Management
Doing an MBA - Discussion

Write on the board:
Is it a good idea to do an MBA?

To help stimulate the discussion, offer these advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages:
• higher salary
• access to top management posts

Disadvantages:
• very expensive
• many successful entrepreneurs don’t have one!
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Class Activity Cards
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Personal development
Get that perfect job!

Ask your students to evaluate their skills on a level from 1-5 in the following areas:

1 You’re looking for a new career in the current, difficult economic climate. Self evaluate your skills set. Give yourself a level on a scale of 1-5 (1 is not very good, 5 is very good).

A) financial management skills  
B) customer service orientation  
C) leadership potential  
D) analytical thinking skills  
E) flexibility  
F) self-awareness  
G) knowledge of languages  
H) IT skills  

Discussion
1) Get students to swap their scores with a partner. What kind of job would they each recommend for the other? Why?

business  management  service  accountancy  teaching  
computers  fashion  retail  tourism  finance  

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Service
Price vs quality

Write the following words on the board.
A) price   B) quality   C) service   D) design   E) brand

Ask the students to think about what matters most to them when buying something.

Pairwork

Ask students to discuss in pairs which matters most in the following areas:
A) a new mobile phone
B) a pair of jeans
C) a meal in a restaurant
D) a flight to see a friend abroad
E) a new computer
F) buying online

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90-second product pitch

Give students 5 minutes to think of a new product that they will present to potential investors.
(For lower-level classes think about limiting the new product to a certain area such as: a new kitchen utensil, a product for a pet, a car accessory)
Give them the prompts below to help cover the areas investors will want to know about.

- Product / service (What?)
- USP* (What is exciting and new?)
- Loan (How much do you need?)
- Break-even point (When?)
- ROI^ (What can you give back to the Investors?)

*unique selling point
^return on investment

Ask the students to present their product to the class in 90-seconds
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**Marketing**

**Social networking strategy**

**Pairwork**

Ask students which social networking sites they use? (e.g. Facebook)

Ask if they follow or ‘like’ any commercial companies and why?

**Discussion**

Is it a good idea for companies to use a social networking strategy as part of marketing? Why?

**Some viewpoints**

**Yes**

- Good for relationship building with customers
- Some companies have very good bloggers

**No**

- Social networking strategies are not good for selling – low ROI
- Maintaining a social networking strategy wastes employees’ time, for no real benefit

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**Finance**

**Borrowing money**

**Pre-discussion**

Tell students they want to start a new company. Fellow directors have the following ideas of how to raise cash. This is what they say:

“Try and look for a business angel”
“Apply for a traditional bank loan”
“Apply for a loan from a peer-to-peer* scheme”
“Invest time, not money; try and set up the company without going into debt”

**Discussion**

Students decide which option to take and explain why.

**Some lower-level classes may benefit from the following prompts:**

- “It’s hard to find a business angel”
- “Bank loans are expensive”
- “Isn’t a peer-to-peer scheme risky?”
- “I just don’t have the free time to invest!”

*Peer-to-peer scheme: people who have spare money lend it to people who want to borrow. A recent development in obtaining low-cost loans.

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Class Activity Cards
Supply chain

Reverse logistics

Reverse logistics is when a product goes backwards through the supply chain network. For example, when a customer returns a faulty product to the distributor; or when a distributor returns it to the manufacturer in order to destroy it or recycle it.

Role-play

A company has received a huge shipment of damaged goods. What should they do with them?

- Return them to the manufacture to destroy
- Sell them as damaged goods on eBay
- Donate them to the developing world / to a charity
- Send them away for recycling

Ask students to discuss with a partner which option to choose and why

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Class Activity Cards
International trade
Communication across borders

“People spend too much time on e-mails and are losing the ability to communicate face to face.”
“We cannot do business with them. They never answer our e-mails!”

Discussion
1 How many e-mails do you send every day? How many do you receive?
2 Have you ever had a problem with someone misunderstanding an e-mail? What happened?
3 In light of the statements above do you think e-mails help business people communicate better?