

[ICP] IN-COMPANY PROJECT

“End of GEMBA Program” Project

Introduction

The In-Company Project (ICP) is an essential part of the Global Executive MBA (GEMBA).

The project offers you an opportunity to work with a real company on a complex business challenge. Participants are able to put into practice new knowledge, skills and insights learned from different courses and disciplines during the program.

Over a period of 3 months, the ICP involves an IESE faculty member, a representative from a sponsoring company (in the case of consultancy-like work) and a team of ideally 5 GEMBA participants and a maximum of 6.

Your team can choose to carry out one of these 2 types of projects:

- **Consultancy-like work:** Based on a complex business situation in a specific company, this work focuses on quantitative and qualitative analysis in order to propose a solution or a way forward to the company with an emphasis on implementable and measurable results.

The team offers valuable feedback and new perspectives on a current problem or challenge that the sponsoring company faces. In turn, your team will get input from expert practitioners.

Projects can come about in any of the following ways:

- Either your team or you individually propose an existing challenge that has been identified at one of your employer companies.
- A third-party company has a challenge they task your team to solve.
- **Business venture:** The project explores a new business idea for either an existing company or a new start-up. The team may want to go deeper into the business plan it has already developed during the Entrepreneurship course and see how it would go about implementing it. Alternatively, the team can choose to work on another business venture.

Objectives

To **apply the concepts, skills and insights acquired during the Global Executive MBA to a real-life business problem or challenge** by translating the needs of real companies into a tangible solution.

Project Proposals should fulfill the following **expectations** in order **to be approved**:

- *Strategic* – potential to impact the company/division as a whole in a fundamental way.
- *Appropriate challenge* – potential to apply general management knowledge and learnings from the GEMBA. It should be feasible/doable/realistic with the adequate scope.
- *Sustained inquiry* – active, in-depth, iterative process. The company that the team works with should provide the relevant information that the team will need in order to complete the project.
- *Impactful deliverable* – high-quality final report that is meaningful and provides a significant contribution to the company.

As a result of your team's work, the company should benefit from the following:

- *High-quality report* similar to the report received from a consultant.
- *Your “outsider perspective.”*
- *Valuable, forward-looking recommendations* summarized in a report.
- *Progress on an important project* that needs time for quality analysis, but for which the company does not currently have the necessary resources.

Learning Outcomes

Implementing the learnings acquired during the Global Executive MBA program to real business problems.

- **Apply general management knowledge** gained in the program to a real-world problem within a “controlled environment” (with the oversight of a corporate sponsor and a specialized faculty supervisor).
- **Work on a challenging problem** in an area that is of interest to the participant for his/her professional development.
- **Gain insight in a different industry or functional area**, working on emerging topics guided by a faculty supervisor.
- **Demonstrate the value of the participant's learning** to a company or a new start-up.

Competencies

General Competencies

- To explain and discuss business situations in a rigorous, effective way using both formal and informal procedures, and provide relevant information to support their observations and conclusions.
- To prioritize objectives, schedule activities appropriately and execute them within the proper timeframe.
- To distinguish and categorize relevant information effectively for business decision making.
- To interpret the global context in order to analyze and judge the threats and opportunities facing the organization.
- To formulate and evaluate business strategies in decision-making, anticipating the economic consequences of action plans.
- To apply business techniques that integrate the interests of all parties in order to reach satisfactory, lasting agreements by uncovering or creating elements that bring added value to the relationship.

Specific Competencies

- To apply a structured, rigorous analysis process of business situations that encompasses all the dimensions of the business (personnel, strategy, finance, etc.) and concludes with the preparation of a reasonable, feasible action plan.
- To write organized, concise and clear executive reports for analysis and decision making in business situations.

Content

The content **will depend on the nature and type of project.**

IESE's Projects Office will assign each ICP team a **faculty supervisor expert on the main topic or sector** related to the business challenge presented on the Project Proposal.

The faculty supervisor will provide general guidance, support, and insights on the relevant issue addressed. He/she has the role of:

- *helping in the early stages of the project, providing general guidance on how to address the chosen challenge*
- *providing feedback as the work continues*
- *evaluating the final report taking into account the company's opinion*
- *guiding the ICP team along without doing the work for the members of the team.*

The main **phases of the In-Company Project** are the following:

- 1) *Project proposal & scope definition* (includes assignments 1 to 5)
- 2) *Progress & development* (includes assignments 6-7)
- 3) *Final project deliverables* (includes assignments 8 to 11)

The GEMBA journey focuses on three main pillars: Entrepreneurial Spirit, Digital Mindset and Sustainable Future. Your project may be related either of these either directly or tangentially. If that is the case, you will be asked along the way to describe how you are incorporating in your project what you learned during the GEMBA journey from them.

Methodology

Participants apply methodologies and frameworks learned over the course of the Global Executive MBA.

As mentioned in the introduction, the ICP **involves three parties** whose roles are the following:

1) *Team of GEMBA Participants*

You have to form teams of 5 to 6. The team is responsible for the results of the project. It carries out the required analysis and summarizes the final recommendation in a report.

2) *Company sponsor*

A senior executive in the company must sponsor the project. The sponsor drives the project by tasking the team with the challenge, providing the team with the necessary information in order to carry out the project and, finally, the sponsor provides continued feedback as the project goes on.

(Note: some venture-like projects may not have a company sponsor)

3) *IESE Faculty Supervisor*

IESE faculty provides general guidance, direction, feedback and evaluates the team's report. To do this, s/he takes into account the sponsoring company's opinion of the team's work.

Evaluation

The faculty supervisor assigned to the project is in charge of grading the team's performance according to these three components:

- *Project proposal & scope definition: 10%*
This includes the Detailed Project Plan and its established milestones

- *Progress and development: 20%*

- *Final project submission: 70%*

Faculty supervisors evaluate the quality of the final deliverables.

In the case of sponsored projects, faculty supervisors take into account whether the company's expectations were met. One of the tools to do so is the "Company sponsor feedback form."