

MBA Brief Project 2012-13

What's the IBA - MBA Project

The MBA Project is an integral part of the MBA program conducted at the Institute of Business Administration, Karachi. A group of 4-5 second year students undertake a management consulting assignment in real life business environment related to managerial and organizational problems that need solutions.

The Project not only enables students to develop interviewing and report writing skills, but also provides an opportunity for them to enhance their managerial and leadership skills, besides their problem-solving and decision-making skills.

Purpose of MBA Project:

1. Conceptual skills.. from idea to final product / project report
2. Team building skills, working and leading teams
3. Decision making and problem solving skills
4. Application of conceptual frameworks in solving managerial problems
5. Managing several stakeholders in the same project, client, faculty, etc.
6. Managing conflicts and build Negotiation skills
7. Communication skills; report writing/presentation skills
8. Analytical /critical thinking skills, brain storming sessions
9. IBA values; hard work, team work, respect, honesty etc.
10. Leadership skills, through taking initiatives and responsibilities
11. Planning, organizing and self management skills

Major Project Areas: The projects could cover any issue the organization would require in-depth analysis including the following key areas:

- New Ventures / Feasibility Studies
- Management Control Systems
- Human Resource Restructuring
- Strategic Analysis & Management
- Marketing Strategy
- Supply Chain Management

The projects would be conducted under the close supervision of an industry experienced Project Advisor. The projects are done with both local and multinational companies, preferably those based in Karachi due to logistic reasons.

Responsibilities of the Organizations: The responsibilities of the client organization would include:

- Provide the IBA a brief description of their requirements and scope of the Project.
- Provide name and contact details of the individual in the organization who can be contacted by the group involved in the Project including to facilitate access, where necessary, to the relevant company material and information.
- Meet the financial cost incurred on the Project including travel and accommodation cost, if any. The IBA does not charge for the Project conducted by its students.

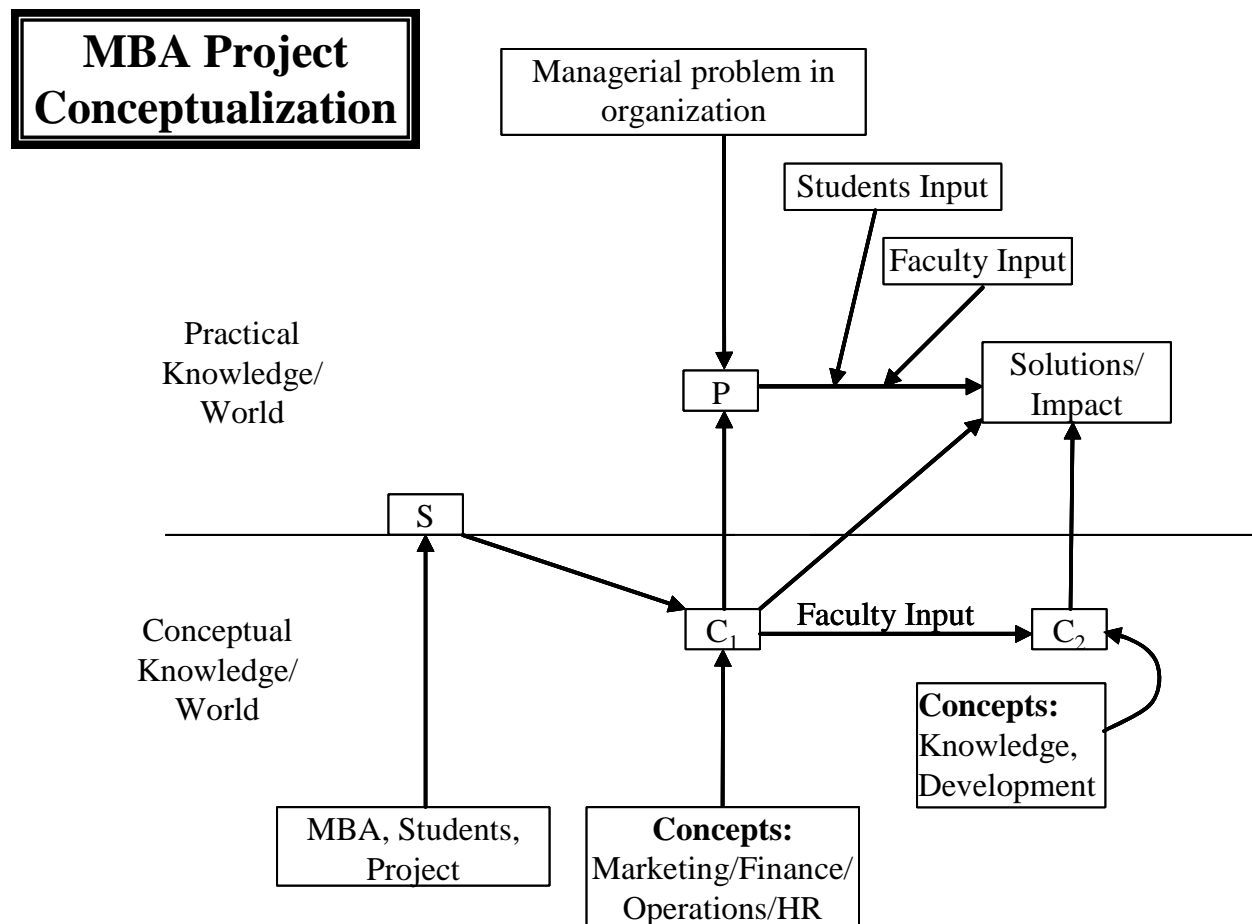
Responsibilities of the IBA: The responsibilities of the IBA would include:

- The IBA students group would select a Project of a client organization whose requirements match the interest of the group.
- Prepare proposal in consultation with the client
- Submit a monthly progress report to the client, besides an interim report, in order to enhance students' communication with the client.
- Ensure the confidentiality of organization's business operations.
- Ensure quality and professionalism in all deliverables
- Keep track of the Project's progress and ensure the assigned group delivers the final report within the stipulated deadline after completion of all the mandatory stages.

Project Benefits for the Organizations

There are wide-ranging and numerous benefits of the IBA - MBA Projects, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Cost is minimal compared to the cost that will be incurred on engaging a professional consulting firm for delivering innovative solutions. Every group can also utilize the extensive resources available at the IBA including expertise of the faculty members.
- Each group comprises of talented and energetic students with sound academic background, who understand the market dynamics and, under the supervision of industry experienced Project Advisor, can be trusted to come up with practical and effective solutions.
- Final report is the result of months of extensive groundwork with every member of the group actively contributing towards its finalization. The client organization can thus benefit greatly from the substantial outcome.



Timeline for the IBA - MBA Projects

A timeline for various activities is necessary for timely completion of the Project. A detailed timeline of the IBA – MBA Projects is as follows:

September / October

- Student groups will be formed to conduct projects, choose client organization of their interest, and submit project name, and name of advisor and co-advisor
- Student groups will submit a draft Terms of Reference (TOR) & Work Plan to their client organization, advisor, co-advisor and MBA Project Coordinator for their feedback

November

- Final presentation of the TOR & Work Plan to the MBA Project Director

February

- Submit Interim Progress Report

March

- Presentation of the Interim Progress Report before the client organization, advisor, co-advisor and MBA Project Coordinator

May / June

- Submit Final Report and Presentation before the client organization, advisor, co-advisor and MBA Project Coordinator

Contact Us

Interested organizations, keen to have their projects included among the IBA - MBA Projects, can send a brief description of their requirements and scope of project till September 30, 2012 to:

Terms of Reference - TOR

During the initial contacts with the client and the subsequent preliminary problem diagnosis the student / researchers / consultant should have collected and evaluated enough information to be able to plan the assignment. This is what the client expects at this stage: A TOR (Terms of Reference).

In this initial phase one should be spending enough time and energy to collect information to identify the scope of the project and problems or the objective of the research which requires a solution. This can only be possible with the cooperation of the client staff and the quality of the data found during data collection. If the initial phase findings (TOR) were not correct or were not very clear and acceptable to both the parties, subsequent results will not be useful for the client.

During this initial phase of the project, students should be able to determine not only the key objectives / problems but also the methodology or the implementation strategy of the project. It must be determined that what data must be collected and how it must be collected and what resources are needed from the client? What are the benefits of the successful outcome of the project?

Terms of Reference set out the scope and purpose of the study or the project. In this phase the clients specify their ideas and requirements, which are then used to formulate a TOR. It includes following elements:

- Background of the project
- The main objectives / tasks
- Specific technical inputs or areas of in-depth investigation
- Methodology to execute project
- Geographic scope and location
- Timeline of activities
- Project outputs or key deliverables (in the form of a report)
- Resources required, both human and financial

TOR must also provide a brief framework of diagnosis phase, design and analysis phase and implementation phase of the project. So the client organization contact person knows exactly what the student / consultant / researcher intend to do in their organization in the coming weeks. Moreover, each phase of the project requires different set of information and activities etc. When students / consultants / researchers have prepared the TOR, it must be presented to the client to have a consensus on TOR and client feedback is incorporated.

MBA Project Brief Outline

OBJECTIVE:

To enable second year MBA student teams to work on a consulting assignment pertaining to organizational conditions or problems that need solutions.

Introduction

The IBA - MBA Project gives organizations the opportunity to take advantage of the expertise and academic knowledge of bright and dynamic students of a premier business school in Pakistan for conducting primary and field research, analyzing the issue(s) organizations want to investigate, and coming up with cost-effective implementable solutions at no or barely minimal cost to the client organizations.

METHODOLOGY:

1. Initially student group (4-5 students) will prepare a project proposal (terms of reference) based on discussions with the company. A work plan is also prepared listing the main activities to be undertaken and a time table for completion of these activities.
2. Students present the proposal and work plan before a faculty committee. During the year an interim progress report is submitted to the MBA Project Coordinator, Project Adviser and the Client.
3. On completion of the project a draft written report is submitted and an oral presentation made to the client and the faculty committee. The presentation is held at the IBA Karachi.
4. Based on client and faculty feedback a final written report is submitted to all and for final grading.
5. A faculty committee (chaired by the project coordinators) guides and monitors the project through the year. This includes reviewing the terms of reference and work plan, the progress report, and the final presentation and report.

Please send us a brief scope of the project, name and contact information of the person in your organization dealing with your MBA Project till September 30th, 2012.

Guidelines / SOPs for the students

The aim of the second year MBA project is to enable students to execute a challenging assignment within the real life business environment. The execution of the project not only helps students to develop interviewing and report writing skills but also provides an opportunity for them to enhance their decision making and team building skills. The outcome of the MBA Project that is, a detailed implementation plan on some managerial and organizational problems also gives a sense of contribution and achievement to the final year students.

The following are key policy guidelines for the MBA project

1. Every year in mid July / August the MBA coordinator shall start writing letters to invite companies to participate in MBA projects, preferably those companies based in Karachi due to logistic reasons.
2. In August the MBA project coordinator will prepare a detail presentation to the MBA faculty about the MBA project. This presentation will include, important dates, number of groups and number of companies etc.
3. In early September students will form 4-5 member groups and provide their names to MBA coordinator
4. In mid September the MBA coordinator will give a presentation to second year MBA students about MBA projects as mentioned in item 2. This presentation also includes the process of writing a TOR.
5. In September students will start selecting the client companies to write TOR and negotiate their terms of reference. Student themselves will establish first contact with the client, but the MBA project staff will keep track of all the students' activities and their dealing with the client. Good relation with client organization is important for IBA.
6. By the end of September Student groups will provide the following names to the MBA project coordinator; name of project client, name of the adviser and of the co-adviser.

Students will start working on their TOR.

7. In early October student will submit a draft TOR to client, adviser, co-adviser and the MBA project coordinator for their feedback. Students then prepare their TOR presentation in Mid November.

8. After this TOR presentation in mid November the students will submit the Final TOR signed by the project adviser and client to the MBA project coordinator. This final TOR covers the, key deliverables, methodologies, work plan, interim report content and date, final report contents and the date of the final presentation. Also the financial costs covered by the client. This Final TOR provides contractual and moral obligations for both the sides, students and client.

9. By mid November regret letters will be sent to companies, which were not selected by the students for their MBA projects with a positive note for the next year.

10. The MBA coordinator will inform students about their grades on their TOR

11. In mid November the MBA coordinator will sit with the groups and discuss their progress and problems during the initial start up phase. In order to keep track of an individual and group performance

12. From November (till May next year) onwards a monthly progress reports signed by the Client and project adviser should also to be submitted by the students to the MBA project coordinator. The purpose of this monthly progress report is to enhance students' communication with the client and project advisers. This will also help to keep track of the student's activities according to the TOR.

13. Interim report of the project should be submitted in end February to client, adviser, co-adviser (if there is) and MBA project coordinator. Students must get written feedback from client, adviser, co adviser and MBA project coordinator.

14. In March students will give presentations on their interim report before the client, adviser, co-adviser and MBA project coordinator. This meeting will also provide opportunity for client to sit with adviser and co adviser and MBA project coordinator to

evaluate the interim performance of the group. At the end of this presentation the MBA project coordinator will provide written feedback on the interim report and gives interim grades to students.

15. In April students will be provided information about the final report (spiral bound) format. The final report must not be more than 100 pages, the executive summary must not be more than 3 pages, A4 pages, font size 13, Times New Roman, double spaced (in order to get the feedback from adviser, co adviser and client).

16. In May students will submit their final report (spiral bound) as mentioned in item 15, one copy each, to client, adviser, co-adviser and MBA project coordinator. All four stakeholders will provide their feedback in writing and students will incorporate changes before their final presentation. The final presentation (formal), will be of 90 minutes duration, 60 minutes presentation and 30 minutes question and answer session it will be held in end of May. Client, adviser, co- adviser and MBA project coordinator must be available for the final presentations. At the end of the final presentations the final grades for the group will be decided. The client feedback on final report must be included for the final grades (and students should not be present during the client feedback session).

17. In June, after the final presentations students will submit 4 copies of (Hard Bound) the final report along with the changes they have made after the final presentations. They will submit these four copies of final report with the signature and approval of the project adviser, one for the client, one for the adviser, one for IBA library, and one for the MBA project coordinator.

18. Students will also submit a written acknowledgement letter from the clients that they (client) have received the Hard Bound copy of the final report.

19. The MBA project coordinator will make a list of the final reports and send them to the library.

20. The MBA project coordinator in consultations with the adviser and co-adviser will decide the final grades. The MBA project coordinator will have the final authority because he / she will have the overall picture of the working of the group, efforts made by the group, methodology and report presentation, and level of client satisfaction with

the output and client relationship management for all the projects.

21. The MBA project coordinator, on the basis of item 20, can also decide the best MBA project.

SUCCESSFUL MBA PROJECT includes

1. Identification and conceptualization of problem by students.

(100 % fit with the client organization is problems).

2. Excellent guiding and mentoring by MBA adviser / coordinator

3. Well structured MBA project plan. Phase wise deadlines/ deliverables / resources needed list etc.

4. Project Methodology and tools/data collection technologies

5. Efficient/effective team work and healthy cooperation and team dynamics.

6. Good client-student relationship

7. Top quality reports and deliverables

8. Open communication and feedback between students - adviser, students - coordinator and students - client.

ROLE OF FACULTY ADVISER

1. Helps students conceptualize problem and focus on objectives and deliverables
2. Helps students to follow deadlines (Monitoring progress)
3. Helps students to work with good team spirit
4. Listens students ideas and share his ideas and concerns
5. Helps students to deliver high quality value added deliverables ethically and professionally.

ROLE OF MBA PROJECT COORDINATOR

1. Helps students conceptualize problem and focus on objectives and deliverables
2. Keeps track of each project progress
3. Helps students focus and maintain high quality relationship with client
4. Helps students solve logistic/operational related problems
5. Helps students solve interpersonal / team issues
6. Quality and professionalism in all deliverables and client conducts
7. Provide students access to data/library/specialist faculty

Grading System

Grades will be allotted after submission of report and final presentation.

Different grade may be awarded to individuals within a group

Final Grade Awarded by Adviser and Coordinator (jointly)

MBA Project is equal to 6.0 units (two MBA courses)

MBA Project Advisors

Marketing

Mr. Jami Moiz

Dr. Amber Gul

Dr. Huma Amir

Mr. Hanif Ajari

Economics and Finance

Dr. Khadija Bari

Dr. Qazi Masood

Ms. Lalarukh Ejaz

Dr. Naeem uz Zaffar

Dr. Ather Elahi

Dr. Mohammad Nishat

Management

Dr. Shahid Mir

Dr. Shahid Qureshi

Dr. Nasir A. Afghan

Mr. Asad Ilyas