

An ELP project for Louis Dreyfus in Geneva

The Entrepreneurial Leadership Project (ELP) is an opportunity for the International MBA students to work on a 9-month team-based project for an outside organisation and in doing so implement and improve their entrepreneurial leadership skills.

Example of an ELP experience with Louis Dreyfus Commodities, a leading merchandiser and trader in international agricultural commodity markets.



*The team at Louis Dreyfus Commodities in Geneva.
(L to R) Jean-Philippe GAYARD, Jing (Jane) WANG,
Catherine BERNARD, Arnaud PAULIK*

In line with the ELP philosophy, the team was truly diverse in cultural, professional and industrial backgrounds, but also when it came to the leadership competencies the members had vs those they wanted to improve.

This team was charged with the large scope of analysing the entire value chain of a commodity that LD Commodities was interested to start trading. This included understanding the market of this commodity, the price drivers (current and historical), and the balance of power among the actors in the value chain. Finally the team had to develop a detailed strategy plan of how LD Commodities should enter into this commodity market.

To provide additional data for the analysis, LD Commodities sponsored the team to visit key value chain players in Asia. The trips themselves were great opportunities for the MBA team to experience different cultures and to meet local top executives. *"The ELP project gave me the opportunity to develop a strategic study in Thailand. This trip was a fantastic occasion to explore new business cultures and establish contacts with experienced executives. The learning from this unique experience will live with me for the rest of my career."* Jean-Philippe Gayard

"Far beyond the application of academic theory, the project allowed us to improve our leadership skills, to be more comfortable with ambiguity, to improve political agility, and to experience working with a highly entrepreneurial organization, such as LD Commodities.

It was truly an experience that will benefit our careers and an opportunity to form a life-long bond with each other that will last long after graduation as the team disperses to different corners of the globe."