

Using Businesses and Charities to augment student learning

Examples in enterprise and strategic
management



In this session.....

- We want to share our experiences and practice in delivering undergraduate modules in enterprise and strategic management utilising partnerships we have with charities and businesses
- To outline what we are trying to do
- How we are trying to do it
- Reflect on the outcomes

Entrepreneurial Creativity and Innovation: doing what it says on the tin!

- The module team wanted students to be able to practice enterprise and engage in creative activities
- Lourenco and Jones (2006) suggest entrepreneurs learn primarily through learning-by-doing and reflection. They cite Cope and Watts (2000) and Deaking and Freel (1998) 'learning by copying and opportunity taking; and learning from making mistakes' Gibb (1997).
- Raising funds for local charities proved most opportune, they are always looking for people to help and institutionally the least contentious route, it is difficult to disagree with a good cause
- It provided a degree of creative freedom, was not resource or time hungry and introduced the students to the third sector. Lourenco and Jones (2006) less than 3% of HEI's made use of action/experiential learning which are regarded as 'the most effective route to entrepreneurial education' (McKeown 2006; Pittaway and Cope 2006)



Designing a curriculum for enterprise

- A shift from a transmission model (learning about) to an experiential model (learning for)
- Learning that is centred on investigating *'real'* problems and opportunities (not necessarily discipline focused).
- Student project-based learning involving independent and team based investigation and presentation of solutions.
- Experiential, practice-based, work/ community located learning opportunities



Designing a curriculum for enterprise

- On-going Personal development and self assessment.
- Charity partners, practitioners and entrepreneurs contributing to the learning experience.
- Conditions of risk, uncertainty and ambiguity introduced into the learning and assessment process to develop students' judgement.
- Affective learning being valued as much as cognitive learning.

Using fundraising to introduce students to the experience of enterprise and enable them to assess and evaluate their entrepreneurial potential 'in action'



We work with 4 charity partners for an assessment

- The students have to form groups
- Come up with fundraising ideas using creative thinking techniques
- Pitch the ideas to the charities
- Then make them happen.....



The relationship

- We have jointly produced guide lines for fundraising and pro forma documents the students must complete and get signed off
- Charity partners regularly engage with us as mentors for the groups at weekly workshops
- We celebrate the student's success together
- This year we raised over £27,000, taking our cumulative impact to over £130,000

Benefits - students

- Students were the decision makers and were active
- They began to understand why the third sector exists, why it is likely to grow in significance and the opportunities it might offer for them – ‘The Big Society’?
- A vehicle for the release of creativity
- An opportunity to assess and take risks in a structured environment
- Confidence, initiative and experience
- Learning by doing
- Adding CV value
- Understanding of the principles and practice of fundraising
- They now achieve a Volunteering award and an Employability award as part of the module



Active learning

- The students were enthused, had to make real things happen, many were moved out of their comfort zone and had to change their modus operandi.
- They had to take decisions and evaluate risks, contact and negotiate with third parties, plan and implement.
- Their creativity was challenged throughout, they had to deliver an exhibition of their efforts and assess and reflect on their entrepreneurial potential through their research and experience.



Benefits - Charities

- £130,000+ in terms of funds raised
- The local charities were able to spread their message
- To engage with demographic segments and community groups outside their normal sectors
- The opportunities to 'capture' activists and fund raisers at an earlier stage of their lifecycle

Benefits – Business School

- We produce better rounded, more confident and more competent graduates that enhance our reputation
- The opportunity for the university to stimulate active involvement, giving back
- It strengthened partnerships with business and third sector organisations and provides a good PR message
- Given all the above we felt this activity was win-win for all partners

Does it work? Yes according to our student feedback



•Clarity of module aims and learning outcomes?

Structure and quality of content?

Classroom sessions/ lecturer?

Support for learning out of the classroom (e.g. WOLF?)

Clarity of assessment criteria and tasks?

Feedback/ Discussion with tutor in class or online?

Contribution of this module to my overall programme of study?

Value of this module to my knowledge, practical skills and general learning?

Enjoyment of the learning experience?

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor
16	25	20	2	0
13	30	20	1	0
22	18	15	7	1
20	22	20	6	0
13	25	19	8	0
13	19	16	12	1
16	28	15	5	0
20	29	19	1	0
17	28	15	1	0



For Strategic Management...Martson's plc

- We wanted to give the module a distinct Wolverhampton flavour
- Marston's Brewery has been based in the city since 1875, the HQ for a FTSE 250 company employing 13,000 with a turnover of £800m
- Plus their products are often well known to students!



We bring in guest speakers at Director level for 2 mass lectures with Q&A

- To identify the key external factors impacting on the organisation and the transmission mechanisms of the impact. Evaluating opportunities and threats
- To assess their strengths and weaknesses via internal audit.
- To identify how they developed a strategy based on this analysis



Building a case study example

- Effectively we build a real life strategic management case study through the use of guest speakers, with the support of industry research reports
- The students learn from this and then apply it to their organisation in their industries
- But because of the seniority of the people who we use and the fact that they are practitioners for a key local organisation, the students are more focused and enthused, and we achieve a buy in we wouldn't otherwise get.



It makes it real

- The students see and hear and can ask questions of real people who work for a real organisation
- Thank you