and workshops on management and entrepreneurship in Iran over the last decade. He was a co-founder of Sharif University of Technology Alumni (SUTA) and was its president from 2004 to 2006. He is also the president of the International Association of Iranian Managers (I-AIM).

1. Having lived outside of Iran for more than 30 years, what is your personal goal for getting involved in this project?

I have lived in the US for over 30 years, but have always attempted to contribute to the progress of science, technology and management in Iran, through conducting many seminars and workshops. I think that many Iranians living abroad share this need with me. For many years I have realised that we are short of a critical mass of professional managers who can help create and grow successful enterprises. So, when I heard of the IBS Project, I wanted to get involved and contribute as much as I possibly could. The more I worked with the team, the more I became convinced that it is the right thing to do.

2. What are your short and long term plans for IBS during your deanship?

The vision of IBS is to become a top business school in the region. That is the long term goal. In the short term we need to build our capacity to deliver on this vision and at the same time build intimate connections with all sectors of business in Iran. We also have to develop strong ties with top educational institutions around the world. Building the capacity to deliver a top-notch business education programme is a gradual and systematic process. The good news is that we have so far assembled an amazing team of very talented people who share this vision and have the skills to make it happen.

3. From a strategic point of view, what are the main differences between IBS and other Iranian schools?

To begin with, we have a very ambitious goal. IBS is the platform where we gather talents that are dispersed all around the world, and then channel this fantastic and diverse resource pool into developing a unique organisation. We believe that Iran must become the recognised centre of

excellence for business education throughout the Middle East region. Our private and not-for-profit status will go a long way towards enabling us to create this wonderful future, without the usual limitations that other institutions might have.

4. What do you look for in the faculty that you will be recruiting for the executive programmes?

Selection of the faculty is probably the single most important part of this process. We aim to invite faculty from leading business schools throughout the world. While our preference is to have Farsi speaking faculty, we are not limiting ourselves to this group. Our programmes will be delivered in English and they will be very interactive using case study methods and simulations. By working with the leading business schools we aim to absorb and implement best practices.

5. What skills do future Iranian business leaders need to develop? Is IBS prepared to face new educational challenges or do they need to adapt Western practises and strategies?

There are some general skills that all professional managers must have and we aim to provide programmes which enhance these skills. Many of these are almost generic in nature, but the trick is to help the executives apply them to the ever-changing business climate of Iran. That is where our experiential learning paradigm comes in. We don't aim to just deliver lectures. We aim to engage people in exploring solutions to problems faced in the context of Iran or the region. Our goal is to adapt the principles of management to the specific conditions faced by managers in Iran. As the Schools builds its own faculty, we will emphasise research in order to test, validate and perhaps enhance the existing theories in order to make them locally relevant.

6. What are the reasons for offering executive education programmes ahead of MBA or EMBA programmes?

We have many reasons for starting this way. To begin with, we want to build our capabilities in a solid and gradual way. You cannot build a solid infrastructure overnight. This has both academic and administrative dimensions. We must provide a unique and positive learning experience for anyone who enrolls in an IBS programme. We also want to learn as much as we can by working with the top executives who have a much broader view of the business requirements in the country. The executives who participate in our programmes in 2010 will help us refine the future curriculum of the School by telling us what is important and what is not. In the final analysis, we want to have a real and positive impact on the economic conditions of the country through training highly qualified business leaders. With what we learn from the executives, we will be able to develop the right programmes and deliver them at the right level.

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