

Carlos Ghosn shares management tips at USJ

RENAULT-NISSAN CHIEF SAYS ECONOMIC CRISES REPRESENT OPPORTUNITY TO 'RENOVATE OLD METHODS'

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BEIRUT: To Carlos Ghosn, president of the Renault-Nissan Alliance of France and Japan, an economic crisis is more than a turbulent phase, it is an opportunity to shine.

The Universite Saint-Joseph's (USJ) Pierre Y. AbouKhater theater hall was so full on Monday that the university's administration had to set up extra seats in the building's hallways. It seemed that everyone was curious to hear the advice of a more than successful man, and respected Lebanese figure.

The conference entitled "Management in Times of Crisis" and organized by USJ and ESA for the France in Lebanon festival of 2010, shed a light on the causes and effects of an economic crisis, such as the one affecting the world today. But most importantly, it gave advice on the crucial management tactics that would help any company weather the storm and come out stronger.

Ghosn is most known for his amazing work with Nissan in

1999 as he guided the company out of its \$20 billion debt by dazzling the Japanese workforce with his innovative ways and bold persona.

When tackling the question of managing in times of economic crisis, Ghosn made recommendations to the crowd of eager listeners, and dedicated his speech to the students, claiming he would do his best to guide them toward successful future careers.

He started by saying that in any type of economic crisis, external or internal, the company's employees will without a doubt turn to the managing team for guidance. "And it is at that particularly difficult time that the managers will be able to show their true leadership skills," he said.

Ghosn added that the crucial first step when a crisis hits is for the company to establish a diagnosis of the situation on a local, national and international level, because one cannot fix the problem before knowing what it really is and what is behind it.

The next step, according to Ghosn, is to build a new vision and set up clear priorities that



USJ students pose with Ghosn at their university on Tuesday.

Photo by Azakir

will lead the company out of the turbulence while keeping in mind that one should be prepared for the post-crisis period, which will determine whether

the company will survive.

Furthermore, he continued, during unstable times, a manager's priorities must be limited and clear in order to avoid con-

fusion and successfully guide his employees.

Also, Ghosn stressed the fact that internal 'resistance' to new managing measures during

tough times must not be ignored, because resisting means remaining involved and concerned over the company's fate. He also added that good

ideas can be found among those who put up resistance. "It is indifference that is the enemy," Ghosn said, "because indifference means giving up."

In sum, the role of management is to inspire people to do the things they find impossibly hard and to provoke a general motivation that will unite a company in solidarity. According to the renowned businessman, strong management reveals its true skills during difficult times, and sometimes surviving a crisis means breaking out of the societal taboos that limit the creativity of management, and calls for innovation and risk-taking.

"Thus an economic crisis must not only be seen as a tough period, which it certainly is, but it must be accepted and seen as an opportunity to learn from past mistakes, to renovate old methods and to defy one's limitations," he said.

Finally, Ghosn noted that one should always keep in mind that "every crisis has an end," and the key is to be able to objectively visualize what will follow. "Because in the end," he said, "what does not kill you, only makes you stronger."