INTRODUCTION

Sustainability has become part of the standard set of business management issues over the past decade. In fact, to have a sustainability policy increasingly has become a "license to operate". Companies that do not adopt this trend will face increasing pressure from governments, investors, NGO's, media and citizens.

And of course this is not a coincidence. The emergence of sustainability as a board room topic is a symptom of a changing world in which resource scarcity, population pressure and technological developments are shaking up the circumstances in which companies operate at an ever increasing pace. Sustainability in that sense literally means: the degree to which the ecological, economical and social system you depend upon can provide the necessary support for the way you do business.

This course is comprised of two modules that will run in parallel during the week:

1. Marketing Sustainability
2. Being Sustainable

The "Marketing Sustainability" module will take an "inside-out" approach, exploring how sustainability locks into business strategy and how it can be leveraged towards the market and other stakeholders.

The "Being Sustainable" module will look more deeply into what being a sustainable business actually means in terms of management practices.

Introduction to Marketing Sustainability.
Whether to have a sustainability policy or not is really not an issue anymore. But how to successfully incorporate sustainability into your marketing strategy, that's a whole different question altogether. Even among the so-called sustainable front-runners it is difficult to find sustainability policies that are relevant for their customers and at the same time contribute to a distinctive competitive positioning.

In recent years sustainability has gained significant strategic relevance within the supply chain: securing access to key natural resources. This is in fact a defensive strategy, which revolves around the absorption of societal costs and changes in the business environment. But the absorption of costs, whether they are societal in nature or not, is only half the story. Creating revenues is the other half. In the end, to create value you have to transform costs into (higher) revenues. This is the challenge that companies - in particular their marketing/sales departments - face: how to turn the unavoidable trend of sustainability into an opportunity for creating more value?

Introduction to "Being Sustainable".

Being sustainable focusses on two fundamental areas of sustainable business practices: waste elimination and resource-life extension. Each stage focuses on understanding how to develop systems (intra-business and inter-business) that create sustainability-oriented increases in cost savings and profits. The module will explore not only the practices themselves, but the financial effects that they have on various types of business.
AIMS

Participants will:
- Improve their understanding of key sustainability trends & drivers
- Understand the relevance of sustainability to regular business practices
- Learn how to apply a specific branding framework for analyzing and designing sustainability strategies
- Understand key concepts for the optimal use of human capital
- Deepen their understanding of the links between sustainable practices and increases in efficiency and productivity
- Learn how to identify opportunities for decreases in waste and extending resource-life

METHODOLOGY

The sessions will include: the presentation of key concepts / theoretical frameworks; analysis of real-life examples using these frameworks; practical exercises that deepen the understanding of how to apply the concepts that underpin the course.

EVALUATION

The subject will be evaluated as follows:
- Individual participation will be evaluated by class participation (30%).
- Group presentation for "Marketing Sustainability" (40%).
- Written exam for "Being Sustainable" (30%).

BIBLIOGRAPHY