

Corporate University: Beliefs and Misbeliefs

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During the process of putting together the program for an American and two European Corporate University Summits, we have gathered dozens of opinions from industry practitioners. Based on our own research and on some industry leading magazines (Chief Learning Officer Magazine, Harvard Business Publishing Corporate Learning, Elearning! Magazine, Learning Solutions Magazine) we are close to the problem definition. Post-experiential business education, which is at the heart of a Corporate University, can make two fundamental mistakes: the first is to attempt being a school, the second is not to attempt being a school.

We may try building a bridge between 'know how' (University) and 'know when' (Corporation), the problem is that we do not know how to get from 'know how' to 'know when'. A modern Corporate University helps those who are hungry for new knowledge to understand the contexts and ideally, in choosing the right professional path. The CU's task is to supplement the entry-level knowledge with the most important, solution-oriented "mainstream" types of knowledge while helping practitioners to understand why exactly that the learning content is, and not something else (and thus, where the world is heading). The practitioner learns this way the most important part: to acquire the necessary knowledge to complete his task. He learns how he can supplement his own existing knowledge with the available knowledge: that of the others or of the gurus – he learns how to search, share and validate. This process is difficult for everyone in different ways. There are those whose challenge is the difference between the levels of brought and acquired knowledge while there are others whose challenges are the hurdles of their own professional path related dilemma. A Corporate University enables the practitioners to step out of their position's comfort zone and to return again according to their areas of interest and to their own knowledge level. Everyone can take from the content and use what he really needs and where his interest is, the rest is optionally available – just like the different tools of a Swiss Army Knife.

Keywords: University, Beliefs, Misbeliefs.