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The State, Impact and Future of Canada's Business Schools

Introduction to a Recently Launched Research Project

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The Conference Board

- A not-for-profit Canadian organization that takes a business-like approach to its operations.
- Objective and non-partisan. We do not lobby for specific interests.
- Funded exclusively through the fees we charge for services to the private and public sectors.
- Experts in running conferences but also at conducting, publishing and disseminating research, helping people network, developing individual leadership skills and building organizational capacity.
- Specialists in economic trends, as well as organizational performance and public policy issues.
- Not a government department or agency, although we are often hired to provide services for all levels of government.
- Independent from, but affiliated with, The Conference Board, Inc. of New York, which serves nearly 2,000 companies in 60 nations and has offices in Brussels and Hong Kong.



The Centre for Skills and Post-Secondary Education

- 5 year initiative to examine the advanced skills and education challenges facing Canada.
- Investors include post-secondary institutions and other public and private sector organizations.



Centre for Skills and Post-Secondary Education

Goals

1. Create a Skills and SPSE Strategy for Canada that embodies a shared vision for the future of PSE in Canada.
2. Track and report on the system's performance in achieving the Strategy's vision and goals.



Centre for Skills and Post-Secondary Education

Goals

3. Build a strong empirical base and foster dialogue among skills and PSE stakeholders to generate common understanding, shared purpose and collaborative action.
4. Raise public awareness of the nature and importance of skills and the PSE sector to Canada's economy, society, and culture.



Objectives of this Project

- Review activities of business schools in public universities, colleges, polytechnics, and institutes
- Present a clearer picture of Canadian business school performance at present, what the future state of business school activity should look like, and what is needed to achieve stronger outcomes.
- To examine connections between research and teaching activities
- To examine connection with national performance in innovation, commercialization, productivity, entrepreneurship, and skills development
- It will *not* provide a ranking of Canadian business schools



Context of Project

- Canada's b-schools have achieved world class excellence in research, and produced graduates taking positions of leadership in a range of businesses and organizations
- Canada's performance in innovation and commercialization has been weak, and potentially impacting our economy
- Different explanations considered, but large residual may be related to management and possible weaknesses in that area.
- View that Canada's performance shows a deficit in managerial talent relative to international competitors, and poor knowledge transfer to industry and society.



Concerns Expressed in Other Studies

- Employers struggle to find people with the right skills in business and management
- Some have voiced concerns about the *quality* of graduates' essential skills (i.e. critical thinking, communication, and entrepreneurial skills)
- Research insights not finding their way to practitioners, or lack relevance for them



Scope of Project

- The project is approximately 18 months long, and will cover a range of business schools and their activity
- Type of School: Colleges, Polytechnics, Institutes, Universities
- Programs: From Certificates, Diplomas and Bachelors Degrees to Masters, MBAs, and Doctorates – including some mixed programs with business requirements
- Research and commercialization: Basic, Applied, Consulting, and the commercialization or transfer of knowledge to industry



Main Questions to be Explored

- What is the current state and impact of b-schools' research activities?
- What is the current state and impact of b-schools' teaching activities?
- How does teaching and research performance compare to Canada's expectations and needs?
- What opportunities are available for b-schools to enhance research to better contribute to economy?
- What opportunities are there to enhance teaching and skills development?
- What models of excellence in teaching and research are available (and appropriate)? Both in Canada and internationally?
- What resources are available, and which are necessary to have b-schools achieve their aims?



Perspectives to be Considered

- School Perspectives – Deans and high-level administration, as well as faculty
- Employers – companies or organizations that would potentially be hiring b-school graduates
- Graduates – In particular focusing on those 3-5 years after graduation



Methodology

Will involve a number of steps and activities:

- Literature Review
- Data Collection and Analysis*
- Surveys – Industry, B-schools, Graduates*
- Interviews*
- Entrepreneur-Start-up Consultations
- Curriculum Review
- Examination of Different Initiatives

***We could use your help!**



Interested in Our Study?

- If you are interested in learning more about our study, participating in terms of providing access to data or people, or as an investor, please see me or contact me.
- My contact information:
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