

2nd International Conference and Exhibition on **Industrial Engineering**

November 16-18, 2015 Dubai, UAE

Engineering management: Preparing engineering managers to drive technological and social change

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Continuous technological, economic and social challenges influence higher educational institutions to equip students with the necessary knowledge, skills and competences to work in such challenging context. In the same context, today's businesses continuously seek innovative engineer-managers not only to design systems but to manage projects/design and development, create strategic plans, handle financing, interface with marketing and recognize and evaluate market opportunities. Management graduate education and Masters in Business Administration (MBA) are considered the most common degree programs offered by business schools worldwide. Even though both degrees serve their purpose well their comparison depends exclusively on the career goals and ways that graduates plan to utilize their degree. For the case of engineering education, engineer graduates tend to undertake management positions within the organizations they are employed; with evidence from research showing that engineers who favor a managerial path have considerably stronger wish for promotion while engineers who clearly want to follow the technical path remain committed to system design. This is evidence that postgraduate studies in management are vital for engineers since more and more engineers need to develop management skills. Within this context, the authors describe and explain the philosophy and foundation that underlines the new Master of Science in Engineering Management at the University of Nicosia. They also provide evidence for the program's evaluation by three experts from industry and academia. The results of this study suggest that higher educational institutions should design such specialized management education programs for engineers who wish to recognize and evaluate market opportunities and understand the enterprise formation process.

Biography

Despo Ktoridou is currently an Associate Professor and Head of Management & MIS Department at the University of Nicosia in Cyprus. He holds BSc (1991) and MSc (1993) in Computer Engineering and a PhD (2000) in the field of Expert Systems from Saint Petersburg State Electrotechnical University in Russia. He has worked as a Senior Computer Engineer for different organizations in Cyprus (1992-1999), as an Assistant Professor of Educational Technology (2000-2007) and currently as an Associate Professor of MIS at the University of Nicosia. His research focuses on areas of Information Communication and Social Technology application in education, Innovative Teaching/Learning Pedagogies in Higher Education and Engineering and Technology Management Education. He has presented papers in numerous refereed international conferences and has published several papers in refereed journals. He participated in EU and local funded programs and has been invited by foreign universities as a guest lecturer.

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