Implementing Educational Innovations in Executive Education Programmes at Business Schools

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Online Survey: «In Search of Sustained Innovation in Executive Education»

- exploratory study
- standardized questionnaire
- items derived from previous literature study and expert interviews
- conducted November 2013 – January 2014
- sampling criteria for practitioners as experts:
  - responsible actors for (further) developing executive education programs at all levels, e.g. deans, directors, designers, program heads and managers,
  - EFMD-accredited business schools in Europe, which implies that they are engaged in quality development.
- research questions:
  - What is the understanding of educational innovations in practice?
    How do practitioners consider current trends and developments in ExecEd?
  - What is their status of implementation?
- descriptive data analysis
Topic Areas of the Survey

1. General Information
2. Program Design
3. Program Management
4. Evaluation
5. Program Strategy and Development
6. Current Challenges and Innovation Pressure
7. Closing Assessments – Open Questions
Information about the respondents

• 52 respondents

• gender: 52% male, 48% female

• age: mainly between 40-49 years

• job roles:
  • Program director: 33%
  • Program manager: 16%
  • Programe designer: 10%

• job context:
  • Custpmized programs: 41%
  • Open enrollment programs: 36%
  • Executive Masters: 20%

• categories of open enrollment programs
  • General Management: 18%
  • Leadership: 15%
  • Strategy: 13%

• management level of the participants: mainly middle & top managers
Current Challenges: Innovation pressure is there! (1/2)

Increased innovation pressure by...

Customers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>partially agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>neutral</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>partially disagree</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

because...

- they demand for support for company-specific problem solving
- they demand for learning in new ways
- they demand professional learning consulting
- they demand resources for on-demand-learning
- new competitors are entering the field of education
- they are changing

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<td></td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>1.475</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>1.856</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>1.856</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>2.217</td>
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</table>
Current Challenges: Innovation pressure is there! (2/2)

In general, the social/technological development leads to...

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
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<th>partially disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>new demands of learners</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new roles of executive education</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased competition</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>pressure to deliver more for less or the same budget</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>transparency and public access to knowledge</td>
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Current Challenges:
Innovation pressure is there! (2/2)

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<th></th>
<th>m</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>new demands of learners</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>.690</td>
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<tr>
<td>new roles of executive education</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>.776</td>
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<td>increased competition</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>.740</td>
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<tr>
<td>pressure to deliver more for less or the same budget</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>1.868</td>
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<tr>
<td>transparency and public access to knowledge</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>1.793</td>
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</table>
Some selected results – area «Program Strategy and Development»: criteria for implementing an innovation

indicates a reactive approach
Ranking of Topic Areas – based on assessed relevance (R) and indicated implementation (I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Topic Areas</th>
<th>Topic Area</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Evaluation and Quality Management</td>
<td>EQM</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>4.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Program Strategy and Development</td>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>3.89</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Program Design</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Program Management</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

relevance: 1 not applicable; 2 not relevant; 3 low; 4 average; 5 high
implementation: 1 at no time; 2 planned after 2014; 3 planned 2013-2014; 4 done/ ongoing partially; 5 done/ ongoing in depth
Some Key Results… (1/2)

- **Searching new business models** is important → need for action
- **Blended learning** as an appropriate design
  - pre-classroom and follow-up activities additional to presence training
- **Content orientation** is ongoing
  - motto: «knowledge is power»
  - the hype of MOOCs or OER is not incorporated → public access to material/content is not relevant, neither for marketing reasons → only few see chances (e.g. blended MOOCs)
  - lecturers as owners of knowledge
- **Outcome orientation** has increasing relevance
  - support companies to enhance learning transfer at workplace
  - BUT: measurement of program quality does not focus on this!
- **Relevance of development of program quality** is high
  - focuses mainly on involving latest/relevant content/research activities
  - pedagogical, resp., learning perspective is involved
  - BUT: in a reactive approach – does this enable innovations (considering trends)?
Some Key Results… (2/2)

- **Facilitation of learning** is essential
  - through mentoring, coaching or new roles of staff/lecturers and program managers (e.g. crosslinking knowledge, moderating in online or non-online environments, strategic perspective)
  - Enabling experiences and reflection through feedback and exchange of ideas

- **Use of technologies** is seen very heterogenous
  - Business Schools are struggling with using technologies
  - opportunities of social media (e.g. communities) are not yet used
  - on-demand-learning resources are less relevant

- **Requirements for didactical & methodological consulting**
  - for staff as well as lecturers

- **Collaboration with partners**
  - like lecturers and learning professionals are important for consulting concerns
  - **BUT**: not to produce/deliver learning resources
  - with other Business Schools or departments are also relevant
Conclusion: current relevant elements of an executive education program – an extended service portfolio
Innovative ExecEd programs in 5 years…

- will be technology-supported
- will increase the impact for companies
- will involve a networking orientation
- will be designed…
  - with integration/ mix of different methods
  - as learning experience as challenging and emotional process with knowledge transfer and exchange among a community of trusted experts
  - as sustainable and actual learning and application (and getting beyond silos)
  - with practice as initial point for learning
  - as time and place flexible and individualized to enable «individual learning paths»/ «multiple tracks» → provide access to networks, places, people, companies…)

→ it’s not longer about the content the Business School offers, it’s about content and experiences the individual participant needs!
Innovative ExecEd programs in 5 years require…

• new roles of faculty and staff:
  • Program managers as curators (contextualize, integrate)
  • Faculty as facilitators, moderator, coach
  • Staff needs to meet trends and requirements of the market → continually updating their knowledge

This vision is in contrast with current relevant aspects:

e.g. the content orientation does not afford such ways of learning!
Discussion

• How would you deal with the gap between the status quo and the medium-term vision?

• Do the results meet your expectations? Are you surprised?

• Which aspects would you investigate in depth through the case studies? Why?
APPENDIX I:
Frame of Reference
“It is clear that quality learning is occurring apart from traditional classroom instruction. … It is no longer sufficient to corral the best faculty, put them in a room and let them do their magic.”

(Eiter & Woll, 2011)
Problem Statement

• extensive criticism for ExecEd results
• input-orientation instead of outcome-orientation (competencies)
• traditional business model:
  • buy-in lecturers as owners of knowledge
    (= experts with regards to content, but not didactical experts!)
  • administrating courses instead of managing them
  • focus on optimization of programs instead of renewal
    ➔ passive learning through instruction in formal classroom settings

Business Schools are struggling with implementing innovations in programs based on a learning paradigm shift!

linking formal & informal learning contexts
Research Question

How can educational innovations in executive education in business schools at program level be successfully implemented?

1. clarification of current relevant-to-practice educational innovations
2. implementation of innovations at program level **FOCUS**
3. organisational frame conditions
Research Objectives

Theory development:

Model for development-oriented program management theory

→ Design principles for practice

Educational Management

Designing...

- Macro Level: educational organisation
- Meso Level: competence development programmes
- Micro Level: teaching & learning situations
Research Design

Literature Study 1
→ conceptual development

Empirical Study 1: Expert Interviews (Sampling: ExEd-Experts within a Network)

Expert Interview 1
Expert Interview 2
→ clarification & definition of current relevant-to-practice «educational innovations»

Empirical Study 2: Online Survey (in Cooperation with EFMD) – Broad Approach
(Sampling: Responsible Deans & Programme Managers in ExEd, in EU-Business Schools)
→ specification and reduction of sampling criteria:
  consideration of innovations in practice; relevance of current trends/developments;
  implemention status of innovations in programmes

Empirical Study 3: Case Studies – Focused Approach
(Sampling: ExEd-Programmes in EU-Business Schools with innovative approaches)

→ investigation of successfully implemented innovations in programmes & preconditions

Focus Group (Sampling: Learning Professionals of the Cases investigated)
→ communicative validation of the findings
Disciplinary Contextualization
Literature Study – Frame of Reference

Definition of Educational Innovations

Innovations are educational innovations, if they are anchored in an educational organisation. Changes aim to improve the status quo & to reach normative goals.

Linkages to Innovation Management:

| service innovation: product + process i. | social innovation: social responsibility |
| organizational i.: cultures/structures, business models | reference points of singularity: organisation + industry |

new combination of new objectives & new/old methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>objectives</th>
<th>old</th>
<th>new</th>
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<tr>
<td>methods</td>
<td>old</td>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>new</td>
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Innovation Drivers

- changed demand
- changed needs
- increased competition
- technological development
Expert Interviews – Findings

• “New Program Delivery” to enable new…
  • integrative and implemented program
  • content delivery
  • blended learning designs

• Preconditions:
  • “willingness to change”  → organizational perspective
  • “willingness to understand”  → pedagogical perspective

• Organizational Challenges:
  • business model
  • collaboration with “partners in the field”
    and commitment of the faculty
  • research orientation

BUT the BRAND will carry them for a while!
APPENDIX II:
Survey Results
Differences: Relevance and Implementation

- Assessed relevance is in line with status of implementation for almost all items!
- Three significant differences between relevance and implementation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Topic Area</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Measure the quality of the program through... <strong>utilization of learnings at the workplace</strong> (e.g. through interviews, assessments)</td>
<td>EQM</td>
<td>4.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Improve the quality of the program through... <strong>explicitly focusing on pedagogical questions</strong> (e.g. how learning occurs and how to facilitate)</td>
<td>EQM</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Measure the learning success through... <strong>individualized forms</strong> (e.g. project thesis, simulations)</td>
<td>EQM</td>
<td>4.31</td>
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## TOP 10 Activities – based on assessed relevance

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<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Topic Area</th>
<th>Mean Area</th>
<th>Mean R</th>
<th>Mean I</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Measure the quality of the program through informal feedback during a program</td>
<td>EQM</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>4.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Improve the quality of the program through pursuing a systematic approach to further develop the program based on evaluation results/feedback</td>
<td>EQM</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Measure the quality of the program through satisfaction (e.g. through evaluation sheets)</td>
<td>EQM</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>4.92</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Involve new learning approaches (non-technology-based) like project-based learning (e.g. action learning, that is teams work on company-related challenges and reflect their learning process)</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Align the program to new demands of the customer</td>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Involve new learning approaches (non-technology-based) like performance support (e.g. coaching, mentoring)</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Involve new technology-based learning approaches like access to content (e.g. learning platforms, podcasts, videocasts)</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Increase the systematic update and exchange of practice-relevant research into the curriculum</td>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Align the use of current/latest content to participants' individual needs</td>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Improve the quality of the program through keeping up-to-date your knowledge about how to initiate and facilitate teaching/learning processes, and based on this, how to design a program</td>
<td>EQM</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
### FLOP 10 Activities – based on assessed relevance

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Topic Area</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Intensify the <strong>collaboration with partners to… technicians to produce and deliver technology-based content/ learning resources</strong> (e.g. transform content to videocasts, create a blog)</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>3.96 3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Measure the <strong>learning success</strong> through… <strong>standardized forms</strong> (e.g. tests, exams)</td>
<td>EQM</td>
<td>3.88 3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Involve new <strong>technology-based learning approaches like… networking with focus on knowledge/content sharing</strong> (e.g. wikis, (micro)blogs like yammer)</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>3.88 3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Intensify the <strong>collaboration with partners to… lecturers to produce technology-based content/learning resources</strong> (e.g. videocasts, blog entry)</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>3.87 3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Align the program to… a coherent <strong>internal competency model</strong> (in your business school's department), which is clearly communicated as orientation for learning activities (customized)</td>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>3.83 2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Intensify the <strong>communication activities</strong> for the program's positioning on the market by… <strong>enabling participants/alumni feedback and/or discussion about the program on a public platform</strong> (e.g. public rating or comments on homepage)</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>3.79 2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Involve new <strong>technology-based learning approaches like… networking with focus on social connections</strong> (e.g. xing,linkedin, twitter, facebook)</td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>3.77 3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Measure the <strong>learning success</strong> through… <strong>new forms</strong> (e.g. e-portfolio, (e-)assessments, e-examination)</td>
<td>EQM</td>
<td>3.67 2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Intensify the <strong>communication activities</strong> for the program's positioning on the market by… <strong>providing public access to research activities/ projects</strong> (e.g. publications through blogs)</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>3.54 2.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Intensify the <strong>communication activities</strong> for the program's positioning on the market by… <strong>providing public access to teaching/learning material</strong> (e.g. presentations through slideshare)</td>
<td>PM</td>
<td>3.31 2.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some selected results – area «Program Design»

- **Blended Learning Design:**
  - additional to the presence phase, pre-classroom activities and follow-up is getting more important!

- **Technology-based learning approaches**
  - New technologies are mainly used to provide access to content (top 7) → delivering content is not learning!

- **Non-technology-based learning approaches**
  - Are much more relevant (e.g. project-based learning (top 4), performance support (top 6)) than technology-based ones

- **Networking (technology-based)**
  - very little relevance of social connections or knowledge → this is in contrast to current developments (e.g. use of social media)

- **In the open question was emphasized…**
  - enabling experiences in programs
  - integrating feedback and reflexion opportunities
  - cross-linking content
Some selected results – area «Program Management»

- **Facilitation of learning**
  - Support for companies to enhance learning transfer at the workplace is extremely relevant
  - building up and support communities is less relevant
  → but this is more relevant than involving networking opportunities in program design → indication of a preference of non-technology approach

- **Collaboration with partners**
  - consult in teaching/learning method concerns is relevant: learning professionals the practitioners can ask, but also consulting lecturers
  - producing learning resources with partners (lecturers or technicians) are very little relevant (flop 10 activities) → is this not practicable currently?

- **Communication activities for the program’s positioning on the market**
  - providing public access to teaching/learning material or research activities/projects are extremely little relevant (flop 10)
  - enabling feedback/discussion on a public platform is little more relevant

- **In the open question was emphasized…**
  - Collaboration with other business schools and departments
  - Learning facilitators are relevant – online and non-online environments
Some selected results – area «Evaluation and Quality Management»

- Improving the quality of the program
  - a systematic approach for program development is extremely relevant (top 2)
  - Updating knowledge about learning processes and pedagogical questions are important! (top 10)

- Measure learning success
  - Individualized and standardized forms are important
  - New forms (e.g. e-portfolio, e-assessments) are less relevant → don’t they know them?

- Measure program’s quality
  - informal feedback during a program and satisfaction are central (top 1/ top 3)
  - utilisation of learnings at the workplace is not in advanced stages → gap!

- In the open question was emphasized…
  - very different ranges: from single methods to measurements at more than 1 time point to 360 degree feedback…
Some selected results – area «Program Strategy and Development»

- Alignment of the program to an competency model
  - many non-customized programs have implemented an internal model
  - customized programs prefer an external model from their clients
- Align the use of
  - current/ latest content is very high relevant (top 9)
  - technologies to an added didactical value has average relevance
- Increasement of
  - update/ exchange practice-relevant research → extremely relevant:
    - searching for new business models to enable → innovative learning
- Last significant strategic changes in programs (open question):
  - Organisational strategy
  - Renewal of the program structure
  - Facilitation of learning processes
  - Collaboration forms
  - Marketing concerns