

Darla Moore School of Business
University of South Carolina

Full-Time **MBA Programs**

International MBA • Accelerated MBA



Project Profile:
Jenny Dodd

IMBA Class of 2012
Company: Michelin Group
Location: Clermont, France



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
Darla Moore School of Business

Journal Entry #1

Country Weekends

The hustle and bustle of the big city (of a whopping 140,000 people) can be stressful, and I've learned that in France the best way to relax on the weekends is to take a little vacation to the countryside. It's a common weekend or



Sunday occurrence for those city-dwelling folk to make the mecca and head for the hills. I've had the wonderful pleasure of being able to do the same. I have a friend who I met while at the school, whose house happens to be settled in a small but beautifully wonderful town called Aurac-sur-Loire. I've mentioned it before, but the first time, I did not realize the whole value. My friend's family has lived in valley for several generations, on a profoundly beautiful piece of land. It's become my new place of solitude and just enjoyment. I can read, take walks through the forest, visit in French with her friends and family, and pick fresh fruits and veggies from their garden. I write all of this to inspire everyone to find their secret getaway place to refresh and relax, but also to share a little piece of the French culture.

Family and meals are some of the most important things here. Meals always last a long time, but it isn't about the food, it is about the conversation, and the time spent together. Also, in France, almost everything is closed (including all shopping), but families pass the day together, working, talking, eating and laughing. Not that in America we don't value our family, but taking time out of our busy schedules is important.



Courir à Clermont-Ferrand

June 10, D-DAY! So the first day I joined Michelin, one of the people in my module asked if I wanted to run a 10k, and of course I said yes! But what I didn't prepare for was my lack of training time. But either way, I joined up, and June 10 was our race day. It turned out to be one of my favorite memories thus far from my time in France.

Fun Fancy French Fact:

In France, if you have bread before or with your meal, don't put it on your plate with the other food, it is impolite. Also while eating, keep your hands above the table at all times, preferably holding your knife and fork the whole time... I have yet to master this.

Jenny Takes a Tumble

The most important day thus far of my time at Michelin, started with a bang... Literally.

Those of you who know me can attest to the fact that I'm not a morning person, but my time in France has allowed me to change a little. It has become a sacred time, with my *café* (espresso for all you Americans), music, and my newspaper. It sets the day out right, and I'm usually in a great mood by the time I leave my apartment. Well this particular day, I was rushed, excited, and ready for the day. I picked out the perfect outfit for the day, and headed out the door with more things than usual.

I started down the hard stone stairs, when my perfectly selected shoes, got stuck on my perfectly selected pants, and my arms full of computers, breakfast and other items for the day, failed to grasp the railing... thus resulting in a mighty quake, which simultaneously looked like a tornado with everything flying through the air.

Luckily, nothing was bleeding, and for the most part I was fine. My neighbor, heard the bang, and rushed out to help. As my former roommates know, our neighbor is a complete mystery, and we've all been dying to know more about her... Anyways, she babbled on for 15 minutes in incomprehensible French about her cat and apartment, while I iced my knees and head and recovered. Success.



Supplier's Awards

My internship at Michelin consists of 3 main parts: Supplier's Awards, intranet restructuring, and an internal event at the end of July. Step number one was the Michelin Supplier's Awards, which took place June 15. This was the day that I had been working towards since the time that I began at Michelin.

This was the first time that this event had EVER taken place at Michelin, and thus was a landmark stepping stone in the future for the Purchasing department and their relationships with their biggest and best suppliers. I, along with my boss, were the main organizers of the event. I love creating—visions, ideas, visuals, concepts, but details have never been my first priority. Well, with this experience, it was absolutely necessary. The event was launched in order to reward

those supplier's who have left an outstanding impression on Michelin. The ceremony included the high executives from each company rewarded. No Room for Error.

I have always thought of event planning as a rather easy job, but I was just proven wrong. When you plan an event for the CEOs and executives of not only your company, but that of 4 other companies, everything must be perfect. Every email, every choice is made with consideration. For me, it's been a character-building experience for my patience, conscientiousness and overall understanding of every element involved in building a strong business.

All in all, the event was truly a success. Those suppliers present were honored and proud, and those of us on this side, had the privilege of watching the hard work we perform, and that of our colleagues flower into a fruitful evening of celebration and just enjoyment.

Another Success in my book.

Dreams

So the other night I had a nightmare that I tutored Mr. Senard, who is a managing partner of the Michelin Group. In French, there are two ways of saying "you" there is *tu*, and *vous*. *Tu* is informal, with your friends, etc. and *vous* is formal: ie, with your professors, or a person of higher rank than you. This distinction is a very important part of not only the language, but also the culture here. So basically, in my dream, it would be the equivalent of saying "What's up dog" to the president of the USA. Ok, maybe not that dramatic, but anyways, I woke up in a blind panic, and was upset for a few minutes, until I realized, despite the fact I was upset by the dream, I was really truly dreaming in French! Sign of progress? YES!!! Except the next I dreamed I was in Pirates of the Caribbean, so maybe it was just a coincidence.



Fete de la Musique

In France, according to Catholic tradition, everyday is a *fete de* (and then insert typical French name here). For example, February 14 is *Fete de le Saint Valentine*...get it? Anyways, June 21 every year is the *Fete de la Musique*. It is celebrated throughout France in almost every city. So this Tuesday I experienced my first *FDM*! It was really great to just wander through the city, with friends, listening to the best and worst Clermont has to offer musically.

Fun Fact: Clermont was named the rock capital of France last year, so yes there was a lot of rock. Either way, it was just another enjoyable and exciting French Experience, and a tradition I wish existed at home.

All-in-all

Don't worry, if you wondering if I've continued to make many embarrassing mistakes, like eating stomach, and frequently tripping up the stairs in front of my superiors, the answer is yes. But I am enjoying my daily challenges and am very happy with my work and my life!

A Bientot!
