

2007 Executive MBA Council Survey results offer industry insights

NOV. 27, 2007 – The Executive MBA Council conducts two annual research surveys that highlight Executive MBA industry trends. The Membership Program Survey offers a comprehensive overview of worldwide programs, and the Student Exit Benchmarking Survey highlights the perceptions and opinions of Executive MBA program graduates. Approximately 327 member programs participated in the Program Survey and 2,834 graduates responded to the Student Exit Benchmarking Survey.

The 2007 Membership Program Survey results reveal the following trends:

Applications are up.

Executive MBA Council member programs reported that the average number of applicants per program in 2007 was up 25 percent from 2005. Program and class sizes are down slightly, and acceptance rates also are declining. The acceptance rate in 2007 was 63 percent; the 2005 acceptance rate was 67 percent. Due to the increase in applicants, 57 percent of the Executive MBA Council's programs are considering expansion by increasing capacity or opening programs in new locations.

Programs implementing special outreach programs.

Thirty-six percent of Executive MBA member programs are implementing special outreach efforts. Of those, 59 percent are targeting women. Twenty-seven percent of Executive MBA students in 2007 were female. Other top niche markets are ethnic minority, entrepreneur, nonprofit and public sector audiences.

Program length remained steady past five years.

The average program length in 2007 was 20.4 months, comparable to 20.3 months in 2003. The majority of programs – some 74 percent – continue to offer programs that range between 17 and 24 months to complete. The most common program length is 21 to 22 months (29 percent in 2006 and 2007).

Programs cost increasing.

Average total program costs for all Executive MBA Council member programs worldwide rose slightly from \$54,295 in 2005 to \$57,954 in 2007.

Level of work experience maintaining.

Students entering Executive MBA Council member programs have had the same average work experience the past three years: 12.7 years. On average, students have 8.2 years of management experience.

Average student age holds steady.

The average age of students in Executive MBA Council member programs was 36.3, on par with the past five years.

One-third of students receive partial reimbursement, one-third full reimbursement and one-third pay own tuition.

Over the past five years, approximately one-third of students received partial reimbursement (35 percent in 2003, 33 percent in 2007). The number of students paying their own way increased from 25 percent in 2003 to 33 percent in 2007. The number of organizations offering students full reimbursement was 34 percent, down from 40 percent in 2003.

Number of programs offering leadership testing doubled

Programs are interested in assessing and strengthening student leadership skills. The number of programs offering leadership testing doubled from 49 percent in 2006 to 85 percent in 2007. Students remain interested in career development. The percentage of programs that offer on-campus interviews has increased from 18 percent in 2004 to 31 percent in 2007.

The 2007 Student Exit Benchmarking Survey results reveal the following trends:

Average payback period decreased for both organizations and students.

Students in the survey reported that it took 23 months for their organization to gain the return on its investment, down from 28 months in 2006. It also took less time for students who funded their education to enjoy a return on their investment: 45 months in 2007, compared to 52 months in 2006.

Students' salaries increase.

Graduating students' salary increases are on par with their expectations. Students participating in the 2005-2006 Student Entry Benchmarking Survey expected a 23 percent salary increase. Students participating in the recent Student Exit Benchmarking Study reported a 21 percent salary increase. Students' salaries rose from \$107,097 when they entered the program to \$130,056 when they completed the program.

Steady increase in number of students receiving promotions.

Thirty-seven percent of students exiting an Executive MBA Council member program expected a promotion – 43 percent actually were promoted.

Performance, value and quality of programs remained steady.

Overall, programs are maintaining high levels in student evaluation of performance, value and quality. The loyalty index remained high with 60 percent of graduates in the “champion” category.

Students value their programs.

The vast majority of students – 84 percent – would definitely recommend the Executive MBA program.

About the Executive MBA Council

The Executive MBA Council fosters excellence and innovation worldwide in Executive MBA Programs. The council provides a place for programs to share best practices and gathers data that helps members improve their programs and that reveals the importance of business degree programs for professionals. The council has more than 200 members worldwide, which offer more than 330 programs. The market research firm Percept Research conducts research for the council. For additional information, visit www.emba.org or contact Paula Mielke, media relations for the Executive MBA Council, 651-647-0311 or paula.mielke@embac.org.