



Executive MBA participants study the Chinese economy on-site

During eight intensive days in Hangzhou and Shanghai, participants from the Gothenburg Executive MBA programme have had the opportunity to study the Chinese economy on-site. Given the current global uncertainty about how China's economy will develop, the residency is particularly valuable. The Shanghai and Hangzhou residency, which runs without interruption for over a week, is an integral part of the Executive MBA programme. Parallel with study visits to Chinese and multinational companies, the participants have studied logistics and Chinese business culture at two of China's top universities, Zhejiang University and Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

Participants in the Executive MBA program have a wide variety of backgrounds and work in different industries. The common denominator is that they all are leaders; in this year's group, among others, from global companies such as SKF, AstraZeneca, Volvo Cars, Volvo AB, AECOM and Etteplan. The Executive MBA programme, which runs on a part-time basis over 21 months, has a clear focus on emerging markets in Asia and is aimed at strengthening the participants' skills in terms of doing business in countries such as China and India.

The education session in China is divided into two parts: four days in Hangzhou and four days in Shanghai. With a population of nine millions, Hangzhou is the capital of Zhejiang Province, which is characterized by a tradition of Chinese entrepreneurship. Geely and Alibaba are two well-known examples of successful growth companies headquartered here.

"China is an extremely interesting market, clearly moving from being the factory for the world, to becoming a market largely driven by internal purchasing power. Staff turnover in Chinese companies is a common problem, which affects all businesses. While in China, I learnt more about the culture that drives people's decisions to change careers. I hope to discuss this knowledge with our HR business partners to see if we can improve our current Chinese HR policy", says Anna Sundgren-Andersson, Director within clinical development at AstraZeneca.

"What would I say to someone who asks for advice on selling to China? It is easy to fall for the sheer size of the Chinese market, but you must still choose what segment to target and which unique or differentiated selling points to leverage. Pitfalls are numerous, hence my advice would be to first find a Chinese partner with the right local networks", concludes Lionel Boubli, Head of demand chain and IT at SKF Aerospace BU.

During their eight days, participants visited companies including Geely, Sunwin Bus, Shanghai Harbour and Jiashan Green Logistic Center. They also met managers working on location in China for companies such as Volvo Car Group, AstraZeneca, Ericsson and SEB.



*Lionel Boubli of SKF and
Anna Sundgren-Andersson of AstraZeneca*

"Thanks to our School's long-standing relationships with partner universities and businesses in China, we are able to offer participants visits to innovative and successful companies and course modules at highly reputable universities. Through roundtables and network meetings with executives stationed in China, participants acquire a profoundly better understanding of what is required to successfully run a business in China," says Håkan Ericson, Managing Director of GU School of Executive Education at the School of Business, Economics and Law, Gothenburg University.

The different course modules covered during the trip include themes such as innovation in China, Chinese business practices, culture and leadership, CSR and sourcing in China, establishing start-ups in China and supply chain management. Both Zhejiang University and Shanghai Jiao Tong University are ranked among the very best universities in China.

Please do read the reflections of Executive MBA participant Hugo Carlén at SKF found in his blog post from the trip to China: [The Silent Revolution in the Chinese Streets](#).

For further information, please contact

Håkan Ericson
Managing Director
GU School of Executive Education AB
Tel. +46 70 950 6335
hakan.ericson@handels.gu.se

GU School of Executive Education delivers an Executive MBA program with a Nordic-Asian focus, and custom programs for the private and public sectors. Program deliveries take place in Sweden and globally. By designing programs to always combine academic rigor and lasting practical relevance, GU School of Executive Education develops leaders and executives.

The School of Business, Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg holds AMBA and EQUIS accreditations, and is in the final stage of its AACSB accreditation process. www.guexed.com