

ESMT Berlin: new book explores the future of leadership learning and executive education

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Educators and learning specialists from ESMT Berlin (<https://esmt.berlin/>) share innovative classroom practices for executive education, including tips from Hollywood, gamification, and research insights in a new book: "The Future of Executive Education."

With the look and feel of a magazine, the "bookazine" is edited by author Nora Grasselli, program director of executive education at ESMT Berlin. Grasselli is an expert in experiential learning in executive education and teaches leadership, team collaboration, and organizational behavior.

"Even before the COVID crisis hit in 2020, big changes were underway in executive education. Since then, the discipline upturned. Leaders want different learning content and want to learn it in ways different from ten years, or even five years ago," says Grasselli.

A specific chapter is dedicated to effective virtual communication based on lessons from Hollywood. The co-authors, with backgrounds in leadership education, theater, and film, present the challenges of virtual communication, including the lack of physical cues and emotional nuance, and how certain practices originating from the world of film can help overcome them, such as evoking emotion and involving your audience.

Another chapter discusses how educational technology helped navigate the COVID crisis. While digital learning tools were present in many business school programs pre-pandemic, the sudden need for widespread remote education during lockdowns led to accelerated investment in and exponential use of digital classroom technology. Educators at ESMT tackle the negative assumptions about online learning and show how it can match or even surpass campus-based learning.

The authors also explore the use of an immersive cyberattack simulation to educate business leaders on teamwork and leadership. This innovative game pits business leaders against fictional hackers and reveals lessons on the future of teamwork, such as how teams are more global and virtual than ever before.

Other topics include designing executive programs that have real business impact, individualized learning in executive education, transferring research insights into the leadership practice for managing digital transformation, and more.

Programs described in the book are also winners of the EFMD Excellence in Practice Award. The 'Enter the Eurozone' program, which supported nineteen Irish SME executives in drawing up a detailed entry strategy for the eurozone market, won silver in 2020. Another involves the TRATON Group, which brought together the world's leading truck brands. ESMT and training partner Mindset joined forces to support the TRATON Group's cross-brand management in designing and executing a structured training program, receiving a gold award in 2021.

Concepts explored within the book have all been tried and tested in on-site, virtual, and hybrid executive classrooms. Continued top 10 placement within the Financial Times Executive Education rankings,

most recently ranked 5th globally for customized programs, confirms the success of ESMT's teaching practices.

The EY Digital Innovation Research Fund supported the book financially.

The book "The Future of Executive Education" is available here (<https://esmt.berlin/faculty-research/publication/future-executive-education-learning-leadership-digital-age>).

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