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Personalities who make a difference: our alumni

Since its foundation in 1971, EBS Universität has produced great graduates whose aspiration is to make a difference in the world. During their studies at EBS, we equip our students with the skills to take on leadership responsibility and change the world for the better. Whether that means taking up an executive position, making the bold decision to found a company or starting a career in a law firm: at EBS, in addition to imparting practical skills, providing a unique network and offering a wide variety of extracurricular activities, personal development in the form of coaching and the advancement of leadership skills is a key objective. Here, some of our graduates give an insight into their formula for success and describe what spurs them on.

Mario Zimmermann

Graduation 2007 | Business

Co-founder of Brands4Friends

Mario co-founded the company Brands4Friends in 2007. Today, he is Co-Founder and Managing Partner of LZW Capital, and Managing Director of b2planet.



Mario Zimmermann |

What does success mean to you?

"For me, success is about being satisfied with what you have achieved. However, at the same time, there is danger in that: someone who is (too) content with the status quo is not going to drive things forward. My secret is that I have always kept this in mind. Never stand still, keep moving, grin and bear it, and just carry on – it pays off in the end!"

Gülsah Wilke

Graduation 2009 | Business

Chief operating officer of Ada Health, former head of Portfolio & Operations for Axel Springer

Gülsah is a real power woman: she has already taken a look behind the scenes and worked at L'Oréal, Roland Berger, McKinsey, IBM and StepStone. She worked for Axel Springer for more than five years as Investor / Head of Portfolio & Operations. In 2019, Gülsah co-founded the women's network Axel Springer Wo/men and, more recently in 2020, the platform 2hearts. 2hearts champions cultural diversity for tomorrow's technological society. Since 2020, Gülsah has been a Member of the Board of Advisors at FinMarie and, since September 2021, is Chief Operating Officer at Ada Health.

Gülsah Wilke |

Where do you find the strength you need for your job?

"For me, my family is the best balance to my working life. My son, Levin Magnus, is now three years old and for me the hours spent with him are a welcome and wonderful time-out on stressful days in my job. And my husband Mathis is always there at my side – My biggest critic but also my greatest fan and supporter in my life. Especially for a woman, it is very important to have a family and a partner who fully support you and are there when you need them."





Investor/former board member of Telekom AG

Kai began his career as Executive Assistant at Bertelsmann AG in Gütersloh and spent some time working for them in Scandinavia. Back in Germany in 1990, he promoted the development of Talkline GmbH in the mobile phone market. In 1998, Kai joined Deutsche Telekom AG, fast as Chairman of the Board of Management, where he was responsible for the German and later the global mobile communications business. From 2002 to 2006, he was Chairman of the Board. Since 2006, Kai has been an investor in the global telecommunications and Internet sector, with various Board positions. He is also co-initiator of a private equity fund.

Kai-Uwe Ricke |

What would you have liked to have known during your time at EBS but only learned later?

"I would have liked to have had a better understanding of the true nature of the mind much earlier. How many emotions and fears, and the resulting attitudes and projections, determine one's character and thus human life. And what a positive difference it makes not to act relatively subconsciously but to be able to act in harmony with oneself and others, free from inner constraints. In this way, I could certainly have spared myself and others a great deal. I have learned that only inner freedom produces real freedom. Seeking freedom only in the outside world leads to a lack of freedom. Awareness training and meditation have helped me to realise this."



Virginie Briand

Graduation 1999 | Business

Owner and managing partner of the agency 19:13

Virginie's passion is brands. After graduating from EBS, Virginie worked at BMW in brand and product strategy and as Head of International Advertising, among other positions. Since 2008, she has also been Co-Founder and Managing Partner of 19:13, an agency whose goal is to transform companies and brands in a sustainable way.

Virginie Briand |

What is the secret to your success?

"Essentially, I'm very enthusiastic and can also inspire and encourage others to join me. I'm tough and have a lot of stamina (as a marathon runner!). I'm driven by my inquisitiveness and my wish to learn new things (for instance, four years ago I participated in the executive programme Leading Digital Transformation and Innovation at the Hasso Plattner Institute, and in Stanford, I'm currently completing my coaching training). And last but by no means least: humour! Together with the ability not to take oneself too seriously."



Dr. Benedikt Quarch

Graduation 2016 | Law

Founder and managing director of the legal tech company RightNow

Benedikt was not only one of the first students in the first year of the law study programme at EBS, but he also passed the state examination as the best graduate in the German state of Hesse. Today, he is Co-Founder and Managing Director of the legal tech company RightNow. In 2020, Benedikt was listed on Forbes 30 Under 30.

Dr. Benedikt Quarch

What is your motto for success?

"Three things have always been important in my life: humility, ambition, and the easygoingness of the Rhineland shown by the saying 'It has always gone well so far'. For all the problems that cannot be solved with this, I think of what Mark Twain once said. 'When we remember we are all mad, the mysteries disappear and life stands explained.'"







Co-founder of the impact company Buckle & Seam

After his studies, Marco spent several years in management positions in Asia until he co-founded the social impact company Buckle & Seam in 2016. In 2019, he was listed on Forbes 30 Under 30 for the company's social involvement in Pakistan. The company's goal is to provide schooling for 10,000 children in Pakistan by 2026.

Marco Feelisch |

What was your biggest mistake, and what was it good for?

"In the first two years after founding the company, I was only interested in chasing fig-ures, did no sport and forgot to celebrate any small successes. Today, my opinion is that we humans are only able to deliver top performance in our professional and private lives if we are in top physical and mental health. Fortunately, I hit the ground running in my mid-20s and was able to make the right changes without straining relationships for decades."





Melanie Kühlborn-Ebach

Graduation 2014 | Business

Managing director of LMM Investment Controlling AG

The journey: real estate economist (2012), sustainable business management in the real estate industry (2013), Master in Real Estate (2014), Real Estate Investment Advisor (2018). After her commercial training and business studies, Melanie started her career as Key Account Manager at Zurich Financial Services Group. Her next stop took her to Henderson Global Investors as Director of Institutional Business. Starting in 2012, Melanie specialised several times in Real Estate at EBS. She has been working at LMM Investment Controlling AG since 2017. Starting as Director of Business Development, Melanie took over the position of Managing Director in 2018. As a mother of three, she also plays an active role in the Anna von Gierke Foundation as a Board Member.

Melanie Kühlborn-Ebach |

What is the secret to your success?

"Long-term success can only be achieved if we keep a grip on reality. My involvement with the Anna von Gierke Foundation certainly helps me in this. Here we support projects that help children of mentally ill parents to gain sufficient selfconfidence to cope with their lives. Being active, not only professionally, is a good life motor. In this respect, sporting activities are also an effective way for me to recharge my batteries and build up my strength."



Tobias Ragge

Graduation 2001 | Business

Managing director of hotel portal HRS

After EBS, Tobias participated in a trainee programme at Lufthansa before he joined the family business and became Managing Director in 2008. Since then, he has been building HRS into a company with three business lines, where HRS leads worldwide in the corporate travel sector and works for almost 40% of the worldwide Fortune 500 companies. Tobias' pioneering spirit and passion are paying off – he has already been listed three times in the 25 Most Influential People in Business Travel by the renowned BTN.

Tobias Ragge |

What is the secret to your success?

"As a family business owner in the tech environment, you have to be mentally alert and open to new ideas. Not only technology but also the markets and competitors are changing rapidly. As father of three small children, I am constantly learning how to adjust to new situations. This would certainly not be possible without the support and understanding of my wife and family for my hectic everyday life. But besides that, I always go twice a year on a week-long 'retreat', where I am just with myself and develop new visions. I'm a firm believer that a clear mind needs a healthy body, which is why sport and mindful breathing meditation are part of

my routine."





Founder of the start-up Listo Guatemala

While still a student, Lilian first worked at UNICEF as Innovation Researcher. She then worked at Pomona Impact in Guatemala as Investment Analyst. It was there where she learned that every second Guatemalan child suffers from chronic malnutrition and the situation has hardly improved in the last 30 years. To combat this problem, in 2018 Lilian founded the start-up Listo Guatemala, which provides poor families with nutrient-rich baby food. Starting this year, she has also been involved as an Advisor to the Bill & Gates Foundation's Nutrition Strategy Roundtable.

Lilian Ebner-Stoll |

Which people have inspired you and why?

"Professor Karin Kreutzer and Dr Andreas Blüthner. Ms Kreutzer holds the Chair for Social Business at EBS and has shown me new ways to use my studies to do good. She has taken on the role of mentor for me and opened many doors, for instance to UNICEF. And she invited Andreas Blüthner as guest speaker. At the time, he was Director of Food Fortification at BASF and is now Director of Nutrition at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He planted the idea of nutrition as a human right in my head, encouraged me to start my own business and gave me a great deal of support. Both have taught me to always think about 'impact at scale' and to build models that can reach not only just hundreds, but millions of people."

Ernst Hoffmann

Graduation 1985 | Business

Consulting Partner at Deloitte

After graduating, Ernst began his career in his family's company in the shoe manufacturing sector, then became Managing Director of a tannery in Casablanca. When this was sold, he changed in 1993 to consulting at Arthur Andersen, where he was made a partner in 1999. Following the merger with Deloitte in 2002, he was responsible for strategy practice, and from 2012 to 2020 for management consulting. Currently, he is responsible for government and public services in consulting management.

Ernst Hoffmann |

What is important to you besides your career? Where do you find new strength?

"For me, family and stable friendships are essential. I particularly appreciate the basic trust associated with it, which follows all career changes with interest (most of the time) and critically (sometimes), but ultimately remains independent. Incidentally, even 35 years after my graduation, friends from my student days are still an integral part of this circle."



Sven Schondelmaier

Graduation 2015 | Business



Founder of the agency WHYAHEAD

After his studies, Sven worked for several years in creative agencies for clients such as Jaguar / Land Rover Ltd., Hewlett Packard, Miles & More and Red Bull. But Sven has bigger plans: by founding his own agency WHYAHEAD in 2019, he wants to help companies discover and live their added value for society in order to meaningfully impact a changing world. Sven is Consulting Director at the creative management consultancy for transformation and communication.

Sven Schondelmaier |

What is the secret to your success?

"BALANCE – in specific terms: to harmonise professional and private life. This is not only about time, but above all about content-related aspects, specifically economy of meaning. If, as a private person, I am happy about the expansion of the cycle paths in Frankfurt at the breakfast table in the morning, but 30 minutes later I have to deal with the issue of how we can help our premium car manufacturer sell more vehicles at work, the two hearts in my chest beat at different

rates. This can't go well in the long term. So, it is important for me to be able to make my decisions in such a way that I am at peace with myself – in balance."



Clara Valeska von Glasow

Graduation 2019 | Law

Legal trainee at the Cologne District Court

During her studies, Clara completed internships at Linklaters and WilmerHale and worked as a Research Assistant at CMS Hasche Sigle. Clara is currently completing her legal traineeship at the Cologne District Court.

Clara Valeska von Glasow |

What is important to you besides your job? Where do you find new strength?

"I spend a lot of my time campaigning for climate policy issues, especially global climate policy. Since 2017, I have been attending UN climate conferences as a civil society observer and organising projects to give more young people from all over the world access to spaces of power and decision-making. In 2019/2020, I sailed across the Atlantic to Latin America and back as part of this engagement."







Gründer des Start-ups Kallpa Superfoods

Josè Miguel was born in Lima, Peru and gained more than 15 years of experience as Electronics Engineer in Medical Technology. He then took an MBA degree at EBS Universität. After graduating, Josè Miguel founded the start-up Kallpa Superfoods, together with Maximilian Ott: a company specialising in the manufacture of products based on South American superfoods. The most popular product in the range is Macakao.

José Miguel Rodriguez Damiani |

What is important to you besides your job?

"For me, the most important thing is to have the right balance between my family, private and professional life. When you balance life in this order of importance, you can find true happiness."



Saskia Bruysten

Graduation 2003 | Business

CEO of Yunus Social Business

After her MBA, Saskia worked for five years as Senior Consultant at BCG. In 2008, she co-founded The Grameen Creative Lab and as Strategic Director addressed the most pressing needs of society. Shortly after, Saskia co-founded Yunus Social Business, together with Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus and EBS alumna Sophie Eisenmann, which she still leads today as CEO. She is also a Member of the Boards of Impact Bridge, MyCollective and EVPA, among others, and co-initiated the World Economic Forum's COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs. In 2020, Saskia was awarded the Bold Woman Award by Veuve Clicquot for her efforts to improve capitalism.

Saskia Bruysten |

Which person has inspired you and in what way?

"That was most definitely Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel Peace Prize winner from Bangladesh. I first heard him speak at a lecture in London. At that time, he talked about his micro-credit bank which, with its economic approach, helped millions of women out of poverty. He also talked about a social business joint venture with Dan-one, which was selling fortified yoghurt to fight malnutrition in Bangladesh. This was a light-bulb moment for me to see how the power of business can be harnessed to address social problems. At that time, I was just asking myself after several years in management consulting that essential question about the reasons for doing this job. After many conversations with contacts from companies, NGOs and in politics, nothing had really grabbed me yet. When Prof. Yunus gave his speech, some-thing clicked. That's exactly what I wanted to do! I was so enthralled by his story that I immediately gave him my business card and later met him to exchange ideas. In the end, we founded our organisation Yunus Social Business ten years ago, together with another ex-EBS student, Sophie Eisenmann. Now I'm very happy to say that every day we use the power of business to tackle social or environmental problems!"



Co-founder of HydroNeo

During his studies at EBS (General Management and Business Law). Fabian also got involved as a student representative. Afterwards, he was a Management Consultant at Barkawi Management Consultants. Since 2016, Fabian has been Vice President of FBS Alumni e.V. In 2018, Fabian co-founded the start-up HydroNeo. HydroNeo has a smart farm technology for the Asian aquaculture industry, focusing on shrimps. The company is market leader in Thailand and is financially supported by the Thai Union Group, the world leader in the seafood sector

Fabian Reusch |

Are there people who have always been behind you and without whose support you might not have made it this far?

"If someone had said back then at our graduation ceremony in 2012 that nine years later, I would be running a smart farm-ing tech start-up in Thailand, I would have said they were crazy. Besides the support of my family and friends, I am convinced that no university in the world could have prepared me better for my daily challenges than EBS did. The EBSpirit connects our community worldwide and has already opened many doors for me, even in Southeast Asia."





Fabian Reusch

Graduation 2012 | Business

Steffen Seifarth

Graduation 1993 | Business

Supervisory board, advisor and investor, former CEO of Mäurer & Wirtz

After graduating, Steffen worked for five years at Procter & Gamble as Brand Manager for the brands Old Spice, Pampers and Bounty kitchen roll. From 2000 to 2002, he was Vice President Marketing Lycos Europe at Bertelsmann. His next stop was at Coty, the perfume and cosmetics group. Between 2002 and 2016, Steffen held several positions there: Vice President Marketing Services, General Manager Germany and Regional Vice President Central and Eastern Europe. From 2017 to 2021, he was CEO for the perfume manufacturer Mäurer & Wirtz. Since 2021, Steffen has been active as a Member of Supervisory Boards and Advisory Boards, an advisor, investor and business angel.

Steffen Seifarth |

Where do you find new strength?

"It has always been my impetus to (help) shape the world. This extends both my professional and private life. An early example of this is the idea and first implementation of the EBS Symposium in 1990 (then with the title PRO 90) 'Germany - a concept to be redefined'. In the context of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the imminent reunification of the two German states, it was a concern of the three initiators at that time to promote intercommunication and the joint formation of decision-making processes among students, teachers and companies from East and West Germany with regard to the growing together of the two former independent states. For this purpose, we organised a symposium for the first time on the EBS campus in Rheingau, which now looks back on an extremely successful 30-year history. In addition to my family with my wife, Katrin (alumna 1994), and our sons Felix and Moritz, my major sources of strength and life bal-ance are definitely sport (mountain biking) and our second home in the south of France"

Yuanqi Zhang

Graduation 2018 | Business

Investment banking analyst

Yuanqi has lost her heart to the finance industry. During her bachelor's degree studies, she completed internships at Deliveroo in account management and at PwC in transactions services. This was followed by a stint in London, where Yuanqi first interned at Macquarie Group (a global investment banking and securities trading firm) and then worked for two years as an Investment Banking Analyst. Yuanqi has been working again as an Investment Banking Analyst at US-based investment bank Lazard in Beijing, China since February 2021.

Yuanqi Zhang |

What is special about EBS?

"Looking back on my time at university, the rural region was the perfect place for me to study and take weekend bike trips. Speaking of studying: Riesling wine served as a 'natural resource' to support us during stressful exam times :-). For me, the time at EBS was valuable because I discovered there what I really want to do and what kind of person I want to be! As a graduate, I also appreciate the global EBS Alumni network. No matter where I am – there will always be someone to meet or help."







CFO of Hugo Boss

After graduating from EBS, Yves completed his 'basic training' at Arthur Andersen as a Tax Consultant and Auditor. His next stop was the family business Tchibo. He drove the company forward for 18 years, twelve of which as Chief Financial Officer. For the past three years, Yves has been CFO and Executive Board Spokesman at Hugo Boss AG.

Yves Müller |

Which people have supported you in your career?

"My family (above all and especially my wife, Silke, and my four daughters) give me a lot of support and strength. And: I met many friends for life at EBS. What a great enrichment for me!"





Graduation 2001 | Business

Trainer, police training supervisor and instructor

After graduating, Christina first worked at Deutsche Bank in the real estate leasing department, specialising in the Czech Republic and Croatia. Her next stop was UBS Wealth Management, where she worked in acquisition and asset management, with a special focus on France. In 2006, Christina joined Doric Asset Finance Limited, where she was responsible for asset management, bioenergy, aircraft, shipping and real estate. In 2008, as a Partner of Treubau Verwaltung GmbH, she managed the Finance and Controlling division. Then, at the Krav Maga School Weinheim, Christina completed her training as trainer, police training supervisor and instructor from 2013. She was trained in Israel and Germany by a Special Operations Commando officer from her own martial arts school

Christina Scheithauer |

Where do you find new strength?

"Archery, music (I play the harp and flute) and sports give me the energy I need. I spend time outdoors every day and consciously enjoy the moment – the mobile phone stays at home I do what I believe in and what I am passionate about. If I can't champion something, I don't do it. No matter what I do, my husband gives me an incredible amount of support and strength. My tip: don't set yourself limits, set yourself goals. And – whatever you do, stay grounded."







Founder of Lieferando and COO of Just Eat Takeaway.com

Jörg's career began at UBS Investment Bank – first as an Analyst, then as Associate Director in Corporate Advisory / Mergers & Acquisitions. In 2009, Jörg decided to become self-employed and founded the online delivery service yd. yourdelivery GmbH, better known as Lieferando. Since 2014, he has also been COO for Just Eat Takeaway.com, which was acquired by Lieferando in the same year.

Jörg Gerbig |

What is important to you besides your career? Where do you find new strength?

"Besides my work, my family and friends are the most important people in my life. A good and varied diet also plays a significant role in my free time. Although I order a lot of delivery service food myself, I also love to go to restaurants with friends and family. Since I grew up in a wine-growing region (Rhine Hesse) and my grandparents even owned a vineyard, I love good wine. I also like to go clubbing and to bars in Berlin or anywhere else in the world. I've been playing football since I was a child, and I'm still very close to my local club and support it financially. Whenever I get the chance, I play tennis and am a passionate skier."

Wenxin Zhang

Graduation 2014 | Business

CEO and founder of GEP Education Group Itd

During her studies at EBS and during internships at PWC and BCG. Wenxin realised that she was interested in, indeed enthralled by, the idea of entrepreneurship. No sooner said than done in her fourth semester, she began setting up the company GEP (German Education Partners). GEP is an international education group that places Chinese pupils and students in German boarding schools and business schools and looks after them. After eight years, Wenxin still runs GEP, which has grown into an international company with more than 50 employees.

Wenxin Zhang |

What is important to you besides your career? Where do you find new strength?

"Holidays and healthy food. I have a great weakness for healthy food. That's why I always combine holiday trips with the question of what local specialities there are. I draw new strength when I go on holiday for a few days, enjoyfood and relax. That also boosts my creativity."









Graduation 1992 | Business

Serial entrepreneur and investor

Hans-Peter has a doctorate in the field of artificial intelligence (AI). He is serial entrepreneur and investor focusing on AI solutions for MedTech (including patient monitoring) and FinTech companies (including sustainable finance). The German–Swiss citizen is father of three children, an active rower (runner-up in the Swiss Championships) and a founding member of the Rotary Club Zurich International, of which he has been President for several terms of duty.

Dr. Hans-Peter Güllich |

What is the secret to your success? What would you have liked to know earlier?

"Focus, structure and perseverance. My family and sport are important sources of strength. Especially in sports and competition, you learn commitment to yourself and the team as well as the will to persevere in



order to achieve a goal. During my time at EBS, I would have liked to have known two things: entrepreneurship and equanimity. Both had to be learned the hard way. And so I made numerous mistakes. But as Dalai Lama says: 'Not getting what you want is a wonderful stroke of luck!' I also like to be inspired by Joel Osteen. He teaches: it's only your attitude that makes things happen."



Associate at Baker McKenzie

After studying law and business administration at EBS, Michelle first completed her legal traineeship at the Frankfurt am Main District Court (as well as part-time at Hogan Lovells International LLP). At the end of her traineeship, however, she returned home to her family in Munich, where she then completed the last stages of her legal traineeship at Milbank LLP and Kirkland & Ellis International LLP. Since 2020, Michelle has worked for Baker McKenzie as a Lawyer/Associate in Corporate M&A (focusing on VC/PE transactions in the biotech sector).

Michelle Karrer |

What is important to you besides your career? Where do you find new strength?

"Time to switch off is essential for me, to have some peace and quiet away from my job. So, at the weekend, I try to spend as much time as possible enjoying the fresh air – either hiking or with my horses. However, more important than relaxing is the time I spend with my friends – whether it's

sometimes just a quick coffee, a glass of wine, cooking or even a holiday together. Spending time with my girl friends always recharges the batteries!"





Director of product partnerships Robinhood

Omid began his career at Google, where he took an active part in the growth and expansion of the cloud computing division – first from Dublin for the European markets and later from San Francisco for the Latin American markets. After six years, he moved on to Stanford Graduate School of Business, where he earned his MBA. Shortly after graduation, Omid moved to China, where he spent three years commuting between Beijing and Shanghai, helping Chinese tech companies to expand internation-ally - first at a mobility company and later at a transborder social commerce company he co-founded. Omid eventually returned to the USA, where he works on Robinhood's business and

corporate development team.

Omid Scheybani |

What is your philosophy in life?

"The way I think about my life is very simple. My life represents a book with 80 blank pages, each page representing one year of my life. I also hope to live 80 years (fingers crossed) to fill this book with stories. What will remain at the end of my life is not the job title I had at the age of 26, or the salary I was paid at 32, or the car I drove at 43 – what will remain and hopefully outlive me is the richness of the book I wrote. It will be the stories, memories and emotions I have experienced throughout my life, as well as the connections I have made and the people I have touched. Writing the best story I could is the most important thing to me – and I use that as my guiding principle when making decisions. It's the principle I used to move to China on a whim, and it's also the principle that made me say yes to the craziest and most uncomfortable opportunities that came my way."





We successfully achieve our goal of imparting knowledge and values. This is proven by a network of more than 10,000 alumni who work in top positions worldwide. EBS Alumni e.V. with more than 4,000 members is always there to support you during and after your studies.



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