



ALUMNI NEWS

FOR CONSALIA GRADUATES + STUDENTS

Consalia launches first Sales Business School

On 8 April Consalia launched what is believed to be the first dedicated Business School for Sales. This initiative follows the successful introduction of Masters degree and degree-level programmes for sales leaders and sales professionals over the past seven years.

Consalia CEO Dr Philip Squire told *Alumni News*: "We believe passionately in sales as a profession. Dedicated programmes at all levels are required for professional development of sales leaders and salespeople. By creating a Sales Business School, we are able to offer the broadest range of degree-level and Masters degree programmes, as well as offer shorter executive programmes using the same learning methodologies, specifically to meet the needs of sales."

Consalia believes that the most critical sales competence for the future is learning agility.

Range of programmes

For 2019, the Consalia Sales Business school will offer Masters degree programmes in Sales Transformation, Leading Sales Transformation, and Key Account Transformation. A Post-Graduate Certificate in Sales Coaching is also available. Additionally, a range of short programmes, with two to three days of tuition followed by project work,

are planned for executive learning.

The Sales Business School is international in outlook, accepting students from around the world.

© Nick de Cent



Association of Professional Sales CEO, Andrew Hough added: "The introduction of a UK business school focused exclusively on sales is a significant step

forward in ensuring the recognition of sales as a bona fide profession. We welcome the range of professional development options now available to sales leaders and sales professionals from the Consalia Sales Business school."

To date, over 100 students have enrolled or successfully completed Masters degree programmes run by Consalia and Middlesex University, with companies such as Royal Caribbean, SAP, SKF, Sony, Toshiba, and HP participating. Sales apprenticeship degree programmes started in 2018; over 80 students are currently enrolled with another 60 scheduled this year. Companies participating in this programme include Bentley, BT, E.ON Microsoft, Royal Mail, and Whitbread.



↑ Simon Dale (right) and Phil Squire: Celebrating Simon's new role at the Long Room, Raffles Hotel, Singapore.

Message from CEO Dr Phil Squire

It was great to meet some of the Asia Pac SAP Masters alumni in Singapore recently. In addition to having some one-on-one meetings, we organised an alumni and friends drinks event at one of the restaurants down on Clark Quay, which was a lot of fun!

It's motivating to hear of the great progress our alumni are making in their careers. Steve Van Wyk, an Account Manager in South Africa at the time he started his Masters, thought he was attending a three-day course in London, only to find he was on a two-year Masters programme! Now Steve, who graduated in 2016, is based in Singapore and SVP Platform and Technologies GCO at SAP.

Simon Dale, having left SAP for MapR Technologies has moved to Chinese sustainable energy business Envision Digital, as Vice President, Business Development and Ecosystem, Asia Pacific and Japan.

Sharath Burla, who at the point he started his Masters was at HP as Alliance Director, is now Executive Vice President & CEO at NTT Data Business Solutions APAC. There are so many other stories that I don't have space to share now, but please keep us up to date with your latest news – we love to hear from you.

Free online subscription

The *International Journal of Sales Transformation* continues to be a great platform for alumni to have their research, dissertations and projects featured in a professional publication – March contributors were Michael Woodcock and Mick Fowler of Arena Group. If you don't already have access to the new online version of the *Journal*, please visit <https://www.journalofsalestransformation.com/subscribe/subscription-options/> and choose the **Annual Individual Subscriber** option. Enter the code **newjost19** at checkout and you won't be charged. Consalia encourages all alumni to access *JoST* regularly to enhance their knowledge.

Courage and curiosity

Nilgün Atasoy's wide experience, open mindset and empathetic approach have opened doors in her career.

Nilgün Atasoy specialises in expanding horizons. From her multicultural upbringing to her progression in the traditionally male-dominated technology sector, to her trailblazing role as one of SAP's first female salespeople in the Middle East and a pioneering woman sales manager in Eastern Europe, she has helped pave the way for others.

Today, as Business Manager for SAP Digital Core in EMEA-South she is no longer in a typical sales role; she's a member of the senior management team.

"I look at the Digital Core business in EMEA-South, which comprises South Europe, Africa and Middle East, with a 360-degree view. Hence, I oversee our organization's ongoing operations and am responsible for the efficiency of business by designing and implementing business strategies and activities to drive growth."

Nilgün Atasoy has been with SAP for 15 years during a career in which she became one of the company's first female salespeople in the Middle East and first sales managers in Eastern Europe. Currently, she is Business Manager, EMEA South – Digital Core based in Germany.

"I started with SAP in 2004 in the consulting area and moved onto the development as well as sales domain – and I truly love working with customers."



In common with others' experience, it seems that the Masters programme has played a part in accelerating Nilgün's career with a role change. "Yes, it was definitely triggered by the Masters; having gained insights into leadership focused on transformation, I was keen to apply my learnings in a role with a wider scope."

"My new role is very interesting to me as it allows me to balance the components of transformational as well as transactional management. As a true believer in collaborative change, I am in a work environment where I drive strategic initiatives with our stakeholders globally as well as locally. Having knowledge about the region and the customers from my previous roles, and the stakeholders is just an additional benefit."

MBA versus MSc

Given that she is now working in a broader business role that extends beyond sales, was she ever tempted by an MBA as an alternative to the programme that she is currently following? "In the past I had also been offered the opportunity to participate in an MBA course, but what I really find intriguing is that this Masters course aligns with the SAP



It seems like I have, not deliberately, but somehow specialised in breaking into new markets as a female.

organisation. Also, in an MBA you study for yourself; however, in this Masters programme, as an insider researcher, I can also apply my research to the organisation and contribute to a positive work culture in our organization – for instance by coaching young talent to enable them to act.

Diversity in sales

As a woman in the male-dominated world of IT sales, and with a pioneering role in sales in the Middle East or sales management in Eastern Europe, Nilgün is something of a diversity role model both in gender terms but also due to her diverse background. "I was raised in quite a multicultural environment, with many languages." Importantly, this background has enabled her to develop empathy across cultures.

"The technology sector is a male-dominated industry and, back in the time when I was in the Middle East, I was also one of the first women working in Saudi Arabia. I already had quite an extensive knowledge of the SAP portfolio, but it

was also crucial to establish credibility and trust in a male-dominated environment ultimately to enable customers to articulate their requirements, so that I could deliver accordingly."

"So, it has been a continuous growth path on both a personal and professional level. I attempt to establish a platform of trust with my customers as well as my internal stakeholders to facilitate an authentic conversation. Furthermore, I also listen to feedback from customers or from internal colleagues; I think it is very important to create a 'metaphorical mirror' enabling you to reflect on self-awareness and current work practices – to continuously improve them."

In conclusion, Nilgün tells *Alumni News*: "It seems like I have, not deliberately, but somehow, specialised in working in emerging markets as a female. It involves a great deal of courage and curiosity to be able to break into these markets and tackle the challenges, whilst keeping an open mindset. I do really enjoy it and I think it's a privilege for me to have these kinds of experiences at SAP."

Blazing the trail for women sales leaders in technology

Dutch ICT Woman of the Year, Monic van Aarle is a sales director working with a diverse range of SAP's customers in the Netherlands.

Monic van Aarle has been working at SAP for 15 years and in sales for a total of 37 years – which stacks up to a significant amount of experience. Starting her career in marketing, she found herself stepping in as sales director after only a few months, which meant she had to learn how to sell as well – a real baptism by fire. Much of her knowledge was self-taught, although things changed when she joined SAP, which offers extensive training.

"One of the core values of SAP is personal development. I don't know another company which is investing in development as much as SAP does. I think the most valuable part of my sales career has been at SAP," she tells *Alumni News*.

Down the years, van Aarle has seen plenty of changes but she attributes much of this to the culture of the company you happen to be working for at the time. One area where she has noticed a difference is in the need to find the balance, on the one hand, between the pressure of quarterly reporting and, on the other hand, doing what is right for the customer. "That is something that has changed over the years. We have to build that relationship, especially as we are going into the cloud business."

Another issue is the need to seek out potential new customers and then to convince colleagues internally to get behind a sale. Two successful examples out of her past are booking.com (now a big customer) and TomTom.

Diversity in sales

Turning to the topic of gender equality, van Aarle's experience is one that will be familiar to most women in tech sales. "I think I was the only woman, especially in a management position. So, yes, I really found a lot of difficulties with credibility internally as well as externally. I think I was lucky; the MD was my sponsor; he really believed in my competencies. "Also I had some mates – males – around me who

really helped me in situations, so that I didn't have to fight alone."

"What I see now is that we have made a lot of progress. We have a lot of women within SAP. I have a feeling that the women are helping each other much more than in the past."

Asked whether she thinks diverse teams perform better, van Aarle responds: "I think that women in a team are very valuable, but it's not as simple as that; it depends on who you are and what their competencies are." And, of course, diversity is not just about gender.

Key takeaway

The Masters programme not only provides students with a qualification, it also gives them the tools to demonstrate the value they have gained from participating.



"I now have four working students in my team and everybody feels the energy. To be successful, teams should have a good spread."

Masters programme

This year van Aarle will graduate with her Masters qualification. It's a programme that she feels has served her well: "It's so valuable because you're taking time to think about things." Moreover, it has helped accelerate her career.

"I made a promotion last year and I really think that it's because of the Masters programme. I was not the favourite candidate, I know that, but I was able to combine the practical stuff with the theoretical background. Once I started my presentation, they extended my half-hour slot to one-and-a-half hours; at the end of it, I had the role."

Monic van Aarle's role

Monic van Aarle is one of two sales directors on SAP's management team in the Netherlands. She is responsible for looking after "general business" in the country.

"I do have the nicest role within SAP. Currently, I'm working with Bavaria Brewery to make them an intelligent brewery," she explains. She also works with various hospitals and a major theme park, Efteling.

"We have a sales team which is more industry-related so they do have more knowledge about specific industries. Besides that we also have solution experts who do not focus on a specific industry but have the knowledge about the solution. One of the big changes of the last few years is that, in the past, we only were working with the CIO;

now the range of stakeholders is becoming bigger and bigger."

"General business is divided among three sales teams, depending on the size of the customer. 'The Upper GB' team comprises nine persons and a manager. Then we have also a commercial sales team in Barcelona; that is seven people and a manager. They serve the smaller companies within the Netherlands. It's more like an e-commerce centre. We also have a team of three people serving the smallest companies. One other very important group of people are the partner business managers."



Addressing the sales diversity gap

Life as a student

Following her decision to enrol at SMU for a Masters in Human Capital Leadership – in order to deepen her knowledge in Human Capital Management and add further value back at Consalia from a human capital and global business perspective – Corrinne Sim's aim is to help make the organisation an employer of choice.

Like many of Consalia's students, Sim was actually working when she was studying, faced with a situation familiar to many alumni – that of juggling career, study and social life. Asked how she approached this challenge, she responds: "I think it's a mindset thing. You need that openness to learn and find out what you can apply. You need to have a lot of flexibility and a 'to do' list to remain focused and on track."

Having now passed with flying colours, she will be attending the convocation ceremony this August. Importantly for the business, Sim has also successfully put in place the building blocks for a Human Capital function back at Consalia.

News in brief

Course news: Consalia is now validated to offer a Level 7 MSc Professional Practice Senior Sales Leadership Apprenticeship and plans to run its first cohort in September 2019.

Masters in Asia: April saw Consalia taking the Executive Masters in Leading Sales Transformation to Asia. CEO Phil Squire and Head of Global Alliances, Licensing and Human Capital Management, Corrinne Sim hosted a dinner in Singapore to support this initiative. A new Masters cohort is scheduled to start in Asia mid-October 2019.

Save the date – Tuesday 15 October 2019: Our XV GST (Global Sales Transformation) event promises a stellar cast of speakers and will focus on "Pushing Boundaries".

New website: April saw the launch of Consalia's new website in a current, mobile-friendly format that is easier to navigate. Please take a look and let us know your thoughts by emailing Yvonne at: ygreen@consalia.com.

Corrinne Sim explains why she is passionate about promoting diversity and inclusion in sales.

Consalia's Corrinne Sim is a committed advocate of diversity and inclusion in business and founder of the Inclusion in Sales non-profit initiative, best summed up by the organisation's tag line: Building an inclusive world of sales. The Singapore-based organisation is run entirely by volunteers keen to advance D&I.

"Our vision is to make sales as a profession more inclusive," she tells *Alumni News*.

Currently Head of Global Alliances, Licensing and Human Capital Management at Consalia, Sim explains that founding of the organisation was prompted by Consalia's 2017 GST conference in Singapore, which took as its theme celebrating D&I in sales. At the conference, Lee Baldwin, Head of Professional Services at what was then CEB-Gartner, put up a slide showing the proportion of women leaders by function: while HR, for instance, had a healthy proportion of female leadership, sales came in second from the bottom with only 19% of sales leaders being women.

"I was thinking to myself this cannot be right; we need to move the needle; we need to do something," Sim says.

Conversations started at the conference followed by a first meeting in November 2017. After a couple of meetings, the group moved forward to be incorporated on 28 May 2018. "In three years' time we hope it will become a full-fledged non-profit company."

She adds: "Our mission is to mitigate bias in and towards sales through education, advocacy and community. We collaborate

with communities, schools and sales organisations to create value for the sales community. What I would really like to achieve is for sales to be recognised as a desirable profession and for it to be part of the curriculum."

"Inclusion in Sales has received a LeanSG Seed Fund grant from Lifelong Learning Council and is actively working with higher education institutes in Singapore towards achieving this aim". Two such institutes that the organisation has collaborated with include Singapore Management University (SMU) Marketing Society and Temasek Polytechnic. "We have run a couple of modules for them; we call it a learning circle. The objective is for students to gain an appreciation of sales as a career, and to give them an understanding of what sales is all about and what good selling is."

The organisation is also keen to present selling as a life-skill regardless of a person's profession, and also to promote a mentoring culture within organisations to support women and diverse communities.

- **The Women in Sales Awards (WISA) will be coming to Singapore, and Inclusion in Sales is very proud to be the media partner for this prestigious event. An official announcement along with more details will be made available on the Zars Media website as well as on the Inclusion in Sales Facebook page.**



Inclusion in Sales would love to hear from you. You can find out more about the group on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/InclusionInSales/>. Please let them know what initiatives you would like them to drive and how you would like to be involved.

Alumni News, May 2019

Editor: Yvonne Green, ygreen@consalia.com
Consultant editor: Nick de Cent
Editorial and production: Write Priorities Limited
Design: Breathe Creative

Published by: Consalia Ltd – London, Singapore, Minneapolis

© 2019. All rights reserved.

Consalia contacts

CEO: Dr Philip Squire
Consalia Sales Business School: Louise Sutton
Sales Consulting Practice: Ian Helps
Licensing Practice: Corrinne Sim

HQ: The Glasshouse, 5a Hampton Road, Hampton Hill, Middlesex TW12 1JN, UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 8977 6944; www.consalia.com

CONSALIA
Sales Transformed

