



Unlock Success Together

Creating a Mutually
Positive Employer
Engagement Framework

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So why is employer engagement so important and how does it align with the Network?

Introduction

Importance of Employer Engagement

For an Education Provider:

- Relevance of Curriculum: Engaging with employers ensures that educational programs align with industry needs, keeping the curriculum current and relevant.
- Work-Based Learning Opportunities: Collaboration with employers provides students with practical experience through internships, apprenticeships, and projects, enhancing their employability skills.
- Employability Skills Development: Understanding employer expectations helps educators incorporate skill development opportunities that are in demand in the job market, preparing students for successful careers.
- Industry Partnerships: Building strong relationships with employers can lead to partnerships for research, funding, and guest lectures, enriching the learning experience for students.
- Graduate Employment Rates: By fostering strong connections with employers, educational institutions can improve graduate employment rates, demonstrating the value of their programs and attracting more students.

For an Employer:

- Access to Talent Pipeline: Engaging with education providers allows employers to access a pool of skilled graduates who are well-prepared for the workforce, reducing recruitment costs and improving the quality of hires.
- Influence on Curriculum: By actively participating in discussions with educational institutions, employers can shape and influence the curriculum to ensure it meets industry standards and addresses specific skill requirements.
- Employee Development: Collaboration with education providers can lead to customized training programs and workshops tailored to the company's needs, fostering continuous employee development and upskilling.
- Brand Image and Recruitment: Demonstrating a commitment to engaging with educational institutions enhances an employer's reputation as a socially responsible and forward-thinking organization, making it more attractive to potential employees.
- Innovation and Knowledge Sharing: Partnering with education providers facilitates knowledge exchange and innovation, allowing employers to stay abreast of the latest trends and developments in their industry, leading to continuous improvement and growth.



What key questions will shape a robust employer engagement strategy?

Group Task: Consider the question posed, and feedback...

Some examples might include:

What are the organisation's specific goals and objectives for engaging with employers?

What are the key needs and priorities of the employers we aim to engage with?

How can we measure the success of our employer engagement efforts?

How will we build and maintain relationships with a diverse range of employers?

What resources, support, and incentives can we offer to encourage active employer participation?

How will we ensure effective communication and collaboration between educational institutions, employers, and other stakeholders?

How can we continuously improve and innovate our employer engagement initiatives?

Developing the Strategy

The 'Why'

- *Relevance and Currency*
- *Employability*
- *Workforce Development*
- *Innovation and Research*
- *Graduate Employment*

But what about the 'How'

Group task: On your tables, list the factors in order of completion / priority as you see them, that will support the creation of a good 'strategy'.

Group Feedback

The 'How'

Examples...



Identify Key Stakeholders:

Determine the key stakeholders within both the education provider and employer organizations who will play integral roles in the engagement process.



Establish Clear Objectives:

Define specific goals and objectives for the engagement strategy, outlining what both parties aim to achieve through collaboration.



Develop a Communication

Plan: Create a structured communication plan to facilitate regular interaction, feedback exchange, and updates between the education provider and employers.



Create Mutual Benefit:

Identify ways to create mutual benefit for both parties, such as offering internships, industry projects, or research collaborations that fulfill the needs of both sides.



Implement Feedback

Mechanisms: Set up feedback mechanisms to gather input from employers and educational stakeholders, enabling continuous improvement and adjustment of the engagement strategy.



Provide Training and

Support: Offer training sessions, workshops, or resources to help employers understand the educational institution's programs and vice versa, promoting effective collaboration.



Measure Success:

Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of the engagement strategy, tracking metrics such as student placements, employer satisfaction, and program relevance.

Measuring Success

*Why is measuring
success so important?*



Measuring Success

- **First**, its not just measuring our 'success'.
- **Second**, its about measuring success (and failures) and tracking progress.

Methods for Measuring Success:

- **Surveys and Feedback**: Conduct regular surveys and feedback sessions with both employers and educational stakeholders to gather insights on their satisfaction levels, areas of improvement, and suggestions for enhancement.
- **Performance Metrics**: Utilise quantitative data such as the number of internships, apprenticeships, or industry projects secured through the engagement framework to gauge the level of industry involvement and opportunities provided to students.
- **Retention and Placement Rates**: Track the retention rates of students involved in IP/work-based learning opportunities facilitated by employers, as well as the percentage of graduates successfully placed in relevant positions within the industry.
- **Collaboration Initiatives**: Measure the frequency and depth of collaboration initiatives between employers and education providers, such as joint research projects, curriculum co-development, or industry advisory board meetings.
- **Quality of Partnerships**: Evaluate the quality of partnerships based on factors like the level of employer involvement, the diversity of industries represented, and the longevity of relationships established.
- **Employer Satisfaction**: Collect feedback from employers regarding their satisfaction with the quality of graduates, the relevance of educational programs, and the overall impact of engagement activities on their organisations.
- **Student Outcomes**: Monitor student outcomes such as post-graduation employment rates, job placement in relevant fields, and feedback on the practical and industry-relevant skills acquired through engagement opportunities.

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Key Metrics for Tracking Progress:

- **Number of Industry Partners**: Measure the growth in the number of active industry partners engaged in collaborative initiatives with the educational institution.
- **Student Participation Rates**: Track the percentage of students participating in work-based learning opportunities, internships, or industry projects facilitated through employer engagement.
- **Employer Engagement Duration**: Monitor the longevity of partnerships with employers to assess the sustainability and continuity of engagement efforts over time.
- **Skill Development Impact**: Quantify the impact of engagement activities on students' skill development, competency enhancement, and readiness for the workforce based on employer feedback and student performance indicators.
- **Employer Feedback Scores**: Assign numerical ratings or scores to employer feedback regarding the effectiveness, relevance, and value of engagement initiatives, providing a quantitative measure of satisfaction and impact.

Enjoying the Benefits

Part a:

Share with your colleagues on the table, an instance where employer / provider engagement has gone particularly well for you and your organization:

- *How did you develop that relationship?,*
- *What made it so good?,*
- *How did you know it was good?*

Part b:

Share with your colleagues on the table:

- *What you feel you do particularly well regarding employer engagement?,*
- *What (if anything) have you learnt from the session?,*
- *And one key takeaway.*

Thinking differently



Thank you for your participation.



Hopefully, you can take something away from the session to implement in your own workplaces.



It would be great if you could share your experience of this session via a LinkedIn post