



Responding to Employers: Moving into the Mainstream

**An Employer Engagement & Employability
Conference**

Friday 11th June 2010

Julia Pointon



Research Background

- Four Stages
- November 2006 Expectations (Int's)
- November 2007 Experiences (Diaries)
- July 2008 Reflections (Int's)
- July 2009 Employers (Int's)
- Employers in India & Ghana (Range)
- 12 interviews in India (one telephone)
- 15 interviews in Ghana



The Presentation: An Overview

- Background to the Research
- Skills Sought by Employers
- Demands of the Curriculum
- Questions, Comments, Contributions

Employers Included:



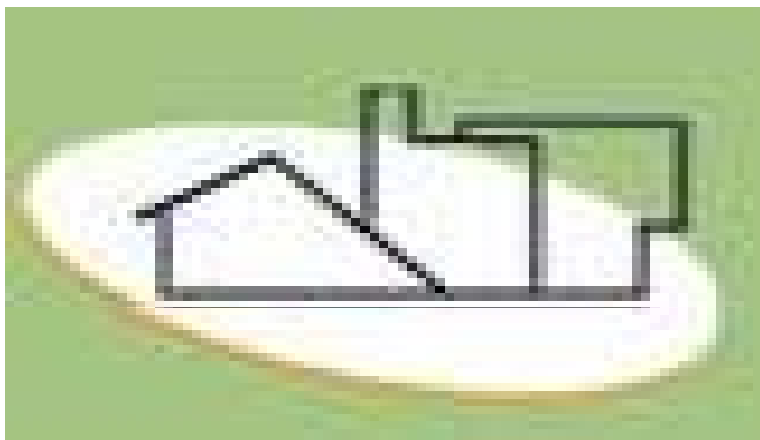
Others:

International Careers Education Company

Venture Capital Company

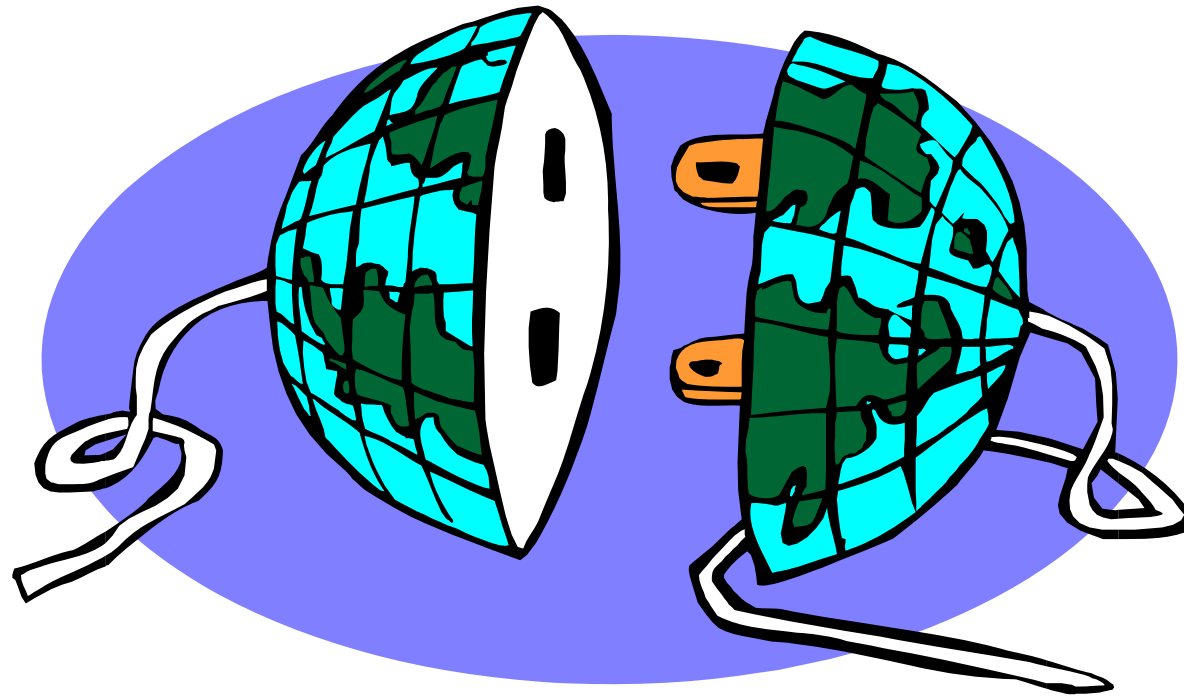


ABP Consult Engineers



Construction Company

General Global Business Awareness



Basic Business Principles, in particular a fundamental grasp of Finance, Accounting, & Marketing and the Integration of the Elements



Skills Sought by Employers

- Cultural Adaptation: Respect for Religion, Culture, Challenge Stereotypes – i.e. the role of Education, Children and Women in Society
- Practical Application of Learning: Oversight, Responsive, Change Orientated
- International Orientation: Global, Macro Level Understanding of Business Issues
- Political Skills: National & Local, Democratic Process, Leadership, Self, Team, Profession

Personal Professionalism



Personal Professionalism: affects the bottom line



Skills Sought by Employers

- Professional & High Quality: Appearance, Time Management, Attitudes, Ethical Probity
- Research Skills: Market Intelligence, Customer Profiles, Product Launches, R&D Investment
- Enquiring Mind: Analytical Skills, Ability to Present Data, Write Concise Reports, Deliver Effective Presentations
- Interpersonal Skills: Self Motivation, Confidence, 1:1, Colleagues, Customer Service, Situations

Ability to Learn



Personal Responsibility for Learning and Knowledge Generation and Transfer



Skills Sought by Employers

- Ability to Learn: From Others & Share Own Learning, Knowledge Transfer, Learning Organization, Personal Reflection, Listening Skills, Pushing Boundaries, Show Initiative
- Emotional Maturity & Intelligence: Self Knowledge, Scoping Skills, Humility, Deal with Failure, Avoid a Silo Mentality
- IT Literacy & Proficiency: Excel, Access, Dream Weaver

Greater Integration of Elements



The Curriculum needs to Emphasise the Holistic Interdependence of ALL the Modules



Demands from the Curriculum

- **Greater Integration and Emphasis:**
Of the links between elements of the curriculum so students are much more aware of the integrated nature and relationships between functions – i.e.
 - Marketing and Business Strategy
 - Health and Safety, Reputational Capital, Contract Procurement and Investment
 - Work Place Behaviours and Social Responsibility
 - Time and Money

International Aspects are key



Increasing need to recognise International Issues and Diversity



Demands from the Curriculum

- **Application to International Contexts:**
Need a Reorientation of the continuing emphasis on a Western predicated Curriculum – Texts, Case Studies from Multi National Blue Chip Organizations, Limited Recognition of Cultural Diversity, Limited Recognition or incorporation of a Geographic, Political, Tribal, Gendered, Hierarchical, Caste Based, Discriminatory, Illiterate, Disaster or Corrupt Business Reality

Working with Employers



Working in close association with Employers provides a real life exposure



Demands from the Curriculum

- **Project Links with Employers:**
 - Involved in an on going dialogue over a semester or more during which students work on particular aspects of a business development
- **Scenario Planning using REAL Case Studies:**
 - Use examples that are live, current and reflect immediate concerns – implications for regency of curriculum content and facility to update on a frequent basis

Entrepreneurship Skills



Developing Entrepreneurship skills through Business Simulation, actual or Community Projects



Demands from the Curriculum

Entrepreneurship Skills:

- Opportunities to understand and to engage with Business Generation – Simulation, Risk Assessment, Project Management, Long Term

- **Finance, Marketing and Political Skills:**

- All Sectors – Public, Voluntary, Commercial
- Campus Elections

- **Language Skills:**

- French, German, Spanish

Community Engagement



Business Skills and Personal Value gained from working within
the Local Community



Demands from the Curriculum

- **Links with the Local Community**
 - Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
 - Demonstrates Initiative & Personal Acumen
 - Action & Outcome Orientated
 - Public 'Professional' Profile (i.e. not a student)
 - Cultural Awareness
 - Allied Business Skills if Project Based
 - Ability to Solve Problems
 - Team Orientated Activity

Developing Personal Skills



Developing a range of Personal and Interpersonal Skills that permit humility, questioning and an ability to be realistic about oneself



Demands from the Curriculum

- **Personal Skills:**

- *“Mediocrity is the norm in Ghana”* – UK Faculty to always push for more
- Challenge Cultural self fulfilling Prophecy of *“No success is the result of not being as developed”* – Level Playing Field
- Ability to manage failure – *“In the UK Education System the Minimum is fast becoming the Maximum”*
- Networking – *“It must be more than just ‘Group Work’”*
- *“Need to see things from the Perspective of another Person”*: Role Play, Drama, Acting Skills



Demands from the Curriculum

- *“Young Graduates of today have a misplaced notion of their value and their actual contribution – they need to be more realistic”*
- *“The Graduates of the UK today - they come in with all the answers but not the questions”*