

Excellence in Business School Teaching

**Insights and recommendations
for faculty, deans and directors**

By Julian Rawel with Alf Crossman

marketechoes

The rise and rise of the business school

Over the last 20 years the march of the business school has been relentless. Despite recessions and increased competition, there has been a seemingly unstoppable growth in the sector. From a start in the 1970s there are now around 16,000 business schools worldwide.

This seemingly unstoppable march is now under threat. MBA programmes are closing. Online learning, much from corporate rather than academic centres, is becoming a serious threat and with ever increasing fees at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, students are demanding more – more value for money and more relevance to their current or future careers.

And with the growing influence of social media, potential students are searching wider than official rankings. They can find views on everything from business school facilities to pass rates to the quality of teaching in an instant.

This e-book – it's about the quality of teaching

Until recently, business schools were ranked almost entirely by the quality of their research. That is changing. Teaching is about to take centre-stage - or at least become as important as research. Yet there is little practical help around to help academics become world class teachers. Most are just expected to be able to teach.

I've been teaching at business schools since the late 1990s. My teaching followed a very successful commercial career and, for most of the teaching period I have pursued my commercial activities alongside my academic ones. I've taught in some nine countries, at MBA, MSc, UG and executive levels and received consistently high teaching scores.

Throughout this time I've been fascinated by the practice of business school teaching. Which colleagues really create that fantastic buzz amongst their students? And for those who don't, why not?

I've been frequently asked to share my views – what makes students really value business school teaching? How can faculty be better or even better? And importantly, how can business schools compete in this ever more competitive environment? There have been so many instances where comments or experience have encouraged me to probe, to think more deeply about this important area of education.

So for this e-book, I have carried out research, interviewed top academic teachers and shared my own insights and war stories. I have resisted the temptation to cite from the variety of texts on the subject (such as Ken Bain's excellent "What the best college teachers do") – I want this publication to be more personal. I am grateful to all those who have shared so generously their stories and feedback and to my partner in this project, Alf Crossman.

Do share your own stories and tips – and we'd love to know which stories or tips have been the most helpful.



JULIAN RAWEL
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julian Rawel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

How we can help achieve business school teaching excellence - the Market Echoes formula

This e-book is available as a free download. We hope it contributes to teaching excellence.

We are passionate about helping faculty to deliver the very best business school teaching every time.

A complementary service is our "bite size" one hour workshops which cover the whole spectrum of business school teaching and get to the heart of best practice teaching – fast.

Instead of time consuming full day training sessions we'll come to a business school for one day and deliver up to eight one hour workshops. Faculty can attend one, two or more – whatever they'll find most useful. And they'll leave each one with practical, actionable and inspirational ideas to help develop their teaching.

Our one hour bite size workshops

- **The guide to best practice teaching – our top ten tips**
- **Undergraduates - year 1**
- **Undergraduates - final year**
- **Pre-experience Master's**
- **MBA (Ft/Executive)**
- **Distance Learning**
- **Teaching international audiences – at home and in other countries**
- **Using blogging to keep (and be seen to be) up to date**

For further information see chapter 16, pages 91 - 93
or contact Julian Rawel - julian@marketechoes.co.uk

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PART ONE

The case for teaching excellence

Chapter 1

Increased expectations from teaching

Increased expectations from teaching

- An academic at a European business school said students rarely remembered what they'd been taught last week, let alone last year
- An undergraduate student said how much he enjoyed a challenging, interactive tutorial – it actually made him put down his smart phone
- A UK business school academic found it difficult to really apply her research to her teaching. They seemed to inhabit different planes. She was keen to do well in both, understood the former but struggled with the latter
- An MBA student bemoaned unapplied theory – the lecturers know their stuff but have no idea as to how/whether it works in the real business world

This e-book has been written in conjunction with Alf Crossman, a teaching colleague I've known and respected for more than ten years. We believe it's time to join up the dots, to link the various strands of best practice business school teaching and help those academics who want to do better – but don't know how.

We really enjoy the whole teaching experience – and score well. How can we help others to do the same?

We have done our research to understand the pain points for academics and what students rate or hate. We wanted to find **how we could make the most contribution to the effectiveness and engagement of business school teaching and inspire faculty (and therefore students as well) to really enjoy the experience.**

What do academics and students think of teaching?

We started this e-book with research - surveying faculty and students/past students from Europe and beyond. We asked them about their views on teaching, teaching quality and suggestions for improvements.

The results of our research (presented anonymously) are fascinating. Whilst students are largely satisfied, they don't believe satisfaction is enough. They are saying *"we want excellence every time."*

And why not? Most are paying handsomely for the privilege of studying at a business school.

Once we had completed and analysed the research, I conducted personal interviews with academics and, in one instance, a senior high school head teacher, to gain further and deeper insights into the issues surrounding great business school teaching.

My thanks go to



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See page 96 - 97 for biogs of Julian Rawel and Alf Crossman.

How this e-book can support teaching excellence

This e-book follows a pathway to great teaching.

It starts with scene setting, in this introduction and a look at the new UK Teaching Excellence Framework as an example of how teaching is being professionalised.

We then look at the key findings of our faculty and student research.

In Part 2 of this e-book we set out our recommendations for great teaching – every time, looking at everything from engaging students, tailoring classes to different age, experience and cultural backgrounds to the essentials of PowerPoint and the kit you need for a smooth teaching session. In part three we take a strategic look at teaching excellence.

Julian Rawel - personal academic teaching journey

I've always been interested in teaching at business schools. Whilst at Eurocamp and the Royal Armouries I'd deliver guest lectures, receive positive responses and developed a taste for it. When I left the Armouries to develop a consultancy company I approached my contacts at Bradford University School of Management (then Bradford Management Centre) and was asked to teach MBA Strategic Management in one of their overseas locations.

The incumbent lecturer, Stuart Sanderson, insisted on sharing the teaching – I'd subsequently take over. I prepared my slides, learnt the content and started. Suddenly it wasn't so easy! Firstly I had to follow Stuart – a larger than life teacher who could wow the students. He taught, they learned and laughed and then it was my turn. I hugged the laptop, went through the theory, didn't interact much and saw a student group which was sort of learning but not laughing. Being a lecturer, not a guest speaker, was different! I got through the week and learnt a couple of things. First, that teaching was as much about interaction and storytelling as theory delivery. Second, that when you really know your stuff you can bring the whole experience to life.

As part of the module I'd personally written a case study about the Royal Armouries Museum, my previous organisation. I brought the story to life, the students really engaged and worked on the case, I laughed, they laughed. I finished the module not too sure as to whether I'd be invited back – but hoped I would. I could see a pathway but knew it would be a challenging one.

A few months later I was called by another business school. Could I help out at the last minute on an MBA marketing module? I was still very new to all this. I went out to help, remembered the lessons from the strategy module and was ready to go. I was better (not much better) this time and, importantly, learnt some new things from the lecturer I was supporting. Whereas Stuart was all about presence and stories, this lecturer was all about organisation, beautiful lecture slides and the use of video.

When I was not teaching I chose to watch my colleague rather than put my feet up with a nice cup of coffee. By the end of the module I now had two great role models. Combining both their strengths allowed me to teach in line with my own strengths and personality. I like to chat, tell stories, use humour. But I'm also impeccably organised and want to use the best supporting materials.

I was on my way and over the last 15 or so years my teaching scores have been excellent. But I've never stopped learning, stopped trying to improve. If I had, then the good scores would have become, at best, average ones.

Great teaching – the future for business schools?

Teaching excellence won't just result in better career opportunities for the students. It will result in better feedback from the students which will translate into all important recommendations. Because without great recommendations, business schools will find themselves moving down in the pecking order rather than up.

And of course better teaching doesn't just deliver all those better student outcomes, it makes life better for the teachers themselves.

The business school world has become ever more focused on business research as a means of career progression. And whilst there's nothing essentially wrong with this, teaching has become less important for career progression, so teachers have naturally focused more on their research. In some cases this has resulted in teaching becoming a necessary chore.

Yet if it wasn't a necessary chore, if it was something to be looked forward to, something which created real job satisfaction, then surely everybody would win – faculty starting to enjoy their teaching and students most definitely recommending their business school as the place to study.

This e-book looks at the issues, interprets our research and incorporates our considerable experience of best practice teaching. In Section 2 we give pointers as to how we hope business school teachers can do the right thing – every time..

Chapter 2

The UK

Teaching

Excellence

Framework

The UK teaching excellence framework

“Unfortunately, it appeared that a number of the teaching staff were only teaching because they had to fund their research/next paper – and that appeared to be what really counted. Teaching was a necessary evil.”

(PART TIME EXECUTIVE MBA STUDENT)

The world of business school teaching could be about to change. In the UK the government is looking to introduce the TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework). It is unlikely that this sort of initiative will be restricted to the UK.

“The (UK) teaching excellence framework will see the government monitoring and assessing the quality of teaching in England’s universities.”

TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT, 4.8.2015

The TEF’s aim is to ensure that all students receive an excellent teaching experience. One that encourages original thinking but importantly, pushes engagement and prepares them for the world of work. Engagement and work preparation are critical for business graduates – both UG and PG but now with the TEF, business schools will be judged and ranked on the basis of their teaching as well as their research excellence.

“We want our universities to wipe out mediocre teaching and drive up student engagement – so for the first time we are placing the quality of teaching on a par with academic research through our new (UK) Teaching Excellence Framework...we’ll be rating them on the quality of teaching and experience they offer their students. We will only allow universities to raise fees in line with inflation if they excel, and will even consider reducing their fees if they are performing badly.”

JO JOHNSON, MINISTER, UNIVERSITIES AND SCIENCE MINISTER, AUGUST 2016

In the UK the government is likely to relax the cap on undergraduate fees, but only if business schools are seen to be delivering what is important for their students. So there's a big link here. For the first time, real teaching excellence (not adequacy) will become one of the key measures for business school rankings and thus revenue generation.

So a win: win – good for students and good for academics with a passion for great teaching.

"I think the TEF could be phenomenally good if done properly. If it results in academic institutions pushing their faculty towards good teaching, this can only be a good thing."

LUKE MASON

However, not all faculty agree.

Stuart Roper worries about any nationally organised teaching structure:

"They aim to improve the quality but what they end up with is the lowest common denominator whereby we all make sure we do X Y and Z and ignore all the things that made our class interesting in the first place."

STUART ROPER

So a word of warning! With government managed assessment systems there is always the danger that universities will try and play the game – developing teaching strategies to meet the TEF requirements. This itself could lead to an across the board formulaic approach, with lack of differentiation and eventual student cynicism and dissatisfaction.

Chapter 3

Our faculty research

Our faculty research

More than 40 members of faculty from a wide range of business schools in many countries responded to our research.

The key results were certainly consistent!

- Over 70% felt trained to do their job
- Over 50% felt that their teaching reflected their research
- Only 3% felt teaching at their establishment was below average
- In fact the only negative concerned briefings from subject heads with just fewer than 50% saying these were not “good.”

We asked what improvements could be made to make a business school outstanding. Interestingly 25% of the respondents skipped this question! For those who didn't, it appeared that administration issues were the constraint on good teaching. Our sample wanted:

- More staff
- Less bureaucracy
- Smaller class sizes and similar
- Only one respondent mentioned “more guidance and assistance on best practices and ‘first in class’ skills”

There were a few more recommendations but these were the exception:

- Encourage learning by doing – “Get them doing things!”
- Engage and learn to “perform”
- “The obvious - engage with your audience and adapt your approach to their energy levels” and “Appreciate the importance of good vocal delivery, eye contact, and movement when speaking”
- “Make the class exciting, unpredictable and interactive”
- And finally, one comment which still seems to create controversy amongst faculty – “Always remember they are paying customers and treat them accordingly”

We finally asked faculty for personal tips to “motivate and hold attention.” Again, a quarter of respondents skipped the question. But some themes did emerge:

- The lecturer’s practical experience and the use of practitioners did feature consistently with one lecturer saying “Business practitioners are normally the most popular lecturers”
- Recognising that both UG and PG students have their own practical experience and that this should be leveraged “Engage students by asking them to reflect on business experience and/or [if undergraduates] imagine what they would do in a specific business situation”

What perhaps really stood out from our research was the general satisfaction with the way teaching was delivered and the feeling that administration issues were the biggest obstacle.

However, when we conducted more in-depth interviews slightly different viewpoints emerged:

“Maybe they don’t want to admit that. I think as professors we all tend to have a very strong ego and it is difficult for us to admit that we are perhaps not doing something very well which is considered part of our core competences... This is also something that generally you don’t tend to speak to your colleagues about.”

HERBERT PAUL

“There is a problem that in the UK we are told how good our higher education is and lecturers tend to believe our own press”

CHRIS GALE

“My perception increasingly is that there is a wide variation in the quality of teaching which is not perceived by those people who are actually doing the teaching and some of this comes from what could be seen as being institutional expectations of what is expected of teachers. This is a little bit of benign neglect accepting that faculty are relatively free, they are the expert and should be able to get on with what they do.”

LUKE MASON

A MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS OF FACULTY RESEARCH, PLEASE SEE APPENDIX 1

Chapter 4

Our student research

Our student research

We received 160 responses from current and past students. These were split evenly between FT and PT, post graduate and undergraduate students.

What students like:

- Teachers who had actual experience of the world of business and were able to effectively share this with students.
- Teachers who were inspirational and had excellent teaching skills

What students complain about:

- Lack of application of theory to practice
- Boring lectures and lecturers
- Poor organisation of workshops and tutorials

In general terms students were satisfied with their overall experience with 37% saying the quality of their teaching strongly met their objectives and 53% saying it met their objectives.

“As part of my role it’s important to keep getting feedback from students. Across the programmes, talking to students from many different levels, I do think that the end result is broadly positive in terms of the teaching quality that they have experienced and the value that it added to their business knowledge. They believe they are well prepared to go on to the next stage of their career, and that they’ve gained as much in terms of personal development as specific subject knowledge. Very often they’ll say that the teaching has helped them to develop a more questioning approach to business problems, thinking about life generally, with a range of soft skills being enhanced – presentation, communication, time management.

But when you then take a more detailed look it is apparent that there is a diversity of teaching styles across any faculty. People’s interest might be in teaching or it might not be. Perhaps they’re more research focused, which is what has brought them into the profession in the first place and the teaching is secondary for them. Whereas for others, teaching is absolutely the most important part of what they do, and they’re much more interested in developing themselves professionally as teachers. Over the ten years I’ve been in this role, I’ve heard enough negative experiences from students to reflect that, cumulatively, teaching quality could be improved upon.”

MARTIN SEDGLEY

Indeed, when drilling down into the responses, students were quite vocal in terms of what worked and did not work.

Let's start with what inspired and impressed students:

1 Teachers who had actual experience of the world of business and were able to effectively share this with students

- *Real-life examples - makes it relevant and easy to remember (FT Master's student)*
- *Practical tips on how to connect the theory to practice in a customer centred approach (FT MBA student)*
- *Examples from the tutor - from his consulting or working experience (DL MBA student)*
- *Up to date applications of the subject - makes it relevant (UG student)*
- *Knowledge of the lecturer both about the theory and application of the theory (Exec MBA student)*

2 Teachers who were inspirational and had excellent teaching skills

- *An enthusiastic teacher because it makes you enthusiastic about the subject (UG student)*
- *If we have a long lecture (with large amount of students), mixing that with videos, discussions, group exercises... as this makes the lecture more interactive and memorable and therefore efficient (FT Master's student)*
- *Interaction with teacher and opportunity to ask questions and discussions (PT Master's student)*
- *Clear speaking lecturers who knew their topics inside out (Exec MBA student)*

The converse of this was unsurprisingly similar!

So, what did not work for students? In many cases this can leave a long lasting impression.

- *The experience of the 'teacher' - there was a considerable degree of variation in the quality of the teaching from those doing it (FT MBA student)*

Three key themes emerged:

1 Lack of application of theory to practice

This was seen as hugely important by students. Students study business to help enter/progress their careers and so need to see the link between what they study and what they do/will do. Otherwise study becomes study for study's sake which might be fine in some disciplines but business studies are very much personal output focused

- *Continuously discussing theory, without knowing what it actually does. Give us examples of how it works in real life so that we can relate to something (FT Master's student)*
- *Sometimes the lecturers were too theoretical and I failed to see the application of the theories (Exec MBA student)*
- *A weakness of teaching was lecturers with no experience of working in business (FT MBA student)*
- *Profs keep on telling theoretical things. It is interesting to listen at first, but it will get boring quickly and students won't focus anymore (UG student)*

"Research faculty will have come through a classical academic route, first degree, MRES, PhD to full-time academic. I wonder if they've got the understanding of practice which is essential when you're preparing people for management and leadership positions generally?"

What you tend to find is a very smart academic talking about his or her research in a way that is completely remote for the students. Also, most academics will only have been used to explaining their research to other people (academics) who have that same experience. We talk to each other in a fairly rarefied language.

They're employed to do their research and then expected to communicate it and students tolerate some fairly mediocre teaching and you need to be really bad to get some real complaints from students."

DOMINIC ELLIOT

Interestingly, academics are generally impressed by UG students returning from an industry third year. Their work ethic and interest is impressive. Yet these same students might actually now have spent more time in industry than their lecturers, leading to unmet expectations by students and a feeling of discomfort by faculty.

Business academia has the same objectives as many practical disciplines - to prepare students for the world of work. Yet when compared to, for example, medicine or architecture, the requirements for teachers and students are very different. In architecture students will be expected to immerse themselves in practice from the start of their degree. And they will expect their teachers to have practical experience of architecture and design. But this isn't the case in business academia where there appears to be a diminishing requirement for academics to have any real experience of what they're teaching.

"But the big thing is most students don't want to become academics. They want to learn in order to improve their understanding of the world and their ability to do things in the world (outside the classroom)."

LUKE MASON

Two of our experts (Herbert Paul and Chris Gale) have suggested that two year placements in industry, for academics, could be a means of creating the positive link between theory/practice. Indeed this has been recently mooted in the German press and, according to Dominic Elliot

"Almost without exception the faculty who go down best with students are the faculty who have real practical and current industry working experience."

DOMINIC ELLIOT

There are alternative viewpoints.

Jochen Wirtz believes that under-graduates do not need and should not need to come out from a degree with very specific practical skills.

"If I am teaching revenue management, I don't have to teach you the systems that are in use. Rather I need to be a little broader. The strategies and key decisions and so on behind revenue management. Can you play with these ideas and concepts? But it doesn't mean that I can put you into a job as a revenue manager when you leave university.

I've been teaching executive MBAs for 15 years and they don't look for you to teach them how to do their job, they know perfectly well how to do their job. They tend to want to understand the bigger picture which is more conceptual and has more theory and they are usually quite capable of trying to translate this into their own job scope and work environment. What I've seen on MBAs is sometimes practitioners tend to bomb in front of MBA classes because they're too close to it and not conceptual enough."

JOCHEN WIRTZ

2 Boring lectures and lecturers

The second key theme to emerge. Students want to be inspired to go on to do great things. But all too often what they experienced was the opposite.

- *Boring lectures where the lecturer is just reading from PowerPoint (Exec MBA student)*
- *Monologue from the professor and no discussion (FT MBA student)*
- *Endless PowerPoint slides and 'being lectured' (Exec MBA student)*
- *A lecturer who keeps talking and talking. After a certain amount you will lose concentration/interest (FT Master's)*
- *Death by PowerPoint – (many students!)*

It is somewhat depressing that death by PowerPoint is still high up in student thinking. We heard this 10 years ago, probably 20, as well. It's also depressing that faculty do not appear to consistently inspire their students – after all teaching is a core part of their job. You'd not expect a chef to have a bad day or produce consistently bland cooking – but somehow in business schools whilst not necessarily the norm, uninspiring teaching is not the exception.

“The version before PowerPoint was actually just reading out the lecture from a printed sheet behind a lectern. Now the mystique has gone because students can actually watch the lecturer reading the PowerPoints.”

LUKE MASON

According to Luke Mason there can be a lack of understanding on the part of faculty as to the developing expectations of students - what it is that students are actually studying and why it is that they are studying it. What is the goal of studying? It can be quite self-perpetuating, information being passed on in a similar way, year after year:

“I got on fine, they'll get on fine” – referring to students from an academic's own experience as a student.

Luke also discusses the fact that for some, faculty teaching is just not an enjoyable experience. And we all know that public facing people who enjoy what they do are more likely to deliver than those who don't.

“There are different reasons why people don’t enjoy teaching. Firstly, they just don’t enjoy it, they’ve been academics from student to professional life, immersed in research and suddenly have to become master of ceremonies.

“There is a different type of academic who dislikes teaching because they see it as demeaning. They are paid to think, not paid to teach. If they saw it as a means of creating new ways to see social reality, then they would actually see it as being far less demeaning and they’d enjoy it and they’d get something out of it and it would feed into their research. We talk a lot about research led teaching but not much about teaching led research.”

LUKE MASON

3 Poor organisation of workshops and tutorials

Workshops and tutorials are typically an opportunity to make teaching and interaction more personal, but many respondents commented that they were frequently poorly organised – a necessity to be endured rather than an opportunity to explore more deeply the subject matter.

- *Some tutorials were simply lectures just with smaller populations. I feel as though tutorials should be interactive with group work and feedback/presentations (UG business student)*
- *Workshops: Need to be organised and structured so they workshops do not turn into chaos where everyone is talking and nobody knows what to do (FT Master’s student)*
- *Workshop - Can easily go off track and requires greater skill of the teacher (PT Master’s student)*

Here a one size fits all approach needs to be avoided.

FOR A MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH, PLEASE SEE APPENDIX 2

PART TWO

Delivering teaching excellence

Chapter 5

How to be seen as an expert

How to be seen as an expert

This chapter starts our Section Two, where we provide a series of recommendations for delivering great business school teaching.

Students study at business schools in order to start or progress a commercial/management career. They expect to be taught by faculty who can deliver this – faculty who are experts.

The march of the accreditations means that there is no place to hide. Looking at the three principal accreditation bodies the promotion of expertise is ever growing:

- AACSB – 761 business schools in 52 countries
- AMBA – 230 business schools in 52 countries
- EPAS – 98 business schools in 72 countries
- EQUIS – 171 business schools in 41 countries

The market can see through the rhetoric. If you show your accreditation in your publicity and promotion (and why wouldn't you?) then you have to support the words with the deeds.

As we've already seen, being an expert means being able to translate theory to practice confidently. It's not enough to be an expert that others don't understand! There's nothing abstract about business and management, it's about helping students to develop a management career.

"You can be seen as an expert by telling stories from your own experience. Maybe this is more difficult for a lecturer or a professor who hasn't been in a practical environment. But here, especially in an executive class, you can get the students to pull in their own experience and relate their own examples and stories to what's being discussed"

HERBERT PAUL

As a business school teacher there is pressure. Pressure to meet the expectations brought on by those external accreditations. Anna Rosinus believes that being an expert means being in touch but not forgetting the past:

"I use a mixture of a solid theoretical and practical base, explained simply and visually and including examples which include really traditional examples as well as more modern ones like Facebook, Uber, Aribnb and so on."

Anna thinks the traditional must complement the new because it's important to learn from successes and mistakes of the past, as well as to show the current and "trending" examples such as Google, Apple or Facebook. However it's also important to mention smaller companies or B2B brands because that's who most people go on to work for. What, for example, Google does is popular and well known but the problems and challenges SMEs face are much more relevant for the future careers of most business students.

Anna sources such as examples:

"I still profit a lot from my business career and many of the examples I found when I was in it. On the other hand I try to talk to as many people as possible. I'm also pretty tuned into entrepreneurship and I know many of the small companies pretty well"

ANNA ROSINUS

So how do you become the expert that your school has promoted?

Here are our five tips

- 1 **Make sure you really know your materials before you start teaching.** This is the most basic tip. If you read off your lecture slides you'll not appear to be an expert – even if you are undoubtedly one. Experts don't read PowerPoint slides, they refer to them.
- 2 **Be up to date.** Experts don't refer to the "power of the internet." The internet has been with us for well over a decade – it's just part of what we do, every day. Students constantly refer to wanting to know about what's happening today. The expert recognises this but also shows students that we can always learn from history. Experts are never afraid of the past – they look back as well as forward but embrace the past rather than hide behind it.
- 3 **Scan the media.** Every topic being taught at business school is likely to have some current media reference. Experts look at what is happening and how they can apply to today's class, especially where "news" and theory can be aligned. Experts also understand that media is a broad term – you'll likely learn as much from Twitter as the Financial Times.
- 4 **Talk to an expert!** This could be an alumnus or a company director you know. Speak to them and find out what's current in their thinking. There's no reason for experts to know everything – but can their network help fill in the blanks? No doubt.
- 5 **Use all the resources available, this includes the students.** The students in the room may have a lot of experiences to share. Post grads might well have interesting work experience. Under grads and pre-experience masters' students will have experience being consumers. Make use of it all. Get them disseminated for the benefit of the class as a whole.

Chapter 6

Five steps to prepare for great lectures

Five steps to prepare for great lectures.

Experts prepare, knowing that a solid foundation is needed for expert delivery.

Of course time is an issue. How do we balance our research, teaching and admin responsibilities, let alone get through all that marking? Being properly prepared might take up valuable time at the front end but it will result in a much better experience for both student and faculty alike. Are there any faculty who haven't complained about seeming lack of preparation in restaurants, hospitals, banks etc.? Students also complain about faculty who read from PowerPoints ("death by PowerPoint" in our research), sometimes appearing not quite sure as to what's coming next, showing a lack of preparation and confidence.

"I've got many colleagues who do change their syllabus and their material regularly and they have exactly the same time pressures as everyone else. So it can't be the case that it's just time."

LUKE MASON

Students pay handsomely for the privilege of studying at a business school and the very least they can expect is properly prepared faculty. But how can effective preparation really help faculty to achieve maximum engagement and personal satisfaction?

Here are our five tips

1 Take time to plan content or syllabus revision well in advance.

This is unlikely to mean wholesale changes which doubtless have to go through various university committees! Rather it means bringing content up to date and freshening it up.

"You have to go through your syllabus regularly and revise it. Partly this is because of content – currently there's a lot of discussion about digital transformation but it's important to fine tune and very important also to understand that less is more. Be prepared to throw out theories that don't necessarily have much value."

HERBERT PAUL

There is a tendency in business schools for the same material to be brought out year after year. Even the presentation fonts are a give away! But in the fast moving world of business, students will soon see through it all.

"I suspect that sometimes I take on too much work for myself because I do spend a lot of time reinventing the wheel and I won't rest on existing resources for too long. But I probably love preparing the resources as much as I do delivering them. I find that creative process really satisfying, it's something I love doing so I just give time to it."

MARTIN SEDGLEY

Every module can be improved through really understanding what's more or less relevant, what needs to be stressed, what is nice – not essential – to have.

Almost all the faculty we surveyed said they acted on the comments from their end of module evaluations. These can be a real force for revision and improvement. Below is a typical set of post module student comments which provides rich information for building on success and making improvements:

Please specify strong points of this module:

1. Working in groups and the interaction during lectures
2. Relevant up to date examples Strong foundation
3. The teacher. The professor keeps it interesting with personal stories & jokes.
4. The videos were very good and interesting. Lots of group work
5. A lot of interaction and assignments
6. Teacher is very enthusiastic. I liked his passion for the subject
7. Good illustration of theory by up to date examples
8. Interesting video clips and journal articles
9. Very clear structure - nice to do some teamwork. Explanation is pretty simple and easy to understand, and it is quite meaningful by the way. Contents are rich enough to have an overview of the subject
10. There is a lot of interaction & group practice to help us learn how to use the
11. Very inspiring - Case studies are good
12. Practical and presentation part of it. Also the focus on group work with limited time
13. Good teacher with good experience. Good that we had to work in teams
14. Excellent theory applied to different real cases
15. Variation of lecture and group work

Please specify points of improvement of this module:

1. Less in class group work, more case studies to be read at home and discussed in class. Videos should be discussed instead of skipping to next subject
2. Short time to do assignment (group work) I'm quite not sure about the depth of module. How much depth should I read/study (I haven't studied the subject before)
3. The depth of the content is too easy
4. The slide packet wasn't very helpful. Too many slides hard to keep interest
5. More feedback on the group work during the module would be useful
6. Quicken the pace - it was a little bit slow!
7. Deeper case analysis, Harvard cases style (longer, with useful info). Comments over our class presentations (deeper analysis)
8. Too slow - theory too general for me - too many presentations
9. Too much group work if you don't find collaboration easy
10. Technical skills need to be improve, e.g. the video presentation, sometimes the teacher took a bit long time to open or close the browser
11. Practice on exam questions
12. Individual essay writing to prepare for the exam
13. Breaks were not kept separately from group work
14. Level was in my opinion too basic. Not enough time to go in depth
15. In the beginning of the course we had some very easy assignments with a lot of time to complete. Towards the end it was the other way around

Listen to students and if they make genuine recommendations be prepared to act

I'm on the faculty of Tias School for Business and Society in the Netherlands. One of the modules I lead is FT MSc Marketing. The module typically ran well with positive scores. But as the programme became more popular, increasing numbers of students complained that they had previously studied much of the content at UG level. This is a typical business Master's problem. But the solution is not simple as some students will have not previously studied the subject! My first action was to redevelop the module so that each subject area consisted of two parts – Essentials and Insights. The former enabled me to cover the basics to satisfy those students new to marketing and I was able to present these as a useful refresher for the others. I could do this because of the Insights element which covered themes such as Marketing 20/20; big data; the internal customer; lifetime customer values. Results of subsequent student evaluations were much more positive. Of course a few students still commented that much of the module content was familiar, but this "few" was a vast improvement on the previous "many."

JULIAN RAWEL

2 Managing time in lectures

Some faculty over-prepare! This is often because they are worried about not including every detail of the syllabus or – and this is quite common – reaching the end of their presentation with half the lecture time to spare. In reality neither works/happens.

"When I first started teaching I used to worry about preparing enough material and I would often prepare enough for three hours for a one hour lecture and so I ran out of time, but as you get more experienced you learn to pace yourself and prepare an appropriate amount of material"

DOMINIC ELLIOT

Being prepared is as much about organisation as content. The right material, delivered in the right time. And this means really understanding the concept of time. We'll talk about interactive teaching in Chapter Seven. But you need to be prepared to cover material and engage within the given time. So this might require estimating time per slide, time for discussion and so on.

"When I first started teaching I would rehearse my lectures in the privacy of my own space. It was amazing just how much material I could cover in an hour. Problem was that once in the dynamic environment of the classroom I soon found myself running out of time and rushing the last few concepts. Over time I learnt to tailor the content to the time and appreciate that even if I had the time to include everything I'd lose the class after 70% of everything!"

JULIAN RAWEL

Printed handouts for students are becoming a service of the past. So increasingly students are working in a 'virtual campus' – often at home or through materials. You'll win no plaudits for emailing students the day before a lecture to let them know that the lecture materials are available. If you upload a minimum of one week in advance you'll gain more confidence from your students – they'll be more relaxed and have no excuse for not being prepared.

3 Research other modules to avoid cross-over of course content

The very nature of business and management teaching means that there is a big likelihood of cross-over between disciplines. This creates teacher frustration and student boredom. The prepared faculty finds this out before teaching – practical research, typically through reading module descriptors or talking to other faculty. In this way certain topics might require more emphasis, certain topics less, others, how the (already studied) theory can be applied in a different manner. Of course this does require a certain confidence that students remember what they have been previously taught but this is their responsibility. The responsibility of prepared faculty is to guard against students switching off because they've already studied the model or concept.

Repetitive teaching – it doesn't have to be that way

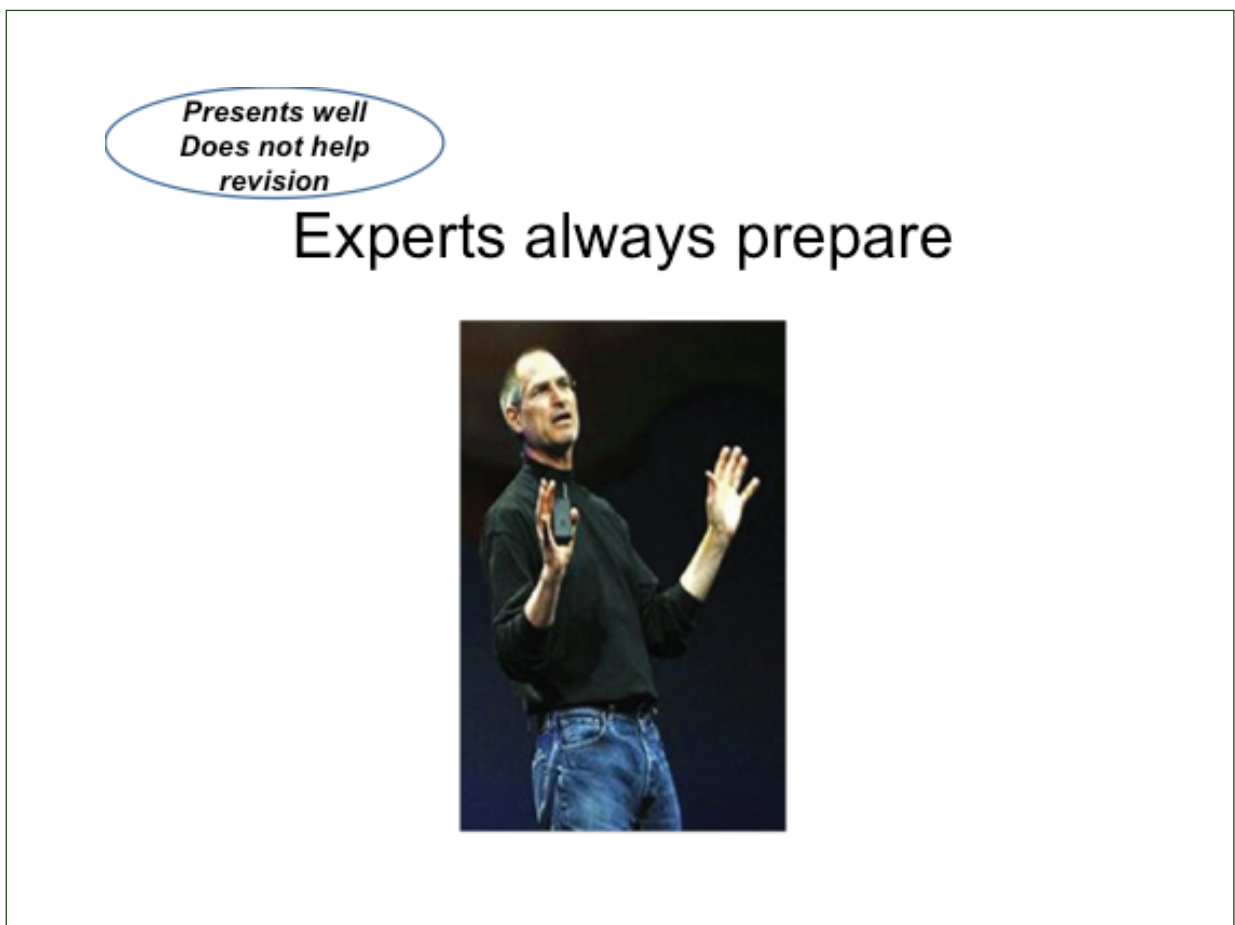
"I teach strategy and marketing and there's a lot of crossover of subject matter. Early on in my teaching career I made it my business to find out what had already been taught. Typically the problem arises when teaching strategy, because many of the models have already been taught in marketing. Students switch off if the same level of detail is applied to describing them. So, I'll ask who is familiar with a model. Assuming most students are, I'll take five minutes refreshing the basics but then apply the model in a more strategic context. So for the BCG Matrix, I'll emphasise its importance in helping a company develop their corporate strategy whereas in marketing I'll have spent much of the time discussing product and service portfolios. I find that students really appreciate this prepared approach"

JULIAN RAWEL

4 Ensuring materials are fit for purpose

Teaching is part performance. Teaching materials are part of the performance. Power Points need to be consistent – typically following the formatting guidelines of the specific school. If there are no guidelines then make sure that fonts used are contemporary, that colours can actually be seen by the audience (the rule is dark fonts on pale backgrounds). Importantly recognise that lecture slides have two purposes – to contribute to your teaching and to assist subsequent recap/revision. So there needs to be a content balance - enough information to deliver content but not so much that each slide looks like a mini assignment.

Here are examples of three types of lecture slides.



**Does not
present well
Helps revision**

Using the PESTEL framework

- PESTEL stands for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal
- It is a macro environment model
- Its aim is to help make sense of the macro environment
- It is typically used as part of a strategic audit
- It is usually applied prior to a micro audit
- Apply *selectively* – identify specific factors which impact on the industry, market and organisation in question
- Identify factors which are *important currently* but also consider which will become *more important in the next few years*.
- Use *data* to support the points and analyse trends using up to date information
Identify opportunities and threats – the main point of the exercise!

**Presents well
Helps revision**

Capabilities - components

Resources – <i>what we have</i>		Competences – <i>What we do</i>
Machines, buildings, raw materials, products, patents, databases, IT systems	PHYSICAL	Ways of achieving utilisation of plant, efficiency, productivity, flexibility, marketing
Balance sheet, cash flow, funds	FINANCIAL	Ability to raise funds, manage cash flows, debtors etc.
Managers, employees, suppliers, customers	HUMAN	How people gain and use experience, motivate, innovate

Johnson et al, (2014)

5 Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse

At the heart of preparation is learning the material. This might mean reading and re-reading your slides, even timing yourself so that you never run out of time. You also need to mentally decide when to ask a question, when to pause so as to emphasise a particular point, when to take a short break to enable students to discuss a particular point. The great presenters rehearse and rehearse again.

One lecturer prints out her slides and puts time markers on each page and in red highlights where there are questions, exercises etc. This can help to keep an eye on the clock as you go along.

Chapter 7

Making teaching engaging

Making teaching engaging

Our research was unequivocal – students complain about boring, uninspiring teaching.

- *Boring lectures where the lecturer is just reading from PowerPoint (Exec MBA student)*
- *Monologue from the professor and no discussion (FT MBA student)*
- *Endless PowerPoint slides and 'being lectured' (Exec MBA student)*
- *A lecturer who keeps talking and talking. After a certain amount you will lose concentration/interest (FT Master's student)*

Most students, yes, even at UG level, actually would like to learn, but they can be turned off by uninspiring, boring and repetitive teaching. As faculty we might believe our content and presentation is interesting and inspirational. Our peers might have told us so. But such success is not necessarily going to translate into the classroom.

The antidote to boring or un-inspirational is engagement. The aim of every business school should be to engage. Business school teachers are not just educators, they are facilitators as well – encouraging interaction and dialogue and the sharing of student experiences.

"I distinctly remember one of the earlier programmes I taught on at Ashridge – Marketing. I got the slot on market research on a Tuesday afternoon and I remember the feedback - somebody said it was the most boring experience of his entire life.

I was focusing on what I needed to and get across in the lecture. Over the years I have turned this around, starting with the audience and what I want them to feel at the end of the course.

Because you get so involved with 'how am I going to convey all this information?' that puts the pressure on yourself, but what you need to do is put the pressure on the audience. That means making it interactive and certainly not death by PowerPoint. Sometimes it's better not to show any slides at all.

It was a big learning for me in that it's not about me, it's about them. Then I start to think about what do I want them to really understand, to get from the session and then I work back thinking how can I make that relevant, inspiring, fun. Then I work out what do I need to do in terms of the session."

JULIE GRAY

We often believe that such engagement is only available to the lucky few – faculty who teach in the relative intimacy of the MBA lecture suite. It might be more challenging but engagement is achievable in front of large UG or MSc cohorts in large lecture theatres. In fact it must be achieved in a large space, otherwise you'll lose a substantial part of the audience, the paying audience, to the smartphone!

"When the lecturer/professor is enthusiastic about his subject, he infects you with this positive attitude and enthusiasm towards the subject. (FT Master's student).

"We should encourage people to think in class just like you did in school and I don't know whether people are reluctant to do that because they think it's not appropriate for a higher level of education and that higher education should be the delivery of information, yet in fact higher level education should be intense thinking all the time. So students would say "I got something out of that, I learnt something, I liked the experience and you know I'm going to go out and read up a bit more on it." What happens instead is that people leave the lecture and say I'm never going to look at that again. And this has important ramifications because the students will just look at the lecture slides which are covered in detail and they won't want to read anything else, so where's the learning?"

LUKE MASON

Engagement starts with preparation (see Chapter Six) and "meaning business" (Chapter Nine) because students will soon see through an "engager" who is all style and no substance.

Once achieved here are our six tips for making teaching engaging

1 Engage from the very first moment

Your first interaction, that first lecture, will set the tone for the rest of the module. Too many faculty just go straight into the syllabus without thinking about that first period, that "moment of truth." But jumping straight in might lose a great opportunity.

"What's important is that you take the students really seriously. At the start of any module, I introduce myself and then ask all the students to individually introduce themselves and ask 'what are their expectations of the module?'. Now in large undergraduate classes I can't give as much time to this as in an MBA class but I'll still ask every student to say something. I'll also make sure they have name tags so I can actually remember their names and identify them as people. I do know from other colleagues that they walk into the classroom and say 'you've had the syllabus so let's get started'. With such an approach, you don't give people the respect they deserve."

HERBERT PAUL

At the core of Herbert Paul's engagement is respect. Respect must be genuine.
And why not?

So understanding your students and showing interest is the pathway towards engagement. Also important is a key practical issue – what is the purpose of the module and how will students actually be able to apply the learning in practice? Explain this and students will listen and understand why they are studying. It works!

Research your students – they'll respond with respect

"For Executive MBA or MSc classes it is normally possible to find out information about your students before the class starts. I look for the organisations for which they work - if this information is not readily available I'll try and email the students in advance and ask. By doing this I firstly get to understand the balance – products/services, corporates or SMEs etc. This can help the discussion and preparation. But it is also symbolic – it shows I've taken the time to research the students.

If I have the time I might even show a slide with some or all of their organisations."

JULIAN RAWEL



Finally, take control from the off. The most effective way is by asking a content question. In fact this should be a starting point for each lecture. Asking a question sets the tone and means students know that they can't zone out.

Start with a question – it sets the tone

"I was mentoring a member of faculty, new to MBA teaching. I talked about starting with a question. He seemed nervous – won't that lose time and what if students don't respond? I put him at ease. If you've only covered two slides in the first 30 minutes then it will be because you are engaging. You can catch up on content but you'll find it difficult to do the same with engagement. He tried it and was pleasantly surprised. Students really opened up and engaged and he felt really energised as a result."

JULIAN RAWEL

It's only rock and roll, but I like it!

"In the classroom, we are constantly competing with Facebook and Twitter for students' attention. Whether we like it or not we live in the 'edutainment' world. It's like the British weather, we may not like it, but we have to live with it.

Students' attention span seems to get shorter year on year. I used to get frustrated with students 'playing' on their smartphones instead of listening to me. Then I decided that I needed to be more interesting than the questionable stuff they were reading on Facebook.

Students revel in variety and doing something different gets their attention. Employment relations can be a pretty boring subject for people who have no understanding of, or interest in, trade unions. So how do you link economics, employee relations, and sociology? Easy, give them a blast of Bruce Springsteen's My Home Town.

When I'm teaching trade union history I play Part of the Union by The Strawbs. Both of these tracks get students' feet tapping and there's not a Facebook page in sight. It's not dumbing down; it's becoming attuned to the students. If you can't beat them, join them. If students want to play with their phones, then I give them something to look for, using Google or YouTube, that's relevant to the class I'm teaching."

ALF CROSSMAN

Engage ...with everyone

Engagement is about engaging with the whole class. There will always be vocal and confident students who are happy to ask/answer questions and really get involved. These students are to be nurtured and encouraged.

However, sometimes it's just comfortable to rely on them, to tick that engagement box. But it's being able to engage with the quieter, less confident students that's equally important but far more difficult.

"However there has to be some balance. There does come a point when, for your own peace of mind, you have to say I cannot give anymore for that particular student because they are taking too much energy away from a lot of people who do want to learn. There's a danger otherwise that you let that troublesome student or group disrupt the class for everyone else. Ultimately, if somebody does not want to learn, nobody can teach them. In the constraints of a university delivery system, you have to accept that sometimes you won't be able to reach all people, and that's not very comfortable for a passionate teacher."

MARTIN SEDGLEY

Martin's quote should not be discounted. There will always students with whom it's impossible to engage. But we should see these as the exception.

According to Herbert Paul, respect for students means giving them the opportunity to speak. It means encouraging weaker students so that they are able to contribute as well.

"And for me, the biggest compliment which I can get is when a student after the class says, Herbert, you really managed to pull them all in, we are normally very quiet but on this occasion we've been really very involved."

HERBERT PAUL

As ever, one size rarely fits all.

"Interestingly, sometimes students will say 'just stand there and teach me something'. You need a rich blend of teaching styles, and there are some faculty who are real proponents of the importance of the lecture in certain contexts or for certain purposes. I think that's helped me in the past when I've been a student, to go and listen to somebody's knowledge about things, perhaps as a good introduction to a subject."

MARTIN SEDGLEY

Encouraging such engagement should not be done with a heavy stick. But equally you shouldn't back away from asking quieter students for their opinions. Encourage dialogue – students will feel better even if it's tough to start with.

In multi-cultural classes, it's also worth remembering that (to generalise) those from an Eastern society tend to be more deferential to teachers and reluctant to voice views. Those from Western societies tend to be quicker to offer an opinion – so this may need managing in the group to ensure everyone is contributing and getting the maximum from your lecture.

2 Can your students understand you?

Speak clearly, make sure you are audible, alternate your tone, sound enthusiastic and interested – it can be infectious!

Business school students are increasingly multi-cultural and multi-geographical. Yet as faculty, we frequently stay within our own geo-linguistic territory. My kids understand me so why not my students? We expect performers to speak clearly. It's the same with faculty and it's not necessarily a skill which comes naturally. Actors spend years at drama school. Faculty? Which faculty ever had voice coaching?

Well, voice coaching might be an unaffordable luxury but attention to voice is still worthwhile. The golden rules are:

- **Make sure you are audible.** Ask a colleague to listen to you in an empty lecture theatre. Can you be heard at the back? Do you need a microphone? Ask students whether they can hear you clearly? Don't wait for them to ask you to speak up.
- **Alternate your tone.** Don't talk in a monotone. Understand the art of pausing and stressing issues for effect and impact. Again it shows that you understand what and what not to stress.
- **Don't be too local.** If you have a strong regional or national accent ask yourself whether students from other geographies can understand you. Don't speak in local colloquialisms unless you are confident they'll be understood. It's surprising how many British lecturers use 'e.g.' and 'i.e.' in their lecture delivery. How do they expect international students to understand these terms?

"Appreciate the importance of good vocal delivery, eye contact, and movement when speaking"
(faculty member – our research)

3 Ways to bring topical relevancy to a lecture

One of the great advantages of teaching a business related subject is that it's live. Business happens on a daily basis. You don't have to look too far for a news story with relevance to your subject, so take a look at the media and integrate an interesting story into your teaching, showing how the story can demonstrate the use of a model or concept. Whilst you might need to do this a few days in advance, try listening to BBC Radio 4 and 5 (UK stations) or your own regional/national radio stations on the way to work – it's likely you'll pick up a highly current issue to share with your students. This shows you are thinking about your subject in real time. You'll win respect from students for doing this.

Here's an example. I'm writing this with the Sunday Times Business section (top selling serious UK Sunday newspaper) open in front of me. Here are some stories which could be used in lectures:

- *"Jaguar plugs in to electric revolution"*
- *"Tesco steps up fight against discounters"*
- *"Energy big six escape break-up"*
- *"Three way battle for £2bn Reuters arm"*
- *"Freddie Laker of the fjords in dogfight with Americans"*
- *"Your digital doctor will see you now – and provide a correct diagnosis"*
- *"I'm sitting comfortably without investors"*
- *"There's no choice between family and success – you can have both"*
- *"How can we cut risk of new venture?"*

Take the energy story as an example. It is all about incumbents and new entrants. The key is to apply it in an interesting manner. Here's one idea. Take the story and ask students to look at it from different perspectives – from the CEO of an incumbent, from the CEO of a new entrant, a student who's looking to apply for a job at one or the other. An interesting story has suddenly become personal – and engaging.

“Relevant and up to date real life business examples: you get a bigger picture and understand how businesses deal with challenges “(Recommendation from FT Master's student)

“In Germany we have a difference between traditional universities and those of applied sciences. In my opinion business administration is an applied science. It is not a theoretical science per se. When academics cite theory they need to have some empirical research to support the viewpoint. It is absolutely vital to use examples in practice be it a specific example or some research which shows examples from a number of companies.”

ANNA ROSINUS

4 Perfect the art of story telling

We grew up listening to stories but these don't have to end by the time we reach high school. Stories bring topics to life. And we all have them. Sometimes you might want to develop a mental bank of these – ready to bring out at an appropriate time within a lecture. Mostly, however, stories just happen, bringing to life something you or a student have mentioned during the lecture. Students are very interested in your personal experiences. This might be as a manager/ senior manager. Or as a consultant. Students don't want to know how amazing you were – they want to understand what you did that went wrong as well as what went right – and what did it teach you? Or, of course, your experience as a customer is also interesting, especially if you apply it to the topic you are discussing. If you are a career academic with little management or consulting experience don't worry. Who have you met during the course of your research? Quite possibly some important players in your field. What did they tell you?

“Storytelling: makes subjects easy to remember” (UG student)

“In defence, at a number of universities, many UK students have different levels of attainment and application, it's difficult to try and engage everyone. Even the best students who might be pointed in the direction of some interesting extra reading are probably unlikely to do so. An engaging way of delivering a lecture is by throwing in the war stories and jokes. You can make people in the audience feel that you are talking to them directly.”

CHRIS GALE

Use personal stories whenever you can bring yourself to life!

"I had great difficulties getting one of my brands on to the shelves of a major travel agency chain. I could never get to see the key decision maker, no matter how hard I tried. Luckily my CE was about to leave on a senior travel industry trip on the Orient Express and the CE of the person I could never get to see was one of his fellow passengers. So I asked him whether he might "become friends" and get the CE to facilitate a meeting with the person I'd had no luck engaging with. No problem. After the trip a meeting was miraculously arranged. Success! Well, until I met with the decision maker. He was obviously not happy to have been instructed to meet with me – it undermined his authority. We met, he said "I've been asked to meet with you", short meeting, no smiles and no business!"

I was for a time responsible for Bradford University's Dubai MBA programme. I wanted to develop relationships with some key corporations. I managed to get a meeting with one of Dubai's key international organisations. It was quite easy actually. I arrived, presented to a very interested manager. Success! I followed up and heard nothing. I did this three times. Same result. Then a contact in Dubai told me. He said that you have to really understand the culture of the territory into which you are trying to sell. This company was being polite by meeting with me. They probably employed people to meet with people like me and to nod interestingly.

Both examples (stories) showed me the importance of understanding the Buying Centre – a concept I teach in B2B. Superficial success is just that and relationship building not as easy as it might seem."

JULIAN RAWEL

"An example of an accessible story was a colleague who taught operations management and looked at a particular model. He explained it in terms of him and his family leaving South Wales to go on holiday via Heathrow – for the first time. He talked about his dad following the signage and the signage said Arrivals so he went to Arrivals basically thinking, well I'm arriving!"

Another story by the same lecturer was that his son was playing in the garden and his mother felt he should be finishing a school task which was about navigating your way through a maze to a pot of gold. When she challenged him he simply said "it's OK, I'll hire a helicopter and find it from above!"

Those stories stick, it's what students remember."

JULIE GRAY

5 Move about and move away from the lectern

Lecturers who stand behind their lectern look frightened and create a barrier between themselves and their students. Whatever the size of the class you've got to move around. But of course you can only move if you are properly prepared (see Chapter Six) – otherwise you will be unable to deliver your content.

"I use a lot of slides but I'll say to the students this is a resource, I'll focus on some of them and the other ones are for you to use to find out a bit more of what we're talking about. For undergraduates I try and use lots of examples and instead of lots of words on slides, I'll try and use lots of pictures and video clips, any ways of keeping a large group interested. For a two hour lecture I tend to wander round the auditorium, I'm quite happy raising my voice from time to time, it might make people jump out of their skin but they usually laugh and it makes them happy. I quite enjoy the performance."

DOMINIC ELLIOT

Lecturers who stand behind their lectern look frightened and create a barrier between themselves and their students. Whatever the size of the class you've got to move around. But of course you can only move if you are properly prepared (see Chapter Six) – otherwise you will be unable to deliver your content.

"If you're teaching 150 people in a class, many might just be there to have signed in. You need to engage directly. Go up and down the room. Move around. Make your presence felt."

MARTIN SEDGLEY

Leave the lectern and get out into the audience

"I've been told so many times by colleagues that you can't make large classes participative. So it was a case of walk in, talk, and walk out. I hated it and so did the students. I detested the constant hum of people talking not so quietly. After one class I asked a few students why they were talking. It turned out they were asking questions about what I was saying.

It struck me they would be better off asking me so I started introducing some question times. After a while I figured out that only about 10 per cent of the class was participating and asking or answering questions.

Then I figured out why; I was choosing who got to speak.

Generally it was those I knew who would give a good answer or ask a sensible question. Everyone else was virtually invisible. The reason for low participation was not the students, it was me. My solution was to give other people an opportunity to speak, to encourage the less willing, and to praise them when they participated. It's difficult to make eye contact in a room with 400 students, so you have to get among them. I use a hand-held mic so that everyone in the room can hear a student's contribution."

ALF CROSSMAN

6 Incorporate variety and change of pace

A one hour lecture need not be a one hour lecture!

If it's too formulaic or one dimensional then students will become bored and find the whole experience uninspiring.

So a lecture should be multi-media and multi-dimensional. Intersperse content with questions. Add some video material. Show some internet insights. And try and give students a few minutes to discuss an issue with their neighbours.

The trick is variety and a fast (but not rushed) pace. It's all about dynamism and keeping students engaged.

"I also try and reduce the Power Points. I am a big fan of images which is why I need some sort of presentation but I do try and make a mixture of work between the formal presentations and the whiteboard. For example we had an energy shutdown earlier this year and I was forced just to work on the whiteboard which was kind of interesting. It's not a problem but if you're not prepared to do so it can be a problem and I think we should mix our methodology and our didactic instruments and tools more."

ANNA ROSINUS

Mixing things up with co-teaching

Anna Rosinus is also very keen on co-teaching.

"I think these lectures are really engaging for students." What she means is that she will deliver a lecture not on her own but together with a colleague and then perhaps at one of the colleague's lectures she will be the other lecturer there as well. "The atmosphere we created was always great. There was kind of a fun element included and everyone could share his or her own experiences. You can also have some interesting discussions and role plays – good cop bad cop and if you know each other well, this even works without detailed preparation presentation."

Chapter 8

Tailor lectures to age, culture, experience

Tailor lectures to age, culture, experience

If there's one thing we know about business it is that markets are not homogeneous. The same applies to business degrees. Business schools teach across a real breadth of age groups and experiences.

The MBA is a great example. Full-timers are likely to be in their mid-20s to early 30s, have taken a career break and might well be career changers. They want to be immersed in the subject matter, learn a lot, make progress and be ready for career advancement. Compare this to executive MBA students. They're going to be older, mid-30s to mid-40s. They'll be successful but probably in a more specialist function and know that to really progress they need a more rounded understanding of business and management. They've got all sorts of pressures – work, family and studying. They want to pass, they want to be more effective in their career but they can't afford the MBA to dominate their lives and they're unlikely to do much in terms of pre-course preparation.

Same subject matter, same qualification, very different students.

In order to keep the full-time students engaged, there's got to be lots of new content within a solid theoretical framework but taught in a way which engages rather than submerges. Executive MBA students need inspiration and accessible relevance – otherwise the exhaustion from everything else they're involved in will just turn them off.

Successful lecturers really understand these differences. But quite often faculty teaching on an MBA might never have reached the management levels of their students and so might find it difficult to really understand these diverse needs. Here it is no good hiding behind the syllabus – "sorry but we've got to get through everything in the syllabus." Rather the syllabus should be a foundation, a guide, something to inform and structure the teaching but equally something that can be used flexibly so as to respond to the needs of individual student groups.

The same applies to undergraduates. There's a big difference between teaching first and final year students. And even in the final year there's a difference between those students who went out on placement and those who did not. Adapting to these differences is not always easy but can make all the difference.

"I'm a marketing person and I've worked in marketing for years and therefore I'm used to this idea about thinking about the target audience, message and so forth and with that in mind it does help me."

STUART ROPER

"What is important is thinking about the students - where is it that they're coming from? So, for example, a corporate group of undergraduates who are in the workplace three weeks out of four: You can't expect to teach them in the same way that you'd teach full-time undergraduates, presenting the "university way of learning" when their life already involves a very different way of learning. So it is really good to think creatively around different audiences, and I spend a lot of time preparing my teaching sessions in that way. This necessitates thinking about who are these people and what might work for them."

MARTIN SEDGLEY

Business school teaching is also highly international. FT MBAs and MScs attract highly diverse international students. UG business degrees, if delivered in English, will have a respectable international presence. Many business school teachers are also required to teach overseas at partner business schools. Here the student body might be quite homogeneous – but of course quite possibly different from the students in the lecturer's home university.

Last, but decreasingly least, is teaching by distance – the DL (distance learning) or blended learning degrees. Teaching remotely is a whole new skill, not a dumbed down, add-on to our face-to-face teaching load. DL students expect the best but they don't expect the same.

Faculty therefore needs to be as adaptable as the managers/future managers they are teaching. But sadly this is not always the case.

We never cease to be disappointed by the number of faculty who complain about groups of students who do not conform to their preferred norms of behaviour. Executive MBA students are often on the receiving end of this – *"their expectations are too high, their effort too low"* or international students – *"they just talk in class"* and so on. But we can't blame culture on the one hand and teach it on the other!

Timekeeping – it’s not always bad, even when it is!

“I’ve taught on Executive Master’s and MBA programmes in a number of different countries. I tend to go out as a UK teacher but what I’ve learnt is how important it is to understand that time-keeping does not necessarily mean the same thing in Dubai as it does in Dortmund. It’s not the same in Greece as it is in Great Britain.

When I started to teach in non-Northern European countries I found it difficult to conform to local norms. Why couldn’t the students just stick to UK timekeeping? Why could they not just prepare like German students?

In most parts of Western Europe everybody is pretty used to starting on time and putting in a full day interspersed with structured breaks. In Dubai and other parts of the Middle East the notion of on time means at least a half an hour later start than planned and the general climate means that students have, shall we say, a more relaxed approach to time-keeping. I’ve seen the same in Greece and the Balkans where it seems impossible to ever start anything on time but there’s never any opportunity to finish late!

So what do I do? Well I’ve learnt not to try and impose my cultural norms on the students. All it does is to alienate them and annoy me when my UK focused plan fails miserably. I make sure I tailor my approach to the different time-keeping needs of different countries. There’s no point in fighting these things because all that happens is you either cause bad feeling or the students don’t arrive on time anyway or you end up trying to rush everything because you have a shorter amount of time. So I find it’s much better to work around the culture norms.

If I’m running a 90 minute session and it starts at 9.00am I’ll plan in my mind to start at 9.15am or 9.20am and organise the content accordingly. This might sound like defeatism or even letting the bad guys win! It’s not. It’s understanding that different countries work in different ways and you can’t transplant one way of doing things. Equally, if a Middle East lecturer came over to the Netherlands and said “hey guys, we’ll always start 20 minutes late” there would be a lot of criticism. It’s about understanding those cultures.”

JULIAN RAWEL

In China, Dominic Elliot uses a music industry report that runs to about 50 pages and has a huge amount of information. He gives his Chinese students a day to make sense of the information and make recommendations based on it. The students are very happy to spend half a day mining the information and then the other half of the day making the recommendations.

Dominic has found that starting in a Chinese class with data analysis eases students in via their comfort zone and gives them the confidence to be far more challenging, innovative and inventive in the recommendations stage than perhaps traditionally they might have been.

“Students want a bit more guidance to begin with and the students have really welcomed this because a lot of teaching in English is by Chinese academics so they adopt a more traditional approach and the Chinese students respond well to a different mode of teaching.”

DOMINIC ELLIOT

“We all know about the rock star who bounces on stage and says “hello Paris” but is probably just remembering the script. He could be anywhere.

Lecturers teaching in an overseas location can win appreciation points quite easily by appreciating culture and commerce. When I teach in the Middle East I know to be sensitive to discussing alcohol.

When I teach in the Netherlands students positively welcome the opportunity to discuss beer!

Wherever I teach I try to show that I have done some local research – even if simply to show a picture of a local McDonalds or the most upmarket and iconic restaurant in town. Doesn’t take too long but shows you’ve given your location some thought. And there are always local news stories which will resonate with the students – just search on Google or better still, Twitter”

JULIAN RAWEL

“There is a lot spoken about student diversity and we’re asked increasingly to take account of that. It’s a fascinating facet of education that we have the opportunity to meet so many different students from so many different backgrounds. However, what is less remarked on is that, whether we like it or not, there is a corresponding diversity in teaching styles in higher education. Whilst there needs to be a benchmarking of what is acceptable or unacceptable in university teaching standards, we also need to help students to recognise the value of teacher diversity. It is an important 21st century skill for students to be prepared to learn flexibly from different educational opportunities in different ways.”

MARTIN SEDGLEY

Different nationalities in home classrooms

When travelling as a business school lecturer to an overseas location it's natural (or should be) to think about international and cultural teaching issues. Of course, international diversity is not restricted to international visits. When teaching on full-time MBA, MSc or certain undergraduate programmes, lecturers will often find themselves in front of a highly diverse class of international students.

Some lecturers might simply decide that as they are teaching in their home location the home norms simply need to apply. After all, if students are visiting a particular country, is it not up to them to adapt to those norms? Or, it could be *"I'm busy enough so why should I start to think about a multi-geographical approach to my teaching?"*

The answer to both questions is that without a sensitivity to the needs of multi-national/cultural classes, the student, and indeed the teacher, experience will be poorer – perhaps irretrievably so. On many post graduate programmes home students are in the minority but home teachers in the majority. The students will arrive with a variety of past learning experiences but then find themselves in one class where that variety is replaced by the norms of the home business school. Take a class of full-time MBA students. In the UK or Northern/Western Europe, this is likely to include students from North America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, South East Asia, South Asia and South America. Each of these groups will have experienced a different style of university (under graduate) teaching. North Americans and Western Europeans will be used to quite an interactive style of learning and will be confident enough to make their voices heard from day one. Students from South East Asia will be far more used to the traditional teacher speaks and student listens approach. South Asians will be confident with their language ability but might also have experienced a more traditional form of learning.

The skill of the business school lecturer is to make sure that s/he understands these differences and encourages the whole class to grow together rather than apart.

A common example is that of loss of face, typically by SE Asian students. Here, the lecturer needs to gently encourage participation. It's not enough to simply state that, here, interactivity is the norm. Rather draw out responses, perhaps through asking students to approach an issue from their own, home country, experience. Thank the students for their responses, even take time at the end of the lecture to acknowledge their contribution. At the same time, don't forget those more confident North American and Western European students. We want them to feel free to contribute in class but also to appreciate that they need to give the time for those less confident students to do so.

Group work - democracy by instruction!

"In my teaching in The Netherlands I have worked with large full-time MSc and MBA groups with students from a variety of cultures and nationalities. I tend to teach them towards the beginning of their study period and use quite a lot of in class group activity as part of module assessment. There is quite some nervousness about producing great in class work early in the programme. So much so that I started to notice that the more confident Western Europeans (especially Dutch) and North American students would dominate the group work activity including presentations. This was not due to a lack of patience or sensitivity, rather the perceived over riding need to maximise the marks which of course were for everyone's benefit.

The marks might have been respectable but personal implications were not. Those confident students became more confident and those less confident students, so recently arrived in a new learning environment, were relegated to behind the scenes or supporting roles, became less confident and retreated into their shells.

This worried me and I struggled to find a solution because I didn't appreciate just how anxious students were about the grades. I chatted informally to students and realised that instruction as well as encouragement would be needed to change behaviours. There now had to be tangible evidence that each member of the group contributed to every task. In verbal presentations, groups would be negatively marked if presentations were made only by students confident in their use of English. Students were told that confidence in the use of English in presentations would not be part of the marking criteria. What mattered was good content and overall group endeavour. This changed things quite quickly. The confident English speakers realised that they no longer had to dominate the proceedings because marking no longer depended on such presentational fluency. The less confident students knew that they had to step up but would not be penalised if they were hesitant during their presentations. I needed to allow more time for in class presentations so as not to be seen to, on the one hand, encourage and, on the other, clock watch.

The results were better, more culturally diverse and interesting written and personal presentations, a more relaxed class, and a palpable development of the confidence of students who were experiencing a different style of university teaching."

JULIAN RAWEL

And remember when thinking about diverse audiences, it's not all about Apple, Ryanair and Starbucks. In fact students often complain about those same old examples. Some students will want to learn about their own countries, others will want to learn about SMEs and start-ups rather than global multi-nationals. Examples are everywhere – they need to be found and you need to steer clear from the latest fad. Years ago every business school lesson was centred on the development of low cost airlines. Today it's more likely to be Smartphones and Uber. But you can overdo things.

If you don't want one size to fit all, here are our five top tips

1 How can you really understand your audience?

Research your students in advance. You might not get an advance list of students and their backgrounds but you will doubtless be able to email the class in advance. For executive classes a simple email asking for company, possibly job title, possibly country of residence will not only provide useful information but will show you care, you are interested. This will up your perceived value in front of your students.

Also, if teaching overseas, make sure you know what's going on in the country/region in which you are teaching. Show this understanding and students will show appreciation.

2 Students are always looking to study issues which have a direct relevance to them

These will differ depending on the student group. For some, the issues might be geopolitical. For others, what can this do to help me get a job? For others, what can this do to help me get a promotion? As we know, very few students study at a business school just for the interest.

3 Be sensitive to a group's differences

Teaching at home to students from different countries; teaching in hot climates or teaching to tired execs means that teachers need to demonstrate a sensitivity towards certain groups. There's no point in being dogmatic, you'll just lose the students. But demonstrate an understanding and sensitivity and you'll gain their appreciation – and keep their interest. So be patient with time keeping and if the execs seem to be glazing over, stop for a break or some group work – don't "carry on regardless."

4 There are undergraduates and undergraduates

From excellent to average. It's always easier to focus on the attentive bright students but possibly more rewarding to see real progress in the less able or perhaps less motivated ones.

5 One size certainly does not fit DL

See our top 5 distance learning tips below (p58)

Distance learning – same outputs – different inputs

DL teaching is different. Students have the same expectations in terms of outputs – typically a good post graduate qualification. But they choose the teaching medium because it suits their lifestyle – typically one that precludes timetabled teaching at a business school. They don't see this as an easy option and their management positions mean that they expect the best.

According to Jay Muir *“DL students are very strategic learners. . . .if it's not worth it, they'll not bother.”*

Yet it is the tutorials which can add that all important personality to the degree.

“For faculty under pressure, perhaps with research assignments and so on, teaching DL – which is often done at anti-social times – can become something of an irritant, an additional strain on stretched resources. Developing online sessions though does take work and experience, a lot of people try to take what they do in the classroom, do it online and it dies”

JAY MUIR

Here are the five key tips for delivering effective online tutorials

- 1 **Enthusiasm counts** - *“If the technology doesn't work that well or there are simply problems with the technology but the tutor is really enthusiastic and engaging then every time the enthusiasm will trounce the technology and students will appreciate this.”* JAY MUIR
- 2 **Understand cultural distance** - Delivering a classroom session with an international audience has its own challenges – but at least you can see which students are from which countries. With DL the audience is likely to be multi-national and multi-cultural – sometimes based in one continent, sometimes made up of students from many. North Americans might be very vocal, South East Asians might be more reserved – but all need to be involved and included. There is also a need for cultural sensitivity – a multi-cultural tutorial will need to be sensitive to the needs and experiences of different audiences.
- 3 **Master the technology** – in the classroom, if the technology doesn't work you can call on a technician or just muddle through. DL teaching exists because of the technology. So faculty need to understand how the technology works and what to do if it does not.
- 4 **DL students expect a 24/7 culture** - DL students study when they choose. They expect to be in contact with their tutors and expect their tutors to engage outside 9-5. It's all down to organisation and understanding that DL is just like any online service – expected to be readily available.
- 5 **Chat rather than mic** – DL tutors need to tease out responses and contributions from students. *“Chat”* means that everyone is equal, that students can type responses and questions. But this does require the tutor to multi task – to keep the discussion going whilst scanning the chat responses. Tutorials with mic content can be problematic because it's impossible for students to know whether they are about to interrupt someone - or not - and there is the concern that they can become dominated by the vocal few. Chat is the answer because everyone is equal, no one can type louder!

Chapter 9

Linking research to practice

Linking research to practice

Our research has shown that students want to be taught by experts who can clearly demonstrate the link between theory, research and practice.

- *We want real world examples and how the models/frameworks apply to them (FT MBA student)*
- *Relevant and up to date real life business examples: you get a bigger picture and understand how businesses deal with challenges (Recommendation from FT Master's student)*
- *Up to date applications of the subject - makes it relevant (UG student)*

This expectation has been a timeless one. What has changed is the trend for an increasing proportion of faculty to be career academics, as research becomes a key measure of the success of business schools and, importantly, the universities of which they are a part. The result is that there are fewer faculty with actual (middle or senior) management experience. And even fewer faculty who can demonstrate practical application as a result of personal management experience. With many research papers including a significant proportion of literature review, meaning a potentially introverted approach, this lack of academic engagement can become even more pronounced.

"Academics, at least career academics, tend to get lost in the jargon and terminology of the field. This can be very alienating for students until they understand the zone in which the academics are existing."

LUKE MASON

"One reason for lack of engagement by students is they don't feel any involvement or connection with the faculty's academic research. They don't feel any part of, or association with, the process that's practised by their lecturers and professors. I'm trying to demystify it."

STUART ROPER

Herbert Paul is both experienced academic and practitioner and sees case studies as a way to link theory and practice.

"What I do - and I think it's important, but I don't see many colleagues doing it - is to almost push the students to apply certain (theory) concepts to an actual case study. For example, you could apply Porter's essential diversification tests to a case study on Virgin. This stops students delivering very general answers to case studies. The task of the lecturer is of course to criticise positively and negatively but it's also important that the application is applied."

Herbert's idea can be used by academics without managerial experience. But, of course, there needs to be more thought about this issue.

"In relation to how academics can actually be seen to be experts but without practice experience, it's often down to how you describe the theory. All theory can be practical, it's just how do you communicate that theory. This at least gets across the idea that these theories are not simply the imaginary machinations of academics."

LUKE MASON

Not all academics (obviously) completely share these views.

"If I am teaching revenue management, I don't have to teach you the systems that are in use. Rather I need to be a little broader. The strategies and key decisions and so on behind revenue management. I want you to play with these ideas and concepts but it doesn't mean that I can put you into a job as a revenue manager when you leave university."

JOCHEN WIRTZ

Dominic Elliot has experience of working in business schools and other faculties and he makes an interesting observation:

"In my faculty, the Faculty of Arts, music academics are fully in tune with actual artistic performance and can relate this to academic discussions. They are very engaged with practice. For most music faculty, music itself is an integral part of what they do and most of my colleagues in English work in practice, either writing novels or writing poetry."

DOMINIC ELLIOT

However, we are where we are. If experienced practitioners can relate practice to theory what about career academics?

The answer would suggest tying in their own research to practice – after all this is where they are experts.

"In terms of encouraging research led academics, let's remind them that they do have teaching strengths directly aligned to this research. This could typically be that they are specialist researchers in a particular field, who will have conducted empirical studies in a business environment. They may have, for example, interviewed chief executive officers in a particular industry, so they can speak knowledgeably and confidently about the outcomes of that research. Our students will be interested in what they've learnt in the corporate world, and we should celebrate that knowledge as part of good quality teaching."

MARTIN SEDGLEY

Many of our experts, however, tend to disagree.

"The link between research and practice is very important. However, making this connection in an MBA class is not an easy task. Someone with a strong research background will tend to focus on his or her research - often times spending a major portion of teaching covering a relatively narrow subject. This is what this person has been trained for, this is what this person is rewarded for and this is what this person wants to share in class. Especially in an MBA class, research must be tied to practice. To make this connection requires good teaching skills; otherwise teaching will turn into a disaster."

HERBERT PAUL

“A very skilled instructor can do it brilliantly. You get all the advantages of the practical elements, because research is practical in one sense and in addition you get to be seen as a charismatic thinker with erudite research and the students really start to respect you as not only the creator of the knowledge but the transmitter of it as well.

If it’s done badly, it’s the worst type of teaching ever. It can appear quite vain because research assumes a canon of knowledge which students simply won’t have. And academics forget that. Forget that they’re building on 10, 20, 30 or even 40 years of knowledge. Students are more likely to have one or less.”

LUKE MASON

Bringing research to life

Stuart Roper’s area of research is brands – what a brand is and what a brand means. His Corporate Character Scale helps to define these. Stuart immediately engages first year undergraduates with a practical exercise that relates to his research on the link between litter and brands. Who are the key litterers and which brands can be most widely seen on the street as discarded pieces of packaging? Stuart gets his students to measure the amount of litter that is found on their walks between university and halls of residence – typically no more than a mile (1.5 km). He provides a workbook and students record the types of litter they discover over a two week period. Not only does this result in some interesting research but, more importantly, it leads to some really good in-class discussions – demonstrating the link between fieldwork and literature and actually involving students in some meaningful research.

“It gets away from the idea that research is just for some people at a certain level. If we can just get students into the way of thinking about research and ideas we can encourage them to ask some questions and though fieldwork find the answers. I’m trying to break down the mystic.”

STUART ROPER

So what should academics do to relate theory to practice?

Take the theories into the real world

“Over the years I’ve seen colleagues complain about executive MBA students – they’re too demanding and are quick to complain. Actually I’ve not found this to be the case. What annoys them is a lack of insights into how they can apply our knowledge to their workplace and career. So I always try to make sure they get practical experience of applying business theories. Typically I do this by knitting together two or three academic models and asking students to apply these to a particular commercial issue, for example the development of a particular product or service. One example is linking segmentation to needs/benefits through to product development using Kotler’s product model. The theories/models are fine on their own but in real life exist in an integrated way.

I also introduce them to academic journal papers! Yes, current research and theory! Exec students can learn much from these but only if approached in the right way. You’ve got to choose the right journal articles, those which are accessible and not too long. I then try and encourage my students to pick out the, shall we say, top five issues and show how these can be applied in practice. Suddenly, there’s a light bulb moment. The academic journal article they thought of as being inaccessible and quite possibly boring, suddenly becomes an opportunity to think outside the box, to learn something new that’s quite possibly not in that oversized text book. But I don’t stop the process there. Whilst I’m pleased that the article provides some useful take-aways I don’t want the students to believe that if it’s an academic paper it must be 100% right! So I then challenge them to critique the article. Now there’s a different light bulb moment – not all those take-aways actually stand up to scrutiny. So the take-away list might now reduce in size but what’s left has some real (and applicable) meaning.”

JULIAN RAWEL

“The best people took whatever the models were and creatively adapted them. We didn’t focus on the model as such but rather how best to apply it. The best faculty I worked were ones who could convey models and concepts in a story format. And they were the ones who always got the best reviews.”

JULIE GRAY

Here are our six top tips for academics to “mean business”

- 1 Don't pretend you're a practitioner if your last management job was 20 years ago.**
No-one's interested. Students don't like being fooled. If you've not worked in industry for two decades then it's time to show your more contemporary qualities and experience.
- 2 You love your research. Now can you motivate your students to love it as well.**
As we've seen, the narrowness of much research (not a criticism) – means that it can be much more challenging to integrate in your lectures and into student consciousness. But your research might well be part of what's formed your identity, contributed to your own public profile. So if you can use it “to mean business” then that's a big personal plus. If you're not confident about such an outcome then find an alternative strategy.
- 3 Look at what's in the media** and apply it to the theory (see Chapter Seven).
- 4 Follow Herbert Paul's suggestion when using case studies. Don't simply use the text questions.** Instead, set your own and encourage students to find the theory in the case. And if using journal articles try and make them relevant to the subject matter and accessible and encourage students to find some practical take aways or constructive criticism.
- 5 Encourage students to apply the theory using their own career/life examples.**
- 6 Use your company/consultancy contacts.** Might even be ex students. They will often be happy to help, be flattered to be asked and provide you with many practical examples.

(and 7! – gain respect through meaningful blogs – see panel)

“Well, I still think that universities should try and send their academics out into the real world and understand what is it like in the corporate world having to deal with people and run a business. I think you get found out if you haven't had real world experience.”

JULIE GRAY

Two of the experts we have interviewed as part of writing this paper have indicated that perhaps encouraging career academics to spend time in industry would be the most effective way of bridging the theory/practice gap.

Herbert Paul noted that in universities of Applied Sciences in Germany there's been some consideration given to having academics placed in a company for two to three years part-time working on the real time application of projects. This would be real work and not a soft, very short option. Senior staff from the company would guide the academics.

"In an ideal world it's about offering some real world work experience in an area relevant to their discipline, perhaps for a couple of years. This would be different to a sabbatical which can sometimes be seen as a career break."

CHRIS GALE

Julie Gray has, perhaps, the most obvious and simple solution. She suggests that a group of academics work together as a team. Their role in a company would be to take a particular strategic issue (selected by the company) and, in a team, work on solutions and recommendations. This could be done in a relatively short time and the academics would experience what it's like to work within an organisation and also to work as part of a team in a commercial setting. Working in a team is important because academics are typically expert in a narrow field – not sufficient for the needs of a company.

A couple of mentors would be needed – one from the business school, one from the company. There would be immediate feedback and then a review of what happened to the recommendations – six months later.

"The company gets some consultancy for free and the academics are immersed in the real world and have to interact with customers, employees, competitors."

JULIE GRAY

Gaining respect through blogging

"Having something to say and being prepared/inspired to go public with it is a way of showing you mean business. Blogging is all about looking at what's going on in the world of business and management and making educated comments - and, of course, recommendations. And just as with teaching, blogs need to be interesting, engaging and meaningful.

I started blogging when I was Director of Executive Education at Bradford University School of Management and have continued ever since. My blogs now have a global following and are always picked up by my current and past students. I am quite selective in the blogs I write, typically five a year, but this means that they don't become part of the "noise", the blogosphere wallpaper.

My blogs tend to mirror my key academic and commercial interests – winning through customer understanding, customer service and customer facing strategies.

From an academic perspective blogs not only show I'm in touch, but give me useful insights to include in my lectures. Here are a selection of my blog titles:

Why do senior managers and directors avoid strategy?

Marketing vs sales – let battle conclude!

Listening to your customers might not always be the best strategy

Big data and artificial intelligence? How about data and intelligence?

How do I develop a marketing strategy – learning from Rolling Stones, Madonna and Take That

Saving costs increases revenue...just join the dots!

Npower – when does the customer stop being strategic?

I can use these in my marketing, strategy and executive teaching and more widely in my general discussions with students. Blogs give me the freedom to comment on what might typically be restricted to a journal paper (and thus out of date!) or a book (even more out of date!). Blogs are for now...but can be used for much longer."

JULIAN RAWEL

Chapter 10

Could universities learn from best practice teaching in schools?

Could universities learn from best practice teaching in schools?

In the course of writing this e-book, a chance conversation with a head teacher led me to one final interview. Could universities learn from the best of teaching in our schools?

Richard Sheriff, head teacher at Harrogate Grammar School, a leading (non selective) state high school and where I (Julian) am a governor mentioned that he goes into primary schools to understand the perspective of students joining his school. It triggered a thought – did universities ever go out to schools to learn from their teaching or learn how to achieve a successful transition from sixth form to university? The answer was no, not to Richard’s knowledge. Richard is also a leader of the Red Kite Alliance, a partnership of outstanding schools and institutions to ensure best practice in teaching in the North of England and this led to me interviewing him to see what universities could learn from schools. Here is a snapshot of the key points I took from this.

Reflections on life at university - from first year undergraduates making a return school visit

Richard says that when students return to his school, a few months into their degrees, there is a sense of disappointment about the teaching they have had:

“At university they do not feel the person standing in front of them is interested in their progress. Instead they are employed to tell them what they know about the subject and once he/she walks off stage there’s little feedback – it tends to be left to assignments and exams at the end of the year or programme. What the students pick up is that what motivates the lecturer is not always what happens with the students in class but rather is research which is the basis of career progression. There’s a feeling amongst students that the lecturers are teaching under sufferance, that they’d rather be doing something else.”

Teaching or learning?

Richard sees a big difference between school and university with schools focusing more on learning and universities more on teaching.

“It used to be that you went to university to find out loads of information from the people who know and the only way to do that was to go into a large room with lots of other students whilst that person introduced you to that content. But it’s now universally and freely available online. Why do you need somebody in front of you telling you all this when students can find it in their own way, in their own time? What they want, and this is more important, is interaction, questions, challenge and they want to be able to extend their learning by using that very educated, informed person to go beyond what they can find for themselves.”

An example of this is the Harvard Business School case study approach which Richard has experienced and found it to be very effective.

“You came to the lecture with some good knowledge from your pre-reading and then worked through the case with the lecturer poking and prodding you about your analysis and the misconceptions. But you know the interaction between the students and the lecturer was really quite deep and I would have thought much more enjoyable for the lecturer.”

Many university academics, however, take a different view – that it is in fact at university where real learning starts with students being encouraged to enquire and challenge rather than just listen and absorb, which presumably they did at school. Richard does not agree.

"I find that genuinely quite amazing. Questioning by students of teachers, particularly in upper secondary level is almost continuous. It's encouraged, supported, in fact that's how we encourage learning. That's part of every lesson, every engagement. Here in our sixth form you've got some very able students and they will question hard and push the teachers, which is why we recruit teachers with very strong subject knowledge who actually relish the opportunity to debate with people who are interested and have got lively and enquiring minds. That's the bit that makes it really work."

What makes a great high school teacher?

Richard is clear – three key skills.

"First, great subject knowledge. It's that subject knowledge which inspires confidence in the learners. Second, really good understanding of where the learners are in their learning and this should not be restricted to formal assessment measures. And third it's all about relationships. If you've got amazing relationships, and it's not just about one to one, it can be 1:150, then students actually want to learn and listen and there is a humanity about that which in the corporate scale of universities is sometimes missing. You know if you feel that the lecturer or the teacher actually cares about the progress you are making, developing perhaps a shared love of the subject, then something special starts to happen."

So could universities learn from schools?

Finally, back to the catalyst for this interview – the links between school and higher education.

"I've got 30 years' experience working in a whole variety of different schools and I can't think of any occasion when we've been visited by higher education to come and look at how teaching and learning is delivered. Don't we need to know about that transition, something that happens between those ages of 17, 18 and 19, they're still the same human beings and we're doing the same job trying to get these people to learn."

Richard believes that schools and universities have much to share in terms of pedagogy. He makes it his business visit primary schools in order to try and work out what they do with their young people.

"Because I need to understand that in order to frame the learning that goes on from that point on. But I've never been visited by a university vice-chancellor or senior lecturer coming to find out what happens to the students before they go to university. The only visits we get are from university admissions teams."

Chapter 11

Tools for the lecture theatre

Tools for the lecture theatre

If tradesmen are expected to have their toolkit with them so the same applies to faculty.

Yet very few faculty have their own teaching toolkit. You often hear them complaining about the absence of white board markers, Blu-tac and, most of all, pointers and clickers. Interestingly, many faculty are still happy to progress slides with a fixed lecture theatre keyboard or mouse – a way of working which ties the teacher to a fixed point for the whole lecture.

With so many faculty teaching in multi-locations it is important and professional to have the right kit. It looks professional, stops hold ups – “where’s the kit?” – and results in the best image and delivery.

So what kit should every serious faculty member carry around?

Here are our five top tips

- 1 **Don't expect others to pay.** Purchase your own toolkit. It won't break the bank, it will give you greater confidence and show you to be a real professional.
- 2 **A clicker/pointer** is essential. Allows you to move around and change slides, forward and back, point at key information, even black out a slide. Cost is around £40 (€45).
- 3 **Pens, Post-its, Blu-Tack.** You'll need sufficient for group work/breakouts – just make sure you collect them at the end of the lecture. Cost is around £25 (€30).
- 4 And if you are also delivering DL (on line) lectures and tutorials then a **professional quality microphone** is essential – the mic on your laptop won't have necessary quality. Cost is around £70(€85).
- 5 **Don't lose the kit!** – if having your own kit is new to you then so will collecting it up at the end of a lecture. It's so easy to leave the kit behind – and will it still be there when you've realised you've left it behind? Unfortunately, no.



Jochen Wirtz - people as well as objects!

“One of the key things is that, like everybody else, I don’t have enough time. So whether the university pays for it or not I always have a teaching assistant. This allows me to concentrate on the teaching and help in other ways such as observing the class, looking at who’s contributing, who’s not contributing and also asking students at the end of their class what’s working and what’s not.”

In this way Jochen can contact students who aren’t really contributing and encourage them or in some cases cajole them into contributing but also make sure that people who are over vocal in class understand that they’re already doing fine and they need to allow time for other people to contribute.

“Actually a teaching assistant costs me \$10 an hour and I pay it out of my own pocket. I don’t care. I know the limitations and I try and be smart and extremely well prepared. I manage this through a lot of planning which makes things easy and effective for me. This helps me to fine-tune sessions all the time.”

Chapter 12

Be innovative and organised

Be innovative and organised

Our research showed that students valued workshops and the study of current issues and case studies. But they complained about disorganised sessions, many of which were simply lecture extensions and with further unapplied theory.

Both UG and PG students appreciate teacher innovation. If a journal article is to be analysed – why? How does it relate to subject thinking? Is the case relevant to today's business environment?

We live in an ever changing society and business environment. Innovation in teaching means offering the best education for students in an engaging way which recognises environmental changes.

We live in a world of Uber, Airbnb, the Internet of Things, 3D printing. Businesses need to completely evaluate/re-evaluate how they operate and tutorials and workshops can be a catalyst for students to make their contribution to this debate and discussion.

Academic models can be fun – even for final year UGs

"I've done a certain amount of undergraduate teaching over the years and have noticed that as the years pass so undergraduates have become less willing to engage, take part and contribute.

Perhaps it's just a reflection of the rather enclosed world of social media. It's difficult (but as we have discussed by no means impossible) to get them to really open up in big lectures. What I have discovered is that in smaller tutorial sessions (with up to 30 students) you can really get them involved, providing that what you're trying to get them to do is actually interesting.

Think about it. Undergraduate students, by the time they're in their third and final year, will have sat in, perhaps, 100 tutorial sessions and many of these will probably have been centred around analysing yet another case study. It's a turn off. Just how many case studies can you analyse? But you can engage students by getting them to look at things differently through the use of academic models.

One example was when I asked third year undergraduates to look at international brands. I introduced a brand mapping technique. Their role, in small groups, was to create a brand map for an international brand but not to actually identify the brand! This was left to the other student groups. Everyone became engaged - instead of one group talking through their case analysis whilst the other groups pretended (or maybe didn't even pretend) to listen, they actively listened – otherwise they couldn't identify the brand. All students had a smile on their face. All students worked really hard and at the end of the tutorial, they said thank you. Praise indeed."

JULIAN RAWEL

Students don't read academic papers

"Like a lot of my colleagues, I used to get frustrated that my students hadn't read the long list of supplementary articles I'd spent hours researching and compiling for each lecture. Then I thought back to when I was a student. Did I read everything my lecturers listed? Of course not. I was no different myself; I found the idea of reading ten or twelve 20-page academic papers for each lecture overwhelming. So why was I expecting my students to do something that I didn't do myself? Simple, I didn't think.

My solution was to gradually introduce my students to reading by tempering my expectations. Better to have them read a few papers than nothing at all. At the start of the course, instead of listing articles from Administrative Science Quarterly or the Academy of Management Journal, I looked for relevant papers in the McKinsey Quarterly or on the Strategic HRM web site. What happened? Students started reading. They found the papers easy to understand and relevant to the subject; they were able to understand the application of theory to practice. As the course progressed I gradually introduced more challenging material, and they kept reading. I found that taking time to develop a strategy to encourage reading was worthwhile; workshops and tutorials became much more interactive as a result."

ALF CROSSMAN

"I try to make my students passionate about the subject so that they read further, not only because we ask them to do it but because they are just interested, so you need to kindle this fire. I also don't think that a super large text book of 1000 pages is that useful, in fact it can be rather daunting. So you need core texts which are really manageable. In terms of prescribed journal articles we're training the students as though they want to become PhD students - I like to have a combination of practical and academic journals, but the practical journals, such as the Financial Analysts Journal, are not that common. However, most students are looking to go into the world of work so they do need this more practical bias."

ARMAN ESHRAGHI

"Normally on an undergraduate class we have 40-45 students in a class. I do not break them out and ask them to go to a different class or place, so I ask them to talk to their neighbours or the people behind them and in this way you start to form loose groups and then give them a topic or a question to discuss. I walk around, provide support and make sure they are really doing it. Having a few of these short buzz sessions I find more practical."

HERBERT PAUL

Of course, workshops and tutorials are not the only way of engaging students outside the confines of the formal lecture session.

Jochen Wirtz has invested in consultancy projects at both undergraduate and MBA levels. The class is divided up into a number of groups and each will work on a different project – within the same organisation or for different ones. So within one class there might be one project on market entry, another on strategy, another on marketing and so on. On completion all the groups present to each in one big class and encourage criticism and feedback. What this really means is that everyone is immersed in a full class rather than specific group consultancy journey.

According to Anna Rosinus: *“When I was a student I had to read material upfront. This is terribly hard to manage nowadays and so instead of making them read something upfront, I tend to do some gamification based elements as a kind of out of class preparation.”*

Anna says students don't read in advance anymore because *“They're not used to searching information themselves. A lot is available on the internet. It might also be a matter of their expectation level. Why should I read something when there's somebody being paid to tell me about it? A problem is that even if students come to class and they can't answer the questions (to do with the pre-reading) there's hardly any penalty the teacher can use and they're not blamed by other students either.”*

So for Anna it's about thinking of new ways to encourage pre-class engagement. With a few prizes for pre-class on line engagement she finds that students will do some pre-work – only it needs to be more dynamic, more fun, more interesting and, importantly, different from when she was a student!

So it's important to create invatotive workshops and tuturoials but make sure that they are scrupulously organised.

Here are our five tips:

- 1 Remember that workshops aren't lectures** - Students will engage if they see workshops as being something different, something dynamic, something to be looked forward to, something with a buzz. Often you see students entering a workshop without any great enthusiasm, thinking it's just a chore to be suffered. But if a real difference between a lecture and workshop can be identified and developed, students will engage.
- 2 Pre-reading isn't what it used to be** - In the ideal world it's great to have students doing all the pre-reading we'd like. However the reality is that at undergraduate level they don't necessarily see the need or they certainly don't have the attention span. At post graduate level, especially Executive Masters or MBA level, they just don't have the time. So, a starting point is simply to reduce the number of papers you ask them to read – one per lecture should be sufficient. Also, it could be that time is running out for the 800 page text book. There are concise versions of almost any seminal text book on the market. The smaller the book, the more likely the student engagement. Finally, use technology to persuade students to start a pre-class journey of discovery. Let them use the internet to find the sort of examples you'd typically expect to be found in the written word. Turn this into some sort of game. Award prizes and encourage some competition. Not all students will engage but many will, and more than will through the written word.

- 3 Use technology in the classroom** - We can't go into this in much detail in this e-book, mainly because technology provision differs between lecture theatres and countries. Many lecture theatres for example, are fitted out so that students cannot receive a phone signal, preventing real time tweeting and remote commentary during a lecture. Other lecture theatres simply don't have technology such as for in class polling. However, using technology will put you into the student zone – especially for the Generation Zs. In distance learning, the use of polling is an effective way of encouraging involvement. Introduce into a lecture theatre and it can be an easy win. So when you ask a question, instead of having one or two students raising their hands, you can now ask a question and give a series of pre-set answers – yes or no, agree or disagree and so on. The result is instant on screen results which can be a great catalyst for discussion.

"The ideal is to make people interested, to keep them on their toes by constantly asking questions and constantly engaging them in subtle competitions. I find that students are very competitive especially in a diverse, multi-national group. They want to stake their claim. They want to show off, well most of them do even the ones that are typically shy. The traditional way would be to ask a question and then get a show of hands and usually the shyer students or students from certain countries would tend to be less vocal, which is perfectly normal from what we know about cross-cultural studies. Using technology, what we call student devices or clickers, is a way to get round this. So you pose a question in your slides, which could be a multiple choice question, but you ask them to log go on a website and answer by polling. After all, they'll all have their phones ready!"

ARMAN ESHRAGHI

Arman uses ParticPoll.com, a very simple, user friendly platform. A question is posed and then the students will see, for example, ABCDE on their phone and they can tap on any of the answer options. *"And what happens is that on a real time basis, we'll see the distribution of student answers right onto the screen. He uses multiple choice and right or wrong answers. "You can do right or wrong answers as a fast check, making sure that the students have understood what you've been talking to them about."* A more advanced option is through an opinion poll. *"So we're talking about share price – so what is their projection for a company's share price for the next month? Nobody knows but we can see what the majority thinks and then we can revisit that next month."*

Arman also uses market simulations. *"I teach investing and investing is very risky and in the real world you could lose a lot of money. So students need to discover how to invest, but in a safe environment."* Here, Arman uses another platform, Zolio.com. *"What happens is that I give each student £1m at the beginning of the course and then I get them to invest in up to 10 stocks and then it's a competition. The students make their choice of the stocks and can be selling and buying all the time. By doing this simulation they learn a lot about investing and I assess this part of the course through self-reflection so that students can see what went right and what went wrong."*

If you can't beat them join them!

"Most of my colleagues complain about students playing on their smartphones in lectures and tutorials. I think we all get frustrated when students don't appear to give us their undivided attention. We always tend to assume the worst; that they are chatting on Facebook or Twitter or, even worse, they're checking what we are telling them on Wikipedia. Yes, it can be disrespectful but we're unlikely to stop it happening. So, it's my view that if you can't beat them, join them!"

A couple of years ago I told my students I expected them to bring a smartphone, tablet, or laptop to every lecture. These were resources I intended to use in every class. At least once in every 1- hour teaching slot I give them a 'smart moment' in the Power Point presentation. I ask them to research one of the topics I've just covered. They can decide the sources they use and what they discover becomes the basis for the discussion that follows. Not only does this allow me to make 'playing' on the phone less attractive, it gives me the opportunity to help them develop a healthy curiosity and their practical research skills."

ALF CROSSMAN

"In one course I taught I organised an in class competition. I gave students a list of 10 countries. In groups they were told to advocate investing in one of those countries. I gave them half an hour to do some on line research – after all the information was at their finger tips – and then present the pros and cons of investing say in Columbia, as opposed to China. This was during a course on emerging market finance and the element of the competition was who would give the most convincing pitch. So sometimes you just need to join them and get them to use their own tools in the interests of the course."

ARMAN ESHRAGHI

"My third pillar of using technology is through social networks. For every course I set up a dedicated Facebook page. I've experimented with LinkedIn and a couple of other platforms, but I always find that Facebook works best. The students like it because it's very social and they spend a lot of time socialising on Facebook so why not channel some of that time into something more productive? And so I post a lot of additional readings, videos and latest news of the day, and first the students tend to like the posts but what I find is after a couple of weeks, discussions start to emerge and they start to post their own discussions and talk to each other about the concepts which is excellent. Students don't tend to engage with traditional virtual campus platforms which are a little primitive. Also it's quite difficult to upload new video material onto virtual campus whereas it's very easy to do on Facebook, you just post a link. Of course some of the problems of using Facebook are that it might all just get a little out of hand but the trick is that the lecturer has a regular presence on that particular social network and is an active user. You don't want someone just to make a Facebook page and then leave it entirely up to the students."

ARMAN ESHRAGHI

- 4 Move away from the classical case study analysis** - There's nothing wrong with cases. We all use them. Some are very good, some are very long. The reality is that cases need to be used and analysed, but in a practical way. So ensure that it's not just about answering the set questions but rather applying case learning into the world of management and business.

- 5 Workshops don't have to be static or in one location** - If you are looking at a particular theme, then divide up the class and have students working in different groups, looking at different elements. There's nothing more boring for students than watching every student or group presentation being made on exactly the same theme. And, to get people moving, to get them energised, feel free to move around your business school if possible. Have students working in different parts of the school, in different locations. It might sound logistically difficult, but it's amazing how much energy people have when moving around.

Chapter 13

Assessment

- it's two way

Assessment – it's two way

Discussing assessment is not a part of this white paper. However, great teaching without attention to assessment and feedback means that only part of the job has been done. We don't intend here to make recommendations as to how to manage the assessment process. However, the two insights below are certainly food for thought as to how the benefits of great teaching can be compromised by poor/poorly organised assessments. After all, those final interactions leave a lasting impression on the student body.

"Sometimes the students do not get the feedback they deserve...there is just a mark or a mark with comments. I've heard that so many times from students. If you do take the time to provide meaningful feedback on exams, papers, in-class presentations, that really helps."

HERBERT PAUL

Assessments should be a learning experience

"I used to get frustrated by hordes of students trooping to my door asking endless questions about the assignment I'd set them. It seemed they wanted to be spoon-fed the single 'right' answer to the problem I'd set. I got into endless discussions with colleagues about how students were too dependent, too lazy and not prepared to think for themselves. The idea that the problem might lie with us rather than them didn't cross our minds.

Following normal practice, I had my assignment reviewed by a colleague and was told they were fine. But I wasn't convinced. So, I did the unthinkable, I asked a couple of final year students to look at my second year assignment and to give me feedback. It turned out the assignment brief that I thought was very clear needed to be more specific. My intention was to provide sufficient scope for students to be innovative in their essays, but in doing so my brief lacked direction.

I learned that being more prescriptive doesn't stifle students' innovation. When students know exactly what is expected of them they can excel. The other thing I learned about assessments is that they don't have to be about measuring knowledge, they can provide a learning experience in their own right. I often set assessments to be handed in, in week two or three of the semester. Nothing like a bit of immersion to get students engaged early on."

ALF CROSSMAN

It's two way

Of course, giving serious consideration and time to giving assessment is one thing. Serious time also needs to be given to receiving assessment.

Most teachers receive assessment of their module well after it has finished – sometimes months after it has finished. Students are cajoled into completing a fairly generic questionnaire which slowly finds its way to faculty. But whether you are delivering a four day PG block module or an eight week UG one, what are you going to do if the feedback is challenging? Maybe use it for the next time. Quite possibly forget about it because the next time might not be for nine months.

"I fine-tune sessions all the time. I don't have an end of term evaluation. The school does that but it's too generic for me. I need to know what worked today and what didn't work."

JOCHEN WIRTZ

Tutors need to think about introducing their own mid-point assessment – nothing too formal, but enough to gain an understanding of the extent the module is working – from the students' perspective.

Mid-point feedback

As we are nearing the mid-point of the module, I'd be really interested to know how it's working for you. Please could you take a couple of minutes to complete? I'll collect at the end of the session. It's completely anonymous.

Thanks
Julian

Is the module:

Meeting your expectations

Not meeting your expectations

If meeting your expectations, please give two reasons why

1 _____

2 _____

If not meeting your expectations, please give two reasons why

1 _____

2 _____

Do you have any suggestions for improving the module? Please give up to two

1 _____

2 _____

Thank you.

Chapter 14

Get some help - it's a sign of strength

Get some help – it's a sign of strength

It's pretty difficult to be perfect but it's not so difficult to make the effort. One way of trying to improve is to seek help. There will always be formal or informal help available, but securing it will always be up to the individual faculty member. As experts we hope that poor students will learn from us – and improve as a result. So as faculty we need to do the same.

In Chapter One I showed how early on in my teaching career I closely studied the teaching skills and techniques of two colleagues. Whilst this form of observation did not give me an A-Z menu of best practice teaching it certainly put me on the correct path. But over the years I've noticed an almost macho attitude amongst certain business school faculty – they know best or believe they know best.

At certain business schools a formal, though not mandatory, mentoring system is in place for new teachers.

At the University of Singapore, Jochen Wirtz describes how they provide all the tools for good teaching, but they don't push them on faculty. They're there if they want them. So for example there's a two year membership scheme whereby a younger member of staff is mentored by a more experienced one. He/she gives feedback, they have lunch together, watch each other teach and so on. It's completely developmental, there's no assessment, it doesn't count towards the annual review.

"A number of faculty have sat in and observed my class and these are the people who have gone on to win teaching awards, they have the motivation. They are quite young and have become quite brilliant. Nobody enjoys bombing in the classroom so most people want to do reasonably well. The question is how much further do you want to go and what's the effort needed to go from doing reasonably well to being a star in the classroom?"

JOCHEN WIRTZ

At the University of Applied Sciences in Mainz a similar system operates:

"We have an on-boarding process, especially for new teachers where they will teach together with more experienced ones. It's a good thing."

ANNA ROSINUS

PART THREE

Strategic leadership for teaching excellence

Chapter 15

The pathways towards strategic leadership for teaching excellence

The pathways towards strategic leadership for teaching excellence

From our research, it is clear that the burden for teaching excellence generally falls on the individual academic. Few mentioned attending training sessions, having central support or collaborating with colleagues to improve their student feedback scores.

As in every field, students are becoming more vocal and expecting more for their money. Already this is showing up in rankings and social media – it won't be long before a bright student starts *ratemybusinessschool.com*.

In the UK, the government is now considering penalising business schools that fall short of teaching excellence by enforcing an actual reduction in fees (and thus income). See our earlier discussions on the TEF in Chapter 2. Research will no longer be the most important measure of business school excellence.

As we have written this e-book, it has struck us that business schools may need to take a more strategic and holistic view of teaching. This would overcome some of the problems of time, mentioned so often by academics, but also save every academic reinventing the wheel. There is only so much that individual faculty can do.

So teaching must become strategic

There are many self-starting faculty who will consistently invest of their own time in improving the programmes they deliver. But what is needed is a consistent approach whereby all faculty see an accessible pathway to teaching excellence, one that does factor in those time pressures. Otherwise, teaching development might become individually an expendable action.

Senior leadership teams need to drive forward the strategic approach to teaching excellence and the development of faculty. This must mean more than the formal teacher training, for example in the UK the PG Certificate in Teaching and Learning. Whilst such a qualification is of course beneficial, this qualification's effectiveness has been called into question and many faculty report a lack of consistent mentoring and follow up.

Ideally the strategic approach should flow downwards, starting with vice-chancellors, moving to pro-vice-chancellors, to deans and associate deans. However, such potentially major culture change is beyond the scope of this e-book. So here, we take a micro approach, recommending strategic leadership through subject group heads, those senior members of faculty who are in direct and daily contact with their own faculty. The reasoning is compelling – faculty teaching development, such as the PG Certificate typically takes a one size fits all approach and this fails to recognise the specific needs of specific disciplines.

Sorry subject group heads! We know you have a doubtless heavy administration as well as teaching and research load. But you are best placed to take the strategic approach to teaching, supporting your own faculty with a consistent approach to teaching excellence. Without this micro lead, teaching development will be (will continue to be) piecemeal.

Business schools that are proactive and strategic about teaching excellence, now, are the ones that will be the top-ranked business schools of the future and attract the highest fees.

So these are our five tips on strategic leadership for teaching excellence

1 Move from ad-hoc to integrated

The first step is to ensure that subject groups heads take a demonstrable role in group teaching excellence. This will ensure that teaching becomes a regular leadership discussion, within the group with a clear focus on teaching scores and improvement. Clear goals need to be set for the group as a whole and, individually, each group member.

The subject group head should also meet with their own team well before the end of the academic year to reflect on teaching experience, feedback and evaluations – at a time when their is the capacity to act and improve rather than at the start of the new academic year when panic is more the order of things! Make sure that a teaching review becomes a must-attend group forum where all participants can air their concerns, ideas for improvement, enablers and constraints.

2 Make mentoring strategic

We've discussed at various points in this e-book the issue of mentoring. Colleagues such as Herbert Paul (Germany) and Jochen Wirtz (Singapore) discuss how at their business schools optional mentoring is readily available where more experienced faculty will mentor new faculty or those more experienced faculty who see mentoring as a useful way of contributing to personal improvement.

The problem here is that mentoring is voluntary. That's not to say that mentoring should be forced upon faculty but rather should form part of the strategic review meetings discussed above. Which faculty would like some help and which faculty would be available to provide it? This is real collegiality where faculty within subject groups support each other.

3 Teaching technology – make it strategic rather than the preserve of the technologists!

Search out as a group, new forms of teaching technology. It's not only outside world technology, the material of case studies, which is changing at an ever increasing pace. It's the same in the classroom. However, it is not necessarily the case that each member of the subject group will spend an equal amount of time researching and reviewing the available teaching technology options. Within a group there will doubtless be a bank of pooled personal research into new technology which can be shared wider. Group needs can translate into economies of scale.

And here it might well be worth asking university IT specialists to join in the discussion so that practicalities can also be shared.

4 Take a joined up approach to tools for the lecture theatre

In Chapter 10 we recommended some tried and tested "props" we believe to be highly useful for faculty. But do these all need to be purchased individually? And which might be most appropriate for individual subject groups? Develop the requirements collegiately and do the same for purchasing.

5 Research, champion and celebrate teaching excellence

Teaching is becoming the new gold standard in business schools. It has government support and can no longer be either ignored or subverted by the traditionally all important areas of research. Great teaching requires commitment and enthusiasm. It requires the flag to be waved and where better to do this than at subject group level? Teaching needs to be measured and should be included in appraisals and reward – just as top quality research attracts higher salaries.

Measurement needs to become more strategic. Module Evaluation Questionnaires tend to be the mechanism used to measure teaching effectiveness. But completion rates are variable, results delivered after a module has ended and follow up improvements needed so long into the future that by the time the module/teaching needs to be revised the MEQ feedback might well have been forgotten. Rather we should consider mid module evaluations, even for block modules, and a more open, subject group approach to improvement based on the steer of the questionnaire results which, if challenging, should not be an automatic sanctions mechanism but rather an opportunity for group led improvement.

And where the MEQs are positive, the school should create teaching excellence awards and celebrate and recognise success.

Chapter 16

How we can help achieve teaching excellence - the Market Echoes Formula

How we can help achieve teaching excellence - the Market Echoes formula

We are passionate about helping faculty to deliver the very best business school teaching every time. Teaching which educates, informs, inspires and develops ultimate best business practice.

Our “bite size” one hour workshops cover the whole spectrum of business school teaching and get to the heart of best practice teaching – fast.

Instead of time consuming full day training sessions we’ll come to a business school for one day and deliver up to eight one hour workshops. Faculty can attend one, two or more – whatever they’ll find most useful. And they’ll leave each one with practical, actionable and inspirational ideas to help develop their teaching.

Our one hour bite size workshops

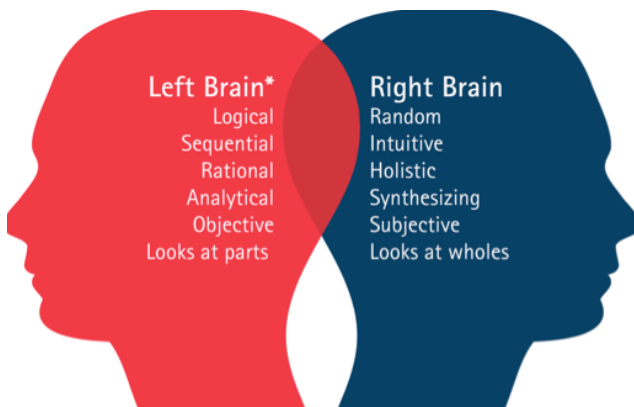
1. **The guide to best practice teaching – our top ten tips** - a summary of this book! One hour on the 10 most important skills for business school teaching.
2. **Undergraduate - year 1** - managing a big class, one made up of students straight out of school where teaching, not research, is the key deliverable. How do you take control, encourage interest and develop real interaction and participation?
3. **Undergraduate - final year** - classes might be smaller but expectations will be higher (or perhaps lower!). Many students will have returned from a year in industry with their newly found work ethic, others will be in a more traditional student mode. All will be thinking about the future. So inspiration in this final year is essential, as is depth as students start to specialise. Keeping students engaged is the answer – otherwise they’ll be physically in the lecture space but mentally elsewhere.
4. **Pre-experience Master's** - for many business schools the “cash cow” degrees with real geographic diversity. Many classes will be big with diverse experience of UG learning. So for the teacher, it’s about presenting in real PG mode but being sensitive to the varying needs of the class.

5. **MBA (Ft/Executive)** – the most demanding business school students. They pay premium prices and expect premium teaching. Teaching is not just about knowledge generation, it's about new knowledge generation and its *application*.
6. **Distance Learning** – increasingly important, not only for full DL but also for blended learning degrees. Teaching through DL is very different to teaching in the classroom. But students still expect quality, interest and inspiration. If they don't get it they (at best) complain, at worst sign in but not sign on!
7. **Teaching international audiences at home and in other countries** - faculty are increasingly expected to teach international classes, at home or abroad in owned or partner business schools. This reflects the global nature of business but requires a different teaching skills set and a real appreciation of cultural differences. Keeping international students engaged might require a very different mindset.
8. **Using blogging to keep (and be seen to be) up to date** – students respect faculty who are truly in touch with the world outside the classroom. Blogging is a way of achieving this, quickly, regularly and accessibly. Up to date blogs provide current examples and encourage discussion – perfect for the classroom.

To find out more please visit www.marketechoes.co.uk
or email me – julian@marketechoes.co.uk

Chapter 17

Celebrate and enjoy!



Celebrate and enjoy!

What we've not set out to do is to design a cloned perfect business school teacher.

Excellence through everybody being the same would soon lead to more complaints by students and a feeling of non-stop conformity amongst faculty. We hope that you'll have found much of the content of this book to be interesting and helpful. Please take on board as many tips as you want.

But also be yourself. As an academic you are most definitely an individual. We want you to be inspired and take real enjoyment out of teaching. But once you're equipped with some of the tips we've given, you've got to let your personality to do the talking.

"I'll always find a way to put my own steer on the subject and my presentations will always contain an element of my own personality. And whether it's a school, a business school, a college, a university, enthusiasm makes all the difference. You've got to get people engaged and interested in whatever your subject is"

STUART ROPER

We're all different and it's that difference, backed by great practice, which will inspire your students. So find out what you've got that makes you special. Although there is quite some discussion about the accuracy of left and right side brain theory, it does help us to understand the importance of balance. If you're hugely organised but a little shy, then work on becoming more confident – you can be because you've organised the foundations. If you're an amazing storyteller but can't quite be bothered to get the detail right every time, then concentrate on the left side of the brain and try and make sure that your great conversational ability is backed up by the appropriate level of detail.

"It's about everybody finding their strengths. The bottom line for me is, are you being yourself? This is an elusive concept, of course. I think we're all in a performance mode when we're teaching, so who is the real self? But without becoming too philosophical about it, I think that, whoever you are, the more genuine you can be, then that inspires people because they feel that sincerity and authenticity."

MARTIN SEDGLEY



Enjoy yourself, it really can be infectious.

THE AUTHORS

Julian Rawel MSc, BA, Dip.M, FCIM, Chartered Marketer

Julian is an experienced academic and entrepreneur.

After graduation Julian spent 16 years with UK tour operator, Eurocamp, principally heading up the sales and marketing function as Group Sales and Marketing Director and was one of four directors to take the company through a £32m management buyout and £60m stock market flotation. In 1994 he was asked to set up the marketing for Britain's biggest museum development, the £42.5m Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds, UK. This he did, leaving in 1998 to set up The Julian Rawel Consultancy, a consultancy business specialising in marketing and strategy for service industry companies. It was at this time that he started his academic career, teaching extensively in the areas of strategy and marketing for Bradford University School of Management (UK) and TiasNimbas business school (Netherlands) where he was Director of Studies, Masters Programmes. From 2007 - 2013 Julian was Director of Executive Education/Associate Dean Employer Engagement at Bradford, a role which included management of the executive MBA programmes in Bradford and Dubai as well as corporate MBA programmes.

Today, Julian combines MBA, Masters and executive teaching (currently in seven countries) with development work via his company Market Echoes (www.marketechoes.co.uk). He is also Interim Director of MBA Programmes at the University of Edinburgh Business School.

Julian graduated in Geography from the University of Leicester (UK) and has an MSc in Tourism Management from Manchester Metropolitan University (UK). He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and a Chartered Marketer. He has been a main board executive director of Eurocamp plc and a main board non-executive director of ABTA (Association of British Travel Agents) and AITO (Association of Independent Tour Operators). He has also been a council member of Bradford Chamber of Commerce (UK) and a committee member of the Association of Business Schools Executive Education committee.

Julian is a business commentator on BBC radio and television, and is a regular blogger <http://www.marketechoes.co.uk/blog/>

Alf Crossman – PhD, MA, Dip Pm

Alf is a freelance academic and journalist.

He started his working life in the hotel and leisure industry working as personnel and training manager for a number of organisations including Thistle Hotels, Whites Club, L&R Leisure, BDO Stoy Heywood and McDonald Hotels. He has also consulted for leading organisations including Boeing and General Motors.

From 1999-2015 Alf was a senior lecturer/teaching fellow at the Surrey Business School, University of Surrey UK. As part of this role he has held positions including Director of International Programmes, Group Leader for the People at Organisations department and DBA Director. Alf has taught widely in the areas of managing human resources, industrial relations and ethics and has written widely on the subject having many peer reviewed publications to his name.

Alf holds a number of visiting faculty positions including at Tias School for Business and Society, Utrecht, Netherlands; Moscow International Business School and the University of Linkoping, Sweden.

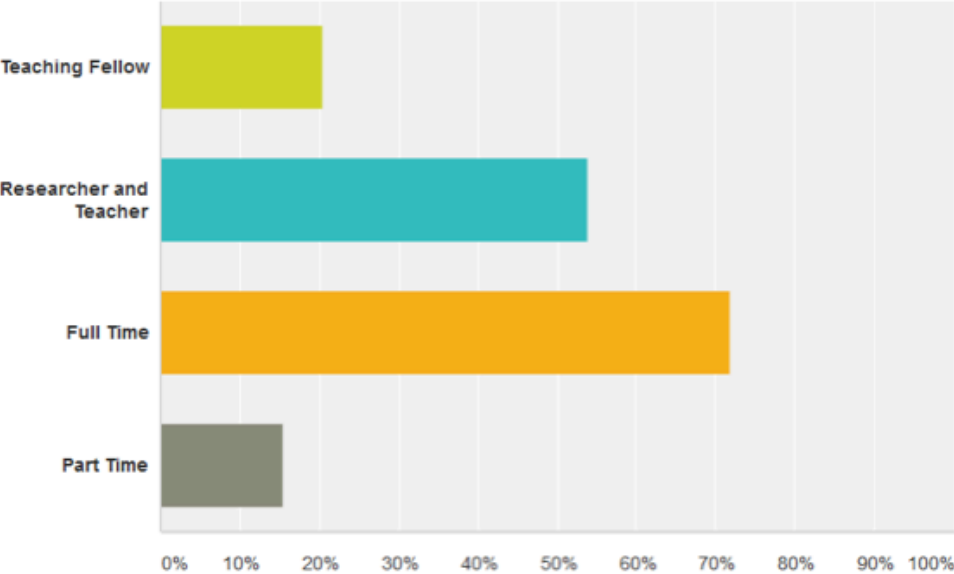
An acknowledged industrial relations specialist, Alf has been a commentator for the BBC on BBC Breakfast, BBC World and Sky News. He has appeared widely on BBC radio. As a freelance journalist, he has had articles published in the Times Educational Supplement, The Times Edge and Professional Manager magazine. He has also been a columnist for the Kommersant Daily in Russia.

Appendix 1

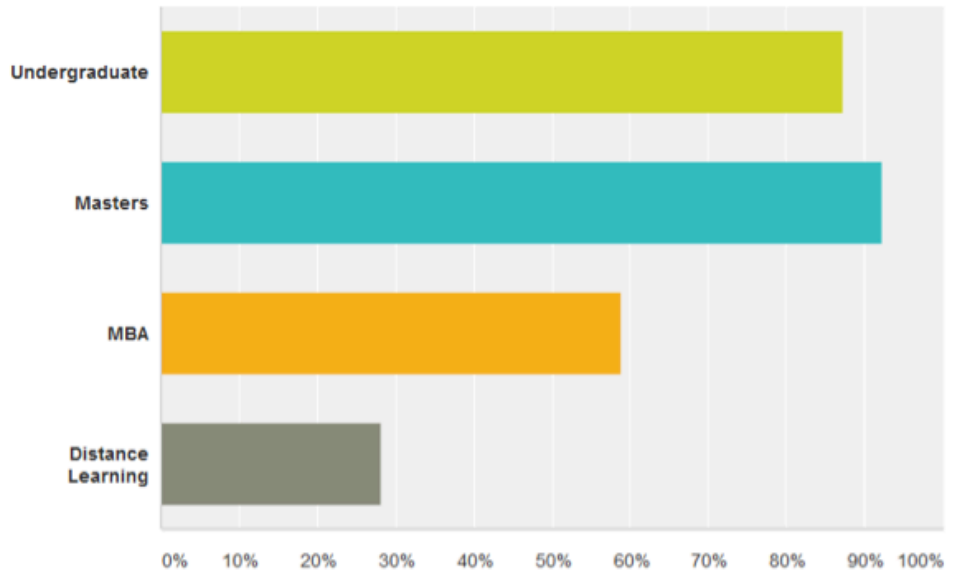
Research findings

faculty survey

What type of business school/faculty teacher are you?

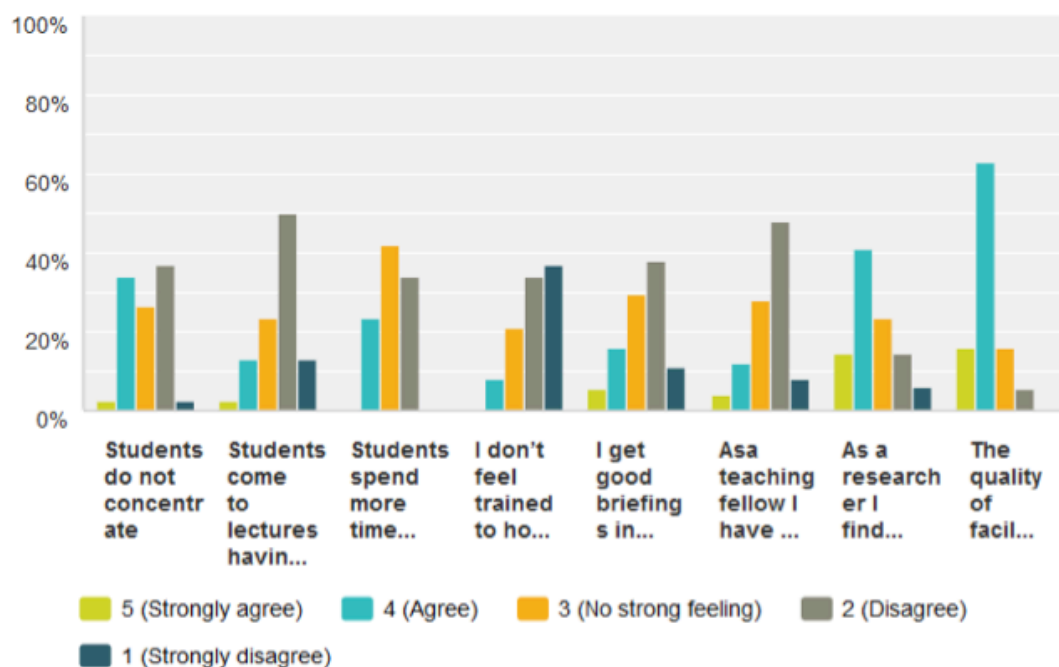


What level do you teach?

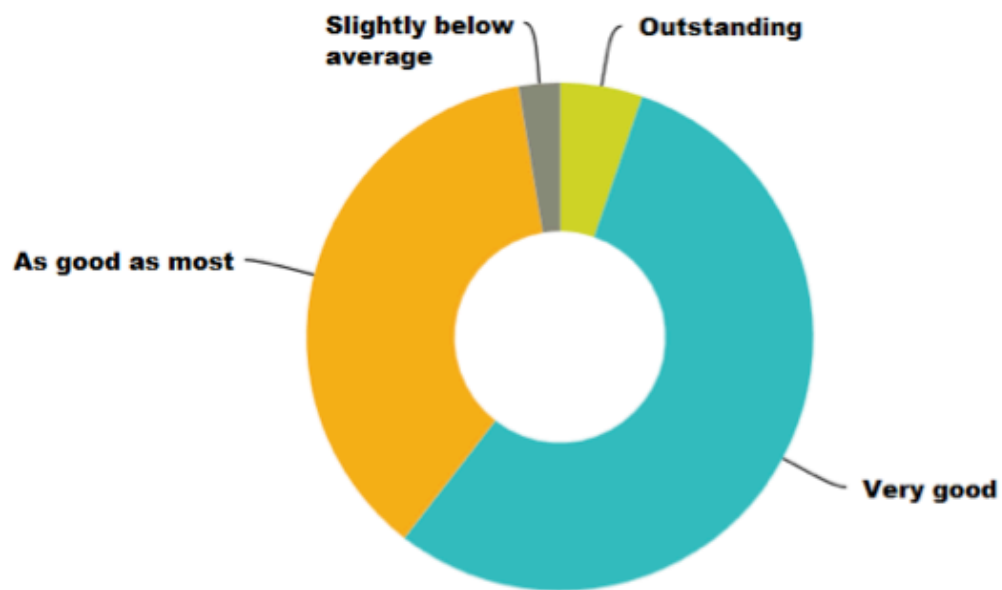


When you are teaching, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

- Students do not concentrate
- Students come to lectures having done their pre-reading
- Students spend more time playing with their smart phones than studying
- I don't feel trained to hold the attention of students
- I get good briefings in terms of class expectations and content from subject head
- As a teaching fellow I have to teach too wide a selection of modules
- As a researcher I find that the teaching reflects the focus of my research and therefore expertise
- The quality of facilities and equipment is good



How would you rate the quality of teaching at your business school/faculty?



What three things would either improve or make your business school teaching outstanding?

1.

More guidance in best practice	4
Getting paid for actual teaching	1
More resources re teaching hours	3
More time to prepare	3
Use of technology	1
Application theory to practice	6
Increase entry requirements students	1
Shorter classes	2
Better trained staff	1
Stable management and admin structure	3
More staff	1
Smaller classes	1
Fewer courses	1
Make teaching more important	1
Fewer courses	1
Being 25 years younger	1
Total	31

2.

More time to develop and improve modules	4
Teach about research	1
Better time tabling	3
Smaller groups	5
More attention to detail	1
Time to facilitate practical business case studies	4
Feedback	1
Less lengthy PowerPoint's	1
Reduce bureaucracy	2
No unions	1
Facilities and new technology	4
Be approachable	1
Stronger subject focus	1
Total	29

3.

Less reliant on student survey outcomes	1
More collegiality	3
Better admin support	1
Better time tabling	1
Too many researchers – need more teaching fellows	1
Time to enable tutorials	1
More relevant teaching courses designed for faculty not provider	1
Better skills training	1
Acting ability	1
Students need to understand the input from themselves	1
Smaller groups	1
Time to facilitate practical business case studies	2
Facilities and new technology	4
More diversity by country	1
Equal status with research	1
Field trips to businesses	1
More time to prepare	1
More able students	1
Increase compulsory attendance of students	1
Total	25

Do you act on evaluations from students to improve your teaching methods where appropriate?



Do you have a personal tip to share with others to motivate and hold the attention of students?

1.

Help students to work in groups and help each other more	2
Start with their experience and doing practical things /interactive	19
Learn your material	1
Less is more	1
Eye contact, vocal delivery and moving around lecture theatre	2
Encourage the students to search for materials on web	1
Silence – powerful tool	1
Teaching by asking questions	2
Don't be nervous, it is a performance, be yourself	3
Total	32

Do you have any other comments?

Teaching should be of same importance as research in business school

Teachers buy their own materials as there is no money

Good teaching is an art

Business practitioners are normally the most popular lecturers

Lack of resources – so teaching is not always efficient from learning perspective

Challenge now is teaching students with much more diverse range of abilities

Should be helping students to achieve the high expectations we have

Give students small amounts of information

They are paying customers so treat them like that

Our challenge is to adapt the best practices and to continuously improve

Appendix 2

Research findings

student survey

**As a student what did you find most effective in terms of lecture/
 tutorial/workshop teaching?** *Please list the three most important*

1.

Group work and discussions / Tutorials	37
Case studies that demonstrate the theory	31
Lecture expert knowledge	29
Workshops	19
Real life projects	19
Visuals e.g. video/presentations/book/storytelling	6
N/A	4
Mini quizzes	2
Compact schedules/clear explanation of framework	2
Business theories and models	1
High intensity focussed teaching days	1
Total	151

2.

Group work	37
Lecture expert knowledge	30
Case studies that demonstrate the theory	30
Workshops	17
Real life projects	10
Visuals e.g. video/presentations/book/storytelling	9
Guest speakers	4
N/A	2
Stop & think mindset	1
Methodology	1
Exam prep	1
Distance Learning	1
Requesting feedback from students	1
Total	144

3.

Group work	42
Lecture expert knowledge	27
Case studies that demonstrate the theory	16
Workshops	12
Real life projects	6
Visuals e.g. video/presentations/book/storytelling	5
Exam	5
Guest speakers	3
Pre reading in business	2
Presentations	2
N/A	2
Keep up with modern practice / modifying course	2
Mini quizzes	1
Private study	1
Research paper on teaching issue	1
Comments on assignments to improve writing style	1
Text work	1
Exams – reinforce learning	1
Comparative learning – showing cultural differences	1
Apple methods	1
Weekends	1
Balance class time and breaks	1
Total	134

**As a student what did you find least effective in terms of lecture/
 tutorial/workshop teaching?** *Please list the three most important*

1.

Pure content lectures, too academic/theoretical, death by PowerPoint	69
Workshops / Tutorials	13
Reading lots of materials /rushed examples	13
To much changing between topics and lecturer not knowledgeable	12
Exams /writing assignments	7
Group work	7
N/A	6
Lectures and groups too big	3
Time constraints	3
Videos	2
Arrogant teaching style	1
Guest speakers	1
Travel	1
No time from professor	1
Intake students – lot of repetition as all starting from different levels	1
Changing class settings	1
Presentations from other students	1
Total	142

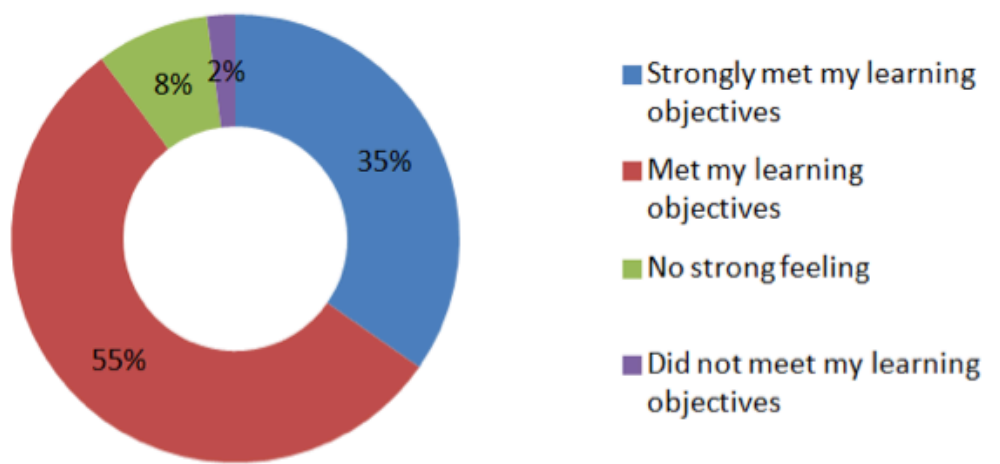
2.

Pure content lectures, too academic/theoretical, death by PowerPoint	34
Workshops / Tutorials	25
Too much changing between topics and lecturer not knowledgeable	15
N/A	10
Group work	7
Reading lots of materials /rushed examples	6
Exams /writing assignments/ dissertation	5
Weak voice/ hardly heard	2
Poor materials/ no structure	2
Arrogant teaching style	1
Guest speakers	1
Lectures and groups too big	1
No time from professor	1
Videos	1
Time constraints	1
Online classes	1
When everyone has not done prep work	1
Long case studies which are hard to read	1
Presentations from other students	1
Not getting feedback wanted	1
Total	117

3.

Pure content lectures, too academic/theoretical, death by PowerPoint	22
Workshops / Tutorials	16
Too much changing between topics and lecturer not knowledgeable	10
N/A	9
Group work	6
Exams /writing assignments	4
Reading lots of materials /rushed examples	4
Time constraints	4
Presentations from other students	2
Poor quality facilities	2
Arrogant teaching style	2
Videos	2
No time from professor	1
Favouritism towards specific students	1
Lost motivation	1
Poor technical back up	1
Hypothetical case examples	1
Total	88

For your most recent degree, please indicate in terms of how the quality of teaching met your learning objectives.



Please give one example of a type of inspirational teaching you experienced on your current or previous degree. Why was it inspirational?

1.

Tutor very knowledgeable on real business issues	77
Passionate discussion in workshop lead by tutor	20
Tutor speaking from the heart/passionate	19
Lectures that are interactive, fun and dynamic	7
Storytelling approach	4
N/A	4
Close personal interaction with lecturer	4
New approaches to specific sectors	3
Visual examples	2
Journal articles	1

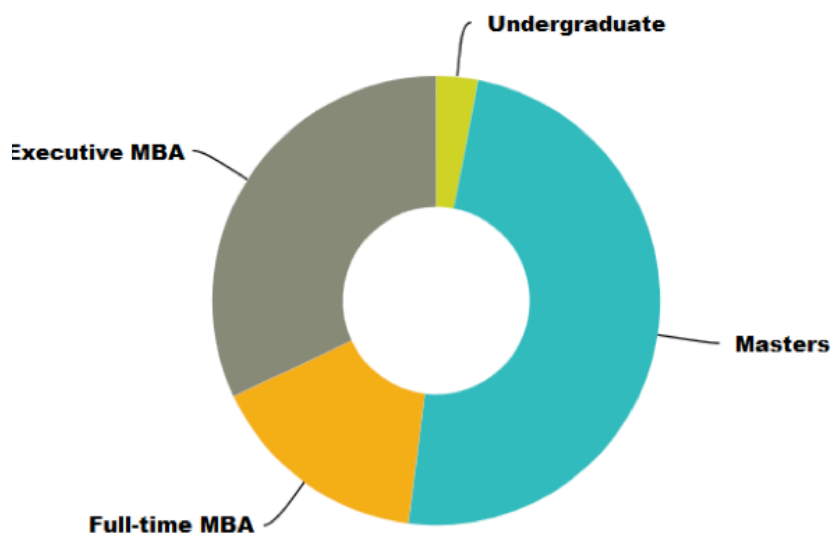
Total **141**

2.

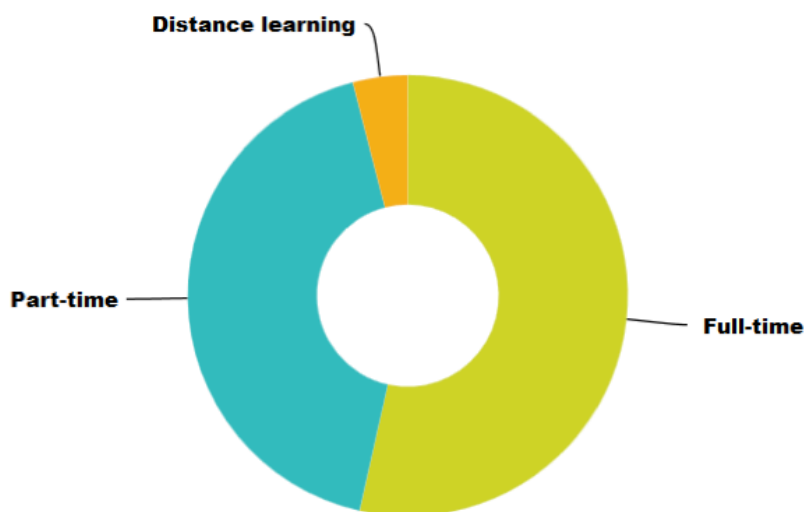
Use real business issues as case studies	27
Guest speakers – real life examples	13
Make lectures more interactive	12
Know your students and adjust course to the group	12
Small group workshops group discussions	11
N/A	8
Off site visits to real business	7
Teach students to work together	7
Motivated and prepared lecturers	7
Video and audio in presentations	4
More how to do research classes	3
Sign up students with real world experience	3
Presentation skills	2
Career fairs	2
Students to write white papers	2
Teachers should have real life business experience	2
Less crowded lectures	2
No final project/exam	2
Provide room for internship	2
Support lifelong learning	1
Mentors	1
Poor quality facilities	1
More case studies aligned to SME not only large corporates	1
Improve teacher selection – practical background/ enthusiastic	1
Total	133

Who took part in the survey?

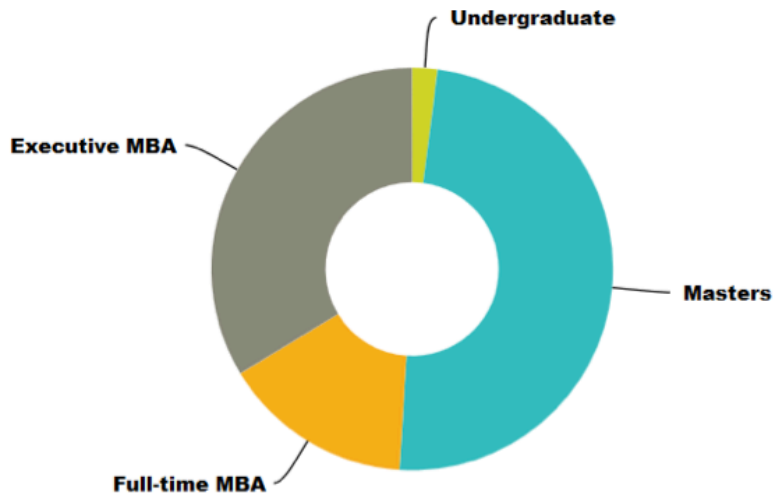
Level studied business related subjects



How they studied



Most recent degree



How we can help achieve business school teaching excellence - the Market Echoes formula

We hope you have found the e-book interesting and inspirational.

As you will have seen, we are passionate about helping faculty to deliver the very best business school teaching every time.

A complementary service is our "bite size" one hour workshops which cover the whole spectrum of business school teaching and get to the heart of best practice teaching – fast.

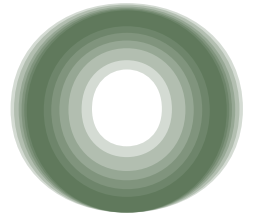
Instead of time consuming full day training sessions we'll come to a business school for one day and deliver up to eight one hour workshops. Faculty can attend one, two or more – whatever they'll find most useful. And they'll leave each one with practical, actionable and inspirational ideas to help develop their teaching.

Our one hour bite size workshops

- **The guide to best practice teaching – our top ten tips**
- **Undergraduates - year 1**
- **Undergraduates - final year**
- **Pre-experience Master's**
- **MBA (Ft/Executive)**
- **Distance Learning**
- **Teaching international audiences – at home and in other countries**
- **Using blogging to keep (and be seen to be) up to date**

For further information see chapter 16, pages 91 - 93
or contact Julian Rawel - julian@marketechoes.co.uk

Excellence in Business School Teaching



Insights and recommendations for faculty, deans and directors

To find out more about how we can contribute to excellence in teaching at your business school please visit Market Echoes at www.marketechoes.co.uk or email Julian Rawel – julian@marketechoes.co.uk