

Partnership



“A higher profile for our business lines and functions”

Crédit Agricole S.A. and its Calyon subsidiary are the first leading partners of Club Finance Paris (CFP), an association of the finance clubs of eleven leading engineering and business schools in the Paris area. Nicolas Evin, the founder and president of CFP, and Vincent Robinet and Judicaël Tracoulat, respectively the Campus Managers for CASA and Calyon, explain the reasons for this alliance and the benefits that the company and the students can expect to derive during this period of crisis and change for the finance industry.

What are the partnership's origins and the reasons for its existence?

Nicolas Evin (NE): Rather than simply exchanging financing for a higher profile, we sought first of all a partner who would favor as much as possible exchanges of viewpoints between finance professionals and the 1,500 students of leading universities that we bring together. The Crédit Agricole group and Calyon represent a broad range of businesses covering all areas of finance and insurance. At our first meetings, we were impressed by our contacts' dynamism, quick responses and the freedom they were willing to grant us to manage our activities. We are truly on the same wave length and that's important in making headway.

Judicaël Tracoulat (JT): When Nicolas came to see me it was obvious that Calyon could meet the students' expectations and answer their questions since we have a very broad range of activities and careers. On top of that, belonging to the Crédit Agricole group, a major universal bank, is truly an advantage. From retail banking to corporate and investment banking, asset management and insurance, the group proposes a wide range of businesses and functions - perhaps less well known to students, who often target trading and M&A - but which offer many attractive career opportunities.

Vincent Robinet (VR): The Club Finance Paris offers us an identified, reliable single point of entry to reach a maximum number of students. We have relationships with many schools and the CFP makes it possible to pool our actions and reach students whose priority areas of interest are banking and finance.

What are the needs or requests that you consider priorities?

JT: We are able to meet the needs of CFP events by, for example, finding speakers. It also provides an important vector for highlighting our job offers and getting across certain messages. The CFP is the ideal partner for direct contact with students interested in banking and finance.

VR: Partnerships inevitably involve exchanges of views and it is up to us to provide the CFP with the expertise which they are entitled to expect from a company such as ours. Today, given the current economic climate, we could organize a conference to explain the financial crisis featuring, for example, Jean-Paul Betbèze, the Crédit Agricole Chief Economist, who speaks very well on the subject which he is experiencing from the inside. Our role is to bring in operating staff who are able to trace their careers, explain their business lines and functions and describe a day in their lives or a typical week to students on the verge of deciding the direction they want to take.

NE: Our students are asking a lot of questions these days especially in terms of the outlook for hiring and career development prospects. They want long-term visibility on the changes the banking industry is undergoing. That is the project we have been offered and these are the questions to which the students expect answers.

Is it already possible to answer some of their questions?

VR: The world of finance has been shaken by the crisis and significant changes have already started to take place. Within the group, the risk and control functions, which suffer from a deficiency of knowledge, gain from being better understood since they are destined to take on maximum importance. At the level of Calyon, we have already refocused on our traditional business lines such as structured finance and the brokerage division, which are also highly effective businesses but which do not have the required visibility and attractiveness.

JT: Our role is to overcome the assumptions and prejudices the students may have – both positive and negative – concerning certain businesses and functions. We must make the effort to teach and explain and highlight business lines considered less sexy than trading for example, but which are just as interesting and important for us. In addition, going beyond the initial job, we must be able to project a career path although this may be difficult for the student to grasp. At Calyon and more generally at CASA, the cross-divisional risk control and internal audit functions facilitate mobility between subsidiaries - something we are seeking to promote - in addition to offering interesting career opportunities.

BB

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