A report to show what Business Schools should be doing to help prepare students for careers in business and management.

Written by:
Emmanuel
Oliver Najeeb
George William Myers

Prepared for:
The DMC Unit Team

Date: 10/11/2015

Word count: 2389

Contents page:

Introduction:

This report provides information, obtained via research using a variety of secondary sources, regarding what business schools should be doing to help students prepare for careers in business and management, and what placement and graduate employers will expect of students. The report will pay particular attention to four main areas; knowledge, skills, competencies and behaviour. The report will comment on the current DMC Unit's strengths and weaknesses will be highlighted and the information researched, furthermore it will make recommendations as to how the current DMC Unit provided could be further enhanced, to ensure that the students are properly prepared for future employment.

Skills and competencies

Real world training

Students at Bournemouth University are offered a 4 year course and in the 3rd year a year out in industry to get a hands on experience of what it is like to work in a real world situation. If you are looking at it from a student's position it is important that you get this experience to put on your cv or during interviews you can tell the interviewer where you worked and what you did etc. "Furthermore, because the working world has changed radically in the last twenty-five years, there is an increased need for educators to prepare students differently for success in life in the 21st century. In the Industrial Age workplace, most workers were not required to do much thinking at all—they simply learned the particular procedures for their part of the business or manufacturing task." McCain. (2006). whatskillswillstudentsneedinthe21stcentery. In: McCain *Business*. London: McCain. P7-10. When students leave the education system will they be equipped with the right skills and training to suit an office job and the real life of a business person? No Outside the education system, basic business skills won't cut it, for an increasing number of jobs in the modern workplace, completing worksheets, collecting information to write a report. "Studying for multiple-choice tests does not equip students with the skills necessary for succeeding. Because the education system is so disconnected from the realities of the working world, it is quite possible for students to develop a skill set that works well inside the education system but not in the real world".
McCain. (2006). whatskillswillstudentsneedinthe21stcentery. In: McCain *Business*. London: McCain. P7-10.
But this is why lecturers and teachers have to make sure that the students are trained and ready for action as they start the real life careers in the business world. Giving them the skills needed

Critical thinking and problem solving

As a student you don't know what you are going to be up against in the real world and must be able to take on any new challenges or solve and problems you may face when you have started the work. It is important that students are taught this at Bournemouth university because it will give students confidence. "Problem-solving often involves decision-making, and decision-making is especially important for management and leadership. There are processes and techniques to improve decision-making and the quality of decisions. Decision-making is more natural to certain personalities in the way you handle it and making sure it is the right decision".
Businessballs. (2014). *Problemsolving.* Available: http://www.businessballs.com/problemsolving.htm. Last accessed 9th November 2015.

I think this is the way in which lecturers should teach students on how they can problem solve and making sure they make the right decision.

Communication skills

Communication skills are key for students that are planning to be successful in the real world of business, skills such as body language, active listening, asking questions and communication methods. Why would students benefit from being taught this at Bournemouth University, well communication is key as basically everything you do with have communication in it, like talking to your boss, or sending emails which look professional. In the modern business world people communicate by written correspondence and verbal communication in the form of; text, phone, and email. "In effective communication you must choose the communication method best suited for the message, business people who are articulate speakers may not be articulate writers so the message in an email and written correspondence can sometimes be misconstrued". Matt Mckay. (2012). *communication skills* Available: http://smallbusiness.chron.com/effective-business-communication-skills-2865.html. Last accessed 11th November 2015. As this is key if Bournemouth University could go into more detail about communication skills they would be moving up the university ranks as this is an important life skill.

Time management

As a student I would say that time management is very important as you got to look after your time wisely making sure your work is done and the important assignments are your main priorities. so you could set yourself certain time limits for each piece of work that you do, or make sure you show up to a meeting a few minutes early so that you can go over the notes or prepare yourself. Students should be shown how to make something like this as they could use it during revision for exams or in the business world. Use a simple weekly planner to manage and protect your planned activities. "You'll manage your time by managing your activities - that means protecting the time slots you plan for your tasks. Time management is mainly dependent on planning activities into time slots and then protecting the activities from interruptions". (Businessballs. (2014). *Time Management.* Available: http://www.businessballs.com/timemanagement.htm. Last accessed 11th November 2015.) Students would be better off if they knew how to look after their time because it would be more important to get their project on in time, so if they were taught how to do this it would be key skill for the students.

Behaviour

In business, behaviour is very important to the company making sure it looks good, keeps it customer loyalty and making sure it makes a good name for itself. In this part I'm going to be looking at what Bournemouth University could do to prepare their business students to act in the appropriate way and making sure that they keep professional. I am going to be looking at the following building customer loyalty, retaining good employees, a positive work environment and avoiding legal problems.

Building customer Loyalty

As a business you rely on your customers, stakeholders and investors to keep the business running hopefully turning a profit. Building customer loyalty is key, so why should business students learn this? Well this is why it is important that students learn this now. "Having a loyal customer base is one of the keys to long-range business success because serving an existing customer doesn't involve marketing cost, as does acquiring a new one. A company's reputation for ethical behaviour can help it create a more positive image in the marketplace, which can bring in new customers through word-of-mouth referrals. Conversely, a reputation for unethical dealings hurts the company's chances to obtain new customers, particularly in this age of social networking when dissatisfied customers can quickly disseminate information about the negative experience they had."
Brian hill. (2013). *The Advantages of Ethical Behavior in Business by Brian Hill, Demand Media.* Available: http://smallbusiness.chron.com/advantages-ethical-behavior-business-21067.html. Last accessed 10th nov 2015.

Retaining good employees

As a business studies student who are learning to become managers of businesses it is important that we are taught on how to retain good employees, what to do if they are not ect. One way in which this could happen is by having a positive workplace, open plan instead of all in small work offices. As a future business manager we should be taught a positive can-do attitude to motivate the other employees. So being ready, available and willing to get the job done, and done well, should be traits that employees keep on the front burner. You should appreciate employees who seek out quality work to remain busy and productive for the company and who eagerly desire to go above and beyond their normal duties to bring further success to your company. "Having good employees is important to but teaching them to take responsibility is key, while confessing an error can strike fear in the hearts of employees, those who value their work, their word and their future with your company will take responsibility and tell you the truth. Making errors may or may not cause great problems with a project or with your company, in general, but when an employee honestly and earnestly explains an oversight or mistake he has made, you have a better understanding of the issue and, even better, you understand that your employee values his integrity"
Melissa Cooper. (2012). *examples of good business behaviour.* Available: http://smallbusiness.chron.com/examples-good-employee-behavior-13805.html. Last accessed 8th November 2015.

Positive working environment

Bournemouth University Business School should give examples of how to lay the office out to make sure that the productivity is at its maximum getting the work done. sitting in a small dark room with 30 other people not talking or socializing is not a positive workplace as no one would want to be there so it is key to make sure that everything is right, like getting the right lighting, choosing a bright or vibrant colour paint, put pictures up or even have a dress down day once a week or something. trusting your work colleagues is every important as you are with them every day so if you don't get on with someone it's going to affect the productivity of work with in the business which could lead to not reaching your weekly or monthly sales goals. This is a harder rule to practice for some more than others. "So try to default to the assumption that your team is made up of adult, responsibility-taking, competent workers that don't need to be treated like children. (In the end, people act the way they're treated.) In action terms, this means that when you delegate, really let go and let the individual own the task you gave them." like for example:

- suggesting when and if meetings should happen
- Assuming that your team wants the best for the project.
- Meeting the deadlines

The biggest complaints from employees is that they don't feel appreciated. The second someone gives us a "nice job" or "you made a difference on this project," we feel like we matter in a way that gives our work a sense of purpose. If you're not so inclined to give out verbal gold stars, an easy place to start is with a simple thank you."

Tatyana Sussex. (2013). *5 ways to create a positive working environment.* Available: http://www.liquidplanner.com/blog/5-ways-to-create-a-positive-work-environment/. Last accessed 10th nov 2015.

Career Motivation

As a graduate or future graduate one needs to demonstrate motivation towards their career choice. Why is this? This does not only allow those around the graduate to witness the motivation but also has the personal gain of getting closer towards the upcoming career choice. There are several ways that a graduates or upcoming graduates can show their career motivation and this is through, finding out as much as they can about their possible future employee or the industry they want to go in, liaising with people in similar industries and getting a deeper understanding of what their job will entail and how they can prepare themselves for it. Carrying out all of the above are signs of a graduate behaviour or acting in the manner of one who wants to prevail in their later career choice.

Delivers Quality

Delivering quality takes time and as current or future graduates this should already be known. Quality is a necessity especially in the world outside of education even though it was expected but not necessary to the point where one's position may be lost due to a lack of. So how can graduates ensure that they deliver quality to their future employers? Taking a structured and methodical approach to all tasks given is a start; again demonstrating behaviour of one that wants to succeed. This will give time to carry out the task as well as the opportunity to look at work and take different approaches to it if faced by any challenges. Graduates also need to know how to manage multiple tasks and plan time efficiently and effectively to ensure the quality is delivered. Finally the key step to ensure quality is delivered is to keep track of

progress for the task in hand. Keeping track and will let one see where they are going wrong, where they currently stand and how much time they have left.

Resilience
To survive the business world graduates will need to be strong minded individuals. As they have or are currently going through university they know about meeting deadlines, overcoming setbacks and prioritizing work over social life. This kind of mind set and behaviour will allow the graduates to gain a head start at their roles and will also allow them to be efficient in the business world.

Conclusion:

What competencies are employers looking for in post graduate business students?

Employers look for a variety of competencies when employing post graduate students, each source used when researching the subject provided different competencies in different orders of importance. However many competencies were found on multiple sources, which leads one to believe that these are the competencies that employers in general are looking for. The competencies found were; Time management, Critical thinking, communicating effectively, adaptability, problem solving, attitude, self-motivation and honesty, leadership, commercially awareness, cultural and moral awareness.

What competencies do employers value highest when looking at potential employees?

Employers look for a variety of skills when employing post graduates, but some competencies are valued greater than others. A survey found, conducted on a Kaplan recruitment report showed that the top three competencies were effective 'communication', 'numeracy' and being a 'team player'. But after researching further on the subject it was clear that organisational competencies such as time management are also valued highly.

The competency of effective communication will apply to both the ability to perform written and verbal tasks. This competency will be noticed from your first interactions with your employer, in both your email applying for an interview and the interview itself. Whereas the other competencies will be more prevalent during your employment. Therefore to prepare oneself to become employed it is prominent that written and verbal skills be of a high standard, that would impress one's employer. Specifically, Formal emails and speech will be the most crucial. Although a good knowledge of the other competencies that an employer is looking for will allow one to answer the interviewers question in a way that will impress him or her.

Recommendations:

How can the current DMC Unit be improved?

The university is currently providing a variety of options available to student who want to improve themselves. A 'faculty of management personal skills audit' form was provided within the first week of the first semester during and introductory session. This form was filled in during class with the tutor, allowing students to assess themselves. The form also provides suggestions to increase these skills and competencies which the tutor encouraged his students to choose at least one. Although this method is best at allowing an organised and motivated student to develop themselves, during the first week of university many students are not organised and motivated. Also due to the fact that many students succumb to 'fresher flu' or other illnesses during the first weeks, the DMC unit could improve its current method by the repeated mention of this form, either by email or in class. However the university could also provide additional workshops to provide students with the knowledge, to both write and speak in a more formal manner. The university currently provides many opportunities to practice communication such as; writing for nerve magazine, becoming a pal leader or student ambassador or by allowing them to volunteer to present during group exercises.

Furthermore the current group exercises conducted during the DMC unit could be used as a tool to develop the students' skills by teaching students essential skills that will be used during the exercises prior to the exercises themselves and highlight the importance of these skills. Also the DMC unit could provide an easily accessible and knowledgeable member of staff that could be utilised for guidance during these exercises.

Appendices

Method x:

1. Define and clarify the issue - does it warrant action? If so, now? Is the matter urgent, important or both.
2. Gather all the facts and understand their causes.
3. Think about or brainstorm possible options and solutions.
4. Consider and compare the 'pros and cons' of each option - consult others if necessary or useful - and for bigger complex decisions where there are several options, create a template which enables measurements according to different strategic factors
5. Select the best option - avoid vagueness and weak compromises in trying to please everyone.
6. Explain your decision to those involved and affected, and follow up to ensure proper and effective implementation.

Table x:

	mon	tues	wed	thur	fri
am	1. check emails, post, initial response. 2. review last week reports 3. department meeting 4. agency meeting 5. check emails	1. check emails etc. 2. staff appraisal 1 3. staff matters arising time-slot 4. project time-slot 5. check emails	1. check emails. 2. chase figures for weekly report 3. strategy meeting 4. process review time-slot 5. check emails	1. check emails 2. my appraisal 3. staff appraisal 4. staff appraisal 5. check emails	1. check emails 2. weekly report 3. conference planning 4. unresolved non-urgent issues 5. phone calls 6. check emails
lunch	• with agency	• project team working lunch	• with customer	• with appraisee	• with boss
pm	1. return phone calls 2. emergency situations time-slot 3. reading monthly reports 4. appraisals preparation 5. check emails and	1. supplier visit 1 2. supplier visit 2 3. major phone calls 4. check emails 5. thinking time-slot for new strategy project	1. customer visit 2. customer visit 3. my appraisal preparation 4. check emails 5. phone calls and correspondence	1. emergencies time-slot 2. systems and process review time-slot 3. weekly report preparation 4. check emails	1. agenda for next week dept meeting 2. plan next week's schedule 3. spare time-slot for staff issues 4. check emails 5. clear up outstanding issues

	initial responses			

Bibliography:

Author: Roxanne Chand

Article title: Top 10 skills that'll get you a job when you graduate

Name of website: Targetjobs

Year of publication: 2014

Full URL: https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/career-planning/273051-the-top-10-skills-thatll-get-you-a-job-when-you-graduate

Date last visited: 1/11/2015

Author: Kaplan

Article title: Graduate Recruitment Report: employer perspectives

Name of website: Kaplan

Year of publication: 2014

Full URL: http://www.kaplan.co.uk/docs/default-source/pdfs/graduate_recruitment_report.pdf?sfvrsn=2

Date last visited: 22/10/2015

Author: Judey Anne Cavey

Article title: Competencies employers want

Name of website: Studentmentor

Year of publication: 2010

Full URL: http://www.studentmentor.org/blog/2010/11/what-and-employer-wants/

Date last visited: 5/11/2015

Author: Dr Tim McMahon

Article title: The 12 essentials for success, Competencies employers seek in College graduates

Name of website: Holden leadership centre

Year of publication: 2009

Full URL: http://leadership.uoregon.edu/events/world_series/twelve_essentials_for_success

Date last visited: 25/10/2015

Author: Mcain

Book title: what skills students need in the 21st century

Year of publication: 2006

Pages: P7-10

Date last visited: 28/10/2015

Author: Mcain

Article title: What skills students need in the 21st century

Year of publication: 2006

Pages: P7-10

Date last visited: 28/10/2015

Author: business balls

Article title: Problem solving

Name of website: Business balls

Year of publication: 2014

Full URL: http://www.businessballs.com/problemsolving.htm

Date last visited: 29/10/2015

Author: Matt Mckay

Article title: communication skills

Name of website: Small business

Year of publication: 2012

Full URL: http://smallbusiness.chron.com/effective-business-communication-skills-2865.html

Date last visited: 30/10/2015

Author: business balls

Article title: time management

Name of website: business balls

Year of publication: 2014

Full URL: http://www.businessballs.com/timemanagement.htm

Date last visited: 01/11/2015

Author: Brain Hill

Article Title: the advantages of ethical behaviour in business

Year of publication: 2013

Full URL: http://smallbusiness.chron.com/advantages-ethical-behavior-business-21067.html

Date last visited: 02/11/2015

Author: Melissa Cooper

Article: Examples of good business behaviour

Year of publication: 2014

Full URL: http://smallbusiness.chron.com/examples-good-employee-behavior-13805.html.

Date last visited: 27/10/2015

Author: Tatyana Sussex

Article: 5 ways to create a positive working environment

Year of publication: 2014

Full URL: http://www.liquidplanner.com/blog/5-ways-to-create-a-positive-work-environment

Date last visited: 24/10/2015