

Creating a business case for company sponsorship

Executive MBA

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A. Introduction

This guide is designed to support you as you consider approaching your organisation for funding. Employer sponsorship is a significant step, with approximately 25% of students across London Business School securing this support each year.

Drawing on the experiences of students who have successfully secured sponsorship from a wide range of industries, including management consulting, financial services, technology, healthcare, manufacturing, and government, this guide provides practical advice to help you craft a compelling business case to present to your employer.

When making such a request, many companies will naturally ask, “*Why should we make this investment?*” and “*What’s in it for us?*” This guide is designed to help you answer those questions effectively, showcasing the mutual benefits of the new One-Year MBA programme from London Business School for both you and your organisation.

We hope the framework provided here helps you develop a clear and persuasive case. While there’s no guaranteed formula for success, thorough preparation and determination have proven to be invaluable for many of our sponsored students.

Wishing you the best of luck!

B. Return on investment

Make sure you clearly articulate to your Line Manager your expected benefits to the company. Define measurements to assess how your contribution will increase during or after the programme in terms of skills and knowledge acquired, that will benefit both the organisation and you as an individual.

It's important to highlight that the Executive MBA at London Business School is a part-time MBA programme especially designed for professionals with a minimum of 5 years of managerial experience. This gives you a genuine edge and enables you to improve your workplace performance from day one as you apply each new classroom concept with direct relevance to you and your organisation. Whether your goal is to take on new or global responsibilities, the programme gives you the knowledge, insights and confidence to operate successfully anywhere in the world.

As you progress through the curriculum, you will gain a thorough grounding in all areas of business and management with the core courses, whereas with the elective portfolio you will be able to specialise in certain subject areas or gain breadth across a range of business and management disciplines. Elective courses are primarily offered in London, with a limited number available in Dubai and New York.

For example, the 'Developing Effective Managers and Organisations' DEMO core course explores how an individual's personality, motivation and managerial style affects their working relationships, and hence their effectiveness within an organisation. Our EMBA alumna, Head of Brand at a major insurance company in Australia, mentions *how receiving company sponsorship to study the EMBA in London helped her apply learning to work*.

"My background is very much focussed on communications and brand development, of which I have a deep understanding. I felt I needed a broader understanding of wider business issues. For me, it's all about getting a better appreciation of the different functional areas. To give an example, In the DEMO assignment, we conducted a whole piece around recruitment which I have had the opportunity to deploy in my organisation. So far it has seemed to work well and the feedback has been very positive".

It is also important to highlight the wider benefits for your organisation of establishing links with London Business School. As their ambassador on campus, you can be the bridge linking your organisation to world-class faculty, major global events and the global alumni network.

B.1. Key programme features

Once you have defined the business need, the next step is to conduct your analysis. Support your choice of programme by identifying the most relevant components to your organisation.

Company project

The company project is done in co-operation with your employer and supervised by a member of faculty, and it is normally based on a company specific issue. In general, project work will be linked to your workplace, and will be of benefit not only to you, but also to your department and organisation as a whole. The project and corresponding management report can be discussed with Senior Managers and can be tailor-made to reflect strategic areas currently needing analysis in your business. Additionally, the report can be used as a launch pad to pursue areas of interest within your organisation, and explore areas that you would be interested in working in afterwards.

This confidential report could give your organisation access to some of the best faculty in the world to resolve or support any issues raised. Potential project topics might include:

- Should your organisation be restructured?
- Should your company's product be re-positioned in the market?
- Are there strategic alliances your organisation should form?
- Can incentives, such as profit-sharing, be introduced to improve managerial performance?
- How might a merger successfully unite two different corporate cultures?
- Where should your firm locate its planned new plant?
- Should IT be carried out in-house or contracted out?

Leadership skills development

Each element of the Executive MBA experience will shape your leadership development journey. This journey is enhanced by the addition of a range of practical skills training to complement your transformation into an effective manager and inspiring leader. With the EMBA you acquire the knowledge, skills and attributes required for effective leadership, and maximise your personal impact through enhanced insight and skill.

You will complete a Leadership Development and Practical Skills Portfolio programme, designed to enhance your personal impact and help you transform into an effective and inspiring leader, by completing courses such as 'Successful Negotiation' and 'Influencing and Persuading', 360 degree assessments, etc. For example, the 360 degree assessment gives you detailed insight into the strengths and weaknesses of your current leadership behaviour. This enables you to maximise your personal impact and helps you start to find new and better ways of 'leading as yourself'. It also establishes a framework for setting tangible goals from day one.

Your ongoing development is supported through structured group-based coaching and peer feedback. A multi-disciplinary simulation enables you to assimilate all your new skills, knowledge, ideas and experiences to see in practice how you have become a better leader. You also get exposure to peers from over 28 different nationalities, representing a variety of different industries which will provide you with a deep understanding of global business. The result is the awareness and tools to progress forward within your organisation - long after the programme is complete.

Our EMBA alumnus, Senior VP Head of Global Regulatory Affairs in a global pharmaceutical company, mentions how the EMBA helped him become a better leader:

"The Executive MBA provides you with a leadership toolkit, which you can immediately apply to your work. This is a clear advantage for someone working in an industry that is constantly developing and integrating within an ever changing environment".

Global Experience

With the week-long international assignment to a destination such as Buenos Aires, Dubai and Abu Dhabi, Zurich, Singapore and San Francisco you will explore the themes of development and globalisation first-hand in a dynamic environment, and consider their implications for yourself and your organisation. Accompanied by a member of faculty and working in small teams, you spend a week working closely with an organisation on a real business project and gain fresh insight into international business practices.

The portfolio of international assignments provides you with a choice of both location and theme. Please see [here](#) for destinations

"The international assignment is an invaluable component of the executive MBA programme. It provides a basis to gain intimate insights into a company and the country while providing a platform to connect with peers. We had the opportunity to conduct a communications and culture audit on South Africa's fastest growing and largest privately held IT company. It was remarkable when we were able to apply the many concepts and theories learned in our various classes and use them in real world issues. The interactive nature of the assignment between our group and the company contributed significantly to the learning process. We were able to showcase applied academic frameworks while gaining insights into the challenges faced by high growth companies in emerging markets."

Network

As a student and graduate of the Executive MBA at London Business School you will:

- Have lifelong access to blue-chip corporate partners and their industry network.
- Become part of the LBS community made up of 57,000 alumni in over 160 countries.
- Learn from a highly diverse and senior peer group coming from more than 28 different countries.

B.2. Programme structure

The Executive MBA programme provides a solid foundation in business and management and, through the international assignment and elective opportunities, the flexibility to specialise in an area of interest to you. The programme format and content have been specifically designed to maximise your programme experience and networking opportunities, whilst minimising the need to be away from work.

Whether you choose to focus your study in London or Dubai, you will start and finish your Executive MBA experience in London. Both the London and Dubai streams will come together for three residential modules in London; orientation, one module mid-programme and a module at the end of the programme. These shared modules provide the ideal environment in which to build valuable networks with an extended group of diverse peers. The Executive MBA programme consists of five elements:

Part 1, Core courses: gain a thorough grounding in all areas of business and management. The majority of core courses are taught in your primary study location.

Part 2, Elective options: choose between six and nine electives from the School's extensive portfolio. Electives are primarily offered in London, with a limited number available in Dubai and New York.

- Global Experience: experience the way business is conducted in an unfamiliar business environment and apply the skills and knowledge gained on the programme on this week-long assignment.
- Leadership Skills Development: underpinning the Executive MBA curriculum is the focus on developing your leadership capabilities. Over the course of the programme, you will explore the skills and attributes required for effective leadership.
- Drawing it all together: Consolidate your learning through multi-disciplinary group simulation and feedback, you are encouraged to think about how you can apply what you have learned to create a management style of your own and to prepare you for your career development ahead.

Programme timetable

Your schedule is dependent upon your choice of study location and electives, and will differ in the first and second academic year. In the first academic year, you will study the majority of the core courses in your chosen study location. In London, core courses are taught on consecutive Fridays and Saturdays of alternate weeks. In Dubai, core courses are taught in monthly four or five-day blocks. During the second academic year, your elective choice will dictate your schedule. The EMBA programme has two start dates each year, January and September. View the sample timetables [here](#).

B.3. Recommendation

After you have gathered specific evidence detailing how our Executive MBA programme will benefit you and your company, you will need to ensure that you highlight the aspects of your personal development that are most important in the context of the business need and your career development plans.

General:

'I believe that it is the right time for me to pursue an Executive MBA programme because I do not wish to restrict myself to technical management positions. The programme will increase my opportunities to enter the more commercial side of the business. Although I have the necessary industry experience and knowledge, I cannot progress to more senior positions without the commercial and marketing skills acquired through an Executive MBA. The Executive MBA will equip me with a broad range of business acumen in order that I can manage projects and work at a strategic level anywhere within our organisation.'

Specific:

'As a Manager in X department, I am tasked with delivering on...'

'To date, within our organisation I have achieved...'

'In order to progress within the organisation, it is vital I develop X skills...'

If your organisation offers internal development programmes or even external training with other institutions, you may need to clarify why an Executive MBA at London Business School would be preferable to a number of short development programmes. In this case, you should emphasise the ability to learn from world-leading faculty who, alongside teaching, consult and sit on the boards of major multinationals and conduct ground-breaking research in their fields of expertise. The rigor of the programme sets it apart from shorter courses, as well as the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with your diverse and experienced peer group. Once you have graduated, remember that you and your company have access to a powerful and influential professional network for life.

C. Asking for employer support

C.1. Financial support

Think carefully about the level of financial contribution you require, making sure you have up to date information on tuition fees. You may also need to request additional funds for accommodation, travel, and materials. Think about different funding models so you have a "package" to request and can offer different positioning. Outside of 100 per cent funding, students on recent intakes have been financially supported in a variety of ways, including matching funding, percentage splits, reduced hours, salary sacrifice, tuition reimbursement at key stages or after successful completion of parts one and two, and bonus payments.

The agreement you finally come to will most likely be the result of a back-and-forth negotiation between you and your employer. The monetary contribution you receive is most commonly dependent on how long you are going to be contractually obliged to remain with the organisation. If you require a significant level of funding, be prepared to be very flexible with this detail.

C.2. Time

You will need to show how you will manage any time out of the office, and what you will do to minimise the impact on your team or clients. Allow time off to complete studies, but also be aware that deadlines may conflict with business needs. Indicate clearly in your request the extent of the time required, and whether you will be using any personal time (agreed study days, unpaid leave, vacation, lieu time) for this. It may be helpful to put the detailed schedules into an appendix, and to give a short table within the business case showing the requirements for the Executive MBA and, if appropriate, a comparison with any other programmes.

Please highlight the fact that ***you will be studying part-time thus remain in full-time employment***. Since you will be applying what you learn at the workplace, this is a very important negotiating tool.

C.3. Commitment and Conclusion

Your statement of commitment is critical and should show your commitment to the organisation, and to being a successful student on the programme. There are a variety of ways of demonstrating this commitment, and as previously explained, agreements will most typically encompass lock-in periods, reimbursement of tuition and other costs. The statement of commitment ensures that you take responsibility for your learning and repay the investment that has been made for you by your company.

D. Contacts

We hope this guide is helpful and wish you the very best of luck! If you require any further information about the Executive MBA (EMBA) or London Business School to support your business case, please contact the Recruitment & Admissions team:

Email: [**emba@london.edu**](mailto:emba@london.edu)

Should your employer wish to have a direct point of contact at the School to answer any questions or concerns they have, or to build a relationship with London Business School, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact our Business Development Team:

Email: [**sponsor@london.edu**](mailto:sponsor@london.edu)