

John Rider

**Personal reflections on running
organisations in tough times**



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(26 membership organisations)

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Business Change and Turnarounds



EU Debt Explained - YouTube.flv

West Midlands Region

- Centred on Birmingham (second city) ‘City of a thousand trades’
- Birthplace of the Industrial Revolution
- Population – 5.5m - diverse - young
- Now mainly small/medium businesses
- Hard hit by recession – but slowly improving
- Still high unemployment
- Only region in England to have lost Private Sector jobs over last 10 years

Regional Universities

- Aston
- University of Birmingham
- Birmingham City University
- Coventry
- Keele
- Staffordshire
- Warwick
- Wolverhampton
- Worcester

- Harper Adams
- Newman
- University College, Birmingham

Graduates in the West Midlands

- Highest level of graduate unemployment in the UK
- Potential waste of talent if they remain unemployed
- Often in “non-graduate level jobs”
- Need to retain them in our region – especially for the upturn and ‘new economy’
- Private sector (small businesses) traditionally reluctant to employ

The problems ?

- Employment badly hit by recession
- Low levels of graduates employed in smaller, private businesses
- Employers want new staff to have 'experience'
- **EVEN MORE STUDENTS GRADUATING !**

How do we find jobs?



Careers services in Universities

- Different in each university – usually a central service funded by the university with ‘Head of Careers’ and dedicated team
- Occasionally, extra grant funding is available for projects and services (e.g. Graduate Advantage)
- Academic departments not always involved
- Library/research facilities - employer visit days/talks - support sessions on CVs and interview techniques etc.

- Departments have varying involvement in paid internships and responding to employer enquiries
- Extra support/resources may be targeted on courses with weakest employment rates
- Students decide when/how to use the services – majority tend to leave it late – near the end of their studies!
- Career services keep up-to-date via research studies and liaison with sector skills councils and employer groups

- Close liaison between career services and local public sector employment services (JCP)
- Little formal involvement by business in design/delivery of courses – some involvement with vocational courses
- Input is sought to test the market for new courses
- National careers heads' group exists and is active: www.agcas.org.uk
- International level networks tend to be initiated by bigger, research-intensive universities



West Midlands Graduate Internships

- New project – 9 months to April 2010
- Example of good public/private sector collaboration
- Maximum 6 months placement - unpaid
- Aimed at small businesses – no cost to the employer – graduates only received travel expenses etc.
- European Social Fund (ESF) support for some via “Flexible Routeways” programme



- Experience of work and CV building for graduates – opportunity to impress potential employers
- Low risk for companies – opportunity to tackle projects and supplement the workforce
- ‘Try before you buy’ – no recruitment costs for employers

How did it work?

- Minimal administration – online and people !
- Project brief from employers
- Interest registered by graduates
- Two databases – business and graduates
- Matching process – personal contact by telephone and email
- Introductions – graduates allocated to companies – no lengthy interviews
- Two week induction – then internship started
- Not contractual – either party could pull out

Employers

Are you interested in taking on a graduate at no cost to your organisation?

In exchange, can you provide experience of work for an unemployed graduate?

Graduating in recessionary times is very tough and we are wasting valuable resources. The normal options of employment are highly reduced. Graduates are looking for experience of work and to build their CV's and are willing to volunteer to achieve this.

Businesses, especially SME's, can benefit from having an enthusiastic graduate who in exchange for an opportunity to kick-start their career will tackle a project that can really contribute to your organisation as the West Midlands prepares for the upturn.

In co-operation with; Advantage West Midlands, Graduate Advantage, Jobcentre Plus and our local universities a unique project has been developed: West Midlands Graduate Internships

So we need your help. The good news is that there will be no financial cost to your business to provide a placement and you will experience a real benefit by having a valuable graduate at your disposal.

In summary, the elements of this programme make it possible for you to take a graduate for up to 30 hours per week and for up to six months at no cost. The graduate will receive various career support services and will also undertake two weeks pre-internship training. They may also be able to claim Job Seekers Allowance through the Job Centre.

This is an ideal opportunity for you to take on a graduate, perhaps for the first time, and to complete one of those projects you have always needed to do but never found the time or resource. Additionally, you will be giving the graduate valuable experience of work and a positive understanding of business as an exciting and worthwhile career option.

Next steps

Check out the website www.westmidlandsgraduateinternships.co.uk.

Register your interest as an employer (we aim to keep administration of this scheme to a minimum).

If you have any questions you can contact Graduate Advantage (which is administering this scheme) directly by emailing or phoning Tess Robinson or Ruth Clarke on 0121 204 4945 or enquiries@wmgi.co.uk

Graduate Internship Partners

- Universities
- Employer organisations
- Jobcentre Plus (JCP-government funded agency)
- Graduate Advantage (Aston University – administration of project)
- Support from the Regional Development Agency (AWM) and government minister

Headline Results

- 1152 employer enquiries
- 1349 graduates interested
- 527 internships arranged (85% private sector, 15% public sector)
- 150 successful job outcomes – most with internship companies
- 70% of roles created were new
- 75% of the private sector employers said they would now consider employing a graduate

Inspiration came from ...

- Pareto - '80:20 principle'
- Zipf - 'Principle of least effort'
- Juran - 'Rule of the vital few'

Vilfredo Pareto 1848-1923



Outcomes

- 4/12 universities provided the majority of interns
- 4/26 business organisations contributed 90% of the internships

Collaboration Lessons

- Perfection is impossible
- Focus on your 'customers' – graduates and businesses
- People make the difference – 'work with the willing'
- Remain positive - avoid bureaucracy – encourage 'Can Do'
- Tell everyone about your successes
- Communicate the proposition using simple language – consider Facebook and Texts

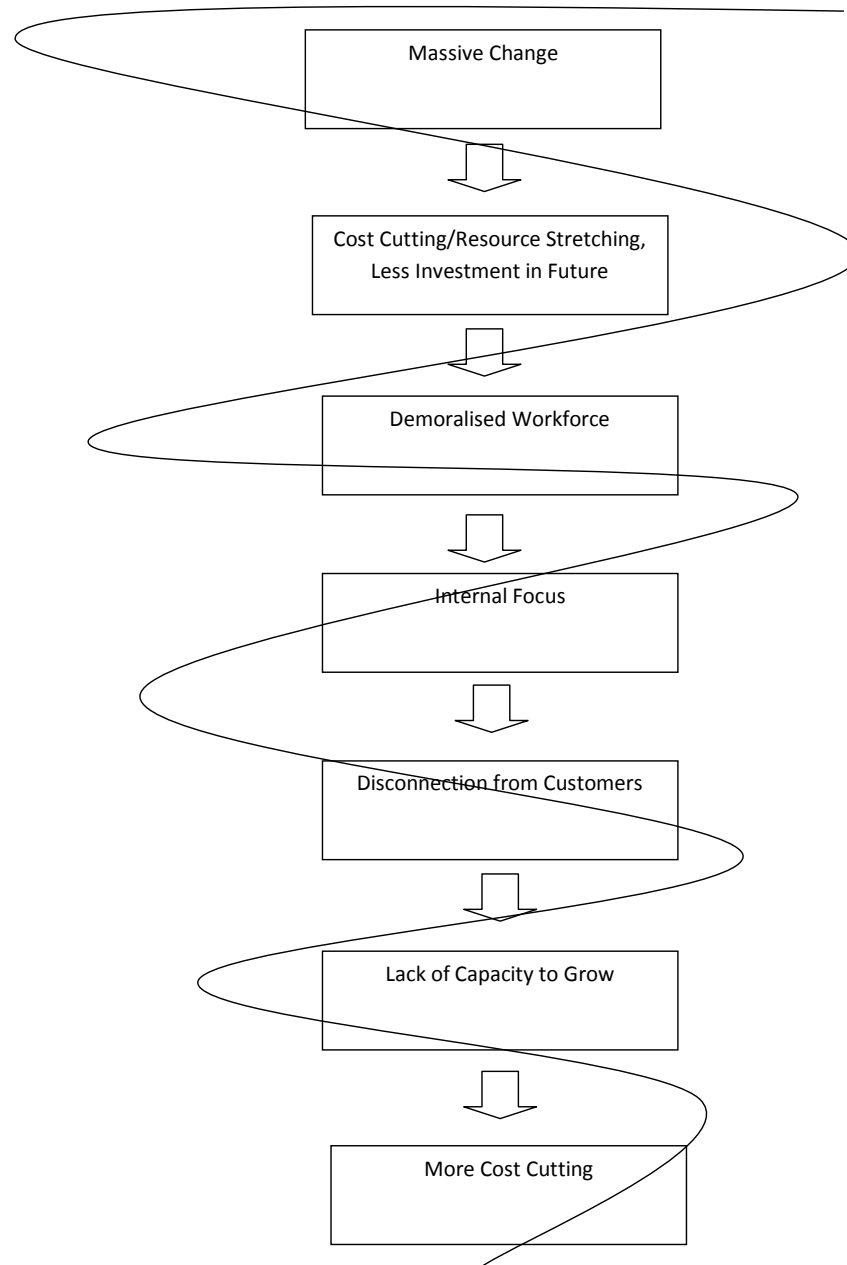
Future Challenges

- More jobs....
- And more Jobs....
- Public sector expenditure cuts ?
- Further reform of universities ?
- Stronger links between universities and employers
- Ensure “employability” of graduates
- I am now leading mentoring initiatives with business undergraduates

Un padre fiero ed il suo figlio!



THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL



Personal lessons from leading change initiatives

- Plan – plan – plan.....
- Be wary about involving people who are only interested in the status quo.....
- Avoid committees.....
- Use a change model....Don't invent a new one...
- Perfection is impossible – forget 'Utopia'
- Focus....and set a fast pace...
- Communicate well
- Keep going....
- Have fun.....

John Kotter's 8 step change model

Create urgency

Form a powerful coalition

Create a vision for change

Communicate the vision

Remove obstacles

Create short-term wins

Build on the change

Anchor the changes in the new culture

Kepner – Tregoe rational process models

- Situation appraisal
- Problem analysis
- Decision making
- Potential problem analysis
- Etc etc

What's happening to our society?

- Banks?
- Rogue traders
- Travellers....
- The Press - Phone hacking
- Celebrity culture....
- Unemployment – the young?
- Leadership – Politicians ?
- Scams – Nigeria – Eastern Europe....
- Terrorism?
- Education?
- Treatment of our elderly
- Bribery and corruption?
- Riots....
- Influence of church waning...?
- Birmingham City relegated (again) but won cup !



No – you can't borrow your money !