

How to leverage your MBA and make it work for you

An Article of the Swiss Association of MBAs



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An MBA is a powerful investment. It's a reflection of your ambition, a gateway to a strong network, and a reservoir of knowledge. But its value isn't automatic, it depends on how well you leverage it after graduation. Many executives and leaders reflect on their MBA as a transformational period, but the key is ensuring that its impact extends far beyond the classroom.

Whether you're a senior executive or a recent graduate, here's how you can maximize the return on your MBA and make it work for you.

1. Apply your knowledge regularly

Your MBA exposed you to case studies, strategic frameworks, and business challenges across industries. But how often do you revisit this knowledge? The best leaders integrate their MBA learnings into their daily decision-making.

- Revisit your notes: your professors' insights and past case studies could hold solutions to today's business challenges.
- Analyze competitors: did your MBA include studies on companies you now compete with? Use this past research to gain an edge
- Translate theory into action: Business models, negotiation tactics, and leadership frameworks aren't just concepts—they should shape your approach to strategy and leadership today.

2. Leverage your internal MBA network

One of the greatest benefits of an MBA is the people you meet. However, once the program ends, it's easy to let these connections fade. The best executives maintain and grow their MBA network actively.

- Stay in touch with your cohort: organize regular check in, congratulate a promotion, or introduce connections who might benefit from knowing each other.
- Tap into the alumni network at your company: if colleagues share your MBA background, reach out. It can accelerate your onboarding in a new role or help you navigate internal opportunities.
- Gather intelligence before making career moves: if you're considering a new job, your MBA network can offer inside perspectives on potential employers, industries, and leadership cultures.

A well-maintained network isn't just a safety net, it can also be a catalyst for growth and influence.

- Recent MBA graduates: offer mentorship, introductions, or job referrals to those just entering the workforce. Helping them today strengthens your long-term professional relationships.
- Senior executives: become the connector. Introduce peers who might benefit from knowing each other. The goodwill you generate often leads to unexpected opportunities.
- Share your insights: whether through LinkedIn posts, guest lectures, or panel discussions, positioning yourself as a thought leader in your MBA community keeps your profile visible.

The more you contribute, the more your MBA network becomes an active force in your career progression.

5. Make time to keep your MBA working for You

The most successful leaders don't just "use" their MBA once, they integrate it into their professional routine. And it doesn't have to be time-consuming.

- Dedicate 30–60 minutes per week: whether it's a quick coffee chat, responding to a connection request, or revisiting a case study, consistency compounds over time.
- Schedule touchpoints: set reminders to check in with key contacts every few months. Strong professional relationships aren't built overnight—they're nurtured over time.
- Be intentional about learning: as business challenges evolve, so should your knowledge. Attending alumni events or executive education programs keeps your insights sharp.



The MBA: a career-long asset

Your MBA can be a powerful tool to shape your leadership and drive your success. Whether you're a seasoned executive or a recent graduate, its value depends on how deliberately you use it.

By applying your knowledge, strengthening your network, opening doors, giving back, and making consistent time for growth, you ensure that your MBA isn't just a line on your resume, it's a dynamic advantage that continues to pay dividends throughout your career.

Are you making the most of your MBA? If yes, you'll fit right in at our SwissMBAs Association. If not, that's an even better reason to join. Come for the connections, stay for the opportunities. Future you will appreciate this!

About the Author

Léonard Collon is a global Executive Recruiter at ABB, helping business leaders seamlessly hire top executive talents worldwide. He is passionate about driving business growth through strategic leadership hiring.

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