



Teesside
University

Inspiring success

Creating and Fostering Distinctiveness at Teesside

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When Prof Sir Howard Newby was Chief Exec of HEFCE he used to say....

In a diverse sector... we need a system
where you tell us what you are good at and
we fund you for that

.... sounded great to me!



It started with our mission

***“Setting our stall out, & then doing
what is said on the tin”***

... and it evolved... and people bought in to it!

1992: “The Opportunity University”

2005: Providing Opportunities, Pursuing Excellence



2012....

Providing Opportunities, Driving Enterprise, Delivering Excellence

..... to achieve regional, national & international
recognition as the UK's leading University for
working with business.....



And we adopted the Strategic Aim of...

becoming a leading business-facing university through:

... adoption of a 'business solutions approach;

... behaving more like a business

...and we worked at making it 'not just a project' but 'a way of life'!

... and we set out principles to guide us!



‘Principles’... *‘non negotiables’ in our 5 year vision*

- Autonomy and ‘financial viability’;
- **A ‘University’ that invests in, values and capitalises on applied ‘R’, innovation & Knowledge Exchange;**
- **A ‘business facing’, ‘business engaged’ University;**
- A focus on excellence and the quality of the student learning experience, in a global context;
- **Providing opps .for those wishing to stay in Tees Valley;**
- Being a ‘People lead’ organisation



Context.... Why?

1. Why... Only University wholly based in the Tees Valley
(the southern half of the NE region)

2. NE RDA first 1st Regional Economic Strategy

*“placed Universities and Colleges at the heart of
the NE economy”*

I...

“placed the NE economy at the heart of the University”



W.P. and 'Improving Access to HE'
is so embedded now it's in our DNA
and taken for granted



So our particular distinctiveness
comes from our responsive and
business facing approach...

and what did pursuit of that
require?



Priorities we had to address:

- Being clear we wanted to do it... nothing's compulsory
- Being inclusive/consultative but also 'selling the message'
- 'Devolved autonomy' within a structured framework
- Putting in place structures that support, & demonstrate the importance of, the activity
- Building 'external' confidence... by demonstrating responsiveness, high value added & flexibility

Communication/Reinforcement... at all stages

- Recruitment
 - Promotional materials/ adverts;
 - Interviewing process
- New staff induction
- Reinforcement through Leadership Devel't prog.
- (Open and honest) Ongoing engagement:
*Open staff meetings; Regular staff briefings
(cascading); Inclusive Planning processes, etc*



Taking the view that... if you're going to do it... have to do it well, & 'behave' like a business!!

- High visibility and deep, proactive engagement
- Professional 'business like' interface
- Client focussed, flexible and responsive
- Delivering what you say you'll deliver
- Focus on local/regional economic priorities
- Long term partnerships & relationship building
(not just transactional)

Changing perceptions...



A brand representation to reflect our changing image



Some examples of our approach:

- Adapting to Govt agendas... PT (*2K to 18K students*), sub-degree, employer co-funded (*15% of all nationally*)
- Dental training on Teesside
- Building HE Centres in every local FEC
- Accommodating NSAPI
- Writing City Region/LEP HLS Strategy

So what, if anything, makes us ‘distinctive’?

- *Proactive engagement* and a ‘*can-do*’ attitude
- ‘*Responsive Repositioning*’ - providing a flexible, timely response, applicable to need
- Behaving like a business
- *Business solutions approach*
- Work on a ‘*what we can do for you*’ basis



And has it worked?

Are we 'Real, Rare and Relevant'?

I really think we possibly are...



Some exs. of what we've achieved

- *THE University of the Year (2009);*
- *THE Employer Engagement Initiative of year (2009);*
- *Shortlisted THE Entrepreneurial Uni of the Year (2010)*
- *Bus. Incubation Champion of Year (2010)*
(Incubated 96 Cos. last year; 138 digital Cos. in 3 yrs)
- *2nd most 'co-funded' in sector (15% of all UK nos. in 2010)*
- *4 of 6 outstanding KTPs in our region in 2011*
- *'Putting the Customer First' accreditation*
- *IIP Gold for whole University (one of only 3 in UK)*



In closing... A light-hearted anecdote from a recent dinner



So... Be surprised at Teesside University

*We're on a journey & we're doing ok ...
it's not a panacea, but it works for us*

Thanks for listening!



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