

## VALOR ECONÔMICO

### MIT wants to build ties with business schools in Brazil

Stela Campos | From Sao Paulo  
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*Executive Education: Vice-Chancellor of the MIT Sloan School of Management says it wants to change the institution's image and expand its operations outside the U.S.*



Although its brand is widely recognized worldwide, the MIT Sloan School of Management, the business school of the American university, still has a small presence outside the United States. With the mission to change this and to broaden links with educational institutions and NGOs around the world, the Deputy Dean S.P. Kothari visited São Paulo last week. For him, Brazil is on MIT's radar because it is the "crown jewel" in Latin America.

In an exclusive interview with Valor, Kothari, who was accompanied by a group of students who chose the country to conduct field work as part of the MBA program, said the school wants to change its international image. "We are known for attracting scientists, engineers and executives in the technology field, but actually we have a much more diverse group," he says.

According to him, a good part of the students who graduate from the Sloan MBA follow a career in consulting and financial services sector, while another portion chooses to start their own business. A recent trend is the search for placements in companies focused on green energy or social entrepreneurship.

The number of international students at Sloan is also growing as a result of the commitment of the school in recent years to seek more diversity in their classes. The school has 350 students between the MBA, PhD and executive education courses. "We have 40% foreigners in the MBA class," says the Deputy Dean, who was born in rural India and has lived 30 years in the U.S. Like him, many of the 120 professors come from overseas.

MIT is renowned as a repository of Nobel prizes. In 150 years, it has amassed 74. "Most of our faculty is engaged in research," says the Deputy Dean. That scientific endeavor earned the school fame for always being involved in innovative projects.

In Brazil, meanwhile, the only partnership is with Vale, precisely in the area of research and innovation. Outside the U.S., Sloan has worked in partnership with educational and research institutions in China, South Korea, India, Turkey, Russia among other countries. "In Singapore, we participated in the creation of Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD)," he recounted. "Brazil could do something similar," he says.

In Kothari's opinion, the lack of engineers, one of the obstacles to the country's economic expansion, must be addressed with more support for higher education by the government and private initiatives. "To improve the quality of professionals more investment is needed." The experience on foreign soil - both of Brazilian students abroad as well as the opposite - is crucial for the country to gain greater international prominence.

The arrival of the 18 Sloan MBA students to the country is an example of what can be done to broaden students' horizons. In this case, the students chose the business of education in Brazil as the subject matter of the course. Afterwards, they hosted a series of seminars with Brazilian and international specialists to discuss the issue. This month, they came to the country to conduct field work. In 14 days, they visited schools, government representatives, and businesspeople in the education sector in São Paulo, Brasília, Curitiba, Florianópolis and Rio de Janeiro. "There is an important relationship between the labor market and the school that needs to be better understood," says Alexandre Kuperman, a student and co-organizer of the trip.

For the Deputy Dean, the exchange of information and experiences between students of different nationalities must also take place with Brazilian executives. Kothari believes they bring the essential qualities to become major global leaders. "They are smart and passionate about what they do." The dominance of English, he said, is a matter of time. "What they need is for greater international exposure."