

# 5 Ways An MBA In Your Early Career Will Boost Your Professional Development

Some MBA programs provide opportunities for candidates with less work experience. But how can an MBA accelerate your professional development in your early career?

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Wed May 4 2022

MBA Degree



*Studying an MBA early in your career can accelerate your professional development in several ways*  
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Many experienced professionals turn to an MBA to accelerate their careers. But what do you do when you're an early career professional with less work experience, yet are still eager to push your career forward?

Some MBA programs, like the one at [City University \(CityU\) of Hong Kong](#), take a holistic approach when reviewing applicant backgrounds, academic

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achievements, and personal accomplishments, and accept candidates with less work experience to help them achieve their career dreams.

So is an early career MBA the answer? Here are five things an early career MBA can do for your professional development.

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## 1. An early career MBA helps you build your business experience

Jos Kiekens (*pictured*) turned to the CityU full-time MBA straight out of his undergraduate degree in economics and business from the University of Amsterdam. Prior to his MBA, he was working in a small real estate firm in the Netherlands.



Hong Kong sits within the fifth top-ranked region worldwide in the [2021 Global Innovation Index](#) (GII), and business schools in the region, like CityU, offer an entry point into this environment. Hong Kong offers networking opportunities with [more than 1,500](#) international businesses that operate their regional headquarters there.

CityU MBA students get to meet industry leaders both in Hong Kong and internationally through experiential learning courses, and career advisors help them leverage these experiences to benefit their career progression.

"Some of my friends previously studied at CityU and it has a really good international reputation here in Amsterdam," Jos explains.

"The CityU MBA SHARP Forum, a career-driven course, was especially useful. Whatever you want to do you can get connected to it through the MBA channels."

SHARP Forums connect business executives, government officials, scholars, entrepreneurs, celebrities, and industry experts to try to solve some of the world's most pressing challenges.

MBA students are responsible for every aspect of the forum, putting together an industry-focused discussion panel, contacting speakers, promoting and hosting the forum event.



Jos was the marketing coordinator on the organising committee of a SHARP Forum for supply chain industry in the Greater Bay Area of China. This role allowed him to have in-depth interactions with speakers from the industry, including the president of the Hong Kong Logistics Association and the co-founder of Easyship, a leading shipping software for global brands.

Such a platform provides students with unparalleled opportunities for career networking and development, he says. "I loved how business-minded everyone was and that it attracted the smartest people from around the world."

## 2. You can change jobs with an early career MBA



During the MBA, Jos got the chance to work on business cases for LinkedIn and Facebook, and even travelled to Singapore, the UK, and the US for the CityU MBA's experiential learning courses.



"We did a branding project for supermarket chain Tesco in the Global Brand Management Workshop, delivered in partnership with Imperial College Business School in London," Jos recalls. "We did an entire business analysis of one of their brands, which was super-beneficial to me as I'm now working in the same environment."

Jos works in retail operations for a supermarket brand in the Netherlands, a switch he made post-MBA. His role involves making high-level decisions about the company's national operations.



"The UK Global Brand Management Workshop helped me boost my career in that perspective," he says. "To be at the table with the entire management team at Tesco and test our ideas was really useful."

### 3. You can complement your past experience with MBA-level knowledge



Glenn Van Eijk (*pictured*), a fellow MBA graduate from CityU, says he was drawn to Hong Kong from Spain by the promise of supplementing his existing business knowledge with experience in a fast-paced, international environment.

Glenn chose the Information Management and Marketing MBA double concentrations, which focus on tech, big data, as well as marketing and business analysis, a decision that complemented his pre-MBA experience working at a tech company as a solutions engineer.

"I noticed that within that line of work, I had to talk to customers in sales, to the CMO, to the CEO—all these people in different verticals.

"I wanted to be more empathetic with those customers and understand what made them tick. The practical communication skills and experiences I acquired at CityU, especially in the Entrepreneurship Workshop collaboration with UC Berkeley Haas School are invaluable assets to me," Glenn continues.

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“My CityU professors shared how to solve business problems with a human impact and trained us to strike a balance between warmth and competence when building a team. They also encouraged us not only to become capable professionals, but competent, ethical professionals.”

#### 4. An early career MBA can teach you how to pitch to employers

Early in your career, it can sometimes be challenging to craft a purposeful narrative around your career ambitions, or to know [how to structure a winning CV](#). At CityU, MBA students receive career advice, coaching, and early career-related training and workshops.

With a team of CityU alumni, Glenn organised a SHARP Forum on emerging trends in the future workplace, and says this experience alongside career coaching helped him land an internship as a marketing technology transformation consultant at Rentokil Initial Hong Kong.



That was the kick-starter his Hong Kong career needed—after graduating, he joined one of the biggest financial consulting firms in Hong Kong as a consultant. MBA

graduates from Hong Kong institutions get access to the [IANG visa](#), which allows them to stay and work in Hong Kong for up to 12 months after graduating.

“The advice I got from the career team enabled me to draft a good pitch about myself,” Glenn says. “Through the MBA, I was able to start articulating my value more sharply.”

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## 5. An early career MBA can build your professional network

Jos and Glenn agree that the MBA at CityU prepared them to advance in their careers in the world’s biggest innovation centers. The experienced network they built also spanned several industries and sectors.

The average CityU MBA student has seven years' work experience and is 31 years old. The class consists of 51% female students, and the cohort draws in professionals from sales and marketing, legal and R&D, business analysis, and consulting, among others.

Over 80% of part-time MBA students at CityU are local Hong Kong professionals, while about 70% of full-time students are from different provinces in China.

“The great variety of people that you meet and the entire network that CityU helps you build in Hong Kong can be really useful, whether you want to kickstart your career in Hong Kong or get a broader business network,” Jos says.



“If you want to launch your career in Hong Kong it’s also very accessible through the IANG visa scheme,” Glenn adds.

"The CityU MBA gave me the opportunity to reflect on what I really want in my career."

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