



# nexus

INSIGHT ... FOCUS ... CONNECT  
FEBRUARY 2014

## INTEGRATING EMPLOYEES IN INNOVATION



Nexus (meaning connection, tie, link) is the joint newsletter of the three Bachelor student seminars Insight China, Focus India and connectUS. It features news, highlights and information about the Preparatory Seminars and (in the second issue) the On-site Seminars which bring together high calibre organisations, experts and professionals with participating students and lecturers from various FHNW schools. Further news and information can be found on the individual websites.

● Endress + Hauser require all of their approximately 900 employees to submit seven ideas per year on process improvement in the work environment, according to Simone Studer, HR Marketing. Novartis has a similar approach; all countries submit ideas and the best idea gets an award and then needs to be implemented within one year. Google allows its employees to spend 20 % of their work time on any project they would like to get involved in.

Innovation is essential for success; whether you have a start-up company, a process that needs to be facilitated, or a product that needs to be more competitive. During the Preparatory Seminars from 10 – 14 February in Olten, many speakers had a clear focus on innovation. Though traditions are valid and good, also traditional companies with years of experience need to keep their minds open and stay creative in order to stay competitive.

According to their website, E + H Flowtec awards employees with outstanding ideas to improve business processes with the "Process Innovation Awards" valued at EUR 10,000. In 2013, this led to three teams of different production facilities, sales centres and support organizations winning said award. One team automated the production of glass components used in pH sensors which resulted in a more efficient production and higher quality. Another team developed over a number of years an online computer network (cloud-system)

**«CREATING INNOVATION IS A SOCIETAL NEEDS-DRIVEN BUSINESS; INNOVATIONS SHOULD ALWAYS BENEFIT PEOPLE AND RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT. PROFIT COMES FROM MEETING THOSE SOCIETAL NEEDS. IF ONE USES PROFIT AS A MOTIVE, THEN IT IS LIKE PUTTING THE CART IN FRONT OF THE HORSE!»**

- DR. GANESH NATHAN, PANEL DISCUSSION, CF. PAGE 7



Javier Bargas-Avila, Google

to provide access to device information for its customer, accessible from anywhere at any time. Another team designed an optimized order processing and design of technical special products through a transparent group-wide database. Global production of technical special products is highly modernised by allowing access to stored information.

The 70 students attending the three seminars learned about different ways of innovation: China is known for its huge increase in innovative high technology which is demanded worldwide and now catching up with the U.S.A. very quickly, said Edward Schwarz, from

## «YOU DON'T NEED TO BE AT YOUR DESK TO NEED THE ANSWER.» - GOOGLE



Pascal Jansen, Kuehne+Nagel

Holcim Foundation. India on the other hand relies on "simplicity and frugality" when it comes to innovation. Products and services should be affordable and accessible to people with very low incomes, accordingly to guest speaker Pascal Jansen, Kuehne + Nagel. At the connectUS sessions speakers pointed out how Google, Apple, Evernote and other American companies took innovative risks to create something new. Switzerland is rather known to be risk averse, whereas Americans "fail to succeed later", so Javier Bargas-Avila.

At an interactive workshop by Lucia Stocker, the participants explored methods to encourage creativity. How do you find out what is missing? How do you find a solution

to a problem? Creativity is key to innovation, Lucia Stocker said. You need to have ideas – crazy ideas. The crazier, the better. And be passionate about it. If you feel passionate, you are motivated to realize the idea into a real solution. Additionally, change is an important driver of innovation, in order to adapt to changes. Diversity was also mentioned as a key factor of innovation. More diversity results in more different ideas.

Pharma and health care industries, logistics, travel retail, and start-up companies were isolated in various sessions as areas especially dedicated to innovation. Pascal Jansen talked about innovative transportation solutions from Kuehne + Nagel. Jansen also explained that for the pharma and healthcare industry the innovation of a temperature control for containers so the products will not be damaged during transportation. Carlo Bernasconi, CEO of Flemingo International Ltd., a travel retailer, combined tradition and innovation in their new airport shop in Bangalore in order to attract the customers. Bargas-Avila spoke about the importance of a creative work environment to stay innovative (cf. Creative Workplace Philosophies, p. 21). In the life sciences area, innovation needs a different approach. The interplay between biology and technical sciences is crucial, said Dr. Christof Fattinger from Roche. Examples there are implants produced with a 3D printer (Prof. Dr. Michael de Wild, FHNW) or more precise diagnostics through technology.

Want to know how YOU can be more innovative? Check out the box "Being Creative and Innovative" for tips and tricks. ● EML

# BEING CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE

## Workshop with Lucia Stocker



Lucia Stocker

- If you have a pro and contra list, start with the pros and finish them all. After that, you move on to the contras. If you constantly switch, you will always find a contra to the pro.
- "If at first the idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it." – A. Einstein
  - Don't dismiss an idea just because your colleagues might think it is crazy. Innovation and creativity need craziness, not boredom.
- Lateral thinking
  - Act as if you have already achieved your objective and work back
  - Use a random word/impulse (e.g. Banana) and write down every word you associate with it
  - Move on with one of these words; Is it an idea or a concept?
  - Example of preventing robbery in shops:
    - Word/Impulse: Banana
    - Association: Peeling
    - Idea: Naked shopping
    - Concept: Transparency
    - Next idea: Scanner

# COMPANY VISITS

The Insight China delegation spent half a day at Brugg Cables, visiting the factory. On the picture is Andreas Heinemann, CFO Brugg Group, who explained the details regarding Brugg's business units.

Brugg Cables develops cables for transmitting power and signals. Set up in 1896 by Gottlieb Suhner, the family is still engaged in carrying on the business: Otto H. Suhner, fourth generation, holds a management position at the Brugg Group.



[www.insightchina.ch](http://www.insightchina.ch)

Brugg Cables

Sustainability topics keep having an increasing influence on the company's agenda, therefore the delegation had an interesting question session with Oliver Johner, Corporate Sustainability Manager at Franke Group.

The Franke Group belongs to the Artemis Group Holding and operates Franke Kitchen Systems, Franke Coffee Systems, Franke Washroom Systems, Franke Beverage Systems, Franke Foodservice Systems and Industrial Engineering. The company's history goes back to 1911, when Hermann Franke established a sheet-metal business in Rohrschach, Switzerland. Franke employs 8523 employees world wide (2012).



Franke

Despite the rainy weather, the Focus India delegation had a great afternoon visiting Endress + Blaser Flowtec in Reinach, BL.

Endress + Hauser Flowtec manufactures industrial meters to measure the flow of liquids, gas and steam. Georg H. Endress and Ludwig Hauser established the group in 1953. By now, the company is wholly-owned by the Endress family. Three sons of the third generation are still actively involved in the business.



[www.focusindia.ch](http://www.focusindia.ch)

Endress + Hauser.

Max Zuber, Head of Manufacturing Technology, showed the connectUS delegation around Blaser Swisslube and explained the details about the use of their products.

Blaser Swisslube produces, among other products, coolants that increase tool life and productivity. The company was founded in 1936 by Willy Blaser and has meanwhile become a global player. The company is now in the hands of the third generation, with Marc Blaser as CEO.



[www.connectus.ch](http://www.connectus.ch)

Blaser Swisslube

# THE MAGIC FORMULA OF FAMILY COMPANIES

Ballooning began as a passion at Blaser Swisslube's HQ in Hasle-Rüegsau, but soon spread across many of the company's subsidiaries around the world. Meanwhile the distinctive balloons can be seen floating over magnificent locations around the globe.



● During the company visits on Thursday afternoon, one thing soon became clear to the delegates: The companies' founders had individual magic formulas for growing their businesses.

## «CLIENT TRUST DRIVES US TO GIVE OUR VERY BEST EVERY DAY» – MARC BLASER, CEO, BLASER SWISSLUBE

Blaser functions according to the principle of "serving before earning". Before being sold on the market, new products are tested with existing clients. This tradition has its origin in 1936, when Willy Blaser let farmers test a water-resistant shoe cream for three months: If they were satisfied, they paid for it. If not, Blaser would go back and improve the cream.

## «SINCE THE EARLY DAYS, THE COMPANY HAS GROWN STEP BY STEP» – WINFRIED AMANN, HEAD OF CUSTOMER CARE, E+H FLOWTEC

Georg H. Endress believed in steadily growing the company. So while competitors experienced growth fluctuation, the Endress approach was slow but continuous. Recent events proved that this approach is still valid today. When orders declined during the 2009 financial crisis, the management took advantage of idle production time in order to reorganize the whole Flowtec facility; assembly is now four times faster than before!

Furthermore, all three companies operate financially independent to a large degree.

## «FROM 1997 TO 2009, THE BANK LOANS OF THE BRUGG GROUP DECREASED TO 0%.»

– ANDREAS BORER, CFO, BRUGG CABLES

In the case of Brugg Cables, the company is 80% family owned and financially independent, which is of great value to Otto Suhner, who carries on his ancestor's traditions and values. As mentioned by CFO Andreas Borer, this structure gives the company a strong financial position, avoids the constant reporting to the investors, analysts and third party stakeholders and permits more flexibility in business operations.

Apart from their business strategies, also the founders' values have been incorporated in the companies' cultures.

At Blaser Swisslube, environmental aspects have always had a high rank. Products are continuously tested in an in-house technology centre. Additionally, due to working with dangerous chemicals, the whole factory is built on what could be called a basin, protecting the environment and water surrounding the facility from potential leaks.

Since the early days, Endress + Hauser places importance on social aspects. Once a year, the whole Endress family clan, even the ones not actively involved in business, meet to discuss the future of the company. By now, the family meeting includes three generations and approximately sixty people. ● KJH

# INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IS ABSOLUTELY VITAL FOR BUSINESS SCHOOL GRADUATES

● Ruedi Nützi, Director of the School of Business at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW), speaks about the importance of internationalisation for business graduates and the three student projects; Insight China, Focus India, and connectUS.

## WHY HAS INTERNATIONALISATION BECOME SO IMPORTANT FOR SWISS BUSINESS STUDENTS?

As an export nation, Switzerland is highly dependent on good international relationships. This is particularly important for graduates of universities of applied sciences, seeing that the focus lies on practical orientation. Having an international perspective provides students with the best learning experience for their future career, whether it is in Switzerland or abroad.

**«HAVING AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE PROVIDES STUDENTS WITH THE BEST LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR THEIR FUTURE CAREER.»**

## WHAT MAKES THESE STUDENT PROJECTS UNIQUE?

As far as we know, there are no other student projects with the same concept as Insight China, Focus India, and connectUS. These projects offer the greatest possible practical experience for our students. They learn to apply knowledge and experience acquired over their first – usually –two years of studies and they demonstrate professionalism and élan in the organisation of the seminars - both the Preparatory Seminars and the Onsite Trips in the respective countries. Students are allowed to define, organise and lead the projects, which distinguishes them from other international

student projects. Naturally, the students are fully supported and closely supervised by lecturers from the School of Business, but the fundamental principle is that the projects are led by students for students. These projects connect and integrate students from a range of schools within the FHNW including Business, Engineering and Life Sciences. In total over 60 students and FHNW staff travel overseas each year and learn more about their chosen country.

**«...THEY DEMONSTRATE PROFESSIONALISM AND ÉLAN IN THE ORGANISATION OF THE SEMINARS.»**

## HOW ARE THE PROJECTS MADE POSSIBLE?

The Project Teams raise sufficient sponsorship money to enable the onsite trips abroad. As the projects are part of the degree programme, the costs for lecturers and staff joining the onsite trip, as well as for the Preparatory Seminars and all supervision is fully covered by the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland. The student delegation members contribute a limited amount to the trip abroad. But without the contribution of the industry sponsors, these projects would not be practicable. The knowledge, networks and experience of the School of Business and the industry partners creates a supportive learning environment within which the students can develop and excel; delivers theoretical, applied and experiential learning opportunities; and reduces expenditure and risk. We are a university of applied sciences and arts, and these projects exemplify the practice of applying knowledge and experience to deliver repeated excellence. The projects ensure knowledge transfer between the worlds of academia, industry and the wider society, which is central to the concept of Universities of Applied Sciences. ● EML



Ruedi Nützi, Director of the School of Business FHNW

“**Franke** expresses a clear commitment to fairness towards future generations. Realizing that they can have a big impact as a global player, Franke’s goal is to catch up with other Swiss companies in terms of making efforts for being a sustainable company. The defined goal for Franke is to be a world leader by constantly trying to integrate aspects of resource efficiency in product development and at the same time providing products and solutions with a rewarding experience for their customers.” - Oliver Johner, Corporate Sustainability Manager at Franke Group

# UPGRADING SLUMS IN MUMBAI AND PROMOTING BICYCLES IN BEIJING

## Construction: A Step Towards Sustainable Development



Edward Schwarz talking about the engagement of the Holcim Foundation in sustainable construction.

● Edward Schwarz, General Manager of the Holcim Foundation brought the topic of sustainable construction closer to the Insight China and Focus India delegations.

**«IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT A ROOF, YOU COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT THE HOLE IN THE ROAD»**

- EDWARD SCHWARZ, HOLCIM FOUNDATION

According to Edward Schwarz, the goal of sustainable construction is to increase levels of living for people in developing countries. If one then talks sustainability on top of that, it is a matter of using as little fossil energy as possible and producing only a minimum of waste and emissions. At the same time, the goal is to reduce corruption and greed.

It is a fact that urbanization is an issue in both China and India. However, both countries lack basic infrastructure, as Mr. Schwarz showed during his presentation.

Apart from roads and public transport, there might even be a greater need for water, electricity and sewage systems. Holcim Foundation projects for “upgrading slums” are concerned with enabling decent levels of living. Often, actions taken are small but have a great impact, such as building staircases in front of people’s tiny slum-houses and thus integrating water, electricity and television underneath.

Quite the opposite can be found in Beijing, where the rapid population growth has led to problematic numbers of automobile traffic. Honoured with a Holcim Award for Sustainable Construction (Holcim Foundation website), two architects planned a bicycle centre in the city, with the aim of promoting the use of bicycles for short distances.

**«THE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY HAVE TO BE LIVED INTERNALLY AND TOWARDS THE SOCIETY. AND YET, IT HAS TO BALANCE BECAUSE YOU NEED TO EARN MONEY.»**

All in all, a project has to set trends and should be adaptable to other utilizations, according to Schwarz. This transferability is the progress that is essential in the business world today. Even contextual and aesthetic impacts, such as a cultural factors or the quality of the constructions have to be leading toward proficiency to get potential solutions in the matter of sustainability.

When asked about the principle of the triple bottom line and balancing social responsibility, economic growth and environmental performance, Schwarz states that sustainability has to be lived internally in the production, products, and services as well as, just as important, towards the society. And yet again, it has to be balanced: you need to earn money in order to give something back.

● KJH / DT



# PANEL DISCUSSION



From Left: Prof. Mick Jeive (Moderator), Evert Dijkstra, Dr Petra Kugler, Dr Ganesh Nathan, Ylva Stiller, Willy Pillinger and Markus Stierli

## DOES GREATER DIVERSITY LEAD TO GREATER INNOVATION?

With the on-going debate regarding Switzerland's recent referendum, the topic of multiculturalism could not be avoided during the panel discussion on the Friday.

● The five panellists agreed on one thing: the world will stay global, whether this concerns the economic or the educational sector. During the years to come, Willy Pillinger (Accenture) predicts that several interesting questions will be raised: where talent comes from, where it goes to and how it hooks into economic processes.

In the case of Syngenta, diversity is paramount in getting talent for research operations all over the world and Ylva Stiller believes that "companies will always manage around any kind of obstacles". However, cross-border research projects generate challenges. As mentioned by Evert Dijkstra (Phonak), such projects are usually slow to put in place and finding the right partners is easier said than done.

As for the educational sector, the two professors in the round, Nathan Ganesh (FHNW) and Petra Kugler (FHS St. Gallen), have both studied and worked in many cities across continents – a valuable experience for life, work and ideas, according to Kugler. Moderator Michael Jeive (FHNW), confirmed this statement in regard to current students: the exchange among European universities, the so-called Erasmus program, greatly enriches learning experiences of today's students, Switzerland's future talents. ● *KJH*

## THE LINK BETWEEN SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION

When asked about their opinion of what comes first, sustainability or innovation, the discussion between the five panellists heated up.

● **Ganesh Nathan:** We should start thinking of sustainable-driven innovation: in production, elements such as waste or not renewable materials cause constraints. Innovation comes in handy to overcome those constraints. It is not a matter of either one or the other!

**Ylva Stiller:** I agree and disagree. Improving efficiency and solving challenges for farmers drive our innovation. But additionally, we try to improve existing solutions, management systems or mind-sets if we see cost benefits. It is a question whether you are forced to improve or whether one takes the opportunity to be pro-active and change something before it becomes a risk.

## «ECOLOGICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMICAL ASPECTS ALL CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABILITY.»

**Ganesh Nathan:** Creating innovation is a societal needs-driven business; innovations should always benefit people and respect the environment. Profit comes from meeting those societal needs. If one uses profit as a motive, then it is like putting the cart in front of the horse! *Continued on page 8*

It was great to have five panellists from such different fields talking about the subjects of sustainability and innovation. What an interesting discussion!

Prof. Michael Jeive, Moderator and Lecturer in International Relations FHNW

Evert Dijkstra, CEO, Phonak Communications

Dr. Petra Kugler, FHS St. Gallen, Sustainable Corporate Development

Dr. Ganesh Nathan, FHNW, Innovation Management

Ylva Stiller, Head of Social Policy and Performance, Syngenta

Willy Pillinger, Managing Director, Accenture

Markus Stierli, Head of Fundamental Micro-Research, Credit Suisse

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**Markus Stierli:** The question of profits is difficult. The impact of innovation or sustainability and how it transforms into company value is hard to measure. Certainly these two things do not contradict, but companies have to think their processes through. Often there is too much focus on just the end product, when actually the whole supply chain is just as important.

**Petra Kugler:** Obviously, both terms are very close in their nature and philosophies. Firms face the conflict of where to invest their resources, because both are expensive. In regard to sustainability, there are not only the ecological aspects but also social and economical aspects to pay attention to.

## «INNOVATION DOES NOT TAKE PLACE IN A BUBBLE.»

**Willy Pillinger:** Personally, I think those terms are all equally important for the economic environment. Innovation does not take place in a bubble: It is driven by intent, results from goals which change over time, and once one realizes that something is not sustainable, innovations are needed to change it. It is a process of continuous improvement over time.

**Evert Dijkstra:** In our organization, there is not tension at all. The sustainability aspect may not be as relevant, but innovation certainly is a must to survive. And the payback was great: Being innovative helped us to become number 1 in the industry. ● *KJH*

# GESTURES



# IS CHINA GOING GREEN?

Over the past 30 years China has achieved incredible economic growth to become the world's second largest single-country economy. In the last decades the economy of China has radically changed. Since the introduction of market-oriented reforms in 1979, economic growth has been the central task of the Chinese government. As we heard from Simona di Grano and Marcel Wyler, policy makers have a vested interest in growing the economy, incentivized by both financial rewards and political futures. Apparently economic performance is even linked to career advancement.

To compete with modern nations of the European Union or the United States, China has to adapt quickly both growing its economy and developing internal consumption simultaneously while at the same time focussing on sustainability. According to Xinhua Wittmann the focus on maximising gross domestic product (GDP) at any cost has created a series of social and environmental problems. Rapid industrial development has depended upon increasing inputs of energy, natural resources, and environmental services. This caused serious problems like environmental pollution and resource depletion that require the rethinking of governmental policies. On the Environmental Performance Index, a method of quantifying and numerically marking the environmental performance of a state's policies, China is currently ranked 118 of 178 countries. (<http://epi.yale.edu/epi>).

China has developed a large number of environmental policies in recent years and is significantly improving the real-time monitoring of environmental pollutants especially PM 2.5 particles and air pollution. However, these measures will take time to have an impact and at the same time, increasing urbanisation and industrialization is putting increasing pressure on limited supplies of water and raw materials. Some Chinese cities, such as Lanzhou, have made enormous efforts with the aim of reducing pollution recently. For example, only cars with an odd number plate are allowed to be driven on a certain day, industrial plants are moved to rural areas and residential heating plants have switched from coal to gas-fired heating systems.

China's environmental challenges are no longer limited to its own borders; Dr. Shuaihua Cheng gave us an insight into the international aspects of China's green challenge. He works for the International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development ICTSD, and part of their research looks at the global footprint of Chinese policies by examining the global economic governance, impacts on least developed countries, and the regional cooperation to assure environmental soundness. As China becomes ever more global in its sourcing of natural resources, and international investments. Its impact is spreading far beyond its own borders to Africa and Latin America.

Developing a sustainable economy will require a focus on the social aspects as well as the economic issues. These are necessary to get a balance in view of resource management and urban transformation. China needs to focus on which levels of government will take which task, and what approach should be considered. Either it will be a top-down or a bottom-up method. The country faces both the challenge of implementing existing policies and the challenge of developing an awareness of the necessity of environmental action amongst a population who only a generation ago were in complete poverty. As Dr. Shuaihua Cheng pointed out, recycling is in its infancy. For example, workers without training or safety information are working by hand stripping electronic parts from waste sites, and while the beginnings offer hope, the current practices are dangerous both to the workers and to the local environment. Simona di Grano told us that focussing on implementation of existing legislation may be the first priority, but without awareness raising real sustainable progress will be very difficult.

As China urbanises further, its problems become ever more focussed. A population the size of Europe's moving to the urban centres requires enormous investment in infrastructure, transport, waste management and housing. While there are many examples of increasingly green cities around the world, only a few Chinese cities appear to be following the trend.

*Continued on page 8*

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Marisa Bumbacher,  
School of Engineering  
After my computer science studies I see myself working in a multicultural and interdisciplinary environment. After my last project - which included people from 5 countries all over the world - I see how important and beneficial it can be when people from many different nationalities work together, including China.



Mensur Kuthlesi,  
School of Business  
"With Insight China I want to embrace the opportunity to get to know a different business culture. This is perfectly in line with my goal to work in a multicultural company where the aim is to be open for new adventures in order to be innovative."



Christian Arber, School of Engineering

"It is my goal to bring together two key features for the future: The implementation of green solutions and processes in a company which create financial and social benefit. China has perhaps the greatest potential to change economy and its effects on our world into a sustainable, green system."



Manuel Tribelhorn, School of Engineering

"As energy demand is growing worldwide and especially in fast growing countries, I see many areas of activity in this field. Commitment to quality work in the maintenance environment of power plants – That's where I feel myself devoted to and where I want to build my career."

Whether to reach a goal or to set new strategies, China has to set up a specific timeline. Particularly it has to be indicated where sustainability is mostly needed, either in rural environment, or in urban environment. The cultural background has to influence the decision as well, because there are huge differences between the areas of China and even several languages. However, all these approaches need some key performance indices. Overall emission, energy mixes, environmental quality, and how green an economy is, are indications of the overall performance of a sustainable economy.

Due to this rapid progress over the last decades, China is not ready for a new system in every single aspect, but they have to adapt to be competitive in advance to other upcoming country and their industries like India. To regulate and enforce systems that are both, environmentally and economically sustainable, new policies are needed. The "China going green" field offers many business opportunities over the next decades and if the correct policies as are implemented and enforced, the country will not have to slow down its growth.

### Challenges of sustainability

China faces numerous problems. Beside the poor air quality throughout whole China, water becomes scarce and soil is polluted by heavy metals. Furthermore, agriculture must become more efficient in order to guarantee food supply while at the same time guaranteeing food quality. Awareness for keeping the environment clean is absent and waste is not separated. Changing the behavior of the society will take years or decades. The biggest part of China is in the early to middle stages of economic development and has to deal with critical natural resource and environmental constraints. Furthermore, there are significant economic and social structural challenges. Nevertheless, as Professor Wittmann mentioned in her presentation, China's pollution per capita is much lower than in other countries (e.g., compared to the U.S.). So there are integrated solutions required in Governance, Technology and funding as well as Education ● TA

## SWITZERLAND-CHINA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT



Ambassador, Christian Etter

● Ambassador Christian Etter, Delegate for Trade Agreements and Head of the Special Foreign Economic Service Division in the Foreign Economic Affairs Directorate, spoke in the 13th edition of Insight China's preparatory seminar about the Free Trade Agreement (FTA CH-CN) between China and Switzerland, which was signed on July 6 by Federal Council member Johann N. Schneider-Ammann and Chinese Trade Minister Gao Hucheng. Switzerland is the first continental European country to sign such an agreement with China.

Ambassador Etter told students at first hand about the negotiations with China. „The principles of the negotiations are finally not different from some in other regions in the world“, explained Etter. Empathy and composition of a bond of trust are essential competences in negotiations with other countries. Also friendliness, decency and credibility are crucial. Therefore good preparation is indispensable „The right answer must come for the right time“.

### What will the introduction of the FTA CH-CN mean for Switzerland?

With the FTA customs duties for most goods from China when imported into Switzerland under preferential arrangements, would be abolished. Consequently, products such as textiles and shoes, coming from the right origin, would be handled as preferential goods when it comes to customs duties on entry into Switzerland. This means that from then on Switzerland would also levy reduced customs duties.

For Switzerland, China is the third most important export destination (first is the EU, and second the USA) with 7.8 Bio CHF (2012) and the most important export destination in Asia. China is the third most important importer after the EU and the USA with a volume of 10.3 bn CHF. ● TA

# ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES IN CHINA



www.insightchina.ch

● Marcel Wyler from Adaxis AG introduced environmental policies in China and shared his experience with us in the Seminar „Doing Business in China“.

The followings are the 7 priority industries China has identified:

1. New Energy – nuclear, wind and solar power
2. Energy Conservation and Environmental Protection – energy reduction targets
3. Biotechnology – drugs and medical devices
4. New Materials - rare earths and high-end semiconductors
5. New IT – broadband networks, internet security infrastructure, network convergence
6. High-End Equipment Manufacturing – aerospace and telecom equipment
7. Clean Energy Vehicles

Three of these priorities relate directly to environmental questions. All seven offer China potential improvements in moving up the value chain and in producing higher added value products. Nonetheless there is potential for economic and environmental needs to converge.

“China’s 12th Five Year Plan marks a turning point from the country’s previous emphasis on headline growth; China’s leaders are now prioritising strategies and measures to ensure long term prosperity for the entire nation.”, so Marcel Wyler.

If we consider China’s key challenges as discussed in the 12th “5-year plan”, we see beside Domestic Consumption, the Growing Gap between Rich and Poor and upgrading Social Welfare also the reducing

Energy Use, funding earmarked for Key Areas and China’s service Sector Output. Both Growth and sustainability are being prioritised by the government, they face the challenge of moving into the next



Marcel Wyler, Adaxis AG

phase of economic development while at the same time dealing with problems caused in the earlier phases such as significant income inequality and very significant environmental impacts.

Finally, the challenges are very great, but we can see that the government is taking them seriously and pitting policies in place. ● DT

## FACTS & FIGURES COMPARING SWITZERLAND AND CHINA

### TIANANMEN SQUARE vs. Bundesplatz

The Tiananmen Square in Beijing is with a size of 440'000 m<sup>2</sup> (880m x 500m) the largest city square in the world. The Bundesplatz in Berne has a size of 2'218 m<sup>2</sup>.

### FLOOR SPACE

By 2025 40'000km<sup>2</sup> of floor space will have been built in China. This is the equivalent of the area of Switzerland or 10 times New York City.

[Source: McKinsey&Company]

### CITY LIFE

In 2013, 160 cities in China had a population that exceeded a million. By 2050, around 75% of all Chinese people will live in cities. Zurich, the biggest city in Switzerland, has a population of about 400 000 people).

[Source: independent.co.uk, allianzgloblainvestors.de wikipedia.com]

# EXCHANGE STUDENT REPORTS



Tamara Altermatt  
interviews Yanhua Sun

● Yanhua Sun, exchange student from China, compared her apprenticeship in China with her studies in Switzerland:

First, she names the relationship between the students and the teacher which is much more “easy going” in Switzerland. Here, everyone discusses on the same level. As a student, you are allowed to ask everything, why, where, which....

In China, this is different, explained Yanhua. With the very large classes in China, questions are impossible for all. Hence, questioning was out of the question.

Secondly, Yanhua mentioned the way of learning. She had to do a lot of homework, not so in Switzerland. Here in turn, she has to write many more papers. Furthermore, she mentioned that the exams are different. “In China, the teacher always told us the important subjects or points we have to know. In Switzerland, it is more open-ended and thus more difficult.” ● TA

# INTERVIEW WITH A CEO: JOSEF MAUSHART

● **What are the strengths of Fraisa Group?**

“Fraisa Group is in the field of metal machining. Our strength is a very unique combination of technology, services and know-how transfer. Therefore we are more a partner than a supplier to our customers.”

**Why do you sponsor Insight China?**

“When we decided last year to found a subsidiary in China, it was very clear that we want to strengthen the relationship with the FHNW University of Applied Sciences and Arts therefore we sponsor Insight China.”

**What is Fraisa doing in terms of sustainability?**

“We are the biggest company in Europe doing the regrinding of cutting tools. That means nothing else but we are making much more use out of a certain amount of raw material. Therefore, we can bring this technology also to China.”

**What is crucial to know about doing business in China?**

“It is very important that we take a lot of time and that we travel in China and learn about the country - also outside our direct business there. Therefore, doing business in China is a long term approach, very much in the sense of the Chinese culture.” ● DT



Find the whole interview on YouTube

# «ONE THIRD OF JOB HIRING IN INDIA HAPPENS THROUGH EMPLOYEE REFERRALS»

## An insight about talent management and talent acquisition in India

● In India, 35% of all inhabitants are younger than 15 years old, which represents a huge pool of potential young talents. However, not all of them can find jobs in the marketplace – which is the reason for a high unemployment rate of 15%.

Accenture India employs a variety of recruiting tools adapted to the Indian market. Among those, the so-called “employee referral” is very important: About 1/3 of all hiring happens through recommendations given by current employees regarding potential candidates in their social network. The well-known concepts of job fairs and campus recruitment are common tools in India as well.

Two rather special approaches are graduate walk-in days and national assessment centres. The first refers to companies having official “visiting days” for graduate students, where they conduct interviews with interesting candidates. It happens that students wait outside for up to ten hours, since those days are

### «RECRUITMENT PROCESSES IN INDIA ARE LENGTHY AND FAIRLY EXHAUSTING.»

extremely popular. National assessment centres are official organizations, which conduct pre-selections for companies. Human Resource specialists test and recruit students – the candidates who pass the tests are only then getting contacted by the companies themselves.

During an entertaining live video question and answer session with an Accenture employee in Bangalore, it became clear that recruitment processes for big Indian or multinational companies are lengthy and fairly exhausting. Smaller Indian companies often do not have the same extent of interviews and test rounds.

The most popular study courses among Indian students are Information Technology, Engineering and Economic Sciences: booming industries in the world market. Therefore it is not unlikely for Indian graduates to receive job offers from all over the world. Compared to Switzerland, the same fields attract only minorities of students. This will lead to a lack of approximately 70'000 IT-Specialists, according to a study quoted by the Accenture guest speakers. ● *KJH*



www.focusindia.ch

Accenture India searches for approximately 2'000 employees per month.

The ASG division (Austria, Switzerland Germany) usually has 1'000 job openings per year.

Accenture India hires about 1% of the applicants.

#### What does Accenture do?

The company's core business consists of offering ICT consulting services to companies in all kinds of industries all around the world.

The three Accenture guest speakers.

Top Down:  
Andreas Volz ,  
Federica Hunziker,  
Zohaib Burney

Like Focus India on Facebook and read more about former Focus India project managers! <https://www.facebook.com/FocusIndiaFHNW>

**Focus India and Accenture: A successful combination**

After her studies at the FHNW, Federica Hunziker got a job with Focus India's long-standing sponsor Accenture. She was in contact with the consulting company through the project and talks about her success story.

**«IT WAS QUITE A LOT OF WORK, BUT WE MADE SO MANY GOOD CONTACTS.»**



Federica Hunziker, project manager of Focus India 2012 and now working in the Project Management Office at Accenture in Zurich.

**FOCUS INDIA: THINKING BACK, WHAT ARE YOUR MEMORIES OF 2012'S PROJECT?**

**Federica:** It was quite a lot of work at the beginning but then we could really enjoy the outcome. At the preparatory seminar, everything worked out, we made so many good contacts and all the speakers were very professional. I was surprised how many people outside the FHNW were excited about Focus India!

**FI: WHICH VALUABLE JOB-SKILLS DID YOU ACQUIRE FROM BEING A PROJECT MANAGER?**

**Federica:** I learned a lot about communication and was able to further improve my English skills. Besides that, I gained self-confidence in approaching managers and high-ranked people. I also got to know a lot about the Indian culture, which helps me interacting with Indian colleagues at work.

**FI: TALKING ABOUT TALENT ACQUISITION – DO YOU THINK BEING A PROJECT MEMBER HELPED YOU GETTING A JOB AT ACCENTURE?**

**Federica:** I believe it did, yes. Without the personal

contact with Accenture during the project phase, I think it would have been more difficult to show my skills with my first application. There are so many other applicants, so being able to show your qualifications during projects like Focus India certainly gives you an advantage.

**FI: WHICH ROLE DOES INDIA PLAY IN YOUR JOB?**

**Federica:** Half of our team is located in India and many of my Swiss colleagues regularly travel to India. There is a lot of collaboration regarding management matters, so an overview over the whole team is important and I know all my Indian colleagues by name. I interact with India every day! ● *KJH*

# ALUMNI STORY

**What happened to Cédric Laffely, Focus India Project Manager 2011?**

**Thinking back, what are your memories of 2011's project?**

During the preparation phase, I liked dealing with all the stakeholders that supported us during the project. Realizing the trip to India was a great challenge but also an opportunity for my future career.

**Were there any success stories linked to the project?**

In 2011, we managed to get Accenture on board, and it is great to see that they are still main sponsor!

On a personal basis, the experience I gained as a project manager was probably one of the main criteria why I got my current job.



Cédric Laffely, project manager of Focus India 2011 and now working at Bruker Biospin as a Program Manager.



**Felix Vellappallil, Engineering Brugg**  
«I would like to do an internship with or even work for a company in Asia after completing my studies. Focus India is an excellent opportunity to get to know more about the mentality and the way they deal with foreign workers. In addition, being of Indian origin, I also get to see how the companies there work.»



**Kathrin Gündner, Life Sciences Muttensz**  
«Having the strong ambition to operate in a multi-disciplinary and international surrounding, I imagine the world as a big puzzle. It needs a diversity of experiences abroad to connect its pieces. Focus India will broaden my horizon by providing insight into the challenges and excellences of an impressive culture.»

# UNDERSTANDING INDIAN BUSINESS CULTURE

● India-born Mr. Ram S. Rambhia who is currently working as Application Manager Chemical & Petrochemical at Sulzer Chemtech Switzerland: Having worked for Sulzer in India until two years ago, he is an expert when it comes to the country's unique business culture and the principles foreign companies should adhere to.

**«TO SET UP A BUSINESS ABROAD, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO KNOW THE LOCAL BUSINESS CULTURE. ONLY THEN WILL YOU KNOW HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL.»**

## INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Taking time to let business relationships grow is an essential factor when engaging with Indian partners. This certainly is beneficial, since getting along with Indian people also means getting requests handled quickly – when otherwise it might take time and patience.

## HIERARCHY

The Indian hierarchy system is a key factor and one should respect it. Companies are organized in many hierarchical levels and superiors are usually called “Sir” or “Madam”; they should not be addressed by their names. With the purpose of indicating decision power, there are all kinds of job titles – even when the work content often does not significantly vary.

## ATTRITION

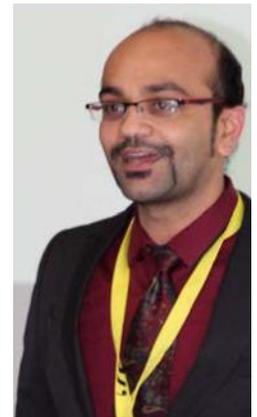
Indians are very ambitious and therefore easily ready to change employers, if a new job opportunity leads to faster learning, a higher position or salary increase. Common motivators used by companies to retain employees are: positive feedback, promotions or a pay rises. The latter are often expected to be a minimum of 10% annually, which is linked to the high inflation rate in India.

## ABOUT SULZER

In the case of Sulzer Chemtech, the manufacturing base catering the whole European Market and other regions is based in Pune, India. The company is specialised in the area of separation and mixing technologies, which are commonly used in oil refineries or gas plants. ● *KJH*



[www.focusindia.ch](http://www.focusindia.ch)



On our YouTube Video Blog, see Mr. Ram Rambhia comment on Sulzer's European market concept:



**Kenny Schreiber,**  
Social Work Olten

«Countries like India have always fascinated me. Since my childhood, I have felt deeply connected to Asian countries and their ability to mix traditional and modern lifestyles. Someday, I hopefully will be able to emigrate to such a country. Before that I want to continue my studies in

English and Japanese and also gain further experience in working together with disabled people.»

More participant  
profiles can be  
found on  
[www.focusindia.ch](http://www.focusindia.ch)

The State Bank of India, the largest commercial bank in India, has approximately 9'200 branches and 199'000 employees across India. A huge number compared to the 60'000 UBS employees worldwide.

Number of ATM's in India:  
8.9 ATM's  
per 100'000 adults

Compared to Australia:  
166.92 ATM's  
per 100'000 adults

## THE INDIAN BANKING SYSTEM – A ROAD BLOCKER?

### Hannes Weibel on the three Main Challenges Multinational Companies Face When Doing Business in India



Hannes Weibel, UBS

Supporting Swiss headquartered companies abroad is one of UBS's goals and current initiatives. However, facilitating local activities abroad confronts the companies and UBS with the specialties of the regulatory frameworks in the respective market.

Due to a highly regulated banking system, managing operations in India is a complex matter from a treasury point of view. Companies are restricted in their flexibility to manage cash, due to overdraft and deposit tenors.

Furthermore, interest rates are highly regulated. Therefore, due to the lack of competition, spreading assets over several banks is ineffective and reduces the companies' possibilities regarding their own preferred financial structure. Also, financing through intercompany loans still presents an administrative challenge. Sending money to a subsidiary based in India is only possible if the transaction is processed and monitored monthly by a bank based in India. Foreign exchange is the last main hurdle. The INR (Indian rupee) is not freely convertible over the globe, which complicates investment and trade related transactions.

However, as mentioned by Hannes Weibel, Global Head Swiss Corporate Clients Desks at UBS, companies are advised to establish business structures according to these regulatory requirements and should adopt a long-term approach regarding operations in India. Cost competitiveness and a huge workforce with good education and English skills are main drivers of the Indian economy and might eventually reduce regulatory difficulties through increased competition and economic growth. ● KJH

#### When it comes to business meetings

- DO expect meetings to start later and take longer than scheduled
- DON'T start discussions right away – small talk as a warm-up is appreciated

#### In terms of business etiquette,

- DO hand over business cards with both hands
- DON'T turn down tea or coffee when offered

#### Regarding behaviour, Indian business partners

- DO shake their heads to indicate they have understood what has been said
- DON'T directly say "no" to express a negative answer



Father and Son at the Preparatory Seminar: Focus India brings generations together!

On the left, Sandro Bernasconi, Business Administration student and part of this year's PR Team. On the right, Carlo Bernasconi, director of the board of Flemingo International Ltd. In Bernasconi senior's presentation, he pointed out that the innovative travel retail (duty free and duty paid) and airport concept of the new Mumbai Airport Terminal 2 is based on a mix of Indian culture, modern standards and outstanding architecture.

# NEXT U.S. AMBASSADOR FOR SWITZERLAND

● Switzerland will soon be welcoming a female U.S. Ambassador. The U.S. Embassy in Bern has not been occupied by an ambassador, since May 2013. On 30 January 2014 it was finally announced that Suzi LeVine, an active campaigner and fundraiser, had been nominated by President Barack Obama. It will take some time until the details are settled - the U.S. Senate must still confirm the nomination -, as well as her family affairs, so we might need to wait a while until we can receive her with cheers here in Switzerland.

Suzi LeVine has a background in English studies,

engineering and worked for Microsoft and Expedia before actively engaging in political affairs. Furthermore, she holds a position at the University of Washington as chair of the Advisory Board of the Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences at present.

«WHO REPRESENTS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WHEN THERE IS NO AMBASSADOR?»

you might now wonder. The connectUS delegation members had the pleasure to meet that official, Chargé d’Affair Jeffrey R. Cellars, on the 13 February 2014 in the U.S. Embassy in Bern in person (see below). ● EML

## U.S. EMBASSY VISIT IN BERN «RISK IS VITAL IN INNOVATION»

● A clear highlight of the Preparatory Seminar week was the visit to the U.S. Embassy in Bern where the connectUS delegation was privileged to have a talk with the U.S. Chargé d’Affaires, Jeffrey R. Cellars, and ask questions they have prepared about any subjects they were interested in, such as the U.S.-Switzerland relationship, the Chargé’s personal experiences, politics, et cetera.

On Thursday, 13 February 2014, all twenty-two of the connectUS delegation passed the security check, and we were escorted to the Embassy House – a beautiful, old house.

Inside it was even more impressive. We sat down, the Chargé d’Affaires Jeffrey R. Cellars, entered and sat facing us. We were all quite intimidated by the house, the room and, of course, the Chargé d’Affaires and his entourage. Mr Cellars, however, opened the Q&A with “So, as I heard, you now ask me embarrassing questions and I try to avoid them.” We all laughed and it immediately resulted in a very relaxed atmosphere. Next to the Chargé d’Affaires, we could also speak to the Counselor for Political & Economic Affaires Tom A. Kelsey and Press and Cultural Attaché Alexander N. Daniels.



[www.connectus.ch](http://www.connectus.ch)



Next U.S. Ambassador for Switzerland: Suzi LeVine

**JEFFREY R. CELLARS: CHARGÉ D’AFFAIRES, DIPLOMAT, VISIONARY, WORLD TRAVELLER, PROFESSOR, FATHER AND HUSBAND**

The Chargé d’Affaires is generally the primary diplomatic representative of the U.S.A. in the absence of an ambassador. He enjoys the same immunities as an ambassador and is responsible for the entire embassy team. When he described his job, he repeatedly said that he was not a “do-er”; he gives a focus, a vision, and facilitates work.

A typical working day would start by checking his emails, followed by a couple of meetings, talking primarily about goals and objectives, and maybe a courtesy call. Afterwards, he would then do paper work, attend events – often company visits – and in the evening have a dinner meeting. He furthermore mentioned that his daughters are not here, and his wife will join him later. He misses them; during his period as Chargé d’Affaires in Switzerland, Jeffrey R. Cellars is not allowed to leave Switzerland or Liechtenstein. Next to his family, he mostly misses California, the coast and salty water, as well as Mexican and Chinese food.

Nonetheless, he seems to be very comfortable in Switzerland. He pointed out that Switzerland is a great country and he loves it and his job. He described the Swiss as engaging, respectful, frank and honest. When adapting to the Swiss culture, he paid close attention to the Don’ts; mainly the eating habits and that no man should bring someone red roses – certainly not in a business context. And he would always – when adapting to a new culture – learn the language as quickly as possible, mostly by interacting with local people. For him, it is not as difficult as for his family to adapt to a new culture, as he would always have one constant; his job. His plans for the future are to enjoy everything within the next three years in Switzerland. Afterwards, he might get back to teaching, as one of his five careers was as a professor.

**SWITZERLAND AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: PLANNING MEETS RISK-TAKING**

CDA Jeffrey Cellars gave us an interesting insight into the general differences between Swiss and Americans. He believed that due to the historical background, it is a given that the mentality and the culture of these two countries vary to some extent. The U.S.A is a very young nation compared to Switzerland. The early U.S. immigrants accepted a great risk by travelling to

America from Europe, leaving their past behind, recreating themselves. Switzerland on the other hand is rather an old nation, with deep fostered values, beliefs and certainty. Probably due to this history, American people are not afraid to take risks, to try out new things, to fail, and to stand out.

What can the U.S.A. then learn from Switzerland and vice versa? Swiss people should definitely try to get rid off their fears of failure and risk, Mr Cellars believes. In the United States, failure means learning and having experience. Albert Einstein once said “A person who never made a mistake, never tried anything new” and that is what Americans live by. Swiss people on the other hand are moderate, plan everything, are relentless and will find a solution to a problem. Both sides are important – especially for business success. Risk-taking is vital in terms of innovation and globalisation, whereas planning is important for sustainability, quality and good organization. To the question “What can the U.S.A. learn from Switzerland?” all three embassy officials agreed on public transportation.

**OUTLOOK: U.S. ELECTIONS 2016**

The U.S. Elections 2016 are slowly but surely moving closer and potential candidates for the Republicans and Democrats are becoming clearer. Jeb Bush, the son of former president George H. W. Bush and brother of former president George W. Bush, is a potential candidate for the Republicans. To the question whether his relation to George Bush Jr. would be an advantage or disadvantage, Jeffrey Cellars and Tom Kelsey both agreed that it would depend on his position on topics relevant to the general population, such as income inequality and taxation. Though his father is much respected – and his brother in certain circles – it might be better to not position himself too closely to George Bush Jr.

“Is America now ready for a female president?” Jeffrey Cellars responded that it depended on who the female is and that the U.S.A. is ready for a talented president, regardless of colour or sex. Referring specifically to Hillary Clinton, he believed that her chances are good; better than in 2008. ● EML



Chargé d’Affaires, Jeffrey R. Cellars

# ALUMNI STORIES

  
www.connectus.ch

## WHAT HAPPENED TO TIMO KAUFMANN, CONNECTUS DELEGATION MEMBER 2012?

- Studied Life Sciences at the FHNW
- Now Quality Expert, Process & Logistics Services, at Novartis Pharma Stein AG

What were your benefits from the project connectUS/NWNY?

The project gave me a broad understanding of the American business culture. Looking back, I have been using many skills in my daily work which I learned during the project. Beside all this useful business experience, I learned a lot for my life as well.

Do/did you work in an American company in Switzerland (or elsewhere)?

I work in a Swiss company with a big American influence/culture! (CEO and many members of the board are American.)

If so, was it related to the project (connection, company you visited, etc.)?

Not directly, but the project definitely helped me to get the job!

What are your tips for students going on this trip?

Be open to the things, always think positive and join the activities as much as you can. The two weeks will be a life time experience. AND try to understand and help the project team, there are 20 students on this trip so it's clear you have to wait from time to time or things don't work out as they were planned! Relax, and don't be in a hurry (there is a Starbucks at every corner).

Do you have any special stories related to the project?

Well, I could tell you stories about CEO's we met or some of the brightest people in the world at Harvard & MIT. Or I could tell you about 20 students dancing in a Irish pub or singing in a Karaoke bar but I think you are going to make your own stories soon!! ●



Timo Kaufmann, connectUS alumni and delegation member 2012

## WHAT HAPPENED TO MICHAEL SCHRANZ, NWNY PROJECT TEAM MEMBER 2008?

- Studied International Management at the FHNW
- After the FHNW he did a 1-year training program at Swisscom (in International Product Management (Roaming), Corporate Social Responsibility, and Public Relations)
- 2009 working in Live Marketing area (specialised in Hybrid Events, Social Media & Apps)
- 2013: 30 % at Apps with Love, Marketing Department (still 80 % at Swisscom)
- Since 2014: 100 % at Apps with Love, Head of Marketing & PR

Next to that, he teaches Event Management and Social Media at the HTW Chur and coaches Bachelor Theses in that area. He also lectures internationally on the topic "Event Apps" (e.g. n Vienna, Mannheim, Frankfurt).

What are your tips for students going on this trip?

Be open minded, think about the fact that all members of connectUS will have great jobs in 5 years and therefore this network will be very valuable for you. Networking is basically giving and only sometimes asking for something.

Do you have any special stories related to the project ?

I still have many contacts that I met during NWNY ●



Michael Schranz, connectUS alumni and Project Manager of NWNY 2008

## EVERNOTE: COLLABORATING NOT COMPETING

● One of the three innovation success factors of Evernote, mentioned by General Manager Europe Cristina Riesen at the Preparatory Seminar, was the “No Zero-Sum Game”. This implies the interesting concept that there is a greater benefit drawn from collaboration than competition. What an outsider immediately would see as competitors of Evernote – Google, Post-It, Apple – are actually already existing partnerships or viewed as potential collaborations by the company. Evernote works with many different industries and companies in order to create something great, new, and useful by believing that everything is possible. A perfect example is their collaboration with Post-It. Instead of accepting that Evernote cannot replace the convenience of a quickly hand-written Post-It note, they created a way to integrate the Post-It in their App. By taking a picture of the note, the App generates a digitalized Post-It note which can be customized to its colors. Each color can be associated with a tag, notebook, and reminder and will automatically be saved to, for example, “Business Notes”. ● EML

## «RISE AND RISE AGAIN UNTIL LAMBS BECOME LIONS»: THE AMERICAN WAY

● “Fail often, fail up”, Cristina Riesen said. All speakers who talked about the American way, emphasized that Americans are not afraid of failure. In order to succeed, you need to fail first; Bargas-Avila also mentioned that in Google’s work ethics it is okay to fail. According to a paper by Dr Christian Lücke “job-related failure is perceived as a positive know-how in the United States”. Jeffrey R. Cellars, Chargé d’Affaires of the U.S.A in Switzerland, pointed out how important it is to take risks and not be afraid of failing – in the end you will most probably not even regret it. That is something that many Europeans have yet to learn. Entrepreneur specialist Jean-Pierre Viuilleumier stressed the importance of being less risk averse when starting a company – he also mentioned the “lean start-up” which is based on customer feedback in early stages. If it then fails; just give up. Do not be afraid to give up and start a new company. His advice was “to become a serial entrepreneur”, “to accept that it is a roller-coaster ride”, and “to do it the lean way”. ● EML

### Do’s and Don’ts

Business Small Talk in the U.S.A.  
Stay politically correct!

#### Don’ts:

- Diversity subjects such as gender, age, race
- Talking about sex is absolutely taboo
- No compliments across gender

#### Do’s:

- Weather
- TV shows / movies
- Sports
- Travel/hobbies/vacations

You can get a feeling about your opposite if you open up about yourself and see how the other person reacts to it.

Advice from the Chargé d’Affaires Jeffrey R.

Cellars for the On-site Trip:

- Get rid of pre-conceptions
- Go and pretend to experience it for the first time
- Go with a blank state
- Wander around, absorb
- Get a feeling for the country, the people



**Tobias Hofer**

School of Engineering

In my focus field of technical IT, I plan to find a trainee program or an internship at an international technical company. In the USA the biggest IT companies were launched (Silicon Valley) and I am very interested in their research.



**Daniela Peter**

School of Business

In the future, I will hopefully be working in a creative work environment with inspiring people, preferably in the United States. connectUS allows me to look behind the scenes of successful companies, which will help me build a valuable network for my career. Additionally, it’s a fantastic experience.



**Juro Viljusic**

School of Applied Psychology

I see myself working for an international company in the HR department after graduation. My aim is to build a bridge between the technical and psychological view of a company. I would love to start my own business when I have acquired enough working experience.

More participant profiles  
can be found on  
[www.connectUS.ch](http://www.connectUS.ch)

# INNOVATIVE HEARING AID SOLUTIONS FOR CHILDREN



Key Note Speaker Evert  
Dijkstra, CEO of Phonak AG

● In China and India, and also other countries, most deaf children can now be integrated in conventional schools due to innovative hearing aid systems, said Evert Dijkstra, CEO of Phonak AG, at his key note speech on the Joint Friday. With these new technologies, teachers use a microphone to transmit what they say directly to the child's hearing device. The child then hears the teachers as if they would only be 20 cm away. Dijkstra also mentioned that those children will not have that typical deaf speech because they can hear normally. These devices can additionally be used for children with reading difficulties (dyslexia), auditory processing disorder,

hyperactivity/attention deficit disorder (ADD), autism, or in general children with concentration problems. Evert Dijkstra emphasized the effectiveness of these techniques.

Another innovative technology, stated by Evert Dijkstra, is the possibility of customization of the hearing aid devices. The specialists would measure the exact shape of your ear, model it and print it with a 3D printer. The challenges for that technology are fast turnaround time, quality control, logistics, et cetera. ● EML

# CREATIVE WORKPLACE PHILOSOPHIES



Meeting Eggs at Google in Zurich

● Google – the workplace everyone could dream of. Really? Their motto is that work should be fun, too. But Google recruiting is hard. According to speaker Javier Bargas-Avila, Google only wants “the best of the best”. The “fun things” are offered because Google works on the principle of trusting their employees. The company offers everything you could imagine; from different playgrounds to a massage room, to a free cafeteria from morning until late, because sometimes “you just need a break”, so Bargas-Avila. Might this now be the new trend? Also Cristina Riesen from Evernote mentioned their open work environment with a similar approach as Google to make their employees feel more comfortable and creative. When asking Javier Bargas-Avila if this kind

of work environment would only work for top intelligent engineers and designer that need a lot of inspiration and creativity and have enough discipline or if it would also work for a financial institution, he answered – without hesitating – that it could definitely work for other industries. Why not try? It certainly might make long working hours more worth while.

● *EML*

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Integrating Employees
- 2 Being Creative and Innovative
- 3 Company Visits
- 4 The Magic Formula
- 5 International Experience
- 6 Upgrading Slums in Mumbai / Promoting Bicycles in Beijing
- 7 Panel Discussion
- 9 Is China going green?
- 10 Free Trade Agreement
- 11 Environmental Policies
- 12 Exchange Student / Interview with a CEO
- 13 Job Hiring in India
- 14 Alumni Story
- 15 Indian Business Culture
- 16 Indian Banking System
- 17 Next U.S. Ambassador
- 19 Alumni Stories
- 20 Collaborating Not Competing / The American Way
- 21 Innovative Hearing Aid
- 22 Creative Work Place
- 23 Sponsors
- 24 Preview

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# PREVIEW

## SWISS COWS: READY TO JOIN ON-SITE SEMINARS



● Our glorious stars, here posing in front of the FHNW, will join the three delegations on the On-Site Seminars in China, India and the USA. Donated by one of our sponsors, Trauffer Holzspielwaren, they already joined the Preparatory Seminars and were joyfully received by many of the companies and people who will host the delegations in April.

### PREVIEW ITINERARIES

The on-site seminars will take place from 10th to 26th April 2014. The next newsletter in early May will document the unique learning experiences made on the trips to China, India and the United States of America. Don't forget, for daily news and other information, go to the websites ([www.insightchina.ch](http://www.insightchina.ch), [www.focusindia.ch](http://www.focusindia.ch), [www.connectus.ch](http://www.connectus.ch)) or follow the groups on Twitter, Facebook and Flickr.

### **Insight China:**

**Beijing – Lanzhou – Suzhou – Shanghai.**

Planned visits include: Brugg, Schindler, Geberit, Endress + Hauser, Raisecom, Holcim, Swiss Bakery, Nestle, Cleantech, Swissnex, EcoCity, Swiss Embassy

### **Focus India:**

**Delhi – Bangalore – Pune – Mumbai**

Planned visits include: Blaser Swissslube, Maruti Suzuki, Kohinor Foods, Accenture, Swissnex, Bengaluru Airport, Sulzer Chemtech, Burkhardt Compression, Franke Asia, Schindler, PRS Permecel, Endress + Hauser, Roche

### **connectUS:**

**Washington D.C. – Boston – New York**

Planned visits include: World Bank, NASDAQ, Swiss Consulate, Sapient, Swissnex, George Washington University, MIT, Venture Café, Architecture for Humanity, Jens Korte