Job Fairs a way to promote Collaboration with Companies and Graduate Job Placement

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Abstract

The entailment has been part of the higher education field for more than a century. Initially achieving entailment concerned more to the universities (eager to financing) than companies. But eventually, the companies seeking to expand their efficiency and growth capability on a global environment, so then they began to assume the role as actor of the entailment with universities. Nowadays the ways most used by the universities to get entailment with the industry are: professional practices, employment, graduates following, business incubators, research projects, advisory services, consultancy services, continuing education and technological innovation parks, as much others. However, one of the main problems of the industry is the lack of awareness of the capacity of universities to collaborate with them; thereby the FIME organizes, invites and receives in his installations more than 60 companies per year to promote their vacancies and to employ students for professional practices or graduate to find them a job, from an average of 12,000 students per semester these events are a great experience. The essence of this paper is to show in a clear and objective way, the achievements gotten in an entailed way.

Keywords: Entailment; Companies; Students; Graduates; Job.

1. Introduction

One of the biggest concerns of university students is when they are in the last semester of their career to find a place to do their professional practices, social service and/or to find a job according to the profile acquired during the five years of their career.

According to Judith Scheele, graduates that make the transition to the labor market seek job positions that meet three criteria: the ability to use properly the acquired knowledge, to have a link with the study field and opportunities to develop their abilities as engineers (Scheele & José, 2009).

The Mechanical and Electrical Engineering School (FIME by its acronym in Spanish) try to influence in the student to find a company that covers the requirements mentioned before, realize activities of entailment among distinguish the program called "Industrial Job Fair", which is held twice a year and aims to attract the productive sector to promote their vacancies and cover them by hiring students and graduates.

The entailment with the industry and government depends on the Deputy Direction of Entailment and Relationships , which has a solid structure divided in nine areas, shown in the figure 1.

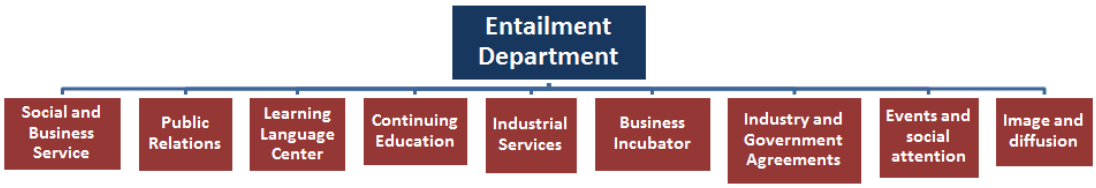

Figure 1: Organization chart of the Deputy Direction of Entailment and Relationships of the FIME

The events of interest in this paper "Job Fairs" are organized by the area of social and business service that make activities that impact the formation of students helping them to find a place to do their professional practices, to do social service, to work and whatever they need to be a better professional workers, in the next figure 2 those activities are shown:

Figure 2: Main activities in social and business service area

The aim of this paper is to show how job fairs are organized, seeking to placement students and graduates in companies, also to establish a close relationship University-Industry linkage in other forms of economic impact and development in the country such as: Research Projects, Technology Development Projects, Consulting Services, Advisory Services, Student Projects, Business Incubator, Training Services, Feedback about graduates profiles among others.

The careers offers by FIME are shown below in the figure 3:

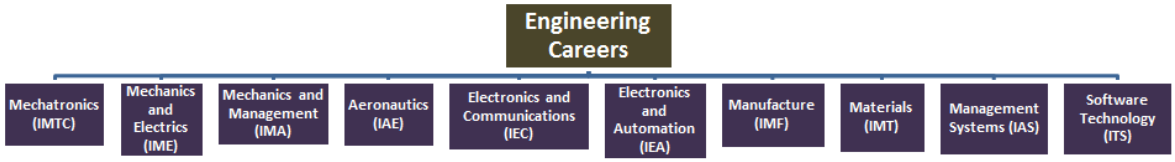

Figure 3: Careers offers by FIME

The most demanding careers among the last years have been: IMA, IME and IAS. For the students the careers with greater offer are: IAS, IMA, IME and IMTC. The IAE and ITS careers have been recently introduced due to the expressed needs by the industry. FIME is the biggest engineering school in Mexico: more than 14,500 students in normal degree, more than 1500 students of PhD, more than 3,800 students of continuing education and more than 660 professors.

2. Methodology

One of the most important aspects is to define the date of completion of job fairs, as we know the demand by companies is variable and relative, so we try to organize during the months of April, May and October, pointing out that the service given from the department of social and business service to the companies is constant throughout the year, to support the companies with students and/or graduates in their vacancies. From the point of planning to the students, these months are suitable for the implementation of interviews to get the job just for being ready before the end of the semester, getting them to adjust their future class schedules. Graduates or near-graduates, they will not have an academic charge or is minimal, so they can fill the vacancy as soon as possible.

After setting the date, the invitation to the event is sent by email and they get a phone call to make even more formal the invitation. Once we have the total number of companies to participate in the Job Fair, we need to plan the special requirements for the event, and we have to define the location, number of tables, chairs, tablecloths, stands, electrical energy, internet, cafeteria service, award, etc.

The date of the event the companies have special parking places in the school, then the companies set their stands which usually takes them an hour. Figure 4 shows a diagram of the area of the first fair 2013.

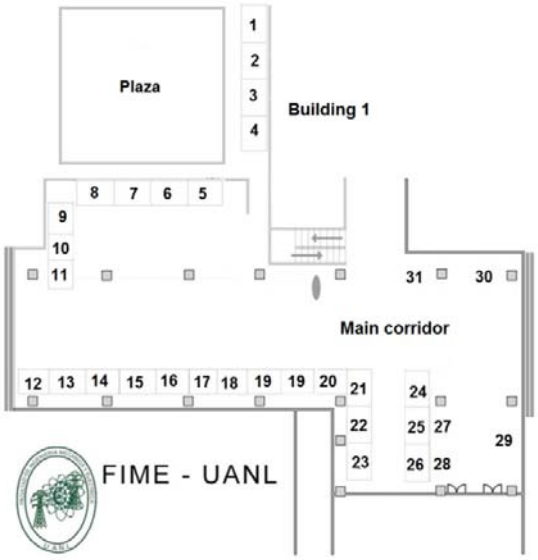

Figure 4: Distribution of places for companies in the job fair May 2013

Then, the opening ceremony takes place, which lasts no more than thirty minutes. All the companies are invited to the cutting opening ribbon ceremony together with the authorities of the FIME: The Director, Sub-director and Social Service and Professional Practice Team, professors, regularly. Some photos about opening ceremonies are shown in the figure 5.

Figure 5: Opening ceremonies of job fairs

After the opening ceremony, the authorities make a tour to every of the stands to greet and thank the representatives of the companies and take a memory photo. Figure 6 shows some photos taken of these events over time.

Figure 6: Some photos taken in tours of the authorities to the companies stands during the job fairs

During the day, the different school departments that offer services to the industrial sector make their entrance to speak with representatives of companies, seeking meetings that create win-win relationships through solving engineering problems in plant, project development, courses, mechanical tests, electrical tests, design of parts, among others. Also, they are invited to a meeting to introduce them into the entailment strategy in FIME to get feedback; in the figure 7 a photo from one meeting with companies is shown. At the end of the job fair, each company receives a recognition (diploma) and a gift thanking them again for their participation in the event.

Figure 7: Meeting to get feedback about entailment strategies

3. Results

Taking into account the last five years or the last 10 Fairs, the most relevant information is shown below:

The totals of companies that have participated in our labor expo are shown in Table 1, we see that the trend in the last three years is an average of 36 companies, and this year the school has set a goal to have at least 60. In this regard, we note that for the Job Fair May 2013 we have confirmed 30 companies, so it will break record in this event:

Table 1: Number of companies attended by year in job fairs

Year	Total of companies
2008	19
2009	24
2010	37
2011	30
2012	42

The next table shows the total of Résumé received from companies by year during those events.

Table 2: Number of Résumé gets by the companies by year in job fairs

Year	Total of Résumé
2008	1,432
2009	1,598
2010	1,857
2011	2,322
2012	3,325

Taking the information of 2012 the average of vacancies by company was 9 graduates and 19 students. In the next figure 8, the requirement regarding by the companies about FIME are shown. We can see that the most required careers are IME, IMA and IAS.

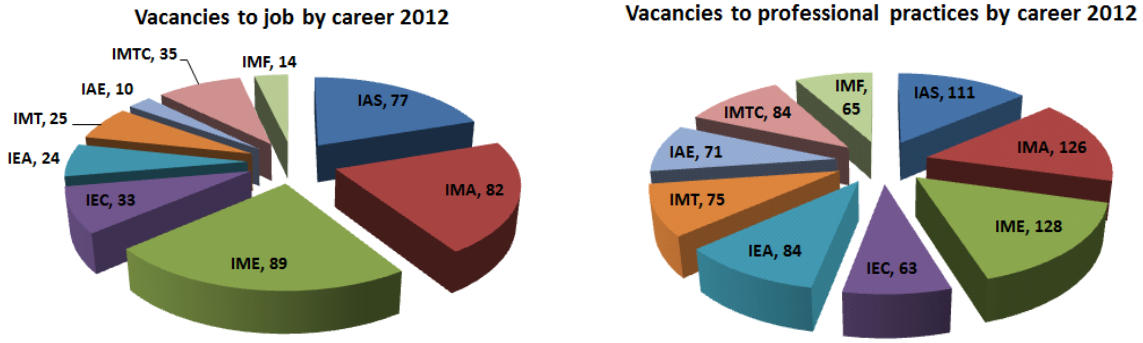

Figure 8: Total Careers demand from companies in Job Fairs in 2012

The students and graduates employed by the companies that participated in the fairs in 2012 are shown below in the figure 9. The employment percent in this fair was 31% to job and 40% to professional practices.

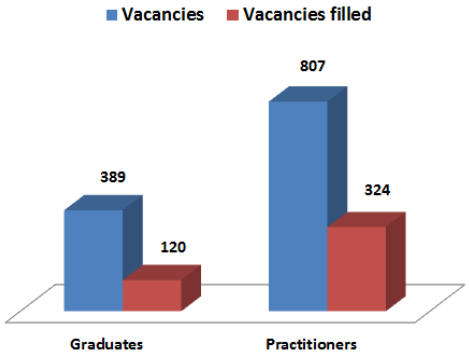

Figure 9: Employability in the last two fairs

Win-win relationships derived from Job Fairs (Entailment):

- Training Services
- Advice and consultancy services
- Recruitment in the faculty (constant visits from companies to fill vacancies by a meeting with interested students or graduates).
- Business projects developed by practitioners with a guide from company and faculty: teacher and responsible of project from the company.
- Generating jobs for students and graduates.
- Increasing awareness of the work of the faculty in entailment issues.
- Work sessions between boss of careers and the industry.
- Increasing donations of laboratory equipment.
- Conferences from companies to the students (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Conferences from a company about job interviews, with the goal of give tips to the students when they going to have one

4. Conclusions

While conducting outreach activities with companies periodically, requires a lot of commitment and management of resources from the university, the results of these, give added value to the university in many ways such as: image, quality of processes, concern for their students and graduates, teachers experience, improvement of infrastructure, higher income, greater relationship with industry and others.

So it is important to consider the relationship as a means of success in universities, which was previously not considered key to successful.

References

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