How do I design an appropriate and authentic four-week GMIX experience?

There are several factors to keep in mind while designing a summer position for an MBA student:

**Challenging work.** MBA students are highly motivated, experienced, and eager to make the most of the four-week opportunity. They often emphasize summer job accomplishments on their resumes when looking for full-time jobs. The average first-year Stanford MBA student has worked professionally for four years. They seek assignments typically given to consultants or managers rather than to “interns.” Students seek a balanced immersion experience that offers both a well-scoped, well-defined project and the independence and flexibility to think analytically, strategically, and creatively.

**The opportunity to work with senior management and a mentor.** Our MBA students look to make an impact at a high level, and appreciate the opportunity to work with your senior executives. Ideally, senior managers are also willing to share insights into the challenges of running their organization. Having an assigned mentor with a demonstrated commitment to giving guidance can greatly enhance the learning experience. Performance feedback, both during and after the GMIX, is greatly appreciated by our students.

**The opportunity to apply analytical tools.** Students are eager to use skills developed or refined during their first year of business school. Think about areas where you could benefit from outside expertise: strategic planning, marketing, finance, operations, organizational concerns, etc. In general, such jobs allow students to apply what they’ve learned in the classroom and make for better matches.

**Opportunities for leadership development.** Students look for opportunities to interact with a wide variety of people (for example, clients, and board members) to learn more about how to motivate and coordinate collective efforts to reach a common goal. When considering your job description, be sure to illustrate how a student’s work fits into the bigger picture and how he/she might be able to test his/her leadership skills.

**The chance to have an impact.** GMIX students want to use their skills on projects that an organization might not otherwise be able to take on, and where appropriate, to strengthen the management of the organization more generally. Students value projects that address real organizational needs, and where they have ownership of the final product and presentation. [1]

Do you have direct feedback from past GMIX Sponsors that would allow us to get a better sense of how the GMIX program would benefit our organization?

Most GMIX Sponsors believe students’ four-week contributions have visible and valuable impact on their organizations:

“I rarely provide endorsements but with the GMIX program I must. The opportunity to participate in the program provided an extraordinary experience for our organisation. The quality of the MBA student was exceptional as was the project work he performed for us. Being a not for profit organisation, every dollar has to be spent wisely. Our investment in this instance has been returned many times over. Consequently we plan to continue our relationship with Stanford as a Global Affiliate for many years to come.”

- Joe Gamblin, CEO, Horizon Foundation, Australia

“The benefit and contribution to the employer from the GMIX students is directly related to employer’s willingness to invest quality time to bring them rapidly up to speed with the background they will need to identity and evaluate issues relevant to their assignments. The returns on our investments in GMIX interns have consistently exceeded our expectations.”

- Joe Hamby, COO, Tri Marine International, Singapore
How much should I pay the student for the living allowance?
GMIX Sponsors provide students with varying levels of living allowance. We suggest Sponsors set a “per diem” or daily rate comparable to the rate for company employees when they travel in-country. This allowance should be enough to cover food, transportation to and from the office, laundry, and other incidentals. We encourage GMIX Sponsors to offer a competitive living allowance equal to or above the local cost of living standards to ensure that the students’ living costs will be covered.

What does appropriate housing look like?
A corporate/international standard hotel accommodation or serviced apartment is the typical accommodation provided for the students during their participation in the GMIX program. We encourage Sponsors to provide accommodation in close proximity to the organization (e.g. no more than a 30 minute commute) in order to maximize both the student and the Sponsor experience. If you are unable to provide accommodations within these standards, please let us know.

Four week seems short – can we extend the GMIX?
The majority of students are only available for a four-week time period between the end of their traditional internship and the beginning of their second year in the MBA program: August 26 – September 20, 2013. There may be some flexibility in timing given individual circumstances; however, hosting a GMIX outside of the traditional program period could result in fewer applications for your position.

In order to maximize your time with your GMIX student, prior to the GMIX experience you are welcome to interact with students by giving them briefing materials, host a conference call with students prior to their arrival, etc. If you plan to do this, please make it clear in the GSB Career Dashboard posting.

Do students sign any agreements with the School with regard to the GMIX program?
Managing non-disclosure agreements is left to the discretion of the GMIX Sponsor. Your organization is welcome to ask the student(s) with whom you will be working to sign non-disclosure agreements, which would then be an agreement between your organization and the student. This has been done in the past. Also, Stanford GSB may feature pictures and written content describing a student’s GMIX experience on its websites. If you host a GMIX student this year but do not wish to have your organization featured on a Stanford website, please contact our office.

Will Stanford GSB students speak the local language?
GSB students come from all over the world and must select an opportunity in a country that is new to them. This often means they are not likely to be fluent in the language of their host country. All GMIX students speak fluent English in addition to their native languages. Previous GMIX Sponsors have found that local language fluency is not necessary, since an interpreter can be assigned for special tasks. If a Sponsor deems language skills a requirement for participation, you should note this in the GMIX position posting; however, this will decrease the number of available applicants.

How can we connect with other organizations that are sponsoring Stanford GSB students through the GMIX program? We encourage sponsors to share experiences and best practices through the Stanford GSB’s GMIX Program Sponsor LinkedIn group. After posting a GMIX opportunity for a student, our office will send you an invite to join the group. While the group is useful for engaging with other GMIX sponsors for guidance on managing a GMIX opportunity for students, all detailed questions related to the GMIX posting and application process should be directed to the GMIX contacts below.
What are some sample GMIX opportunities that have been posted in previous years?
Scoping a project in advance and being fairly specific about what is expected are critical considerations for you in order to maximize the time you have with the student as well as an effective way to set expectations for the student’s success. Below are a couple of examples.

Sample GMIX I
Job Description: [Company X] launched a “Bridge Loan Fund” with the primary goal of immediately meeting the need of capital for launching micro enterprise. Though there are several government programs which encourage micro enterprises by giving soft loans, the time lag between the submission of the project proposal to the bank and its approval is typically four to six months although economic conditions lead these entrepreneurs to want to start earning a living as early as possible. They face a dilemma as to whether to stick around in the village and wait for the bank approval or to step out and search for jobs at urban locations. This is an anxious and unsettling period. It is observed that some youngsters fall through this crack and follow the less risky path of migrating to cities and searching for a job.
To meet the needs of these young entrepreneurs, [Company X] plans to expand the size of its Bridge Loan Fund, to put in place the systems to evaluate the project proposals and to monitor their progress and also offer basic management training to the young entrepreneurs. Therefore, [Company X] is seeking the help from Stanford graduates to:

● Conduct the case studies of at least four entrepreneurs who have received micro loans under the Bridge Loan Fund.
● Design parameters for evaluating the project proposals, design a basic management training module for the young entrepreneurs, and design a monitoring system for tracking the progress of the micro business.
● Write a business proposal for fund raising.

Potential outputs are:

● Four case studies of young rural entrepreneurs.
● A template for project evaluation, a monitoring system for measuring the progress, and a basic management training module. The students will be expected to conduct a pilot training program for a batch of entrepreneurs.
● A business proposal for fund raising for the Bridge Loan Fund.

The assignment will involve four weeks stay in India and travel to rural areas within the state of Maharashtra and desk research. The graduates will work in close collaboration with [Company X] and its local NGO partner.

Sample GMIX II
[Company X] in Singapore is responsible for base oil supply to all of Asia-Pacific and Middle East and would like to host a Stanford GMIX opportunity for four weeks. The main project is to review the supply security in the region and propose the most cost effective mitigations such as minimum inventory levels at the refineries, minimum inventory levels at the lubricant blending plants, diversity of supply, etc. The project will include the formulation of “Credible Supply Emergencies” which the individual will create, develop and then host “dry-runs” with the supply, trading, shipping and planning team.
The above will be the majority of the GMIX and will require excellent strategic analysis, financial analysis and presentation skills as well as an enthusiasm to introduce and interview many different people across many businesses and at all levels in the organization. The project will give a very comprehensive overview of the entire supply chain from trading, shipping, supply, blending and distribution.
For variety, several smaller projects will be proposed to be undertaken in parallel. These will mainly be general country market and competitor analyses for the region and will provide the individual with an excellent overview of the oil industry dynamics in the Asia-Pacific region.
The individual will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement. No prior oil industry experience is required and consulting experience would be desirable. The individual will be part of the supply and trading team reporting to the Regional Supply Manager.

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[1] Source: Alison Davis, MBA-Nonprofit Connection