

Lifelong learning and graduate programs

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Over the past twenty-five years, there has been a continuous increase in the number of graduate programs at a master's level or above that are dedicated to students who have already acquired substantial professional experience (5 to 15 years).

In parallel to an analysis from the perspective of society (how does this model serve to provide competencies that are useful for the growth of the economy and the development of society?) this trend begs management questions from the students' perspectives:

- How can this two-year break from professional life be analyzed?
- It stands to reason that this break must be considered as an investment towards an enhanced later phase in an individual's professional career. Are the competencies, the ability to apply improved professional vision, the skills that were developed during these studies applicable when the individual returns to his or her professional arena? To what extent do they serve the professionals on their return the "year after?" How is it possible to calculate the usefulness of such an investment?
- Does the experience of mid-career study change the manner in which the individual perceives his or her needs for the ongoing acquisition of professional competencies? Does she or he approach the question of continuing education differently?
- How do individuals identify their professional needs?
- How do individuals determine their response these needs?
- From a human resource perspective, do organizations that hire individuals who have embarked on mid-career training create special frameworks to re-integrate them into professional life?

All of these questions, which have largely not yet been researched, will be dealt with in this track.

Together with what happens the "year after" an MBA, some presentations will focus on what happens for professionals who are integrated into the education and social sectors following such a mid-career period of study. The reason for this is that working within the education and social sectors opens a double perspective:

- on the one hand, the individual who studies in such programs has expectations, goals, career plans, etc.
- on the other hand, society at large has expectations that relate to individual's desired impact in the service of the general interest.

Some papers will focus on this dual perspective and some other will approach this topics through the notion of career path.