

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDUSTRIAL TRAINING PROGRAMME
FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION IN MANAGEMENT

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Universities require continual contact with industry and a sound understanding of their problems to provide effective education programmes for their students. Despite a wide recognition of this need, there are many difficulties that universities face in establishing university-industry linkages. In Engineering courses, vacation practical work is mandatory and training opportunities are provided by the National Apprenticeship Board. Undergraduates programmes in Management and Commerce also have attempted to expose the students to the 'world of work'. Their efforts have failed to poor response from industry. As a result in disciplines such as Commerce, industry related projects have been introduced in academic programmes in place of in-plant training opportunities on industry. Departments with smaller numbers of students, such as Industrial Management at the University of Kelaniya, have attempted to provide industrial training opportunities through personal contacts. Such ad-hoc arrangements often defeated the main purpose of industrial training due to lack of supervision and student interest.

The present study investigated the types of industrial training programmes in Management in the higher education sector and the reasons for their success or failure. The types of training programmes adopted by different academic disciplines can be classified as; structures, problem-oriented and noncommittal. Among the weakness of training programmes identified are; non-assessment of training for credit, lack of supervision at place of training, non-existence of training standards, not keeping to training schedules and guidelines, poor or non-payment of allowances and absence of state assistance.

In this paper a structured type training programme is suggested which includes preparation of a project report which is to be assessed for credit. Training is suggested to be offered during long vacations at the end of the first and the second academic year covering a period of six months. Provision of training supervisors attached to the university and incentives to supervisors at training institutions and suggested as means to control and supervise the implementation of the training programmes.