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Conference or Workshop Item

Title: Using a joined up approach to get the message across regarding work experience and placements, with a view to enhancing student's employability

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Example citation: Anderson, M. (2013) Using a joined up approach to get the message across regarding work experience and placements, with a view to enhancing student's employability. Workshop presented to: *Enhancing Employability through Placements in Higher Education, University of Huddersfield, 09 July 2013.*

Version: Presented version

Official URL: <http://www.hud.ac.uk/uhs/businessschool-events/enhancingemployability/>

<http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/6013/>





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Session Aim

Using a joined up approach to get the message across regarding work experience and placements, with a view to enhancing student's employability.

To share good practice in relation to a joined up approach between academics and placement support services at Northampton Business School.

The Idea



A lecture style session has been delivered to all first year students, on a HR module in the business school ,highlighting the employability research, using models such as the Career Edge Model (2007) .

This session is used to highlight the importance of an extensive period of work experience and the positive impact that this is reported to have on employer selection processes and decisions.

What we Did

The session and the research is strengthened and supported with an analysis of current graduate vacancies and expectations in order to embed the reality of their future career opportunities and employer expectations.



HRM1002 Employability

Importance:

Personal – For you as a
future graduate employee

Professional – As a future
Employer



HRM 1002 What do Employers Want????

There are various attributes or behaviours that are common in the research around what employers are looking for. The Career Edge Model has been designed around this body of research.



The Career EDGE Model (Dacre & Sewell 2007)



Dacre Pool & Sewell (2007)

Experience

- According to The Pedagogy for Employability Group (2004), it is broadly agreed that graduates with work experience are more likely to secure employment than graduates without.



A joined up message

This lecture session is then followed up by a seminar session which is run as a team effort between the placement office, the careers service, volunteering services and enterprise services. All of these services offer work place guidance and opportunities for students.



Student Reflections



“On the 9th of November I had a lecture with Maggie Anderson about Employability. It really opened up my eyes on life as a whole. What do I want in life and how I’m going to get there? Assessing deeply into what traits I have and ones I do not. It was explained in depth what employers want including diagrams The Career Edge Model (Dacre & Sewell 2007). “

Student Reflections



“I decided to do further research within Employability to know exactly what I need to change in myself to get the job I want.”

“To make myself more comfortable in an interview I can research the most common questions asked and build template answers and know exactly what I’m saying.”

Student Reflections



“Through further research I found that there is/ has been research to support that students who graduate who have had work experience are more employable than those who have not “

“Reflecting on this I knew that I needed to get more experience as I have no experience in the type of career I want (human resources). “

Student Reflections



“I decided I would take the initiative and apply for jobs locally by handing my CV out to places and checking other different advertisements”

“I feel as if I have a lot of work to do to deem myself a strong candidate than others, as there are more people passing their courses and getting good grades, I need to stand out in different ways “

Outcomes

This session has resulted in an increase in students declaring an interest in a year's placement or other work experience and related opportunities.

However this has not translated into actual placements. 😞

Placement office report around 200 students declaring initial interest but only around 10% follow the entire process to completion.

Outcomes

This type of session is now being considered for delivery to all students within the business school.



Conclusions

The joined up approach leads to greater understanding of employability issues for students and academics.

Collaboration and a joined up message leads to an interest in work placements and work experience.

However , this interest does not translate into university supported placements.

Questions

