Reorganizing Corporate Engagement Offices

July 9-17, 2020 | n=85

A number of universities have reorganized their corporate engagement offices in the past several years. UIDP was interested to learn about our member representatives’ experiences, whether they’re part of a university that does corporate engagement or an industry member representative that engages these offices.

The survey used branching to gather separate insights from university-based respondents (77) and industry respondents (8).

Among university respondents, a majority (56%) had reorganized their corporate engagement offices within the past five years. Another 19% said they were considering or planning a reorganization, and only 16% were not considering it.

Personnel resources (having the team on hand to implement the change) was the top challenge cited by this group (54%). Lack of leadership buy-in was cited by 28% as a factor, as well as funds needed to reorganize (26%). Among additional responses, faculty engagement and the nuances of navigating the university’s culture and innate resistance to change were also factors.

A majority of industry respondents (56%) said they are working with universities that take a holistic approach to industry engagement. Among these five respondents, the majority said they realized benefits from working with a centrally-managed corporate engagement office.

Informal, non-scientific survey of UIDP members. Property of UIDP. Do not distribute or reproduce in any manner.
In an effort to get at challenges for industry, UIDP also asked those respondents what hurdles they face when working with universities. The nine respondents ranked “difficulty with coordinating across many touch points” first, but “reduced visibility to events/initiatives across the university” was cited by almost as many respondents. “Other” responses included:

- Difficulty coordinating within my company across many touch points at the university.
- Everyone is "zoomed out" – hard to get in front of university clients
- Sometimes too much of information, which is not relevant
- Getting agreeable terms on IP with the tech transfer offices when there is one professor we want to engage

These results will seed the presentation and discussion at the UIDPConnect 2020 workshop, "Corporate Engagement Centers – Internal Models of Organization," led by Penn State University's Priya Baboo. Learn more and register.