



SIG 06 - INNO - Innovation

With our theme **Exploring the Future of Management: Facts, Fashion and Fado**, we invite you to participate in the debate about how to explore the future of management. We look forward to receiving your submissions.

ST06_02 - Competency Development in Business Management: Improvement through Higher Education

Proponents:

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Short description:

Companies today are part of more complex and dynamic environments than ever, and this calls for new competencies for managers. Higher education must deal with this challenge, ensuring that students acquire appropriate competencies and that are trained in order to be able to continue learning throughout their lives. There are certain crucial competencies, skills and abilities: capacity for innovation, leadership, decision-making in uncertain circumstances, teamwork, conflict management and, above all, the ability to acquire and generate knowledge. The purpose of the track is to propose and analyze avenues for the development in higher education of skills related to business management.

Long description:

Companies today are part of more complex and dynamic environments than ever. This calls for flexible and multidisciplinary management and new competencies for managers. Universities must face up to this challenge in order to develop professional student competencies in consonance with demands on company workforces. The European Commission has placed universities at the centre of Europe's 'knowledge triangle' of research, education and innovation, areas which are seen as being the key drivers for a knowledge-based society (Humburg, 2013). But are they succeeding? What makes the difference? How can improvements be made?

The European university system has reflected on this in depth and has carried out reforms to develop and evaluate the acquisition of skills. EHEA has been the most important reform in this regard, and the AHELO project is a prime example of increased concern about higher education learning outcomes, understanding that competencies are the heart of those outcomes (Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia et al., 2015).

Nevertheless, there seems to be a gap between the competencies acquired in higher education and those required in the workplace (Teijeiro et al., 2013). Therefore, higher education must develop new orientations toward competencies with a twofold purpose.



Firstly, in order to improve employability: graduates who have gained a competencies profile that matches the set of requisite competencies for companies are more likely to find employment. Secondly, in order to improve efficiency in business management: managers need to have appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA), and transferable and multifunctional KSAs which can be applied across a variety of work and life contexts. Establish the best combination of competencies is no easy task, but there is broad agreement about some crucial KSAs for successful management: flexibility and adaptability are required for the management of increasing uncertainty; innovation and knowledge management skills are needed for dealing with the ICT revolution; leadership and entrepreneurship are essential in order to face economic structural changes; teamwork ability and efficient conflict management are crucial in complex and international business projects. The crux of the issue is the ability to learn and generate knowledge. Overall, universities around the world are increasingly required to train highly skilled students able to deal with and adapt to any contingency in their workplace. So the purpose of the track is to propose and analyze avenues for the development in higher education of competencies related to business management.

Keywords:

Competencies in management
Higher Education
Lifelong learning
Employability
KSAs

Publication Outlet:

Cuadernos de Gestión
International Journal for Academic Development
Investigaciones Europeas de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa

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