What is Core Carriculum

of Business Schools?

～Project of Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in FY2017
    "Project to promote and enhance advanced professionals training"
    theme: Demonstration and improvement of core curriculum etc. in professional graduate schools of management (MBA).

京都大学経営管理大学院
Graduate School of Management, Kyoto University

Contents

Message from the Dean

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This brochure summarizes the main points of the results of research projects by the Kyoto University Graduate School of Management entrusted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in FY2017 "Project to promote and enhance advanced professionals training" theme: Demonstration and improvement of core curriculum etc. in professional graduate school of management (MBA).

We have investigated about how Japanese business schools should be through this project. With the introduction of professional graduate school system, some business schools have been born in 21st century. For further development, it is required to clarify what kind of human resources development the business schools create, and to strengthen collaboration among industry, government and academia.

Graduate School of Management, Kyoto University was established as a professional graduate school in 2006, and held the tenth anniversary ceremony in 2016. For 12 years since the establishment, we have explored what kind of management human resources development is required under a changing business environment. While exploring collaborations among industry, government and academia, we have developed and improved new education programs. From April 2018, we will start tourism management science course to nurture strategic tourism management talent targeting those working in tourism related industries. We are such entrepreneurs that we create a new market with our own actions. The following 5 points are main arguments through this project.

1 The education curriculum of the business school should be driven by clarifying its mission so that it proactively responds to the changing business environment (mission-driven).

2 The education curriculum of the business school should be systematically designed so that the three points: goal-evaluation-method are consistent with each other based on instructional design.

3 Learning goals for business schools should be de ned as competencies, and each lesson subject should be provided and improved so as to satisfy the competency.

4 According to surveys, learning at a business school etc. is not regarded as an important human resource development method for many companies in Japan, but companies sending employees to business schools or accepting graduates certainly recognize their value.

5 According to surveys, it is highly appreciated that business school graduates (MBA) have learned a lot of competency items at school, and more than half of them are active in departments or positions of companies.

Although this deliverable is a modest one, we hope it can contribute to the development of future business school in Japan. For that purpose, this product must be useful for dialogue and cooperation with the industry and the business school, and making the way of education programs. For details, please see the result report or the website. Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the members who cooperated in this project, and the deans graduate schools of management who cooperated with the core curriculum discussion forum and the questionnaire. We appreciate your continued guidance and advice. Thank you.

March 3, 2018

Outline of the Project

Theme

"Project to promote and enhance advanced professionals training" in FY 2017, theme: Demonstration and improvement of core curriculum etc. in professional graduate school of management (MBA)

Purpose

By demonstrating and improving the core curriculum in the professional graduate school of management (MBA) formulated in FY2016, it aims to improve the quality of education of the professional graduate school of management (MBA), visualization of the contents of education in order to improve social awareness.

Contents

【1】 With the participation of stakeholders, we consider points to be reviewed and to be added, demonstrate and improve learning contents considered to be acquired by all students and common goal (core curriculum) in the professional graduate school of management (MBA) formulated in "Commissioned project to enhance and strengthen the development of leading management professionals" of FY2016,.

【2】 In order to report the progress status and results of this project, we hold a joint symposium with the executing agency of the project: research on the demonstration and improvement of core curriculum in the professional graduate school of management (MOT)".

【3】 We analyze the survey results from "Survey research theme: Survey on the actual conditions of graduate schools of management in Japan and overseas, and companys' needs of graduate schools of management ("Needs survey") in FY 2016, and make recommendations on improving the quality of education.

Implementation System

We established "MBA Core Curriculum Demonstration Committee", composed of the deans of professional of management, industrial committee members, directors of certication evaluation agencies. With participation of stakeholders in each field, it planed and directed the project. We also made a working group based on it, consisting of professional graduate school teachers, pedagogy researchers, to conduct survey research on demonstration and improvement of core curriculum and comprehensive analysis of "needs survey". Also, in order to get opinions of graduate schools of management widely, we held "MBA Core Curriculum Discussion Forum (opinion hearing)" three times and sent a questionnaire to the deans.
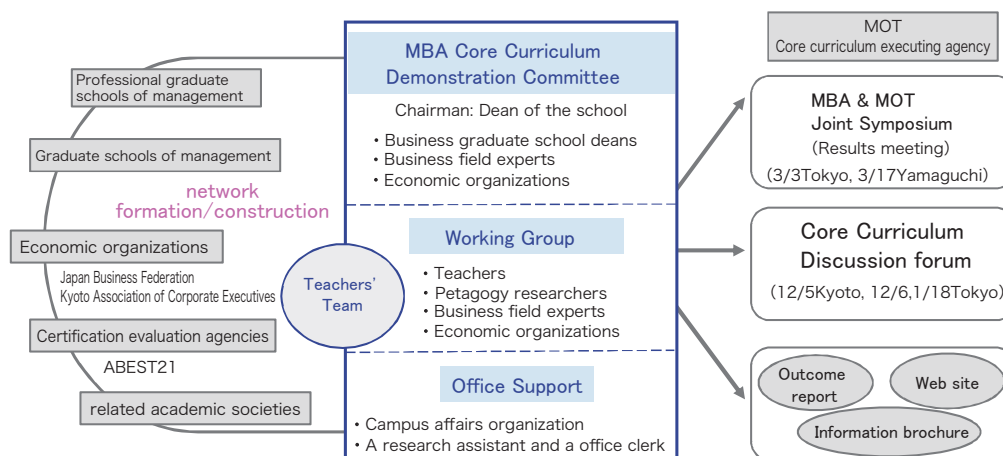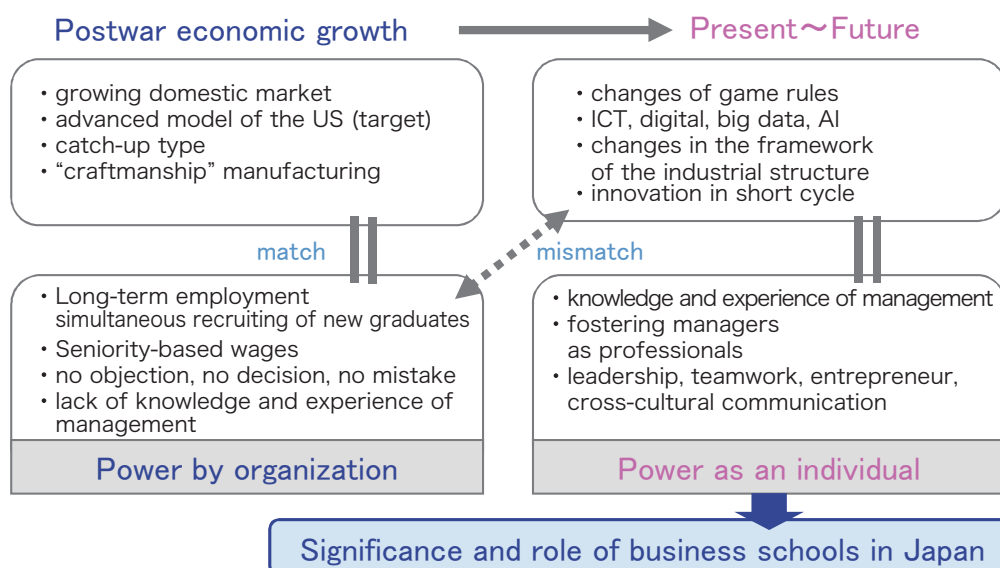
Significance of core curriculum design

In Japan, there was not much demand for business school, because of the "Japanese management" such as simultaneous recruiting of newgraduates and lifetime employment which is very different from the United States. Conversely, in the United States, as large enterprises were born and business managers werw needed, business schools have spread widely as an education institution to train business managers, and have cultivated them as professionals.

In the 21st century, "Japanese management" is not necessarily effective due to changes in the business environments such as a major transformation in industrial structures, development of technology such as ICT, and globalization of competition. From now, business managers as professionals, leadership and teamwork as individuals to create new situations, management human resources that play in global markets and organizations through cross-cultural communication, entrepreneur that find and create new markets to create and so on are becoming required.

In order to foster such new human resources, it is important that Japanese business school tackle Japanese issues by promoting collaboration among industry, government and academia. Currently, some business schools have been established under the professional graduate school system in Japan. And we are promoting efforts to guarantee and improve the quality of education through certifcation assessment etc. of professional graduate schools. As a result, domestic and international students have learned in business schools in various places, worked in companies and organizations, and start up businesses.

This is also the significance of the core curriculum. Even in order for Japanese business schools to further fulfill the role of human resource development by being supported by industry, in order for many of workers to enter business school with a strong interest in learning there, it is important to clarify the core curriculum. By clarifying the core curriculum, it becomes clear what you learn at the business school and what kind of human resources you train. Improving and appealing the core curriculum to the industry and society means propositions to society on what role the business school plays.

Postwar economic growth → Present～Future

- growing domestic market
- advanced model of the US (target)
- catch-up type
- "craftmanship" manufacturing

- changes of game rules
- ICT, digital, big data, AI
- changes in the framework of the industrial structure
- innovation in short cycle

match   mismatch

- Long-term employment simultaneous recruiting of new graduates
- Seniority-based wages
- no objection, no decision, no mistake
- lack of knowledge and experience of management

- knowledge and experience of management
- fostering managers as professionals
- leadership, teamwork, entrepreneur, cross-cultural communication

Power by organization   Power as an individual

Significance and role of business schools in Japan

Core curriculum design framework

What is the core curriculum?

・Learning contents and common goal (core curriculum) that all students need to learn at the professional graduate school of management (MBA) .

・The core curriculum is not a curriculum or course subject itself, but learning contents acquired through them.

Considering the core curriculum of the business school means that we clearly set up the contents of the education program of the business school are provided, and what kind of content the students learn. It will clarify the goals and plans of human resources development at the business school.

The core curriculum in the professional graduate school of management (MBA) formulated by Graduate School of Business Administration, Kobe University in FY2016, shows three components. Two major components as a common part are "Common Leaning Goals (core curriculum)" that all students should learn beyond different missions, training images, and the students of each school, and "Organizational Structure and Operation Method" that promote the education programs. In addition, there is the third componet "Original Learning Goals" that each business school can set freely, so that each school defines original mission, and design original charmed curriculum.

This core curriculum shows that the contents of "Common Learning Goals" are five items: (I) Organizational behavior/ human resources management, (2) Technology and operation management, (3) Marketing, (4) Accounting/finance, and (5) Management strategies. (see the report for details).
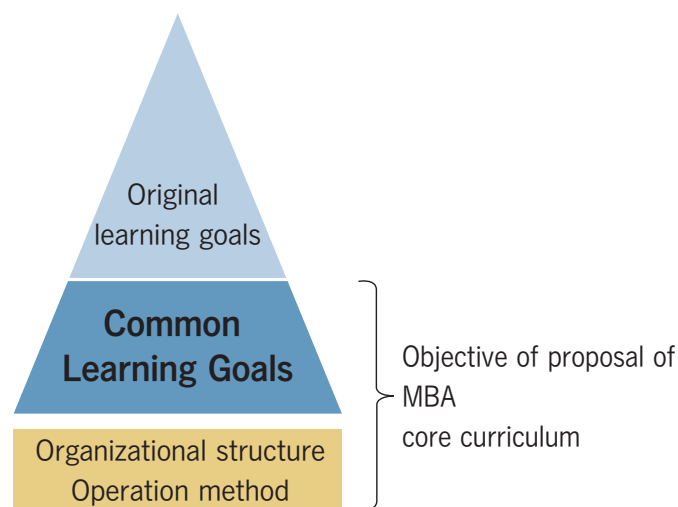

Fig. 7 structure and relationship diagram of curriculum of
professional graduate school of management

("Research Report on Core Curriculum Formulation in Professional Graduate School of Management (MBA)", Graduate School of Business Administration, Kobe University, p.23)

The core curriculum is philosophically positioned as learning contents in common at business school, as "Common Learning Goals (core curriculum)" that all students should learn there, beyond the difference of the mission, the image of the talent to nurture, and the students profile, etc. of each business school.

However, in the meaning that each business school should develop diversely and independently based on its own mission, it is also pointed out that there is an adverse effect of uniformly standardizing it. Therefore, we would like to propose the core curriculum and original program that each business school designs independently.

Instructional design

As a basic approach to designing a curriculum, we propose to adopt the concept and the model of Instructional design (ID).

Instructional design is widely used in school education and human resource development in the company. ID is comprehensively and systematically methods for making education/training more effectively, more efficiently and more attractively. Furthermore, it includes not only models that educators directly teach but also how to design learning support environments that learners learn voluntarily.

There are three major elements of ID. Here are three questions of R. F. Mager.

① **Where am I going? = Objectives**
② **How do I know when I get there? = Assessment**
③ **How do I get there? = Contents**

In ID, we start by clearly setting of the objectives. Since it is the purpose of education to make learners achieve their learning goals, we clearly set up the evaluation method, how to assess the achievement status of learning objectives. Education without evaluation would not function effectively as an education program that realizes the learning goal after all. After deciding the learning goal and evaluation method as a set, what kind of contents, and what kind of method (such as simultaneous classroom, group work, etc.) are to be taught.

By assembling the three elements systematically, the purpose of the education program is clarified, and it can be evaluated whether the education program is functioning effectively or not. And we can improve our education program based on the evaluation results. ID is a framework for the development of education programs and at the same time can be said as a framework of education program management.
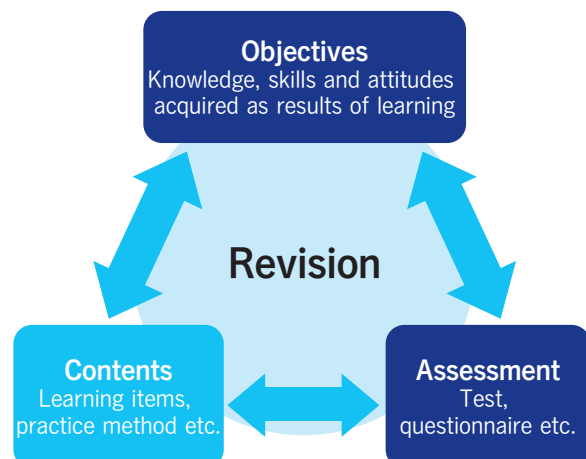
Mission-driven

Companies and organizations are a kind of artifacts with purpose and exist to achieve some purpose. The mission clearly defines the significance of the existence of companies and organizations. In order to clarify the mission, it is necessary to answer the following questions (P. F. Drucker).

① What is your business?
② Who is the customer?
③ What is valuable to customers?
④ What will your business be like?
⑤ How should your business be?

In order to contribute to the development of significant management talents in changing industries and societies, business schools should also clarify their missions and appeal them to industry and society. In order to foster management human resources for the needs of industry and society, it is necessary not to be passive to the needs but to define their own roles actively and proactively based on their own knowledge and value (mission driven).

〈Elements to be defined in the mission at each business school (example)〉
① What role will the business school play?
② What field will the business school compete and act?
③ What does the business school do and what will it produce?
④ Who is the customer of the business school and what value will it provide to customers?
⑤ What strengths and resources will the business school use?
⑥ What is important for the business school?
⑦ How will this business school contribute to society through our own activities?

In order to realize these missions, it is required to clarify admission policy, curriculum policy, diploma policy, and improve the quality of education.

MISSION	raison d'etre
VISION	Aiming image
VALUES	Behavior standard
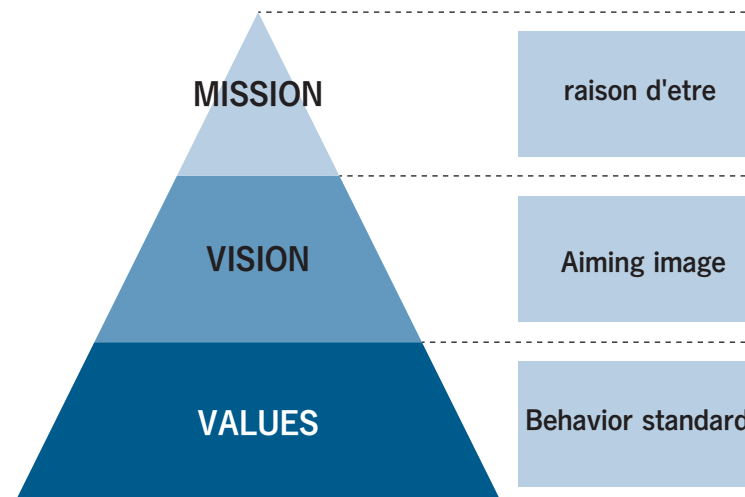
About the mission in the business school, here is an example of Graduate School of Management, Kyoto University.

Example

Mission of Graduate School of Management, Kyoto University

The Graduate School of Management has developed an educational system that draws upon the latest research in management, as well as advanced and specialized business practices. This school aims to contribute to the diverse yet harmonious development of global society through nurturing of originality and decision-making capabilities in professionals, so that they can give leadership in a wide area of fields.

Approaches

The following are the three principal approaches to realize this mission.

① While following the tradition of the Kyoto University that places an importance on the autonomous and independent spirit and critical discussions, the school will promote advanced research and develop an educational system that encompasses highly specialized business practices, by creating a research and educational environment in cooperation with industries and government

② The school will accept individuals with diverse backgrounds, and will produce highly specialized professionals and highly specialized professional doctors in various fields by utilizing our educational system.

③ As a university in the global society, the school will fulfill the role of becoming a base for research and education with originality.

Three points to organize the mission:

Ⅰ． **What does the graduate school do and what will it produce?**
・nurturing of originality and decision-making capabilities in professionals, so that they can give leadership in a wide area of fields
・produce highly specialized professionals and highly specialized professional doctors in various fields

Ⅱ． **What does the graduate school do for that purpose?**
・develop an educational system as a bridge between advanced management research and highly specialized practice
・following the tradition of the Kyoto University that places an importance on the autonomous and independent spirit and critical discussions
・creating a research and educational environment in cooperation with industries and government
・accept individuals with diverse backgrounds

Ⅲ． **How does the graduate school contribute to society?**
・contribute to diverse yet harmonious development of global society
・as a university in the global society, the school will fulfill the role of becoming a base for research and education with originality

The following courses are placed at Graduate School of Management, Kyoto University.

2-year Course

Students select one of the following four education programs and take classes according to the studied model.
・Business leadership program
Realization of the strategic advantage of 'individual in organization' and 'company in market'
・Service & hospitality program (2018-)
Promotion of service innovation, productivity improvement, and hospitality development
・Project operations management program
Fostering project managers who manage projects
・Finance & Accounting program
Training experts in both finance and accounting

International Project Management Course（IPROMAC）

Provide all classes in English and nurture managers who can promote international projects

Tourism Management Science Course（2018-）

Foster professionals for tourism business management, tourism place management (DMO) for workers in the tourism field etc.

Learning goals or competencies

How should business school learning goals be set? In recent years, in setting widely education curriculum, the competency of what you can do rather than traditional knowledge content has been drawing attention. Learning goals of business schools should be also designed as competencies required for manager if the educational purposes are to foster management human resources who are active in various fields of business and are expected to raise high performance.

Implementation of the extracted/set competency into subjects
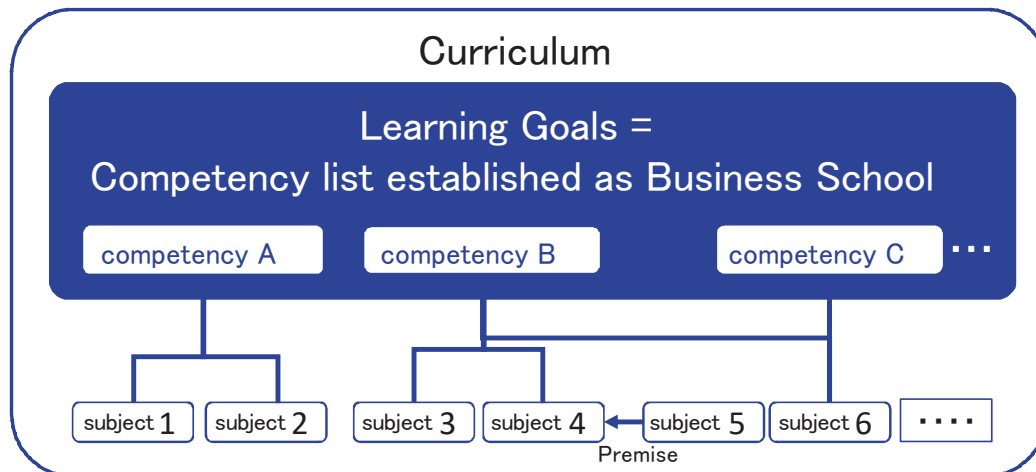
Competency in business is made from an observation/survey of behavioral characteristics commonly seen among high performer in a certain role/responsibility. Competency is explored scientifically by observing the differences between high performers and average workers for a specific job function and extracting factors that can explain them. Various conceptual models on competency have been proposed, but here we treat it as a characteristic behavior that can be observed and measured in four factors; knowledge, skills, motivation/attitude, and the others.

In the US and Europe, the competency of each job is clearly described in each company or generally as recruiting, placement, evaluation and training by job are carried out. Workers and employees will analyze themselves, appeal at the time of adoption, and develop capabilities through self-development, based on this competency. Educational institutions such as business schools and certificated programs of various professional qualification organizations are greatly involved in the development of skills based on these competencies.

Among the consideration of this project, it was said, in particular, the goal of education at business school is not training managerial candidates with knowledge and skills, but a truly leader, future executives who have their own vision and strong sense of mission. It would not be an exaggeration to say that this is the significance and value of education at universities, not within companies.

Based on several competency classification lists for managers and entrepreneurs, we propose reference example of competency as a business school learning goal as follows.

(Reference example) Business School Competency

Ⅰ. Manager's attitude	An attitude of achieving goals and respecting members
2. Management	Problem finding, problem solving, target setting, planning, evaluation based on objectives, and feedback based evaluation
3. Specialized knowledge	To understand and use theories and knowledge of management (strategy, organization, marketing, accounting, finance, etc.)
4. Information utilization	Investigation, information gathering, data analysis, ICT system, information integration, and information utilization
5. Communication	Communication, presentation, negotiation, and coordination skills
6. Team	Leadership, followership, and team building
7. Resilience	Dealing with difficult situations by self-management, emotional control, toughness, and resilience
8. Ethics	Ethical judgment, justice, responsibility and trust, resistance to injustice, and compliance
9. Creativity	Critical thinking, hypothesis thinking, design thinking, and creative thinking
10. Entrepreneur	Needs exploration, ideas generation, product development, service development, and business development
11. Globalization	High cross-cultural sensitivity, diversity accepted, communication by a foreign language

Learning goals are also set for optional special education programs. Below is a reference example of the competency of the education program to train tourism management talent.

(Reference example) Competency of Tourism Management Talent

Ⅰ. Attitude	Intention to contribute to the world, Japan, and the region through tourism management
2. Management	To promote, adjust, negotiate, and organize tourism business, problem discovery and problem solving in tourism
3. Information utilization	Investigation for tourism business, sightseeing spots, and tourists, information gathering, data analysis, information integration, information utilization
4. Marketing	Target setting, appeals of attractions of sightseeing business/sightseeing spots in an appropriate way, and grasp customer's needs and discontent
5. Hospitality	Scientific analysis of the hospitality of Japan and service innovation
6. Entrepreneur	Development of new tourism business including use of ICT technology
7. Cultural understanding	High cross cultural sensitivity, understanding and acceptance of the culture of Japan and the region, and viewpoints of different cultures abroad

Relationship between competency and course subjects

Completion of the curriculum essentially means that not only unit credits but also all core competencies (competencies required to be commonly learned) are satisfied. Therefore, in principle, in order to satisfy all core competencies, compulsory subjects corresponding to it are provided, and if all required compulsory courses are acquired, all will be satisfied in the curriculum.

In order to make the curriculum, we determine the list of competencies firstly, and then set the necessary subjects to satisfy each competency.

	Compulsory subject A	Compulsory subject B	Compulsory subject C
competency 1	○		
competency 2		○	
competency 3			○
competency 4		○	○

The following table lists the course subjects in order to correspond to the competency list of the business school cited above as a reference example. If you create this correspondence table, it will make the curriculum clear. If we use this table, we can develop and improve the curriculum; What competent courses are offered to satisfy competencies? Are their competencies that are not sufficiently by provided subjects? Are subjects functioning sufficiently to satisfy competencies?

(Reference example) Table of correspondence between competency and course subjects

	Microeconomics	Organizational behavior	Management strategy	Marketing research	Problem solving	Business design	Service Creation	M&A Practice	Public asset accounting	Business ethics	Business negotiation
Core competencies											
Manager's attitude: an attitude of achieving goals and respecting members		○				○	○				
Management: problem finding, problem solving, target setting, planning, evaluation based on objective, and feedback based onevaluation				○	○						
Specialized knowledge: to understand and use theories and knowledge of management (strategy, organization, marketing, accounting, finance, etc.)	○	○	○					○			
Information utilization: investigation, information gathering, data analysis, ICT system, information integration, and information utilization				○							
Communication: communication, presentation, negotiation, and coordination skills	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Team: leadership, followership, and team building		○	○				○				
Resilience: dealing with difficult situations by self-management, emotional control, toughness, and resilience										○	
Ethics: ethical judgment, justice, responsibility and trust, resistance to injustice, and compliance										○	
Creativity: critical thinking, hypothesis thinking, design thinking, and creative thinking					○	○	○	○			
Entrepreneur: needs exploration, ideas generation, product development, service development, and business development							○	○			
Globalization: high cross-cultural sensitivity, diversity accepted, communication by a foreign language											○
Optional competencies											
experts in both finance and accounting									○	○	

Education evaluation and development to educational methods

The competency we propose here needs to confirm the learning outcome that the students of the business school satisfy, in order to recognize "what can we do?" If it can not be confirmed, it is also required to feed back the insufficient points and carry out relearning/retesting.

We recommend evaluation development based on the 4-stage model of evaluation proposed by Donald Kirkpatrick. In general, education evaluation is being conducted on Level 1 "Reaction" and Level 2 "Learning". Furthermore, in order to verify whether it is utilized after that, it is a big issue whether it is possible to develop follow-up research on level 3 "Behavior", level 4 "Results".

1. Reaction	How did the students respond to education (What is their satisfaction level/likability?)	Questionnaire survey of students immediately after attendance
2. Learning	What kind of knowledge, skills, attitudes, etc. did students acquire? (Did they reach the learning goal?)	Examination (completion) immediately after attendance
3. Behavior	How did the participants change their behavior (Did they leverage the learning outcome?)	Follow-up survey after several months (questionnaire to boss or surroundings, etc.)
4. Results	What was the result of education to the organization (Did it lead to performance improvement?)	Effect measurement checklist and ROI calculation after several months

By remarks and discussions at the classroom, written exams, reports, presentations and so on, we check whether to reach the learning goal for each lesson subject or not. Although it is useful to introduce relative evaluation to incorporate competition and aim to a higher level, firrst of all, the degree of achievement of the subjects' learning objectives will be evaluated absolutely.

In business schools, students have diverse backgrounds, age and experience, and experience, knowledge, skill level at the time of admission may differ greatly. Therefore, in order to make use of the evaluation results, it is also important that each student conducts the evaluation before and after attendance, after graduation, as confirming its own growth. Supervisors etc. are required to conduct such individual diagnosis, regular evaluation and guidance for students.

It is important to develop and improve educational methods based evaluation. Appropriate methods will be different by the status of the students (knowledge of management, working experience, etc.), and by the character of learning contents (5 classification by Robert M. Gagne: language information, intellectual skills, cognitive strategies, motor skills, attitudes).

In business schools, it is important not only to learn knowledge and skills, but also to utilize and practice it to produce results. Therefore, business schools provide not only input methods but also output methods such as students participate, speak and discuss, and do group work and presentation. It is becoming more and more important to create an active learning environment, and to provide a learning environment to make interactive learining from team, as well as personal learning,

Among competencies, the areas of communication, teamwork, ethics and resilience are able to learn in a united way with multiple lecture subjects, not only to learn each subject as a specialized field. By having learning opportunities by multiple lessons, students themselves are expected to realize their own tasks and to improve and grow.

It is necessary to effectively and systematically combine educational methods such as cooperation and competition among students, learning from the lecturers outside the university, field work, internship, or such as teaching, guided practice, group work, personal work, reflection and feedback, not only lecture and guidance by teachers.

Part 2 Analysis of "Needs Survey"

Following are the parts of the accomplishments this project has been analyzing about current status of today's business school, how the industry sees business school, and how business school graduates are evaluating their schools.
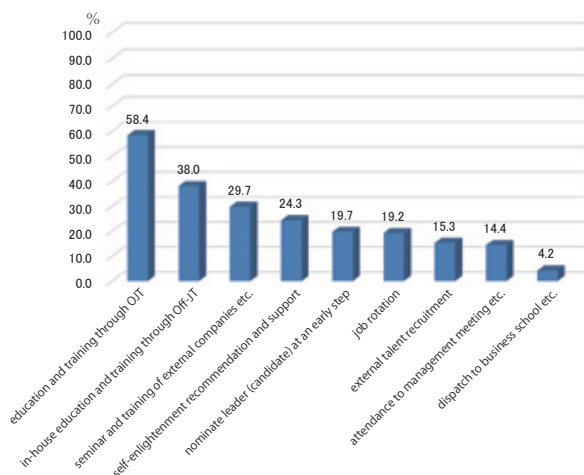
The original data is from "Survey research theme: Survey on the actual conditions of graduate schools of management in Japan and overseas, and companys' needs of graduate schools of management ("Needs survey") in the project of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in FY2016 (for the entire survey report, see the web).

Q1. How is the core human resources competency developed in the industries?

The figure below shows the result of choosing up to three items that are emphasized, among those being implemented for the competency development of core human resources such as management, various projects, research and development.

The most frequently carried out is "education and training through OJT", about 60% of companies are implementing it. OJT, a traditional method of human resource development in Japanese companies, seems to be still fundamental today. The second method is "in-house education and training through Off-JT", about 40% of companies are implementing it. On the other hand, only 4.2% of companies conduct "dispatch for employee to graduate schools/business schools".

We pay attention a limitation of choosing up to three for this question. However, it is mainstream to train core talent through in-house training using OJT and Off-JT, and it clearly shows how few companies dispatche employee to graduate schools/business schools.

Q2. Do industries evaluate or expect that domestic professional graduate schools/ graduate schools of management can train human resources required by companies?

The figure below shows whether domestic professional graduate schools/graduate schools of management are able to train the desired personnel or expected to be able to train employees, under comparison with dispatched experience to business schools and no experience.

Clearly, companies with dispatched experience have high expectations and evaluations for business schools. In addition, companies that do not have dispatch experience do not have no expect or appreciation for graduate school, but do not know whether they can expect or evaluate it.

This can tell that steadily expanding the dispatch/ recruitment will improve the evaluation of domestic professional graduate school/graduate school of management.
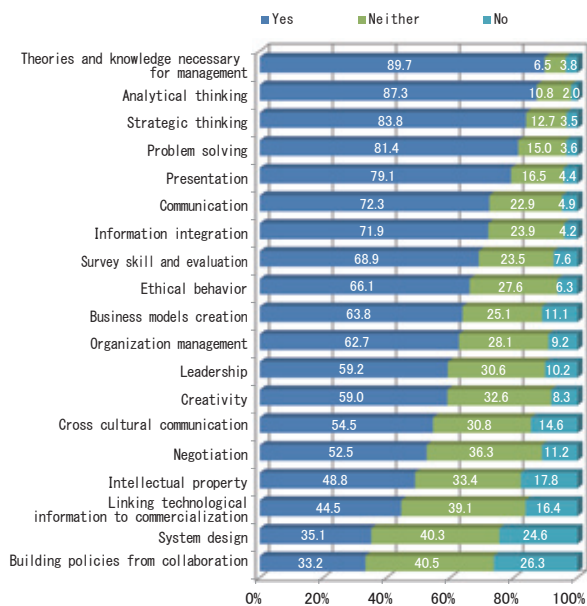

Methods of ability development of core human resources (companies)
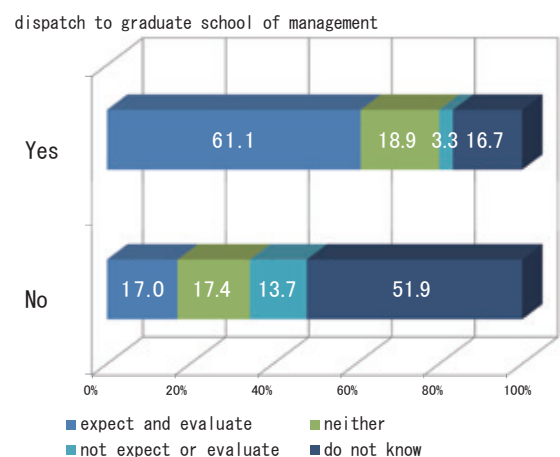
Evaluation and expectation for Domestic graduate school/ professional graduate school of management (companies)

Q3. What is the knowledge and ability that graduate students acquired at graduate school?

The figure below shows the degree of knowledge, ability and competency that graduate students have acquired at graduate school. In general, majority answer they acquired all knowledge and ability. In particular, many graduates said they could get "theories and knowledge necessary for management", and a universal cognitive ability such as "analytical thinking", "strategic thinking", and "problem solving", and interpersonal relationship abilities such as "presentation" and "communication ability". These are the contents of education that many business schools emphasize. and clearly indicate that the business school education programs is very useful for graduates.

Meanwhile, acquire competency such as "building policies from industry-academia collaboration", "system design", "linking technological information to productization, practical realization, and commercialization" was relatively low. MOT graduates acquired these higher than MBA graduates. These are the contents of education MOT schools emphasize.

In addition, "negotiation" is also a skill that is not high in mastery, MBA graduate gets this higher than MOT graduate. There is a difference in the areas of competency that MBA and MOT emphasize.

Q4. Do graduates make use of what they learned at graduate schools at their workplaces?

The figure shows whether or not employees make use of what they learned at graduate schools, by working period. The result seems that both experienced workers and inexperienced persons make use of it in the workplace. However, although there is no statistically significant difference, inexperienced workers tend to answer that "they are working in departments and sections that can leverage their acquired competency" and "they are making good use of the acquired competency in ordinary work." On the other hand, the longer the working period, the tendency is "to work in positions and roles that make use of learned competency", and the longer the working period is, the more the acquired competency is effective for the role required in the company position.

Japanese business schools, although there are some differences at each school, generally have a unique point that the average age of the students is high (roughly 35 years old) compared with that of US and Europa. Also, in some business schools, there is a characteristic that it tends to be widely studied from young people to seniors without concentrating on a certain age group.

In such situation, it can be said that business school education programs generally satisfy the needs of inexperienced workers, young people as well as those who have worked, or middle-aged. In other words, students at a business school seem to try to clarify their own tasks and targets, and wrestle with tuition under the guidance of teachers' advice, so that a business school can satisfy what they ask for.

Acquired competency at graduate school (graduates)
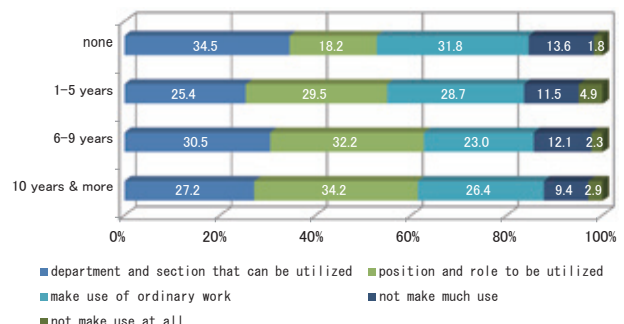
Utilization at workplace what you learned at graduate school (graduates)

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