Building industry links to improve student employability

A case study from a private provider

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Overview

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- The Employability Agenda – My understanding
- Overview of LSBF
- How we build links with employers
- Key Account Management
- Overview of 360 programmes
- Training Credits

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The Employability Agenda (1)

- Employability Agenda is very much high on the HE & political agenda – has been for the past few years
- However, there is a great deal of “inequality in terms of provision of and resource for employability support” – (HEA summit 2012)
- No consistency across HE sector with employability initiatives
- Engaging students and employers with employability remains a challenge and defining what is meant by employability is still a very much a big issue for HE institutions

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The Employability Agenda – key questions: (2)

- We have all read many reports and publications on what constitutes employability: employment stats vs. skills development? or both?
- Do universities have an obligation to find students jobs? Many in this room might disagree
- Given increased competition in the UK HE market – what are universities doing differently, value added?
- Can anything be learned from the Private HE sector on employability initiatives?
- Should university career service departments move more away from CEIAG activities (leave this to faculty) and focus purely on recruitment, is this justified?

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The Employability Agenda (3)

"To be employed is to be at risk. To be employable is to be secure" The Art of Building Windmills, Dr Peter Hawkins (1999)

"Every full time undergraduate student should have the opportunity to experience a structured, university approved internship during their period of study" (Wilson report Feb 2012)

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- Private provider of Higher Education & professional qualifications
- Founded in 2003
- 5 campuses worldwide: London, Manchester, Birmingham, Toronto & Singapore
- 20,000 students
- Students from over 150 countries – diverse
- Online learning platform, powered by Interactive
- Leading provider of professional business qualifications in the UK (ACCA, CIMA, CFA, CIM)
- Partnered with: Grenoble Graduate School of Business, Bradford University, UCLAN

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How are we building links with employers at LSBF?

- One corporate development strategy
- Key Account Management
- 360 programme for UG & PG
- Joint Recruitment Plans – A tangible tool to get buy in and commitment
- Training credits – partnership with executive education

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Key Account Management – One Corporate Development Strategy

- Many institutions still struggle to engage with employers in having one point of contact within client organisations

- Having multiple contact point of contacts creates inconsistency and issues with clients

- In 2010 LSBF integrated the Careers & Corporate Development departments - now have one committee and key account execs/managers looking after our clients

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Corporate Development Structure

- One committee: Meets once a month to discuss all corporate development activities within the school in the UK & Globally: CEO, Head of Marketing, Head of Careers, Exec Education, Faculty Management teams- Discuss key accounts and identify new business opportunities
- One person owns the relationship within the organisation for each key client – they don’t necessarily have to work in the careers/corporate teams. We have about 100 key clients we work with globally

LSBF Key Account Model:

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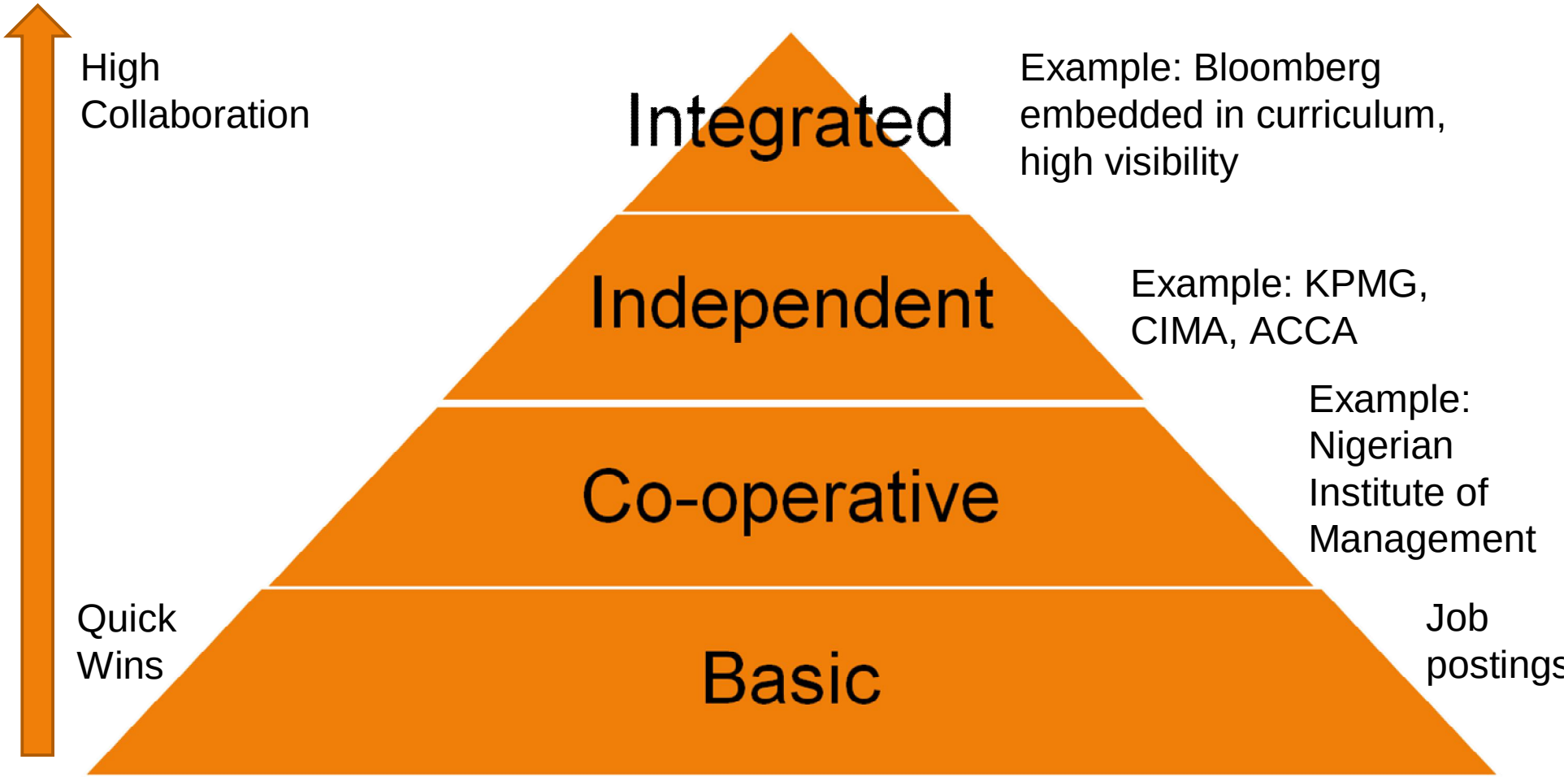

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LSBF 360 programme

- Designed in response to market concerns about the lack of soft & hard skills that new graduates bring with them
- Helping differentiate LSBF from other providers
- Increasing our chances of attracting the brightest candidates
- Developing long lasting partnerships with employers

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LSBF 360 programme

- 360 gives students a clear pathway to achieve their Career Goals
- 360 is an innovative Programme which combines:
  - Degree course
  - Professional Qualification Component
  - Graduate / Executive Development Programme
- Leads students directly to Guaranteed Employment
- 360 is academically intense

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LSBF 360 programme:

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Training Credits

- Partner with executive education team at LSBF
- Offer clients the opportunity to obtain training credits in exchange for taking on interns, offering projects and placements and FT jobs
- Example: Big oil & gas company in the CIS region, agreed to take on 10 interns within all areas of their business in return we offered them credits for life long learning courses/exec education courses on our online systems or in person
- Win for LSBF : engaging with middle managers within this organisation as well as helping with their talent needs leading to long lasting relationships

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Joint Recruitment Plans

- Organisations to sign a one page document on their plans of action with LSBF – helps with commitment, transparency and planning
- Example: KMPG has agreed to come to campus to present, provide speakers, sponsorship for finance clubs and recruit students
- Bloomberg- BAT testing and recruitment drives, put into writing and agreed upon
- CIMA – undertaking a range of employability enhancement workshops – again, signed and agreed upon

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Conclusion:

- Given an insight of how a Private Higher Education provider tackles employability issues
- Some new perspectives of developing employer links to enhance student employability

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END

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