

Quality of Faculty No. 1 Factor Impacting Executive MBA Program Choice

Results of first Executive MBA Council Student Entry Benchmarking Survey shed light on key decision factors for students

May 29, 2007 -- The top five factors that students consider when selecting Executive MBA Programs include the quality of faculty, reputation of the school, program format, quality of classmates and location, according to the results of the first Executive MBA Council Student Entry Benchmarking Survey.

The council launched the survey in late 2006 to offer programs and the industry information about the factors that students consider when looking at programs, their expectations of programs, their information-gathering process and their perceptions of the admissions process. Approximately 1,379 new students from 36 member programs responded to the first offering of the survey.

Survey findings revealed that 35 percent of students in Executive MBA Programs considered applying one to six months before attending. They weighed the following factors, which they rated on a 10-point scale, in selecting a program:

1. Quality of faculty (9.11)
2. School reputation (8.88)
3. Program format (8.65)
4. Quality of classmates (8.61)
5. Location/geographic setting of campus (8.45)
6. Curriculum/class offerings (8.31)
7. Rankings (8.07)
8. Global content (7.58)
9. Strength of alumni network (7.12)
10. Integration of technology (7.02)
11. Strength in a particular functional area (6.61)
12. Class size (6.48)
13. Total cost (tuition and fees) (6.39)
14. Admissions process (6.26)
15. Strength of elective offerings (6.09)
16. Career services (5.87)

What prompts students to consider programs and apply

The top six factors that prompted students to consider a program were the same top factors that influenced their decision to apply: colleague/friend, alumni/current student, school web site, school information session, rankings and employer. The influence of both rankings and the school web site decreased by 8 percent as students moved from considering a program to the application process.

Resources most helpful in choosing program

Students rated on a 10-point scale the program resources that helped them make the decision to attend a particular program:

1. Admissions process (8.00)
2. Information session (7.97)
3. Campus visit (6.30)
4. Alumni (7.37)
5. Program web site (7.07)
6. Current student (7.02)
7. Program brochure (6.30)
8. Virtual information session (5.25)
9. Program CD-ROM (3.89)

New students have high expectations

Seventy-five (75) percent of students expect to be given new responsibilities from their employers while enrolled in an Executive MBA program. Forty (40) percent expect to be promoted while enrolled and 59 percent expect to be promoted after they complete the program. Students expect that their salary at the end of the program will be 23 percent higher than when they started. About 43 percent of program graduates who completed the 2006 Executive MBA Council Student Exit Benchmarking Survey were promoted, and their salaries increased by 20 percent.

Sixty-six (66) percent of students will be partially or fully reimbursed or sponsored by their employers. Students expect that it will take 52 months to recoup their personal investments. They estimate that the payback period for employers sponsoring students will be 28 months. Participants in the Student Exit Benchmarking Survey estimated that the average payback period was 47 months for students and 23 months for employers.

About the Executive MBA Council

The Executive MBA Council fosters excellence and innovation worldwide in Executive and Professional MBA Programs, as well as in other business-related degree programs for professionals. 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 320 programs. For more information, contact the Executive MBA Council office at 714.628.7334 or info@embac.org.