

***INTEGRATION OF INDUSTRY  
AND  
ACADEMIA.....  
ENHANCING STUDENTS EMPLOYABILITY...***

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## **INTEGRATION OF INDUSTRY AND ACADEMIA – ENHANCING STUDENTS EMPLOYABILITY**

Academia- Industry Interface could be defined as interactive and collaborative arrangement between academic institutions and business corporations for the achievement of certain mutually inclusive goals and objectives.

This paper attempts to explore how business schools can work closely with industry, study the dimensions of academia-industry partnership, and identify possible areas where industry's contribution to academia would be most effective.

Universities and industry, which for long have been operating in separate domains, are rapidly inching closer to each other to create synergies. The constantly changing management paradigms, in response to growing complexity of the business environment today have necessitated these two to come closer.

The paper proposes to present four broad arguments for better coordination between academic and technical skill standards. First, educators, policymakers, and employers have emphasized the value of creating stronger connections between academic and vocational education for several years. Integrated skills are needed in new, more demanding workplaces and provide better pedagogic and social opportunities for all students and educators. Second, research has increasingly shown that relating learning to work can strengthen academic learning by giving a coherence to academic studies that is difficult to create when subjects are taught independently or in the abstract. Third, given that the workplace now demands better academic skills across all occupations, increasing the rigor of academic preparation for all students is especially important. Fourth, by working together, academic and vocational educators and employers can strengthen both sets of standards. At the same time that educators often do not possess a strong understanding of the workplace, employers and workers are not in the best position to evaluate the academic content of the skills they need. A strong working relationship between educators and employers in developing skill standards eliminates potentially misleading messages delivered through standards.

For the above reasons, Industry rather than just being the customers of academia output today have become stakeholders and partners in progress. Industry on the other hand has also discovered the advantages of collaborative learning opportunities. Corporations seek to play increasingly important role in activities of academic institutions to incubate the talent they need. The shift towards the short-term performance metrics and shareholders interest has led to a number of changes in conduct of business, which has translated its effect on business schools.

It is observed that the major objective of academia-industry partnership and initiatives taken in this direction revolves around getting lucrative and better job opportunities for graduating students.

Academics have been including the industry inputs into their curriculum and course designing without assessing the effectiveness of such corporate representatives to these committees. Today it is just a matter of pride for these schools to adorn their councils with big names from industry, with an objective to score high on “*Industry Interface*” parameter in the ratings and rankings being done by every other business magazine in India. Executives from corporates are invited to take up an entire course or few lectures with prime objective of getting them on campus for placements, but the learning, students accrue from these lectures is not evaluated.

- It is imperative for academia to bring Academia and Industry closer and build strong collaborative relationship;
- It is not a must that all modes of partnership are equally beneficial to every business school. They have to work on ‘differential relationship’ mechanism.
- Academia and Industry need to take build organic relationships, with long term strategic intent contributing to growth and development of both the entities;

Business schools have to move beyond the phenomenon of ‘working with employers’ towards the concept of ‘**working with partners**’. The collaboration between the two is dynamic and complex. A synergistic relationship has to be carved between the business schools and the industry so that both can benefit and also contribute to enhancing the entire teaching-learning process.