

REACH

Prize answers

The latest winners of the MBT Facilitator Award for Excellence in Teaching both champion the value of thinking beyond the theory.

Dr Ian Benton and Brad Smith, the recipients of the 2008 MBT Facilitator Awards for Excellence in Teaching, are used to dealing with difficult questions. But, given their natural humility, the question of why they think they won the award is an especially challenging one.

"It's really not for me to say... I'll have a shot at it though," replied Ian with a laugh. "I believe that business theory is basically useless unless it has a direct monetary benefit in practice. In my classes I aim to provide people with the academic disciplines that go with learning the theory, and to explain that this is a foundation for them to understand, from the research, what is replicable in practice. Then we come together as a group and collectively facilitate the application of that theory in practice. By the end of a class, the students are pumped. They come in with the power of one and leave with the power of 27. And that applies to the online students as well. The online discussions can become awesomely dynamic."

When Brad, like the other nominees, was required to explain in a written submission why he deserved the award, he told MBT Academic Director John D'Ambra he didn't think he could put it into words.



Brad Smith and Ian Benton

"But I think having experience in face to face teaching is important," he told Reach. "The techniques you develop for questioning students are transferable to the online teaching. It's a matter of answering their question with another, opened-ended question to try to get them to think, without spoon-feeding them."

He also credits his 20 years as a manager in the real world. "It allows me to bring a practical focus – 'war stories' of how we implemented something or the problems we had. Because what's written in the academic texts... well, sometimes it isn't quite so easy to implement in reality."

Ian, who has a Bachelor of Economics, an MBA and a Doctorate in Business Administration, also has nearly 30 years of commercial experience in marketing and general management. Since he started teaching MBT courses three years ago, he has taught Principles of Marketing, Business Economics, and Development of New Products and Services.

Having recently become the course coordinator for Managing Agile Organisations, he says the current business environment couldn't be better for teaching the subject. "Understanding how to bring agility to the organisation is going to be the difference between the winners and the losers in the immediate term," he says. "As much as I don't like the effect the recession is having on many businesses, I couldn't dream of a better case study."

Brad, who is in his second year of MBT teaching, coordinates Supply Chain Management and facilitates Project Management. He started his career in the mid-1980s as a product development engineer and since 2002 has been consulting in quality and occupational health and safety improvement while lecturing at universities and business institutions. He has a Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical), a post-graduate

"BY THE END OF A CLASS, THE STUDENTS ARE PUMPED."

Diploma in Management and an MBA. Asked if he has any advice for MBT students, he says: "I see a lot of students much too focused on the final mark rather than the process of learning. I understand that it's partly because they are very time poor, but if they enjoy the whole learning process, then the results will come."

Nominations for the 2009 MBT Facilitator Award are now open, visit: www.student.mbt.unsw.edu.au/Facilitator_Award.htm



Alumni Prizes: in the words of the winners

The MBT's two capstone courses were offered in both semesters last year, so there are four winners of Alumni Prizes for the best performances in each course.

The prizes are sponsored by Hudson, one of the world's leading recruitment providers. The winners – Wolf Getto, Mary-Beth Hosking (Management of Innovation and Technical Change), Peter Williamson and Naomi Ward (Strategic Management of Business and Technology) – will each receive a certificate and \$500, to be presented at the Australian School of Business scholarships and prizes ceremony in June.

Here the winners talk about the courses and how the MBT in general has had an impact on their lives and careers.

WOLF GETTO

Management of Innovation and Technical Change, Semester 1 2008

As an independent project and business consultant, Wolf Getto has made full use of the MBT's flexibility to fit it in with the ups and down of his contract work. As he completes the penultimate course of his degree, he admits it has been "a bit of a slog". But spreading the courses out by doing two a year since 2004, and studying by distance even though he lives in Sydney, has enabled him to stick to the task.

Wolf completed a Bachelor of Engineering (Electronics) at the University of South Australia in 1983. He also has an arts degree, and he has studied Italian and German. "Having studied so much previously, I didn't feel I needed to attend classroom-based lectures to get the full benefit," he says. "The MBT still requires you to relate the content back to your work, so there's that interaction with real business and real people."

He doesn't know why he did particularly well in the capstone course. "But it was

interesting and relevant. I was very busy managing two global projects in the gaming industry, with travel commitments to the United States. One project was managing a new business model for the licensing of gaming content, which I used as my MBT assignment case in innovation and change.

"With only a few exceptions, I've been able to fit study assignments in with work. Certainly there's a lot of academic material there that doesn't necessarily translate immediately into your workplace, but it still challenges you and makes you question the assumptions you might make about your work."

"THE MBT HAS PROVIDED SUPERB PREPARATION AND FUELLED AMBITIONS."

PETER WILLIAMSON

Strategic Management of Business and Technology, Semester 1 2008

Peter Williamson can provide some statistics which give more than a hint as to why he has won an Alumni Prize. "Being typically anal about these things, I kept track of the time devoted to my MBT studies," he says. "It comes to a total of 2,189.75 hours on the 11 subjects completed to date. That's an average of 199 hours a subject, or 14.22 hours a week based on 14-week semesters."

After qualifying as a teacher of science, mathematics and computer science, Peter spent 25 years in South Africa, Australia and other countries "exploring the blind alleys and cul de sacs of computer-based education". He has worked in a

*From great people
to great performance*

number of roles in teaching and education administration at school, university and education department levels. For the past 12 years he has been the architect and driving force behind the IT strategic plan at Barker College, an Anglican school in Sydney.

"The MBT has made me better able to carry out my current job," he says, "but it has also provided superb preparation and fuelled ambitions to once again assume a more senior role in the field of education."

He began his MBT in mid-2006 with Project Management, following the educational maxim 'move from the known to the unknown'. "I already had post-graduate qualifications [an honours degree in operations research] and considerable practical experience in IT."

The MBT lecturers have generally been of high quality, but capstone course lecturer Craig Tapper was exceptional, he says. "Craig brought the subject alive by videoing lectures and providing them online – with cameo appearances by his dog, doing his best to distract his master. Craig also closely guided the team assignment to ensure maximum benefit. Our group carried out a strategic analysis of Apple Computer, and I had the opportunity to interview Apple Computer Australia's managing director, Tony King."

MARY-BETH HOSKING

Management of Innovation and Technical Change, Semester 2 2008

Mary-Beth Hosking admits she took on a "tough gig" when she set out in 2007 to complete her MBT in three years. The support and understanding of her husband and 11-year-old son have been crucial.

NEW MBT COURSE: Introduction to Management a compulsory induction

She relates with amusement how her son asked her: "Do people fall asleep in your course? Because it's very boring what you've written." But he finds it extraordinary that someone can write 3,000-4,000 words and it all flows, she says. "It's important that he sees that university takes a lot of commitment, for when he gets to the age to make that decision about furthering his own education."

Mary-Beth is the Melbourne-based learning and development manager at Toll Solutions, part of the international transport and integrated logistics provider Toll Holdings. She is currently enrolled in her 10th and 11th MBT courses.

She started her MBT because she wanted to enhance her ability to lead her workplace team. "I work long hours and I couldn't be constrained by having to go to lectures or tutorials," she says. "Everything I do at work is virtual, so I've found the distance learning mode easy, and I can study at three in morning if I want to. I also wanted the technological slant so I could apply it to my work."

She notes that the capstone courses are more involved than the other subjects. "People need to consider that it's worthwhile doing the capstones on their own so they can appreciate all the nuances. They bind all the other subjects together."

NAOMI WARD

Strategic Management of Business and Technology, Semester 2 2008

Naomi Ward credits her lecturer, Amanda McKernan, with taking the Strategic Management of Business and Technology course beyond the realm of theory into areas of practice that have directly affected how she has gone about her work.

"At work senior management would discuss strategies on how to improve the business relative to the marketplace," says Naomi, who as an acquisitions manager

The MBT's new Introduction to Management course will serve as an induction for students and also provide the generic study and academic skills needed to be successful in the MBT program.

Introduction to Management, available as an option for all MBT students, will be a compulsory first course for those beginning their studies at the Graduate Certificate in Business & Technology level.



"THE CAPSTONE COURSES BIND ALL THE OTHER SUBJECTS TOGETHER."

at SingTel Optus in Sydney, looks after the wholesaling of mobile voice and mobile broadband products. "One of the things I struggled with was coming in from that strategic view. Studying strategic management helped me realise that I already knew many of the answers but didn't have frameworks to guide me in my thinking. Amanda had a wealth of experience from which she was able to translate text into real-life experiences. This especially resonated with me. But then, throughout the whole of the MBT,

"It's a starter course for those who don't have a previous academic degree but have the relevant work experience to be accepted for the graduate certificate, and for students who have a prior degree but may have been away from tertiary study for a period of time," says MBT Academic Director John D'Ambra.

"As well as meeting the need for an introductory course in management, particularly for graduate certificate students, it will encompass the development of critical thinking, research skills, academic writing and study skills."

The course will have one coordinator, but John is aiming to have a number of experienced MBT facilitators teach it to give it breadth and depth. "We're hoping to attract experienced MBT facilitators from a broad range of expertise. People teaching capstone courses would also be ideal," he says.

Introduction to Management is currently being written for delivery in Semester 1, 2010. An overview will be on the MBT student website from October.

the focus has been about relating your studies to your workplace – experiential learning, which I thoroughly enjoy."

Naomi's initial degree was a Bachelor of Applied Science in social ecology at the University of Western Sydney in the 1990s. She commenced her MBT in 2006, choosing it for its IT and telco focus.

In a roundabout way, it had a profound impact on her career from the outset. "My first subject was Project Management," she says. "I thought that was where I wanted to go, but having studied it, I decided otherwise – so that was good."

For details of the MBT Alumni Prize, visit: www.student.mbt.unsw.edu.au/MBT_AlumniPrize.html

NEW MBT COURSE: Focusing on Quantitative Methods

Many organisations use quantitative techniques to identify trends and their impact on expectations and outcomes in terms of customer satisfaction, profit, stock control and other business factors. That's why Quantitative Methods for Business Decision-making will be introduced as an MBT course in the first or second semester of next year.

"It will be a conceptual and frameworks-type course where students develop skills to understand and use quantitative techniques and statistics to support organisational decision-making," says MBT Academic Director John D'Ambra. "We'll cover the fundamental mathematics of business and statistics, focusing on how managers apply them to understand data and its impact on outcomes."

John suggests that students will want to do Quantitative Methods sooner rather

than later in their MBT program because courses such as Business Economics and Fundamentals of Corporate Finance include some statistical content.

Paul Walsh, who teaches Data Analysis in AGSM MBA Programs, is writing the course for delivery during 2010.

"UNDERSTAND DATA AND ITS IMPACT ON OUTCOMES"

TESTIMONIALS FROM MBT STUDENTS ON LEAD PROGRAM 2008:

"The program has acted as a catalyst for change in both my professional and personal life. The program offered the opportunity to expand my thinking and frame leadership in a different light . . . I could not recommend this program more highly."

Matt George

"I would most certainly recommend this program to anyone looking to refine leadership competencies while expanding your network."

Ivan Sanchez

LEAD Business Leadership Program 2009

Following the success of the inaugural LEAD program in 2008, the Australian School of Business Student Development Office will again host this intensive one-week personal and leadership development program for 50 Postgraduate Coursework Students in September 2009.

Last year 8 MBT students were accepted onto the program and this year 10 places are specifically reserved for MBT students. LEAD 2009 will be held in Sydney during the mid-Semester 2

break from Monday 7th to Sunday 13th September and comprises two sections: four days of practical workshops from Monday to Thursday on campus at UNSW Kensington, then an experiential component from Friday to Sunday in the form of a residential leadership camp at Milson Island. Participation will be by way of an online application, followed by an interview.

Expressions of interest will open on 20th July however if you would like to register your interest informally or would like more information please contact the LEAD Program Director, Shahid Majeed on s.majeed@unsw.edu.au.



Leadership • Education • Association • Development

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

I would like to congratulate Ian Benton and Brad Smith for their receipt of the MBT teaching award. Their approach to teaching and learning is indicative of the excellent efforts of all our facilitators. I am also very proud of our Student Services team who received the Australian School of Business Staff Innovation Award, the team will be featured in the next issue of Reach.

Work continues on the MBT learning management system (LMS). The University has opted for Blackboard 9 (BB9) as the corporate LMS, being phased in from Semester 2 this year. We will be piloting BB9 in one of our Semester 2 courses – Sustainable Energy Management. Students are major stakeholders in our use of learning technologies so they will play an important role in the evaluation of the pilot.

I strongly recommend the LEAD program to you as not only an opportunity to further develop your leadership skills but as a great opportunity to get know you peers in other programs in a supportive and relaxed environment.

On behalf of the MBT team I would also like to wish Tony Munos, our long-time facilitator, a speedy recovery.

We are currently holding monthly webinars for prospective applicants, to register visit:
www.asb.unsw.edu.au/mbt



Associate Professor John D'Ambra

Extending the network

MBT alumni have exciting new options for networking among the broader Australian School of Business alumni community.

MBT alumni "punch above their weight" when it comes to staying in touch with each other, says Jane Miller, Manager of Alumni Relations at the Australian School of Business. Although they total less than 5 per cent of the nearly 60,000 people who have graduated from the Australian School of Business with a business degree, they tend to put a lot of effort and energy into networking.

To everyone's benefit, some functions for alumni from the MBT networking website are being integrated into the overall Australian School of Business site. And since April, MBT alumni have been receiving a monthly email newsletter which goes out to the broader Australian School of Business alumni community.

The newsletter includes information about all Australian School of Business alumni events around the world, features and profiles, and messages from the Dean.

The new, improved website is being introduced a section at a time, with alumni-dedicated pages available in the next few months.

"It's a one-stop shop which includes the alumni directory and events registration," says Jane. "A place where MBT alumni can find out about the broader Australian School of Business goings-on as well as being able to network within MBT alumni. When they sign up, they can set their preferences to have their contact information available to only MBT people or to all Australian School of Business alumni."

The alumni pages will also have information about alumni leaders; virtual postcards to make networking easier; news of alumni-specific events; and media releases, podcasts and vodcasts.

Robert James, the new chair of the MBT



Robert James

Alumni Advisory Committee (MAAC), is well aware of his fellow graduates' passion for networking.

"I was one of the inaugural committee members and I've been the deputy to the previous chair, Ian Dagger, for several years," says Robert, who completed his MBT in 2001. "I'm very happy to step into the role and expand on what Ian has done."

Robert lives in Sydney, where he is doing health research into specialist pathology services as well as contract work as a senior business analyst at RailCorp.

"The purpose of the MBT alumni association is to foster networking and relate the experiences of the alumni back to the MBT office," he says. "We're an extra set of eyes and ears, providing the office with advice and comment on the needs of the alumni."

In recent years the committee has organised events in Sydney including golf days, bowling evenings, recruitment seminars and career evenings, and Christmas functions. It has also supported the activities of an MBT alumni group in the ACT.

"At this year's graduation, MBT alumni in Brisbane and Melbourne expressed interest in doing something similar, so we're looking at inviting a member each from those centres to join the committee to help increase networking opportunities there."

To update your contact details or get in touch with the MBT Alumni Committee, please email mbt.network@unsw.edu.au.

May 2009 Graduates

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY

Timothy John Canham
 Steven Charles Darlow
 Nathanael Wallace Doyle
 Alison Evans
 Joseph Christopher Gunawan
 Stephen John Harle
 Mark Philip Johnston
 Mark Kelly
 Caroline Audrey Kerr
 Matthew Norman Knighton
 Vicky Ann Knighton
 Joel Lipman
 Clement Lun
 Darren Russell Miller
 Rachael Minton
 Kavesh Moodley
 Scott Newton Munro
 Jamie Pearson
 Kane Jaxon Pryzibilla
 James Carlyle Ross
 Remko Verschuur
 Kamran Zali

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY

Randeep Agarwal
 Catherine Rose Delhanty
 Raymond Colin Doak
 Abhishek Kashyap
 Julie Carolyn Kirby
 Robert Alexander Stodart
 Paul Tito
 Pik Ching Wong



MBT Graduates May 2009

MASTER OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY

Rebecca Acebes
 Greg Allan
 Arun Kiran Alur
 Charaka Jenendra Aluthge
 Rodney Mark Aspin
 Neil Leslie Avery
 Fergus Bailey
 Dominic Byrne
 Milan Calina
 Andrew Michael Calman
 Joy Yip Chan
 Wisam Charmand
 David Hang Chuen Chow
 Daniel Patrick Collins
 Nathan Emanuel
 Evelynne Fu
 Napoleon Paul Andrew Gahdmar
 Benjamin David George
 Benjamin Dugald George*
 Justin David Gordon
 Nigel Patrick Grange
 Ralph Grimes

Jason Scott Harkins
 Michael John Hemphill
 Stephen Grant Hicks
 Leanne Jeffrey
 Stephen Jewell
 Lauren Lynette Jones
 John Robert Kimbell
 Katie Kinaan
 Justine Clare King
 Chi Shing Law
 Scott Andrew Leonard
 Oi Kwan Leung
 Chi Man Li
 Andrew James Lindner
 Murray Alexander Loch
 Glenn Lucas
 Andrew James Mann
 Alex Eric McCreath
 Geoffrey Alan McGowan
 David Mills
 Louise Mary Mills
 Christine Ann Minto
 Louise Ann Nicholson
 Andrew William Norman

Cassandra Nugent
 Joon Sung Park
 Annclaire Perkins
 Leesa Jane Philip
 Andrew Porter
 Gregory Prove
 Vincent Reedy
 Jeffrey San Jose
 Ultra Kumari Singh
 Andrew John Spurr
 Genelle Stock
 Rajesh Surti
 John Philip Teschendorf
 Suthanthra Thambyrajah
 Jeyaganesh Tharmapalan
 Andrew Jeremy Thomas
 Richard Vaughan
 Alexander William Wade
 Jun Wang
 Kristin Fiona Williams
 Freeman Hiu Wong

* Degree previously conferred.

Photography by Matthew Duchesne,
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Rajesh Surti and family



Graduate Ultra Singh with friend Larry Hulbert and nephew Andrew Singh



Alex McCreath and Rodney Aspin