



The Executive Language Center is a **guarantee**

Els programes de Management d'ESADE es troben entre el millors d'Europa. Entrevistem a Xavier Mendoza, degà d'ESADE i gran impulsor de la internacionalització de la unitat de management que, conseqüentment, respon en anglès.

Xavier, how long have you been the Dean of ESADE Business School?
Since September, 2000, almost seven years.

What have been the most important changes in ESADE during this time?
Without doubt the internationalisation of the school at all levels, and the strengthening of research which that has implied: changing the Phd program into a program entirely taught in English, increasing internationality of Phd students; the launching of the two Masters of Science also entirely taught in English with students from more than twenty countries in that program; the increasing internationalization of the MBA program, with 75% international students and very good results in the rankings... Another very important thing has been the opening of the New Campus in Madrid, raising the ESADE Business School profile in the corporate world.

How has the Language School helped in the growth of ESADE? I know for example in the Language School now you hear English all the time.

The ESADE Language program is a terrific asset for ESADE overall. Both our own students in degree programs as well as exchange students really prize the contribution of the Language School, as well as the proficiency of the teachers there. The contribution to the Spanish business executive has also been very important, not only in terms of their mastery, their fluency in foreign languages but also using foreign languages as cross cultural training and in that sense I see lots of synergies between the Language School and the activities in the Business School.

Cross cultural differences within multicultural business teams is one of the things ESADE is putting a lot of energy into, both in the Business School and the Language School.
That's right. And that's not obvious to the outside world. If you talk about a language school people expect to get language training, but I think that using a language as a door opener for understanding other cultures, and other societies, is an added value that our language school is really providing to our students. This is also shown in the fact that our exchange program, ESADE degree programs in business do have one of the largest percentages of students going abroad among European business schools. That's made possible because they have very good training in foreign languages. But also because they are willing to adapt to different countries. The ESADE Business School has around 100 student exchange agreements at both undergraduate and graduate level on the six continents and our students go not just to Europe and North America but also to Latin-America, Asia the Middle-East, South Africa. They are very willing to adapt, and I think that is in part due to the contribution of the language School.

So, the language school has contributed to the international present of ESADE and has been helpful in ESADE taking its international steps forward.

I think the contribution of the language school goes beyond the educational programs of the Business school or the Law school. And it goes on to have a direct impact especially on the Catalan business community. I think the language school over the years has really supported internationalization of companies located in the Barcelona metropolitan area and beyond. There is a direct contribution there.

So here the role of the language school is very important.
I think so. There are some hidden synergies such as the tremendous pedagogical skill that exists in the language school. We have a unit which is really focused on learning methodologies. We have a very broad audience of students and participants ranging from people of 18, 19 years old to people in their 50's...

Or more.
Or more...the majority of them with many years of working and managerial experience. So it means we really need to tailor not just our contents but also learning methodologies to these people. I think the interactive approach of the language school in some instances has been very inspirational for management faculty members.

And the companies here in Barcelona are conscious of this?
Yes, of course. Recently I was talking with the director general of an important Catalan multinational and he was saying "Well I'm sending all of our managers to ESADE language school to improve their level of English" and the same is true for many other companies. Really they see ESADE as a whole entity, not just the management component or the law component, but also the language component is related to the brand perception of the companies.

Sant Cugat represents a big change for us, doesn't it?
In September, 2008, we expect to be open and running...

Is ESADE ready for the growth?
Sant Cugat is a major challenge because all the studies show that taking a workforce and splitting it into two or more locations is not easy. Each location starts developing its own culture and style. So we are very aware of this and that's something that we're trying to minimize. There are many advantages in moving to Sant Cugat but there are also costs which will require careful management. We have currently 1,200 students in the Licenciatura program. Once we are in Sant Cugat, in three or four years we will have around 1,400 up to a maximum of 1,500, which is the capacity of the new campus. This is a large number of students.

So we will have a double Center...
That's right. In the Sant Cugat ESADE campus plus Creapolis, there will be at least 2,000 people working there every day. This is a significant number. It is an interesting challenge.

It will be very exciting. At the moment both the Spanish government and the Catalan government are especially interested in improving the level of English within the country. ESADE obviously is playing its role in the business world.
The challenge is really not to teach languages on one side of the curriculum, but really to integrate and mainstream English into the curriculum and to use it as a learning tool.

Which is what happened in ESADE...
That's right.

Using English as a learning tool for other subjects, to open the world of other subjects.
Exactly.

Thank you very much Xavier.
My pleasure.

Xavier Mendoza és el degà de Management d'ESADE des de l'any 2000. Doctor en Ciències Econòmiques i Empresariales per la Universitat de Barcelona i Llicenciat i MBA en Administració i Direcció d'Empreses per ESADE, es va incorporar al Claustre del Professorat d'ESADE l'any 1982 com a professor del Departament de Política d'Empresa.