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*I Editorial*

**Mr. Shen Jinjun**  
President of CADA

It's a great pleasure to be in touch with you all via the Carl Benz Academy Newsletter.

It was only a short time ago that I learned about the excellent programs being offered by the Carl Benz Academy. After meeting with the Chancellor of Carl Benz Academy, Mr. Schoenebeck and his team in Beijing, I gained an insight into the innovative education opportunities being offered to entrepreneurs and managers from the automotive field throughout China. The Academy's approach of bringing together the best in expertise and intelligence from three man-

agement schools in Europe, the United States and China provides participants with the opportunity of enjoying one of the world's most advanced automotive industry vocational education and degree study programs – all from their home-based dealerships in China.

I am so happy to see that the Academy has already successfully graduated two cohorts of students who are now bringing their new knowledge to life in their daily work at the Chinese dealerships.

I think the Carl Benz Academy has done a very significant thing. As dealerships are experiencing a transformation period, our entrepreneurs and managers need to expand their horizons; to learn more about the automotive retail network; to understand advanced operation management tools; and to apply measures from devel-

oped countries. Chinese dealerships are currently very focused on how to improve single dealer profitability, but we also need to work on discovering our problems and gaps then finding out how to improve on them by benchmarking American or European dealerships.

It is my sincere hope that the Carl Benz Academy can continue to provide curriculum that is designed to fit the needs of Chinese dealerships. Through dynamic teaching methods we can cultivate more and more auto industry talents at both the technical and management level, with an international perspective.

I wish the Carl Benz Academy great success in 2015 and to the students of the Academy, I wish you a lucky Year of the Sheep and all the very best for your work and studies!!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Shen Jinjun' in Chinese characters. The signature is fluid and cursive.



**II Top News****President Shen Jinjun of CADA meets the Chancellor of Carl Benz Academy in Beijing**

From left to right:

Ms. Lang Xuehong (Industry Coordination Dept. Director of CADA), Mr. Xiao Zhengsan (Secretary General of CADA), Mr. Shen Jinjun (President of CADA), Mr. Schoenebeck (Chancellor of CBA), Mr. Yang Yuxin (Deputy GM of CBA) and Mr. Song Tao (Deputy Secretary General of CADA)

On January 20, 2015, Mr. Shen Jinjun, President of China Automobile Dealers Association (CADA), Mr. Xiao Zhengsan, Secretary General of CADA and Mr. Song Tao, Deputy Secretary General of CADA met the Chancellor of Carl Benz Academy, Mr. Schoenebeck at CADA headquarters. They discussed training in the automotive industry and the future of education in this changing market in China. President Shen indicated that China's auto market is

currently in a transformation phase, and that more professional automotive market talents are needed. Training for talented team members should start from the time of entry into the organization (at a basic level) and progress to more depth over time. Such programs can commence with basic training, such as vocational training, and can then be combined with management training in the future. The main problem confronting Chinese deal-

ers right now is how to increase the profitability of each single dealer. Chinese dealers can benchmark the American auto market and excellent dealerships there by promoting meaningful exchange between China and foreign countries. Mr. Shen expressed his enthusiasm for working together with the Carl Benz Academy to ensure greater cooperation in this field.

Mr. Schoenebeck from Carl Benz Academy noted; "through our cooperation with CADA, the Carl Benz Academy will develop more courses in accordance with dealers' needs in China by integrating the best resources in order to contribute to the growing reserve of talents in China's automotive market."



**III News**

**2015 MBA Enrollment**

Enrollment for the next student intake of the Carl Benz Academy for our next international Master of Business Administration (MBA) program is now open. Applications close on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015.

The program comprises a combination of online and face-to-face learning and students are encouraged and challenged to interact closely with their classmates and to apply their learning to their daily working lives. Action research and overseas site visits to Germany and the USA complement the 2 year program designed for working professionals. The program is bi-lingual in Chinese and English. At the end of the program, students have the opportunity to obtain a European-accredited Master's degree from the Berlin University for Professional

Studies / Steinbeis University Berlin.

For more information visit us at:

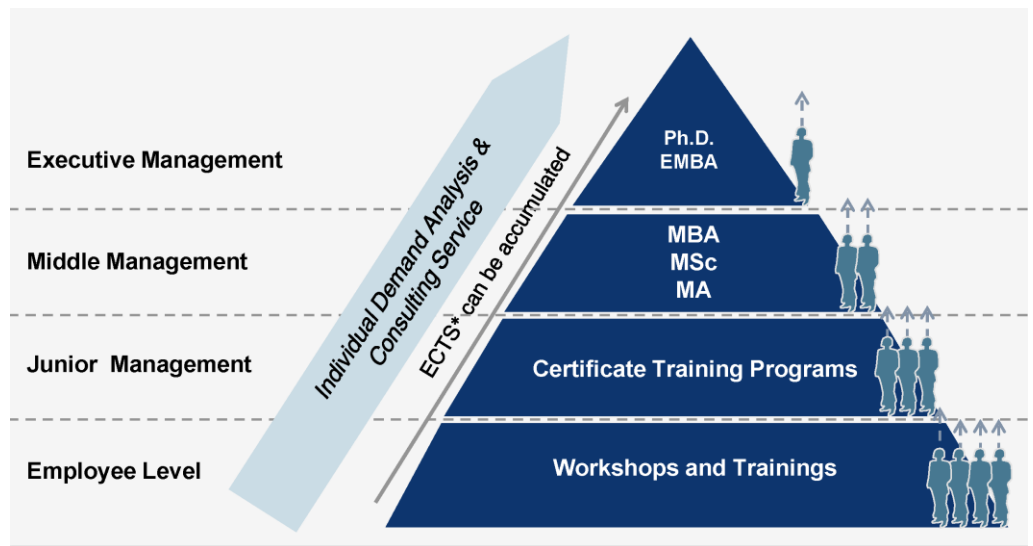
[www.benz-academy.org/en/programs/MBA](http://www.benz-academy.org/en/programs/MBA)

**Education and Training at the CBA**

As of early 2015, the Carl Benz Academy offers a new range of corporate education and training programs in addition to its now well-established Master of Business Administration. The team at the Academy has worked together with

its partners to develop innovative and scientifically-based content for tailor-made corporate education ranging from short, 2-3 day courses; to 1-4 month courses; or 2-3 year master or PhD programs. Courses currently available cover the areas of:

- Management & Leadership
- Professional and Personal Efficiency
- Commercial Skills
- Project Management
- Finance
- Purchasing
- Human Resources
- Marketing



\* European Credit Transfer System (ECTS): ECTS recognition available through our university partners



The training programs are designed to provide employees with the flexibility to integrate further education into their professional lives, whilst giving them immediate benefits in the form of practical skills for their daily work. Based on unique company profile, this incorporates the development of a holistic training concept for employees and organization. When required, this can also include an analysis of current employee engagement and potential. Complex and integrated programs such as those offered by the CBA are built upon a blended learning approach, incorporating Humboldt's Ideal of the 'unity of teaching and research', as well as the 'Situational Approach', or



practice-oriented learning. These foundations enable us to teach students at the Academy practical and industry-specific skills.

### **Beijing On-Site Module, November 2014**

In the last week of November 2014, the students of the Academy's 3<sup>rd</sup> Cohort gathered at Peking University to participate in the 6-day face to face MBA study module in Beijing.

The on-site study module makes up a critical component of the Carl Benz Academy's blended learning approach and is designed to complement the online and distance learning that takes place either side of the on-site studies. On-site at the university campus, students have the opportunity to experience high quality lectures; to communicate with professors and classmates in-person; and to build relationships through group

discussions and project work. At this latest Beijing module, the Academy's students brought with them questions and challenges from their daily work, as well as queries directly from their studies. The Peking University module included the courses: Action Research; Customer Relationship Management; Managing Sustainability; Innovation and Corporate Sustainable Development; and 'Think as an Economist: Apply Economic Thought in Business and Policy Analysis'.

Feedback on the Beijing module was very positive and students were inspired by both the university courses as well as the chance to see their classmates presenting their research topics and graduating from the MBA program. One student even said, "the PKU module is fantastic, if there was an opportunity, I would like to





join again next year even though all the modules are the same as this year!"

On November 29<sup>th</sup>, students of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cohort also had the chance to observe the public thesis defense session and final graduation of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Cohort students.

### **CBA April Event**

In April this year, the Academy's 3<sup>rd</sup> cohort students will once again come together in Beijing for the annual student event. The event provides the opportunity for students to gather in person and to build on exchanges within the student group, as well as with the teaching team of the Academy. The agenda this year includes face to face lectures from the professors of both DUW and Peking University, as well as special one-off seminars from Daimler Research and automotive industry ex-

perts. Students will present the results of their own studies for the course Action Research, in preparation for their Master Theses.

### **Education + Arts = Culture**

The Carl Benz Academy is pleased to announce the launch of its virtual gallery and inaugural online exhibition at the end of March! Through the gallery, we aim to introduce to you, our students, professors, partners and friends; the work of unique, inspirational artists and to bring together the worlds of art and education.

<http://www.benz-academy.org/en/culture/exhibition/immo.jalass>



Our first exhibition features the German artist and creator of digital paintings, Immo Jalass. A pioneer in the realm of digital arts, Immo Jalass is one of the most successful artists in his field.

In this, our first exhibition, we bring you a selection of fascinating digital photographs and an interview between the Academy's Chancellor, Manfred Schönebeck and the artist himself. Find out more about Immo's creative process and the background to his work, browse the gallery and give your personal feedback online!



*IV . Research***Daimler Storage Research Report**

During the grand opening ceremony of the new Mercedes-Benz R&D Center in China, Mr. Hubertus Troska, member of the Board of Management of Daimler AG and responsible for China said, “for the automotive industry, China has become the most important market worldwide. The country is truly in fast forward mode – we recognize this importance and reflect it in our local R&D activities, which we are clearly pushing forward to the next level. As a key element for our sustainable growth strategy in China, our new R&D Center will help us to fully tap our potential here and give our Chinese customers’ voice even more weight in our global network and future product development.”

To better implement the concept and to give our engineers a more compre-

hensive perspective of the requirements from Chinese customers, the ‘China Requirements Team’ from Mercedes-Benz R&D center and the Carl Benz Academy along with several local dealers from around China launched a “Chinese Customers Storage” program in August 2014. During the past 6 months, the team has interviewed over 1,000 Mercedes-Benz customers in 10 typical Chinese cities and collected more than 30,000 photos of their cars which directly reflect the daily usage of these customers.



Through the process of conducting face to face interviews, we have gained a better under-

standing of the customers’ habits and have gathered many interesting insights on local Chinese customers. For instance, based on our survey, around 21% of our customers smoke in the car and only 9% of them use the internal ashtray when smoking. Also the ratio of customer charging their electronic devices in the car has reached 77%.



On the basis of such a large database of customers, we have categorized the demands of customers into 5 categories: demand for electric and related devices; demand for internal decoration; demand for accessories and auxiliary devices which could improve driving safety; demand for food, beverage



and smoking in car; and demand for cleaning equipment. By collecting and translating these requirements from customers, we gain a more systematic view when analyzing our products, which in turn, will help us to develop more rapidly and in direct response to customer needs.

The cooperation between the China Requirements team from Mercedes-Benz R&D center and the Carl Benz Academy will continue in the future. At Mercedes-Benz R&D we will visit more customers from different dealers in different cities, and obtain more first-hand feedback from customers to improve their user experience. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all of our colleagues and friends who continue to help and participate in the program.

R&D China, Daimler  
Greater China Ltd.

### **Snapshot of CBA Student Research**

In our coming editions of the CBA Newsletter, we will bring you snapshots of some of the research conducted by our own MBA students. In November of 2014 the first and second cohort of the Academy's students completed their Masters presentations and exams. One of these students was Ms Zhang Ling, who was working as General Manager of a Mercedes-Benz dealership in Chongqing, at the time of her dissertation. Together with her study group, Ms Zhang chose to address the topic of Employer Branding in the context of Mercedes-Benz dealerships in China. In particular, Ms Zhang wanted to investigate the impact of employee position levels on attitudes to Employer Brand. The driver behind the selection of this topic was the high turnover of employees and the in-

creasing challenges faced by dealers in finding and keeping the best people.

Ms Zhang and her group undertook their own research, conducting a survey of nearly 700 Mercedes-Benz dealership employees across six cities in China. In the context of existing research and theories on employer branding, the major recommendations arising from Ms Zhang's research are for Mercedes-Benz dealers to:

(1) Use the company's mission and goals to create a strong company culture and to guide junior staff to improve their awareness of the value and significance, and strengthening junior staff's "personal identity";

(2) Focus on the adjustment and improvement of workshop technicians' job content, work environment and incentives, strengthen





publicity and education of workshop technicians' corporate culture of acceptance;

(3) Maintain effective communication among company executives and workshop technicians' in order to develop an understanding of their state of mind and attitudes, and to guide them with establishing a correct "self-realization" concept, as they build a good career development platform to enhance their social status;

(4) Future car dealers will quickly turn from sales oriented to service oriented, and customer resources and customer satisfaction are car dealer's focuses, therefore, when converting business ideas, the focus of human resource development and employer branding will also change, the emphasis will be on the work of service personnel and personnel administration and

customer service personnel to maintain communication, understanding their needs and views of employees on the company, so as to enhance their degree of recognition of the company's corporate culture environment.

The focus of this study – and indeed the majority of research work conducted by students at the Academy – is strongly directed towards addressing real-life working challenges at Mercedes-Benz dealerships in China. Together

with her fellow group members (who looked at other aspects of employer branding such as the influence of age, gender, education or geographical location on employee attitudes), Ms Zhang was able to formulate practical suggestions for the future development of the dealerships. For more information, contact us at Carl Benz Academy headquarters in Beijing!



### V. Profile “We didn’t know that it was impossible. That’s why we did it!”



**Manfred Schönebeck**  
- CBA Chancellor

Many of our readers will have seen the Carl Benz Academy’s Chancellor, Mr Manfred Schönebeck at the Academy’s major events and study modules over the last three years. Mr Schönebeck took up the role as the Academy’s first ever Chancellor when the Academy was in its earliest days back in 2011. Since then, he has worked closely with the Academy’s President, Professor Dr Ada Pellet and the Academy’s partners to build an innovative, relevant and meaningful curriculum for managers from Mercedes-Benz dealerships around China.

Whilst Mr Schönebeck’s connection to Daimler and

Mercedes-Benz has a much longer history than his current role with the Carl Benz Academy, he also has experience in a broad range of other creative and technical fields. Mr Schönebeck is a qualified and practicing Psychologist who has spent more than 25 years working as a psychotherapist, counsellor and mediator. He has experience as a journalist in both radio and television in Germany and has worked for many years in the fields of communication, research and consulting.

Mr Schönebeck was a pioneer in the area of internet research, starting his work in 1989, well before it became a popular or well-understood field. He is passionate about solving ‘unsolvable’ problems in ‘impossible’ time frames and in the founding of the Academy itself, Mr Schönebeck said: “We

didn’t know that it was impossible. That’s why we did it!”

The Chancellor is also an entrepreneur and has founded companies in Germany, the United States, Hong Kong and mainland China. He specializes in luxury brands; automotive; IT developments; HR Projects; coaching; intercultural communication; project management; psychological research; and interaction and communication design. He speaks German, English, Hungarian, Russian and Hindi.

Mr Schönebeck is committed to the development of outstanding individuals in the areas of education, IT and entrepreneurship and aims to work together with the students and professors of the Academy to reach new horizons in customized and globalized education.

