



University of St.Gallen

# Developing Socially Responsible Business Leaders

The case of „SIMagination Challenge“

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# Outline

1. Background
2. SIMagination Challenge
3. Conclusion



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# Background

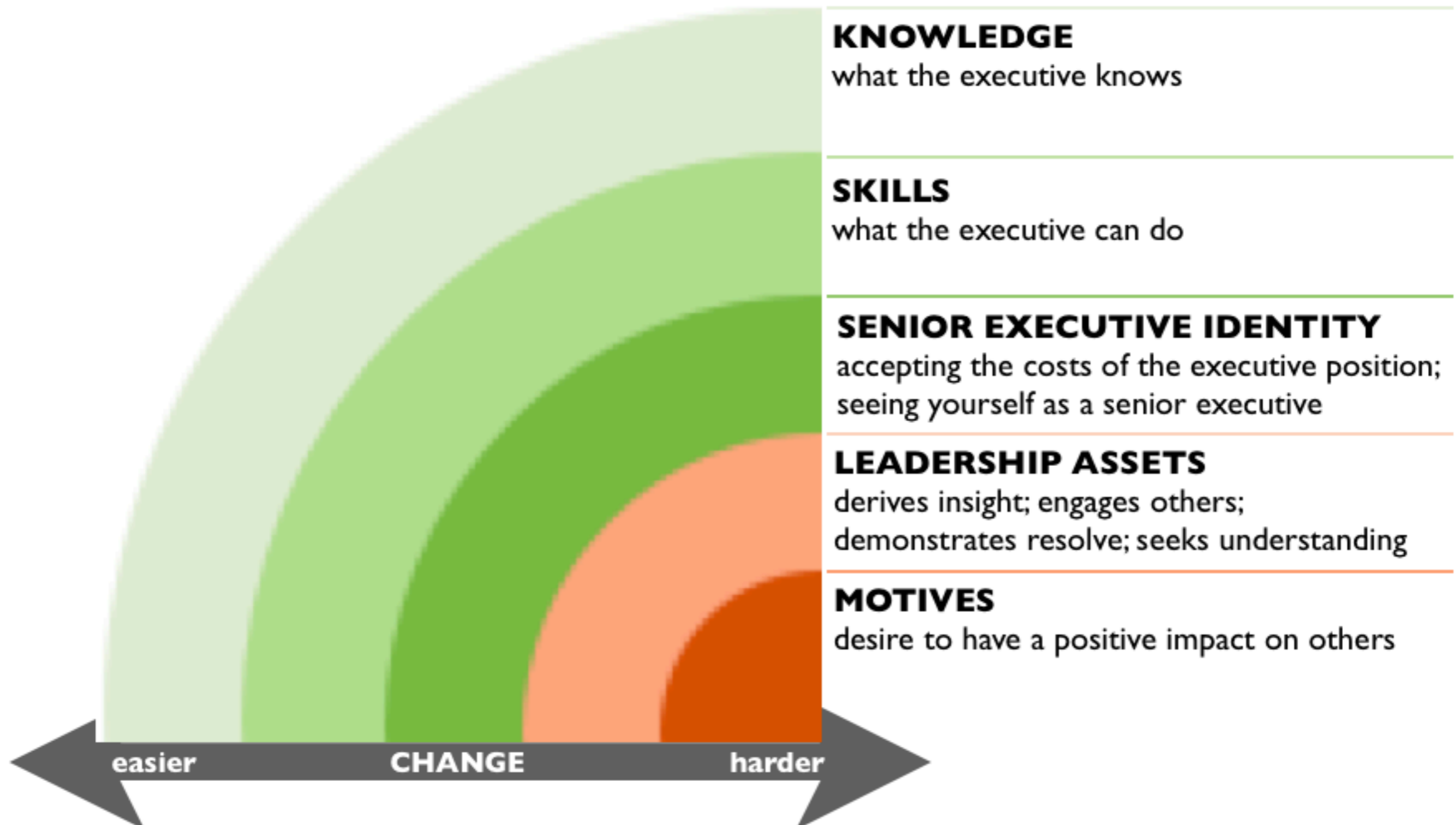
# Why, really, should We Care about Responsible Leadership?

- Corporations create value for human beings. They do have a weighty co-responsibility for the well-being and progress of society.
- Business leaders' are expected to generate meaningful, sustainable and lasting results in a global and interdependent world.
- Universities are entrusted with the professional education of tomorrow's leaders. The strive for a high standard of excellence in (management) education is a permanent challenge in itself.

# The Educational Challenge of Striving for Excellence

- The challenge for universities is to strive to act as examples of socially responsible leadership. This necessitates constant, critical self-reflection as an institution.
- Educational programs need to re-think their mandate and regularly ask: „Are we living up to our responsibility to provide a truly excellent education?“
- The student learner is challenged to shift his focus from „What do I want to achieve“ to „Who do I want to become.“ This necessitates a new way of learning, and a new way of personal development.

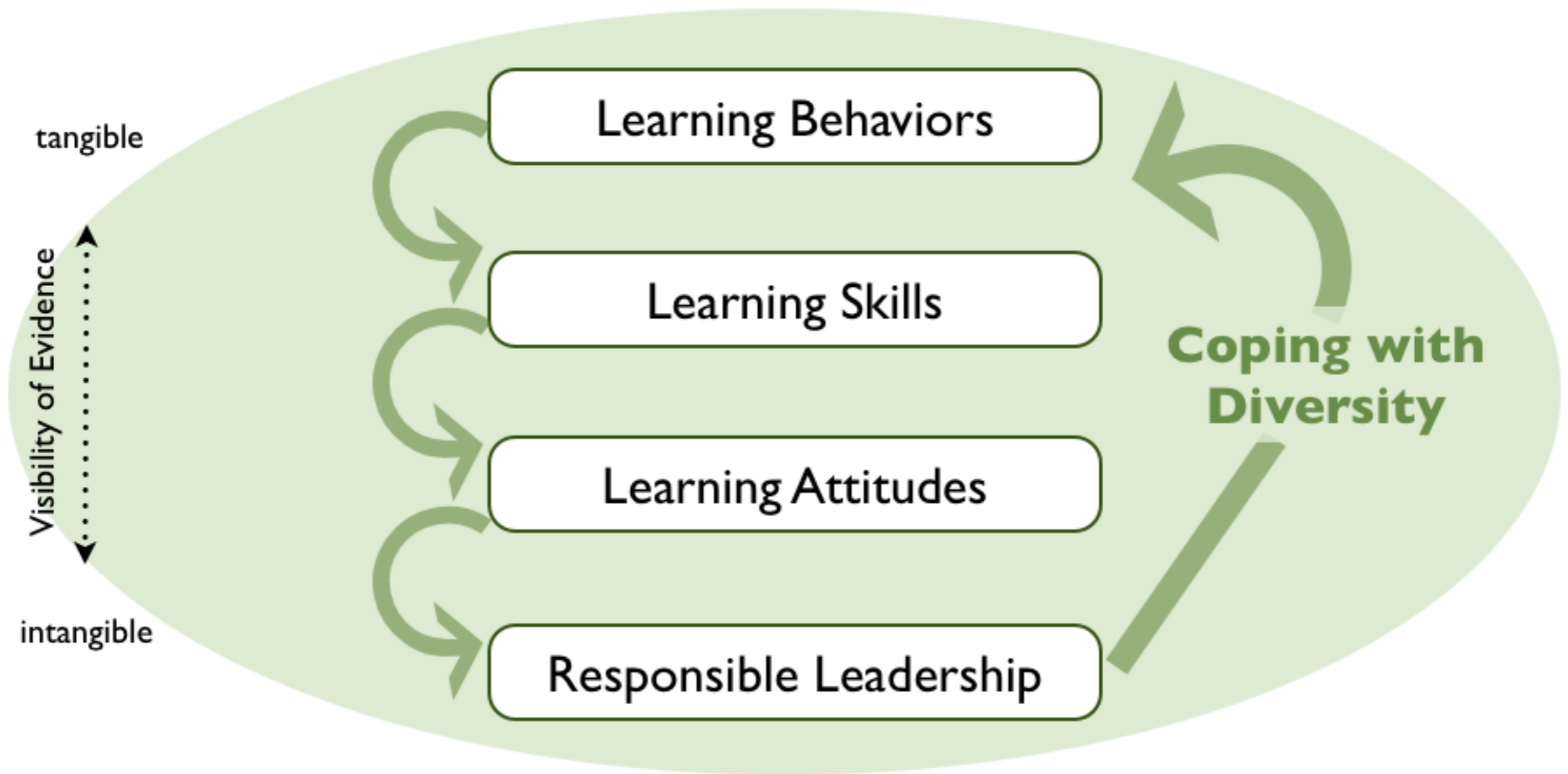
# Desire of Positive Impact on Others – Key Predictor of Executive Potential



# Responsible Global Leadership Development at PwC

- In a study based on an international service-learning program, evidence of learning was found in several areas: responsible mind-set, ethical literacy, cultural intelligence, global mind-set, self-development, and community building.
- The effectiveness in developing and enhancing competencies that are critical for responsible global leadership was confirmed.
- For an assignment to be developmental, it needs to be challenging and force people out of their comfort zones.

# Developing Responsible Leaders - A Learning Cycle







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# SIMagination Challenge

The Case of a Service-Learning Master's Course

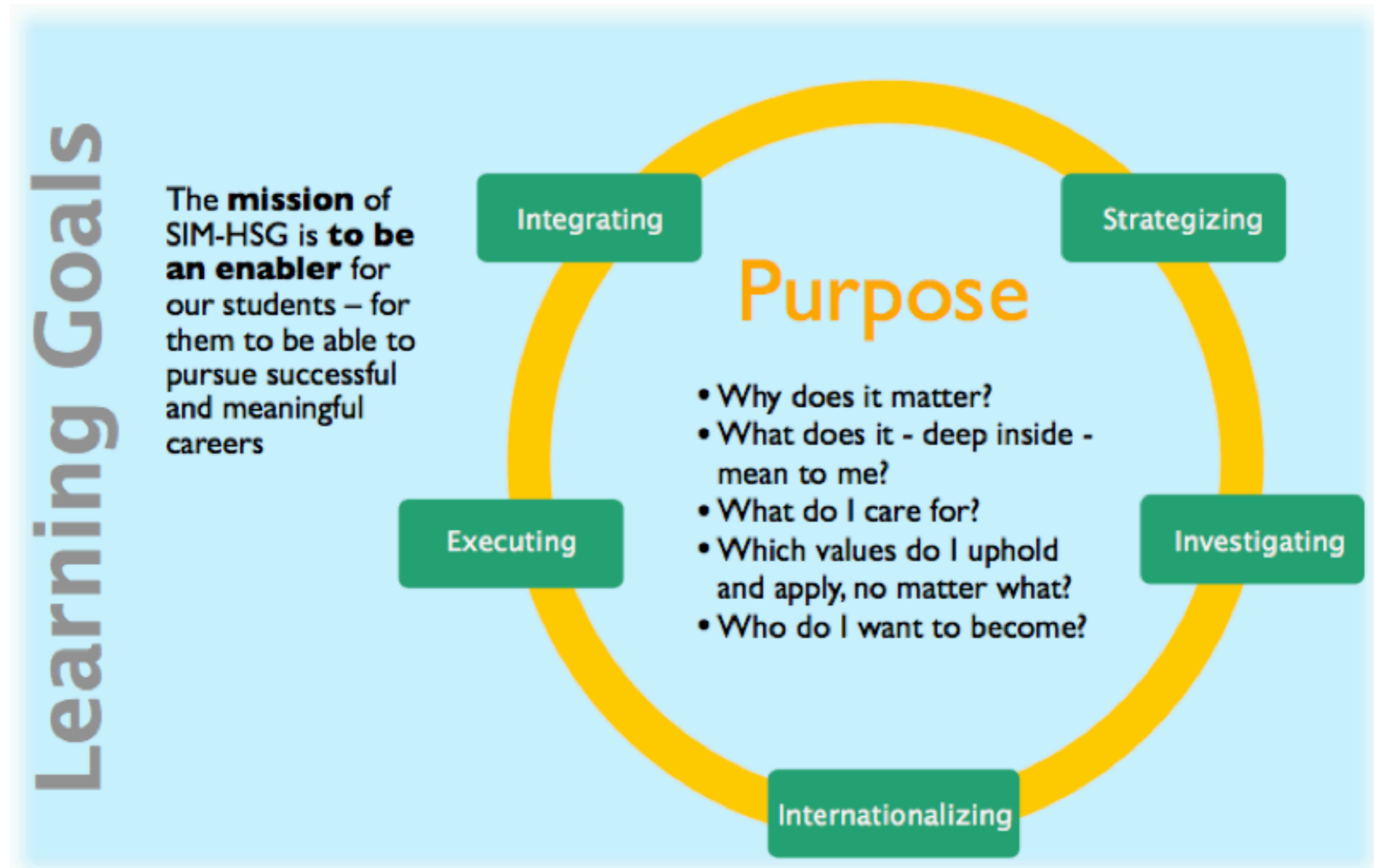
# Master of Arts in Strategy and International Management (SIM-HSG)

- Aspires to be a leading provider of outstanding education in management, generating exceptional value for its students, employers and society at large.<sup>1</sup>
- Provides students with necessary competencies in the field of management for a successful career as respected and responsible business leaders. <sup>1</sup>
- Global and diverse SIM community network
- No. 1 worldwide by FT Global Masters in Management Ranking 2011

# Course 'SIMagination Challenge' in the SIM-HSG Curriculum



# Extended Framework for Key Competency Development



# SIMagination Challenge



- International team initiatives aiming at leaving a positive and lasting social impact. Effort is a formal requirement for all students and needs to be carried out internationally.
- Students are in charge of independently planning, initiating and successfully completing the initiatives.
- SIMagination teams can either choose to continue and expand existing initiatives or define and initiate a new one.
- It remains in the responsibility of the student teams to ensure that the initiatives live up to the course expectations.  
Minimum time investment: 120 hs /student.
- Initiatives are accompanied, enriched with expertise and supported financially (matching-grant policy).

# Overview of Initiatives Worldwide (since 2010)



 SIM Class 006

 SIM Class 007

 SIM Class 008

# Evolverement of SIMagination Challenge Over Time

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Total																														
Completed Projects	15	6	5	27																														
Countries Involved	11	7	5	20																														
# Teams Involved	15	7	5	27																														
# Participants	72	34	36	142																														
# Nationalities	22	12	16	30																														
Project Locations:	<p>Legend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Europe (Blue)</li> <li>Asia (Green)</li> <li>Latin America (Yellow)</li> <li>Africa (Red)</li> <li>Middle East (Purple)</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <caption>Project Locations Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Region</th> <th>2009-10</th> <th>2010-11</th> <th>2011-12</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Europe</td> <td>60%</td> <td>14%</td> <td>20%</td> <td>33%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asia</td> <td>13%</td> <td>57%</td> <td>40%</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Latin America</td> <td>13%</td> <td>14%</td> <td>40%</td> <td>19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Africa</td> <td>7%</td> <td>14%</td> <td>20%</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Middle East</td> <td>7%</td> <td>14%</td> <td>7%</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Region	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Total	Europe	60%	14%	20%	33%	Asia	13%	57%	40%	30%	Latin America	13%	14%	40%	19%	Africa	7%	14%	20%	11%	Middle East	7%	14%	7%	7%
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# Examples of Initiatives

2011  
SIMAGINATION  
CHALLENGE

## Vietnam

Equipping students from the poorest families with the tools necessary for their personal and professional ambitions by setting up a self-sustainable coaching program



## Tanzania

Building an "off-grid" solar-wind power plant that is economically and ecologically sustainable for a remote community



## Brazil

Supporting Saúde Criança by formulating a strategy for financial self-sustainability



## Jordan

Building entrepreneurial skills and capacities among Jordanian youth in creative and interactive workshops



## Cambodia

Elaborating a strategy and business plan and providing administrative support for a local education NGO



## India

Consulting a farmer in energy production based on waste from chicken farming, with the objective of creating an independent social business



## Thailand

Developing a business plan workshop in cooperation with a local university in order to foster knowledge on successful start-ups among the youth





# Examples of Initiatives

## Caribbean

Draft an overall Fundraising & Leverage Plan, which will include country-level plans for each CYEP country, based on the initial scan of funders, the field visits, and teleconferences/meetings with potential funders in the three Caribbean countries, Europe and the U.S.



2012  
SIMAGINATION  
CHALLENGE

## Togo

The Education Togo project is comprised of three sub-projects, which interact, share resources and provide synergies. Thereby we want to create a maximum sustainable social impact on the Togolese communities we will visit.



## China

The P.I.E.C.E.S project "A Journey to China" involves four passionate SIM students travelling to Yizhou, China, for four weeks in order to exchange their knowledge with the students at Yizhou Senior High School.



## Cambodia

The overall goal of Helping KAKO is to provide support to KAKO ("Khmer Akphiwat Khmer Organization" - Cambodians help Cambodians), a small NGO located in Siem Reap, Cambodia.



## Colombia

A Liter of Light Switzerland is a project which aims to provide an ecologically and economically sustainable source of light to underprivileged households that do not have access to electricity or simply cannot afford electricity.



# Evolution & Stages of Development

## Experimentation

- ▶ **Austria (1):** Charity event\*
- ▶ **China (1):** Health
- ▶ **Germany (3):** Re-employment; intercultural understanding; support at therapy center
- ▶ **Hungary (1):** Education
- ▶ **Israel (1):** Youth service\*
- ▶ **Liechtenstein (1):** Special olympics\*
- ▶ **Mongolia (1):** Education
- ▶ **Nicaragua (1):** Education
- ▶ **Peru (1):** Poverty reduction
- ▶ **Switzerland (3):** SIM community service; SIM community service\*; awareness to racism in sports
- ▶ **Tanzania (1):** Orphanage
- ▶ ...

\* ... project proposal

## Consolidation

- ▶ **Brazil (1):** Health for children
- ▶ **Cambodia (1):** Education
- ▶ **India (1):** Agriculture
- ▶ **Jordan (1):** Entrepreneurial Education
- ▶ **Tanzania (1):** Solar energy
- ▶ **Thailand (1):** Entrepreneurial Education
- ▶ **Vietnam (1):** Career Enablement

## Professionalization

- ▶ **Cambodia (1):** Education (cont'd)
- ▶ **Caribbean (1):** Fundraising & Leverage Plan
- ▶ **China (1):** Education
- ▶ **Colombia (1):** Liter of Light
- ▶ **Togo (1):** Education

● Experience Curve

Fall 2009

Fall 2010

Fall 2011

Fall 2012

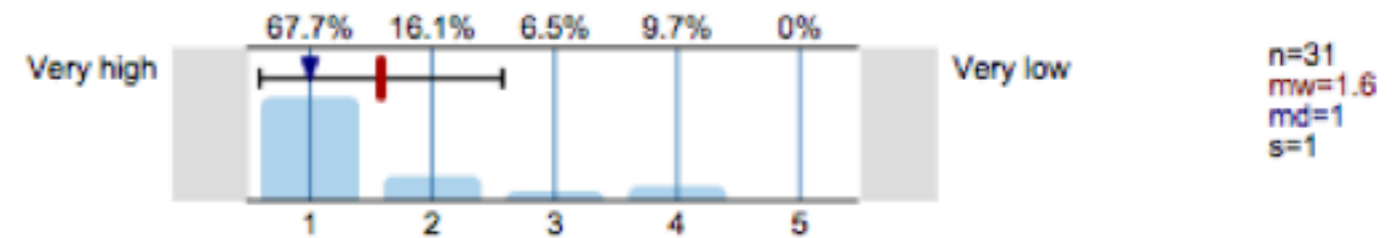
# Quote Excerpts from Student Narratives

- *„... this is sustainable, and this is exactly what the SIMagination Challenge is all about ...“*
- *„I believe there is no better cause than to help children to receive education. I am very excited to support this project.“*
- *„Differences will always arise - such a project is emotionally challenging.“*
- *„To SIMagination, for giving us the right incentive to do something greater than we all would have been able to imagine.“*
- *„This was what they thought was the most important impact of all: how a team of foreigners were able to change the way they viewed the world and for this they were eternally in their debt. ... „*

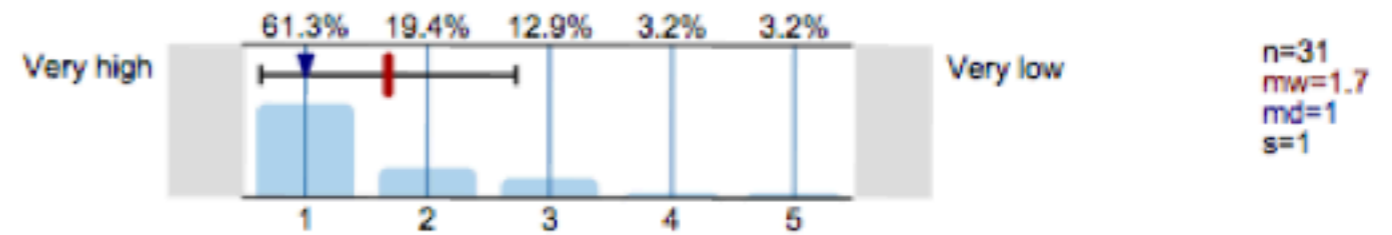
# Evaluative Survey Results

(Time period covered: Oct 2011- July 2012)

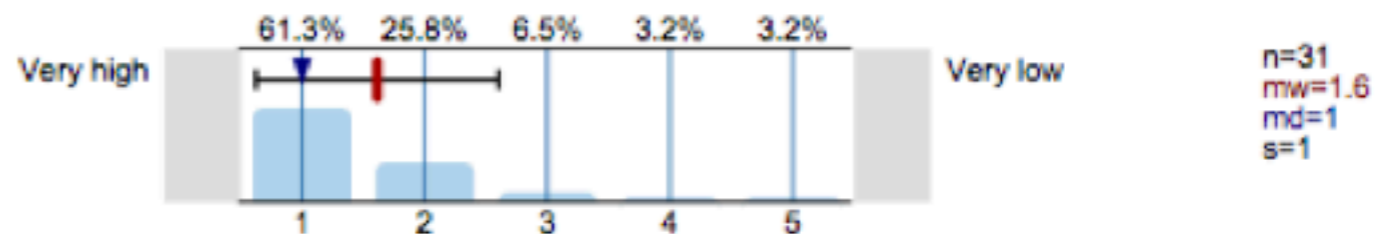
To what extent did the experiences and knowledge you gained along the course help to sharpen personal competencies (e.g. teaming, strategic thinking, intercultural skills, etc.) during the duration of this course?



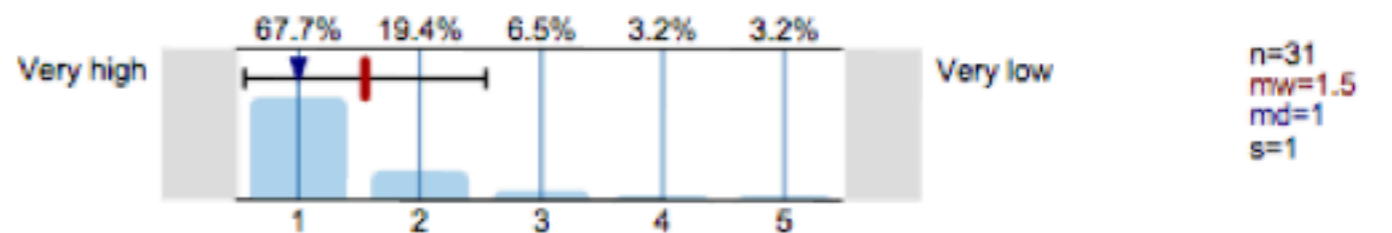
How would you evaluate your overall learning progress in this course?



To what extent did you feel challenged by the SIMagination Challenge course.



How do you evaluate your own level of engagement in this course?





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# Conclusion

# Developing Socially Responsible Leaders of Tomorrow

- A sense and awareness for social responsibility grows from within a person. All involved in this process are learners. One needs space to create meaningful experiences. The focus is the care for the other. A culture of mutual trust nourishes learning success.
- Challenges arise with highly unstructured tasks, complex in scope and scale, involving a high degree of uncertainty and ambiguity concerning solutions and success factors. They spur personal growth.
- Learning is based on cognitive, affective and behavioral learning processes. When faced with unexpected ethical dilemmas, cultural paradoxes and ambiguous situations, new learning is stimulated in terms of perspective of self, mindsets, attitudes, competencies, cultural sensitivity, among others.

# Increasing the Impact of Service-Learning Projects

- International service-learning projects clearly have the potential to sharpen those critical competencies and develop mind-sets, that are required to assume socially responsible leadership roles in a globalized world.
- SIMagination has been pursuing organic growth. The rationale is to be sustainable and ensure a leverage of learning outcomes. It stimulates participants, university, corporate and educational partners and the global SIM community to expand, adopt or built on the learnings.
- The focus needs to be on individual capacity building and team progress, less so on meeting traditional and normed measures.
- Accompaniment on various levels is key. So is the relentless emphasis on purpose.

# Summary

- The question of how to strive for leadership excellence is a challenging one and should regularly involve all stakeholders.
- The desire of positive social impact is a key predictor of executive potential. It is, therefore, critically relevant to put it at the heart of management education.
- SIMagination Challenge is a yet young success story of a service-learning course, that addresses global leadership behaviors, competencies, attitudes and mindsets. The emerging research in the global context mostly confirms the conclusions.
- One foundation for successfully scaling up promising initiatives roots in an deep understanding what it means to be of service to humanity.



# First Discussion Questions

- How can international service-learning programs contribute to scale up sustainable social and environmental projects?
- How can academic institutions encourage a culture of social innovation, that allows for both cognitive as well as affective and behavioral learning processes to be utilized for the purpose of developing socially responsible leaders?

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