INTRODUCTION TO STOCK MARKET ANALYSIS
(COURSE SYLLABUS)

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Course Objectives:

A key objective of this course is to develop analytical skills for making sound investment decisions, based on publicly available information, while developing reasoning and critical thinking skills through presentations and extensive in-class discussions.

This course introduces students to investment analysis, including fundamental, technical and industry analysis, as well as to selection of appropriate investment vehicles, including options strategies. Students will learn how to research publicly traded companies using various internet-based information sources and computer programs. Particular attention is paid to analyzing crowd behavior based on specific market indicators, scrolling financial news tape and analyzing financial analysts' recommendations.

The course is largely based on practical fund management experience and focused on down-to-earth issues, common mistakes and myths. Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to make well-founded investment decisions, either as individual investors or as part of an investment team.

There is no final examination in this course. Each student is expected to prepare a case study of a publicly traded company of their choice (at least 15 slides) describing possible scenarios of its market behavior in the intermediate term and to present an informed and substantiated investment decision.

Prerequisites: Fluent English, basic Excel skills, Bachelor's degree or equivalent, or at least 3-4 years of university-level education.

Course Outline:

1. Basics of stock market analysis and latest trends in today's stock markets. The importance of information technologies. Key definitions, investment vehicles, algorithms of decision making.
2. Fundamental analysis: indicators and evaluation techniques, stereotypes of thinking, analyst estimates and "pros and cons" lists.
3. Technical analysis: trends, key technical indicators, regression models, Japanese candlesticks, turning points, support and resistance lines, cycles, optimistic/pessimistic scenarios and forecasting models.
4. Crowd behavior analysis: behavioristic models, roles of mass media and big traders, stock market manipulations and catching a market momentum.

5. Industry and macroeconomic analysis: comparison with competitors, industry trends, correlation analysis, market share evaluation, key macroeconomic factors, potential risks.
6. Investment vehicle selection: leverage and risk exposure, key option strategies, criteria of comparison.
7. Investment decision making under uncertainty: scenarios and criteria.
8. Tips for putting together an impressive and meaningful presentation.

Course format: open discussion based on a specific showcase (a publicly traded company), learning by doing (following the Professor throughout the investment showcase, the students advance in preparation of their own cases, facilitated by discussions in class).

Course Meeting Times: 2 hours per week.

Course Language: English

Enrollment deadline: 31.03.2015

Tips for success:

To stay on track throughout the course, the students are expected to participate in all in-class discussions, ask questions as they arise and put together each week a related section of their own case presentations. Any questions and interim materials can be addressed to Professor either in person or by email for review at any time.

Potential next steps:

Interested and qualifying students will receive an opportunity to interview for a part-time Analyst position at Trendomatic GmbH (Freiburg), with a flexible schedule and individual on-the-job training.