wbcsd

Firmenich – Introducing a Master of Science in Business Analytics

Location	Size of organization	Industry	Learning stage journey
Various	90 companies / 10,000+ employees	Various	University

Innovative partnership between the Groupement des Entreprises Multinationales (GEM) and the Geneva School of Economics and Management (GSEM).

Step 1   Step 3   Step 4   Step 5

What was the business need?	In recent years, business analytics – at the intersection between data science, statistics and management – has become an increasingly sought-after skill in many companies. Nevertheless, as a relative new discipline, it is often hard for companies to find people with the skills that they need in this area. This skills gap affects companies from a wide range of sectors, including manufacturing, banking and finance and industry.
What program was implemented?	The Groupement des Entreprises Multinationales (GEM) – represents approximately ninety multinational companies located in Swiss Romandie. Many of the member companies are affected by the lack of business analytics skills. To address this gap, the GEM has cooperated with the Geneva School of Economics and Management (GSEM) at the University of Geneva (UNIGE) to develop and implement a Master of Science in Business Analytics (MaBAn).
	This Master's program combines a first year of academic studies at the university followed by an optional yearlong corporate internship, thus allowing students to develop skills that are in demand in the work-place as well as providing a talent pipeline for individual businesses and the economy more broadly. The program is open to students who have completed a bachelor's degree in a scientific discipline.
Did the organization face any challenges?	The establishment of an advisory board which includes members of the GSEM as well as the university has helped to foster and maintain a close link between academic theory and business practice, bridging the gap between university education and professional needs.
	While the program has immediate benefits for those companies that recruit students, it also serves to widen the talent pool for all those companies with business analytics and thus had longer term indirect benefits.
How has the impact of the program been measured?	The program started with a cohort of 16 students in 2017, with 13 of these passing to a second-year internship in a GEM company. In 2020, 231 applications were received, 45 students eligible for admission and 18 students finally started the program in Fall 2020. In 2021, 264 applications were received and 40 students eligible for admission. The sponsoring companies have maintained a significant commitment - not only do they work to secure intern placements within their company, but they also make a financial contribution of CHF 20'000 for each intern they receive, which goes to support the program to enable a continuous improvement of its contents to suit the professional needs. Additionally, the feedback from students and participating companies has been very favorable.