



McGill

Executive
Institute

The Mini-MBA
at a glance

WHAT IS THE MCGILL MINI-MBA?

McGill University realized that not all managers and professionals have the time or financial resources to take a full MBA degree program. Yet, key tools and learning pillars taught in an EMBA or MBA can be critical to career success, including how to work with and manage others, build successful strategies and business models, understand marketing and negotiating techniques, and learn the meaning behind accounting and finance numbers.

As a result, the Mini-MBA Executive Development Course (EDC) began in 1949 on the home campus in Montreal. Today, it is the largest and longest-running program of its kind in Canada with hundreds of managers annually attending online and in-person at locations including Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto.

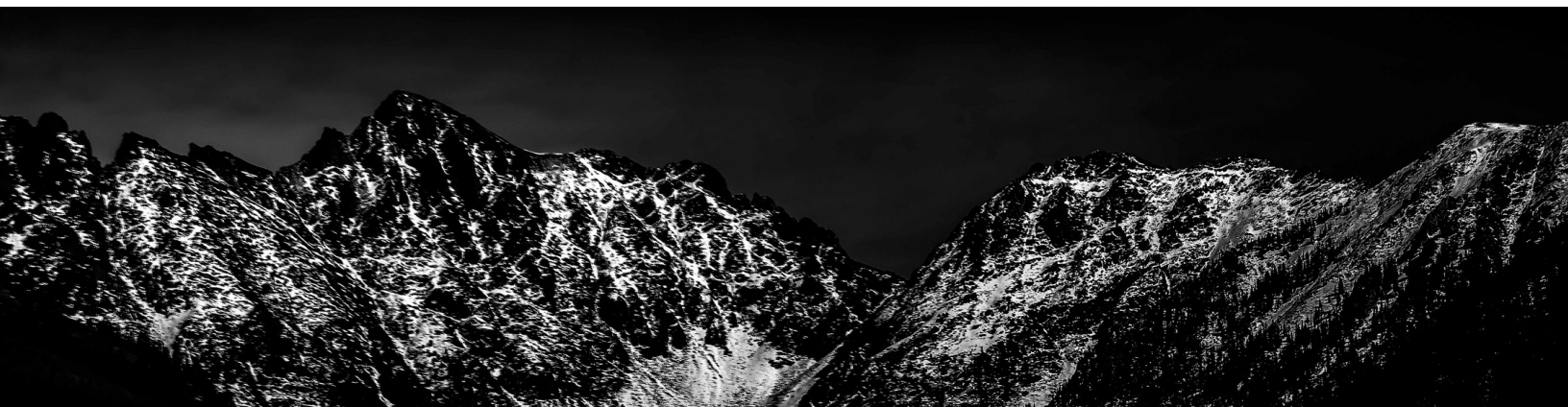
The program attracts candidates with at least six years' experience in the workplace (whether private or public sector) and the typical audience profile is 34 to 54 years of age. Participants may either be individual contributors or manage a team of others. It is not necessary to take the GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test) or have an academic background in commerce in order to register.

Through popular demand, a second learning experience was added called the Mini-MBA Advanced Management Course (AMC) for those who wanted to delve deeper into the key topics covered in the first program, as well as the added topic of improving business processes and operations.

In summary, people now have the flexibility to take the 10-day EDC and stop there or continue their learning momentum with the 10-day AMC (20 total days of learning) culminating in a Mini-MBA Certificate of Completion.

The Learning variety includes pre-course readings and assignments, personal and small group exercises/projects, video examples, lectures, role-play, case studies, business simulations, team-building experiences, executive panels, and more.

All McGill Mini-MBA programs are delivered by top-rated faculty members who often teach on the university's MBA degree programs, whether full-time, part-time or Executive.



WHY A MINI-MBA?

Companies and public sector organizations are full of very competent people in their 30s, 40s and early 50s who have worked their way up the ladder through experience or grew within their specialist or technical fields. Now, they look back and want their business education to keep pace with their career progress. There is a point when the full-time MBA may no longer be an appropriate learning option. First, a mid-career manager with seasoned experience might not appreciate sitting in an MBA class with junior-level students who have far fewer stories to share about successes and pitfalls in the world of work. Second, the pace of life today already puts pressure on juggling family and career life, let alone finding room to join a full-time program.

The EMBA, then, becomes an excellent choice for those who have the time and budget. But many companies are shying away from the price tag that comes with these programs, not to mention the time commitment.

A Mini-MBA nicely fills the gap between no MBA learning at all and the intensive EMBA. A Mini-MBA never claims to replace the depth of a longer degree program. However, it serves a much-needed purpose in offering a toolkit of management ideas, models, benchmarks, and practices taught in leading MBAs but delivered in a compact format for managers on the go.

Note that this is also considered by some to be a pre-EMBA. People will take it to test the water and have a “taster” before taking the plunge with a full degree program.

The McGill Mini-MBA is comprised of peers who have an appropriate level of prior workplace experience (whether in the private or public sector) which fosters quality interaction, networking, idea sharing, and diversity. Perhaps most importantly, the Mini-MBA has a very strong focus on practical, relevant learning points which bring real value and results back at work. Learning-by-doing exercises help to deepen understanding and recall.



Do employers place value in Mini-MBA (are they credible in the market)?

Simply put, “Yes”. McGill sees more and more companies of all sizes sending managers who are transitioning to higher responsibilities and want to grow by updating MBA knowledge that they can apply immediately back on the job. As one HR Director put it, “a Mini-MBA experience is much better than no MBA experience.” Emerging leaders and high potentials can be at their best more quickly and gain exposure to pertinent MBA concepts, benchmarks, and tools that they otherwise would not have.

In the words of a recent EDC graduate, “My company wants me to ‘level up’ what I know about business and management so that I can be ready to take on more responsibilities – but they don’t care whether or not my learning includes a degree.”

Organizations often cite the program’s good quality-price-ratio and compact learning format that interferes less with their ongoing day-job than many high-intensity, long-term degrees.

Who is the Mini-MBA targeting?

Participants have at least six or more years of work experience and tend to be mid- to upper-level managers (with or without direct reports), coming from every discipline, size and type of organization, including private companies, not-for-profits and government services. It is perfect for managers who have only had exposure to one functional area and plan to move into general management responsibilities.

Why does the Mini-MBA seem to be really catching on now?

Companies are placing a greater emphasis than ever on managers who can view a business through many different lenses. Even if the person stays in a specialist role, the decisions he or she makes will have a ripple effect on other functions and areas of the organization. The Mini-MBA is a cost-effective and time-effective solution to put the various pieces of management practice into one program. They see a Mini-MBA as an opportunity to link these themes together into a compact program with the bonus of additional learning that comes from sharing ideas with others from different organizations (avoiding insular reflexes).



Is there a key reason not to take a Mini-MBA?

How important is a degree for you? That is a key question people often face in deciding on their education pathway. The Mini-MBA offers important tools and practices to apply on the job, a Certificate of Completion, referral letter from the program's Academic Director (useful for job promotions or further academic pursuits) and the opportunity to include it in your CV or web profile – showing others that you have gained exposure to many key MBA insights. However, it does not offer a degree or academic credit. “Is it worth my time and budget to get a degree” is a question many grapple with. Certainly, if you want a deep-dive exploration of management practices, a degree program will give you the exposure you need.



Overall, people should consider the “degree or no degree” question from three angles:

- 1) Industry/Sector: do you work in a field where a master's degree is coveted and expected for career advancement? While no one would argue that a graduate degree is nice to have, is it perceived as a requirement among industry peers to achieve recognition and promotions?
- 2) Company Culture: look around you – how many of your colleagues or those in more senior management roles have advanced degrees? Many organizations focus squarely on your experience and proven results in the world of work. Others appreciate management development seminars for “just-in-time learning” throughout one's career progression (flexible to fit your schedule, cost effective and aligned with today's build-to-order and on-the-move generation).
- 3) Inner Motivation: now forget what others think. Deep down, how do you feel about getting a degree at this point in your life? For many, the key objective is to update their skills, behaviors and attitudes that will help them be valuable contributors – a degree is not required. Others see being awarded a degree as an undeniable confidence and credibility builder.

If you have more questions, a learning advisor is ready to speak with you from the McGill Executive Institute, our university's hub for lifelong learning of managers and executives.

For More Information or to chat with someone, please visit <https://executive.mcgill.ca/mini-mba>