EY Academy of Business

Executive Finance Labs

An immersive executive experience that develops financial judgement through immediate application

Live Online | Intensive, Practical, Interactive | Five 2-hr Finance Labs

EY Academy of Business

Executive Finance Labs

Practical Finance for Immediate Impact

Overview

This programme is not a traditional finance course. It is an immersive, hands-on experience where participants apply finance from the very first Finance Lab — and learn through the process.

Rather than spending hours learning theory before putting it into practice, participants work with real financial information from the very first session. They will build financial statements, analyse business performance, identify problems, ask the right questions and develop solutions — all within a structured, expertly guided environment.

Every Finance Lab is designed to bridge the gap between financial knowledge and business decision-making. Participants progressively build the confidence to interpret financial information, understand what drives business performance, and contribute meaningfully to strategic discussions.

By the end of the programme, participants move from understanding financial information to using it with confidence and judgement, enabling them to contribute more effectively to business and strategic decisions. This reflects the programme's philosophy of developing financial judgement through guided application rather than theory-first instruction.

Methodology

The methodology behind the Executive Finance Labs programme is based on a simple principle: you cannot learn to swim by reading about water. You learn by getting into the water, starting to move and building confidence through guided practice. Finance is learned in much the same way. Rather than spending hours studying concepts before applying them, participants engage with real financial situations from the very first Finance Lab. As their understanding grows through guided practice, they develop the confidence and judgement to navigate financial decisions independently.

> “*Executive Finance Labs is built around a unique methodology that develops capability through guided experience rather than traditional instruction.*”

Participants are active contributors throughout every session. They construct financial statements, analyse business scenarios, investigate problems and make decisions instead of listening to extended lectures or memorising accounting terminology.

Key features include:

- Short 2-hour, immersive and practical Finance Labs
- Highly interactive, instructor-led learning
- Realistic business cases and practical exercises
- Immediate application of concepts throughout every session
- Direct access to trainers between labs for ongoing support
- Session recordings to reinforce learning and provide flexibility
- Opportunities for participants to bring real workplace challenges into the discussions

Programme Details

The programme consists of five highly interactive **Finance Labs**, each lasting approximately 2 hours. Each Lab is a hands-on working environment: participants apply finance first, through practical exercises and business scenarios, with concepts and theory introduced as they become relevant to the situation.

Throughout the programme, participants progressively construct, interpret and analyse a complete set of financial statements before applying their knowledge within an integrated business simulation.

It all starts from the first Finance Lab – participants are *actively doing* finance, not *preparing* to do it.

Finance Lab 1: Building and Understanding the Balance Sheet

The balance sheet is not a static document; it is a snapshot of future expectations.

Participants construct a balance sheet from a business case while exploring the meaning behind assets, liabilities and equity. The session develops an understanding of financial position, capital structure, business risk and the judgement required under IFRS.

By the end of this Lab participants will be able to:

- Explain how everyday business transactions affect assets, liabilities and equity.
- Understand how key accounting principles such as accruals, matching, prudence and neutrality operate in practice.
- Assess the financial position of an organisation.
- Recognise the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy balance sheets.
- Interpret balance sheet information from the perspective of investors, lenders and management.
- Participate more confidently in discussions involving financial position and business risk.

Finance Lab 2: Building the Income Statement

Profit is an opinion. Cash is a fact.

Using real business information, participants construct an income statement and explore how organisations generate profit. The session examines revenue recognition, expenses, profitability, cash versus profit, and how financial results can sometimes be manipulated or misunderstood.

By the end of this Lab participants will be able to:

- Explain how organisations generate profit.
- Distinguish between profit, cash and business performance.
- Understand the drivers behind revenue, expenses and profitability.
- Recognise situations where financial performance may be misunderstood or misrepresented.
- Ask more insightful questions when reviewing financial results.
- Interpret the story behind an organisation's reported performance.

Finance Lab 3: Cash Flow and Equity – Where Value Really Lies

This is where finance becomes real.

Participants construct the Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Equity to understand how cash moves through a business and why profitable organisations may still experience financial difficulties. The relationships between all four financial statements become clear.

By the end of this Lab participants will be able to:

- Understand how cash flows through a business.
- Explain why profitable organisations sometimes experience financial difficulties.
- Connect the Statement of Cash Flows with the Balance Sheet and Income Statement.
- Assess liquidity and financial flexibility.
- Understand the role of equity in supporting long-term business success.
- Identify early warning signs of cash flow problems.

Finance Lab 4: From Numbers to Decisions

It is not numbers that matter, but decisions.

Participants move beyond understanding financial statements to interpreting business performance. Using ratio analysis and practical business cases, they identify trends, assess financial health and connect financial performance to operational decisions.

By the end of this Lab participants will be able to:

- Interpret financial ratios with confidence.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in business performance.
- Recognise trends and warning signs in financial information.
- Connect financial results to operational realities.
- Use financial information to support management decision-making.
- Move beyond analysing numbers to understanding what actions should be taken.

Finance Lab 5: Business Simulation

This is where participants begin thinking like business partners rather than analysts.

The programme culminates in an integrated business simulation where participants diagnose the performance of a company using only its financial statements. They identify underlying business issues, formulate the right questions, determine root causes and develop practical recommendations for improving both short-term stability and long-term performance.

By the end of this Lab participants will be able to:

- Diagnose business problems using financial information.
- Identify potential root causes behind poor performance.
- Formulate relevant questions for management and operational teams.
- Develop practical recommendations for improving business performance.
- Link financial results to underlying business processes.
- Think and act more like a business partner rather than simply a reader of financial reports.

Trainers

Meet the trainers who will guide your immersion into finance:

Marinos Athanassiou

Marinos is the founder of the EY Academy of Business and has been a professional trainer since 1994, with deep expertise in finance and accounting rooted in his background in audit, CFO experience, and economics education. He designs and leads courses on practical applied finance programmes and delivers training in social skills such as effective leadership and team communication in business contexts.

George Skordis

FCCA, ACIB

George is an Associate Senior Trainer at the Academy with over 20 years of experience in professional education, combining senior finance leadership roles with international training. His expertise lies in finance and accounting areas such as IFRS, strategic financial management, risk management, corporate finance and M&A, and he delivers practical executive-level training programmes to professionals across regions.

Martinos Martoudes

FCCA, CIA

Martinos provides training courses in the basics of financial (IFRS) and managerial accounting, subjects related to strategic management, as well as selected topics of the ACCA Qualification programme and postgraduate studies at the Warsaw School of Economics.

Contact

Should you require additional information please do not hesitate to contact us at:

Mykyta Stefko

Training Coordinator

Phone number: +48 571 663 688
Mail: Mykyta.Stefko@pl.ey.com