

Ivo Tokarski (28)

STUDY YEAR: 2010-2012

IS: Strategic Sourcing Manager @ ORLEN

HOME: Apartment near Hamburg

HOUSEHOLD: Engaged

DREAM JOB AS KID: Investor (really!)

RIDE: PT Cruiser 2.4 GT Cabrio & Yamaha R6



In 2010 after completing my Bachelor's degree in Warsaw, I was looking for a university that could offer the combination of the topics I figured were the most interesting ones – and there you go: Master of Science in Business Administration, Strategy & Innovation at the RUG.

The study equipped me with a wide set of skills in a short amount of time. In a way, as a student, you develop skills to structure and cluster your tasks according to priority, time and the potential effect they might have - so basically the Pareto effect comes in handy.

Throughout my studies I've met great people and had a lot of creative exchanges with them. I find (and you may hopefully also realize it eventually) people who are interested in innovation to have a great grasp of life, business, and everything in between. The network of people you can build up during your studies is very valuable, since you often end up in business together. I have personally experienced this myself on several occasions. Therefore, don't underestimate the importance of engaging with the people you are studying with! This can be a start of great businesses and partnerships.

After my studies I've moved to Germany where I had the chance to start working for a subsidiary of the biggest Central/Eastern European company in the oil & energy sector – the PKN ORLEN S.A. (a Polish firm). The subsidiary is named [ORLEN Deutschland GmbH](#) and operates around 560 fuel sites under the brand "Star" in northern Germany. I started as a Trainee and was promoted two years later to become a Strategic Sourcing Manager in procurement. Basically, I now take care of tender processes that have high volumes and are of strategic relevance. The scope of work includes commercial evaluations, negotiations and contracting. The scope is not limited to a predefined set of categories, but includes any business segment that is strategically relevant. This makes it very interesting. I have the chance to gain a lot of deep knowledge of how business mechanisms work in our company and in the industry. There are a lot of topics to cover – being it tenders for debit/credit card payment schemes; logistics/ agency business for convenience products or maintenance services for fuel sites, and so forth.

The job requires that you apply a structured approach and that you are able to work under severe time constraints. But those are indeed the core competencies you'll gain during your studies, so you'll be prepared. Also innovation, which is my key motivator in almost anything I do, does not come short at ORLEN Deutschland. We've just rolled out a tablet solution for our fuel sites. In the conceptualization and development of the application, I could definitely spark my creative juices.

If you have any questions or just want to network, do not hesitate to connect via [LinkedIn](#).

Susanne Roelofsen (25)

STUDY YEAR: 2012-2013

IS: Business Development Manager @ SBI

HOME: Apartment in the Hague

HOUSEHOLD: Single

DREAM JOB KID: Orca Trainer @ Sea World

RIDE: I still ride my bike from Groningen ☺



Hi SIMmers!

Hopefully, all is well in the beautiful city of Groningen. I often think back to those days; make sure to enjoy it while it lasts!

My SIM adventure started after completing the IB&M Bachelor (with a semester in Guadalajara, Mexico) and organizing the 2012 International Business Research (IBR) trip to Indonesia. I was sure I wanted to do something in international business, but I still had to define a focus. During the IBR trip, we performed a market research on a firm's product portfolio, and we used our business development skills to look for opportunities in new markets. These companies targeted new markets, but they focused little on adapting their product or service to these new markets. Especially the need-based/ customer-focused aspect of innovation triggered my interest; so this is why I decided to follow the Strategic Innovation Management master.

Idealistic as I am, I decided to write my thesis in a completely different setting than most students do. While my friends did an internship at Philips, I went to Southern-Tanzania to write about farmer empowerment and local economic development. How could innovation in the field lead to higher yields and a higher income? In the three months I was there, I got to see what social entrepreneurship is all about, and what it means in developing countries. There are many entrepreneurs worldwide who tackle social issues in an entrepreneurial way; social entrepreneurship aims to provide a sustainable solution to e.g. food security and a reliable income for farmers.

After graduation I looked for a job in the social enterprise sector. I started as an (unpaid) intern at Cordaid and explored the possibilities in different partnerships. Combining business development with Cordaid's local network and lobbying capacity resulted in a new foundation; the Social Business Incubator (SBI). Currently, I'm part of the management team; helping local entrepreneurs set up social businesses (for more info; see: www.socialbusinessincubator.nl). I just got back from a three-week trip to Kenya, where we organized brainstorm sessions and gave business model trainings around solid waste management. Besides, I was in Nairobi for the Global Entrepreneurship Summit to discover the great potential of young African entrepreneurs. I couldn't have wished for a better job!

My advice to you? **Travel!** Take all the opportunities to see things from a different perspective, as it will tremendously help you in your future career. They say that those who travel see change as normal, rely on creative thinking and easily learn and use new ways of thinking. Who wouldn't hire you with those skills?

If you have any questions about social entrepreneurship (or any other topic for that matter); please connect to me on [LinkedIn](#) or [email](#) me.