

SKU and the SKU Advanced Management Program

Origins

SKU, the organization, was founded in 1953 as the association "Schweizer Kurse für Unternehmensführung" (Swiss Programs in Management) by the heads of three Swiss institutes of academic repute: the Institute of Management of the University of St. Gallen HSG, the Swiss Foundation for Applied Psychology SSAP, and the Center for Enterprise Science (formerly BWI) of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich ETH.

SKU is a registered non-profit association. Its organizational structure consists of the Association (Verein SKU), a Supervisory Board (Vorstand) and the operational and program management. SKU's mission, then as today, lies in preparing senior executives to take on or better fulfill their roles in general management and the business community at large.

Program alliance with the Executive School of the University of St. Gallen

SKU is also the name of the SKU flagship program. "The SKU" is a ca. year-long, part-time **Advanced Management Program** for profit center managers at medium-sized companies and heads of smaller companies who are looking to expand their management competencies. The program focuses on strategic, integrated general management. A **joint certificate issued by the Verein SKU and the Executive School of the University of St. Gallen** attests successful completion of the SKU Advanced Management Program.

The SKU AMP is complemented by two further offers: a seminar on the SKU Strategy Method and a Senior Executive Program. While the Strategy seminar is open to the general public, the Senior Executive Program is restricted to SKU AMP Alumni and qualified delegates of long-standing client companies.

Concept

SKU participants are experienced managers and participate in the program both as student and teacher. The SKU approach is three-tiered:

- SKU provides a basic refresher on present-day management learning and practice as presented by leading members of both the academic and business communities, in Switzerland, Great Britain and China
- SKU systematically enables peer learning, drawing upon the extensive cross-cultural and cross-sectoral experience of all program participants via topic-focused group discussion, and
- SKU provides a framework for learning from best practice, and for developing a strategic plan for the own individual business that will be fit for implementation by program close.

Benefit

The SKU graduate leaves the program with updated knowledge of the management disciplines, with wide insight into current business practice at the national and international level, with a strategic plan for his or her own business – and with a network of peers that continues to provide invaluable professional and personal support long after program close.

This network is also appreciated by multinational companies wishing to give their executives quick access to a professional and social network in their new country of residence.

The SKU AMP program is recognized by the Executive School of the **University of St. Gallen** as a certificate program. The SKU diploma is jointly awarded by SKU and the Executive School of the University of St. Gallen. Separate certificates are awarded for the modules in London and Shanghai by SKU's reputed and highly-ranked partners, **Cass Business School** (City University, London) and **China Europe International Business School** (CEIBS), Shanghai.

Curriculum structure

The SKU AMP spans nine months, with 27 days of on-site contact sessions distributed over seven modules (run in Brunnen on Lake Lucerne and St. Gallen, in London and Shanghai). Personal preparation and project work between modules is estimated at some 200 hours. The main program language in the five Swiss-based modules is German, respectively English in the module run in London (focus on finance and change management at Cass) and the module in Shanghai (focus on international management at CEIBS). The SKU curriculum is structured in main topics (running over several modules and comprising lectures as well as business presentations of the group members followed by topical discussion), coached project work (strategic plan) and complementary topics (covered in lectures, workshops or seminars).

Admission Criteria

SKU applicants must have a good working knowledge of the German and English languages (oral and written), at least ten years' management experience (with line responsibility within a larger company, or senior/top management responsibility within an SME). In view of their project work during the SKU year, they must have strategic authority over their own profit center or business operation. Median participant age is 43 years, within a bandwidth from 32 to 52 years. Applications must be submitted by the sponsoring company complete with a candidate assessment indicating the prospective career track within the organization or group.

Participants

SKU participants are predominantly Swiss (from all four language regions), German and Austrian. Virtually all sectors of private enterprise as well as the public sector are represented in each SKU. Candidate selection ensures that each course reflects a greatest possible diversity of industries, functions, professional experience and personal backgrounds.

Regular client companies include all major Swiss firms and increasingly foreign multinationals operating in and out of Switzerland. The SKU alumni network currently comprises over 4,300 graduates in key, mainly European-based, positions.

After SKU

The SKU Alumni Organization, open to all alumni of the SKU Advanced Management Program, organizes annual meetings, and provides continuous education in various formats including access to publications of SKU faculty, invitations to lectures, and dedicated alumni programs and events.

One or more annual SKU Senior Executive Programs target important trends and current aspects of management at the international level. In a format combining lectures and site visits, members of the business, academic and political communities provide insight into selected program topics, local management practice and current affairs in developed, developing or emerging regions of the global economy.

Earlier SKU Alumni Programs have highlighted business and management issues in Japan, Greater China, the United States, India, the United Kingdom and the Asian "Tiger" economies, or have focused on specific management challenges (currently "Value Creation"). The SKU Senior Executive Programs are run in English and open to SKU alumni and, by special application, members of the senior management of SKU client companies only.

SKU's partner, the University of St. Gallen, further offers a wide portfolio in executive education open to SKU Alumni.

For detailed information visit www.sku.ch (in German only).