Strategic marketing of further and higher educational institutions: partnership arrangements and centres of entrepreneurship

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Abstract
Partnership arrangements involving institutions of further and higher education provide educational provision to a broad audience. It is essential that within the framework of a partnership arrangement there is a structure in place which allows senior academics and administrators to ensure that the partnership is maintained, developed and realizes the objectives set by senior management. This paper makes reference to a centre of entrepreneurship, which academics and administrators can establish, to facilitate the development of partnership arrangements and can be viewed also as a catalyst for developing new products and services which can be turned into marketable products and services, leading to increased opportunities for income generation. The framework outlined in this paper can provide a basis for establishing a professional and relational marketing approach that should ensure that customer expectations are met, and can be used to audit, evaluate and manage a partnership arrangement.

Introduction

Those working in higher and further education are aware that customers are not homogeneous and that attention needs to be paid to placing customers into various categories: individuals, sponsors, commerce and industry, and other educational institutions, for example. Bakir (1993) has identified the various client groups to be found in the further education sector and it is important to realise that senior managers at an institution of further education are accountable to a number of influential bodies (Cantor *et al.*, 1995), hence educational provision needs to placed within the context of a stakeholder model. The stakeholder model is a concept that views an organization as being an open, socioeconomic system which is composed of a number of constituencies (Hinterhuber and Krauthammer, 1998, p. 150). Johnson and Scholes (1999, p. 213) have defined stakeholders as: "those individuals or groups who depend on the organization to fulfil their own goals and on whom, in turn, the organization depends". Therefore, various stakeholders can be identified: academic staff and support staff; students; administrators; governors; local authority personnel; central government staff and government agency staff; politicians; chamber of commerce personnel; bankers, accountants and auditors; sponsors and various publics (parents, siblings, shopkeepers and various local business personnel and community groups). In the case of an educational partnership arrangement involving an institution of higher education and an institution of further education, it is important to add the list of stakeholders from the partner institution(s) and in the case of international partnership arrangements, foreign governments and government agency staff can also be added.

Barden (1993) has outlined the fact that in the UK there is a movement towards the provision of mass further and higher education and this momentum will continue. Within all markets there is a concentration of power and a degree of integration. It is therefore important to think in terms of market imperfections (Hirsch, 1995) and how these will militate against the planned expansion of educational provision. Although it is not always possible to predict with accuracy how markets move, it is important to bear in mind the fact that collaboration (Tett, 1996) is a useful aid to market positioning. Guzkowska and Kent (1999, p. 1) have defined collaboration as a "shared unity of purpose". Hence, partnership arrangements involving educational institutions can be placed within a strategic framework, and this means that marketing needs to be viewed from a relational stance.

Partnership arrangements

There are several models of partnership (Boot and Evans, 1990; Woolhouse, 1991; Warwick, 1995) and as well as thinking in terms of partnerships between educational institutions, it is important to place a partnership arrangement within a broader setting which encompasses links with business and commerce as well as non-profit making organizations. Trim (2001) has undertaken research into a partnership arrangement based on a franchise arrangement between a college of further education and an institution of higher education and has concluded that partnership arrangements can provide several advantages to both types of

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institution. For example, both types of educational institution can extend their reach, provide opportunities for access and progression, identify new opportunities for income generation, and establish a means for maintaining the institution's independence in the marketplace. The key point to note is that both the partner institutions (or all the particular institutions in the case of a multi-partnership arrangement) need to view a link from the basis of mutuality. However, governments are concerned with aspects such as quality educational provision, and this requires senior management in both types of institutions to provide decisive leadership and to share the responsibility *vis-à-vis* managing the partnership arrangement (Gallacher, 1995). It is clear from the above that a partnership arrangement, in order to be successful, needs to be underpinned by clear authority and legality, and needs to be based on trust and teamwork (Trim, 2001). A well thought through and clearly defined partnership arrangement will allow senior management to establish other partnership arrangements and this is turn will provide a firmer base for maintaining independence (a number of loose arrangements replace the need for a merger based on necessity, for example).

Partnership arrangements also take into account internal linkages (department to department and faculty to faculty) and external linkages (educational authorities and bodies, educational institutions, commerce and industry, professional organizations, and government bilateral and multi-lateral arrangements). Bearing this in mind, it is important that educational partnerships are viewed from the perspective of the stakeholder model owing to the fact that there are many interested parties involved, either directly or indirectly. Commerce and industry are expected to become significant influencers and partnership members in the future (Lawlor and Miller, 1991; Leonard, 1993) and although education is about providing educational opportunities, a successful partnership arrangement can be viewed from the basis that it delivers high quality education which benefits the community and other stakeholders (Gallacher, 1995).

Veugelers and Zijlstra (1995) indicate that networks assist managers in educational institutions in a number of ways, which include interpreting government policies; the ability to influence government policy; and the sharing of experiences, which results in increased professionalism. Elliott (1996) has indicated that institutions of further education do not have a research culture,

however, such institutions can develop a research culture by forming links with an institution of higher education. However, collaborative arrangements do not emerge overnight, they need to be planned and timetabled (Bronder and Pritzl, 1992). This is a crucial point to note and underpins the need for a strategic approach to be taken towards building relationships and partnership arrangements as individuals from different types of educational institution possess different mindsets (Somekh, 1994).

Once a partnership arrangement has been formed, adequate and continual communication between the partnership members needs to be maintained. According to Kanter (Leech, 1995, p. 105) this means that senior management in each partner institution keep their counterparts informed about their plans and priorities. This is essential if trust (Guzkowska and Kent, 1999, p. 2) is to be maintained and the partnership arrangement is to be expanded in a logical and structured manner.

It is also relevant to place partnership arrangements between institutions within a regional context. Indeed, Guzkowska and Kent (1999, p. 1) have made reference to a learning region which has the "ability to generate and support partnerships and networks that drive substantive change". Guzkowska and Kent (1999, p. 5) have suggested that with respect to the development of a learning region, it is important for planners and decision makers to realize that staff employed by companies in the learning region need to improve their management skills; that staff employed in the partner institutions engage in networking both within and outside the region; that new forms of financing are deployed in order to finance innovative projects; that training is placed within an overall regional plan; small and medium sized organizations are given assistance in order to improve their infrastructure in information, organization and quality policies; and training and education are given priority and placed within a company and regional context.

It is clear, therefore, that educational institutions need to work with government bodies and the various authorities; and participate in active discussion with national and regional government representatives when required. It is clear from the literature that there are various forms of partnership arrangement and that they can be viewed from an economic, social, political, cultural, geographical and technological basis. Another key aspect with respect to partnership development within a regional

learning context is the culture of networking itself that is important with respect to producing a mechanism for innovation and risk taking. It has been suggested that in the UK, the concept of technology transfer is viewed to narrowly as technology transfer initiatives (Guzkowska and Kent, 1999, p. 17) "appear to fund specifically focused academic-business links between one firm and one researcher, group or department". Examples from other parts of the world have provided a different view of what partnership is (Guzkowska and Kent, 1999, p. 1):

> In Jena everyone took a measure of responsibility for the final outcome: the city drove the strategy, the company embraced change openly, the people placed their trust in the process, the regional and national governments supported the city, and so on …. In Silicon Valley it was driven by a collective need to keep up with an exploding technology that depended on common technical standards but which was marketed with ruthless competitiveness – technical expertise had to be pooled to create the standards – and to advance the technology, but among firms that were in direct competition …. For the US bio-technology programme it was a joint government-industry-university collaboration with government underwriting much of the risk in order to be able to engineer collaboration where otherwise there might have been competition.

Governments are taking a direct interest in broad based partnership arrangements owing to the fact that issues such as economic growth, employment levels, wealth creation and living standards fuel political debate. In Canada, universities account for 22 per cent of the country's research and development expenditure and employ 31 per cent of the country's research and development personnel (Advisory Council on Science and Technology, 1999, p. 3). Universities are concerned with income generation and university commercialization can prove useful in this respect. Issues such as intellectual property rights and the registration of patents need attention, and in some cases the services of outside organizations is needed in order that ideas and technological advances can be brought to market, sometimes via license arrangements. In 1998, a Canadian university was declared the leading North American university as regards creating spin-off companies per $10 million of research (the Canadian university was placed above both MIT and Stanford University) (Advisory Council on Science and Technology, 1999, p. 11).

Organizational culture is a manifestation of the value system within the organization.

When analysing organizational culture it is essential to pay attention to factors such as feelings, beliefs and values (Lewis, 1998, p. 254), and how culture can influence organizational change (Franklin, 2000). Institutions of higher and further education employ a high percentage of medium and long-term serving staff who are grounded in the cultural value system of the organization. An educational institution's culture is a key factor in determining which institutions are deemed potential partners. When selecting an educational partner, senior management needs to pay attention to whether the potential partner has the same or a similar value system and furthermore, whether the mission statement of the potential partner institution is representative of the institution. Kirk (1995) has stated that the mission statements of each institution must be compatible, and this view is shared by Trim (1994).

It is worthwhile to clarify what a mission statement purports. Hinterhuber and Krauthammer (1998, p.153) have stated that:

> The mission is the visualization of the basic rules of behaviour of a firm in accordance with its vision. It is based on the values, orientations and norms as lived in the corporate culture. The objective is to orient, to legitimize and to motivate all employees to deploy their energies for the satisfaction of all key stakeholders of the firm.

In order to produce a realistic and representative mission statement, it is imperative that a thorough strategic analysis of the educational institution is undertaken which is comprehensive and takes into account a strengths and weaknesses analysis (Aaker, 1995). A comprehensive strategic analysis needs to establish if there is or is likely to be compatibility of the partnership institutions (Trim, 1994). The analysis also needs to establish whether the partnership members can implement a non-adversarial or win/win approach that is based on mutuality (Cantor, 1995; Gallacher, 1995). To ensure that this is so and at the same time provide for a successful relationship, a partnership council, which is a formalized framework (Edwards *et al.*, 1993), needs to be established to plan the partnership strategy. In the case of multi-partnership development, it is important to implement multi-partite consultation (Duke, 1984) and to view this as an ongoing commitment.

Partnership arrangements between educational institutions should not necessarily be viewed as rigid and fixed, but should be viewed as flexible and multi-faceted. In view of this, it is important that the strategic thinkers within educational

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institutions (professors, administrators and specially formed working parties which deal with teaching and learning for example) and advisory board members establish a structure within the educational institution which is given the task of identifying market changes, and providing market data and information which can be used by policy makers to develop new and sustainable programmes of study. This means that in order to develop an adequate response to the marketplace, it is essential to adopt a structured and professional approach which is based on relationship marketing which is underpinned by a strategic marketing approach.

One crucial aspect of a partnership arrangement that needs to be addressed at some stage (often during the pre-partnership arrangement talks) is intellectual property rights. Intellectual property rights can include consultancy services and this is, and will continue to be, an important area of income generation. Governments are paying serious attention to the broad area of innovation and commercialization, and the benefits that result from exploiting intellectual property (Advisory Council on Science and Technology, 1999). Partnership arrangements that link education and business are perceived as useful as they provide a basis for developing the skill base of people (Lawlor and Miller, 1991). However, it is important to have a control mechanism in place to ensure that the benefits derived from the commercialization of ideas relating to intellectual property rights material is distributed on an equitable basis.

Strategic management tools and techniques, such as the 7-S framework (Waterman *et al.*, 1980) can be applied to strategic planning within educational institutions (FEDA, 1995). Waterman *et al.* (1980, pp. 2-20) have indicated that an organization's effectiveness is determined by the interaction of seven factors: structure, strategy, systems, style, skills, staff and superordinate goals. Structure is important because it divides organization tasks and provides for co-ordination; strategy is important because it specifies how senior management are going to position the organization with respect to competitors and customers; systems describe the procedures to be used and underpin how the organization functions; style relates to the personality of top management and how such people influence the organization; skills refer to the attributes of the organization and cover such issues as quality, for example; staff are upgraded through management schemes; and superordinate goals are the

guiding concepts/values or aspirations that integrate an organization.

Strategic management tools can help senior managers to understand better the environment in which the organization competes (Porter, 1980, 1985, 1990). Porter's (1985, p. 5) five competitive forces industry profitability model is useful because it allows marketing strategists to think in terms of the rivalry that exists and which shapes the type of competition evident in the industry; the possible threat posed by new entrants and the threat associated with substitute products and services; and the bargaining power of suppliers and the bargaining power of buyers. Porter (1985, 1990) extended his earlier work on strategy formulation and implementation and produced the three generic strategy concept and the value chain concept. As regards the three generic strategy concept, strategists need to think in terms of competitive advantage and competitive scope, and devise a strategy which is based on cost leadership (the organization aims to be the low-cost producer in the industry); differentiation (the organization establishes uniqueness); and focus (a narrow competitive scope is identified and a segment or group is targeted using tailor-made products and services) (Porter, 1985, pp. 11-16). Porter (1985, 1990) has produced a useful strategic management aid in the form of the value chain that can be used by strategists to identify the value activities of an organization. The primary activities are defined as inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing and sales, and services; and the support activities are defined as the firm's infrastructure; human resource management; technology development; and procurement (Porter, 1985, p. 37).

The strategic marketing approach

Marketing draws on an established body of knowledge. There is the classical marketing approach which is firmly established and which has been propagated by various authors such as Kotler (1980, 2000), who treats marketing as a number of separate but interlocking and related subject areas. There is the strategic marketing approach which treats marketing as a subset of strategic management (Kerin *et al.*, 1990; Cravens, 1991; Aaker, 1995; Wilson *et al.*, 1996). There are a number of authors who have filled the middle ground and approach the subject from a marketing strategy perspective (Luck *et al.*, 1989; Doyle, 1994; Fifield, 1996; Hooley *et al.*, 1998). As regards marketing educational

institutions (Kotler and Fox, 1985), it is important to understand that as is the case with private enterprises, senior managers need to ensure that the institution establishes a number of differential advantages (Jobber, 1998; Milliken, 1999) and a sustainable competitive advantage (Aaker, 1995). This should ensure that the educational institution is positioned within the industry. Senior management also needs to think in terms of delivering a high quality of service provision and this means thinking in terms of services marketing (Lovelock, 1991) and customer service (Trim and Lee, 1999).

Aaker (1995, p. 22) has provided a useful framework for analysing and interpreting strategic marketing relating problems which takes into account the external environment (via an external analysis) and the internal environment (via an internal analysis). The strategic market management framework as it is known demands that marketing strategists undertake an external analysis that is composed of a customer analysis, a competitor analysis, a market analysis and an environmental analysis. Having done this, it is possible for marketing strategists to produce an opportunities and threats analysis, and to extend this by also looking at trends and strategic questions. As regards the internal or self-analysis, it is important to undertake a thorough performance analysis and to establish the determinants of strategic options. This will then enable marketing strategists to undertake a strengths and weaknesses analysis; and various problems, constraints and questions can be identified. Next, both analyses can be combined and the mission of the educational institution can be appraised; a number of strategic alternatives can be identified, and the most appropriate strategy selected for implementation. A plan to implement the strategy can then be formulated. The strategy can, once implemented, be reviewed at specific points in time or as and when necessary.

Senior managers in educational institutions which attract overseas students and which have formed partnership arrangements with educational institutions at home and overseas, and sponsoring companies, need to think in terms of relationship marketing. Relationship marketing is based on establishing workable, trust-based long-term relationships which meet customer expectations (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Palmer, 1995; Gronroos, 1997; Chee and Harris, 1998, pp. 563-4). Relationship marketing also needs to be viewed from the perspective of aiding organizational cultural change and

facilitating the development of organizational learning. Ho (1999, pp. 74-5) recognises this by stating that senior management needs to be committed to implementing total quality management and this should result in staff in a "learning organization" being prepared to try out new ideas.

Farrell (2001, p. 170) has introduced a number of factors which need to be borne in mind by educational marketers and reference has been made to postmodernism and the fact that mankind is operating in an era which is characterized by increased fragmentation. Farrell (2001, p. 170) suggests that educational marketers need to think in terms of dynamic organic market segments which contain their own "subsystems, tensions and changing alliances". Building on the work of Brown, Farrell (2001, p. 171) states that: "The new fragments are not discrete, homogeneous subsegments, but overlap, interact and interpenetrate. Indeed, this interpenetration is an example of another postmodern phenomenon: de-differentiation".

It is evident, therefore, that marketers need to understand how and why people act the way that they do within a society, and this means that socio-cultural factors relating to how individuals exercise their decisions relating to matters of choice (something that governments are keen to encourage) need to be studied, analyzed and interpreted. The concept of poststructuralism is important as it highlights the fact that an educational institution's image, communications and value statements when translated into messages can and will be translated differently by different people (customers/potential customers) (Farrell, 2001, p. 175). This evolving situation will make it increasingly difficult for educational marketers to be able to collect, analyse and interpret market data, as it becomes more and more difficult to collect accurate and representative data. This may result in senior managers employed by educational institutions commissioning market research from specialist providers or lobbying government departments to provide additional educational/consultancy services. What is evident is that educational marketers will need to be skilled at strategic marketing and in particular develop an expertise in identifying unmet needs, for example. The deployment of a strategic marketing framework, as advocated by Aaker (1995), should allow marketers working for educational institutions to identify unmet needs and formulate new products and services to meet the anticipated

demand. For example, the demand for multimedia based training distance learning is expected to increase and companies with large training budgets, located in the manufacturing sector, and with an international training capability, are more likely to engage in partnership arrangements than small, non-manufacturing companies with a national level training capability only (Huseman and Goodman, 1999, p. 88). Huseman and Goodman (1999, p. 90) also point out that the number of employees an organization has is a significant factor in that large companies with a large number of employees are more likely to engage in a partnership arrangement with a university than companies with fewer employees. Nonaka and Takeuchi (Huseman and Goodman, 1999, pp. 184-6) are right to indicate that facilitative technology can be used to enhance the transfer of knowledge (via the Internet or the intranet). What is evident is that more stakeholders will emerge: companies that use the training service itself; the consultancy that provides the service; various private suppliers; universities; and the corporate training units of other companies (Huseman and Goodman, 1999, p. 86).

By adopting a strategic marketing approach it is possible for senior managers to implement a differentiation strategy (McElwee, 1994) which provides the educational institution with an identity in the marketplace. It also ensures that there is a customer focus which is underpinned by a commitment to quality improvement (Murgatroyd, 1989). In order that quality provision is maintained it is important to take into account how senior managers formulate a strategic marketing plan (Kotler and Fox, 1985) for the institutions in the collaborative arrangement. Aaker's (1995) approach to strategic marketing provides a comprehensive basis for ensuring that a high level of customer service evolves which provides the institutions(s) with a sustainable competitive advantage. Customer focus models that concentrate on provider-customer relationships (Trim and Lee, 1999) can be used to implement a relationship marketing strategy. By meeting customer expectations it is possible for an educational institution to develop a brand positioning strategy which is underpinned by a promotion strategy.

The centre of entrepreneurship

Trim (1997, 1998, 1999a) suggests that a partnership arrangement between an institution of higher education and an institution of further education can be developed which allows management in the partner institutions to develop a strategy which is aimed at maintaining the authority and independence of each institution in the marketplace. This will allow each institution to be viewed as trustworthy. Trust will be maintained provided that teamwork is evident with respect to problem solving and will be reinforced by the fact that senior managers are held accountable for their actions.

Owing to the fact that markets are influenced by factors that are outside the control of individual managers, it is essential that a proactive approach is adopted towards managing change. In the case of market segmentation, it is important to think not just in terms of providing opportunities for access and progression in the immediate geographical area, but also in terms of developing new forms of educational delivery (distance learning and franchise arrangements, for example). This will ensure wider market coverage.

In order that effective market reach strategies are devised, it is important that people with knowledge of a locality or region are consulted and their expertise acted upon. The following strategies can be identified:
- regional/tactical/operational;
- national/strategic; and
- international/global.

The regional strategy would be the priority of the further education institution as it draws on the local marketplace. For example, students live within a 20 mile radius; secondary schools and colleges are targeted by a local promotional strategy; and local industry/institutions are targeted in order to promote the partner institutions' training programmes. The national/strategic strategy is the responsibility of the institution of higher education, which, in partnership with the institution of further education, formulates and implements a national promotional strategy. There may be an arrangement in place which places first-year undergraduate students accepted onto a degree programme at the institution of further education (students transfer to the university at the start of year two). In the case of an international/global strategy, a hospitality service may be in place to welcome overseas students, and the institution of higher education formulates and implements an international/global promotional strategy which targets educational fairs, institutions overseas and British Council representatives, for example. The main emphasis could be on attracting taught masters students, research students,

research funding and implementing international staff and student exchange programmes.

Expansion can be planned in an incremental and pro-active manner, and needs to be based on clear and concise leadership from top management. Quality is an important aspect and is influenced by a number of factors, including employee behaviour, organizational systems and procedures, and technology, for example (Lewis and Gabrielsen, 1998, p. 66). Quality of educational provision takes into account a host of factors such as the delivery of teaching and learning material; the quality of student life; and employment prospects, for example. It is important to remember that measuring performance in a public sector context is complex because one needs to think in terms of multidimensional performance criteria (Stainer and Stainer, 1998, p. 113).

Gibb (1996, pp. 310-5) has indicated that staff in an organization need to encourage intrapreneurship and self-career development, and establish a learning environment, if, that is, a culture of enterprise is to be established. This is important with respect to the organization surviving in a complex and uncertain world. What is also evident is that the services of a traditional university will still be required, but that in addition, a more innovative form of delivering educational provision is needed which allows the teaching of theory and practice, and the generation of new insights and solutions to recurring problems. This also means that teaching entrepreneurship becomes an established way of life, the key being to stimulate entrepreneurial behaviour (Gibb, 1996, p. 316). This means that a number of key stakeholders need to be identified (Gibb, 1996, p. 317): bankers, accountants, the legal profession, the staff of regulatory agencies, business advisors, local enterprise development agents, customers and suppliers; and relationships nurtured.

Menzies (1998, p. iv and pp. 15-18) undertook an exploratory study of centres (institutes) of entrepreneurship at Canadian universities and established that knowledge building and research were of importance, and so too was promoting the concept of entrepreneurship to students. Other factors that emerged were the enhancement of faculty, reputation building and outreach, as well as a liaison role, for example. According to Menzies (1998, p. 1), the centres of entrepreneurship nurture innovation, promote an entrepreneurial spirit and also an enterprising culture. One point to emerge from the research is that the concept of

outreach is very important in the sense that the university itself sees itself as part of the community and is concerned with facilitating the economic development of the region. Staff at the university can benefit in the sense that they can derive an extra income from providing consultancy services and this can also be used to fund research. It is interesting to note that centres of entrepreneurship can be funded in various ways (Menzies, 1998, pp. 25-6): successful entrepreneurs, private foundations, corporate bodies and the university itself, and fee generation, for example. In order that the centre functions smoothly, it is important to appoint a senior manager to administer the work of the centre and for a strong support team to be appointed. An advisory board also needs to be appointed which can oversee matters (Menzies, 1998, p. 29).

A number of problems have been cited with respect to centres of entrepreneurship and these include (Menzies, 1998, p. 30): the inability to involve university faculty members in the activities of the centre; and the lack of funding. It is also important to establish network and partnership arrangements with a range of bodies prior to the centre being launched and, if possible, engage the assistance of interested parties such as local chambers of commerce and trade associations, for example. In order for the centre of entrepreneurship to be successful, it is important for staff at the centre to establish a main objective and a number of subobjectives. For example, Menzies (1998, p. 32) has indicated that the most commonly cited success factor is the ability to "create a high number of start-ups and new jobs". Once the centre has been established, it is important to undertake marketing research on a continual basis so that the needs of the interested parties can be identified and satisfied through educational programmes of study, conferences, workshops and research and development facilities, for example.

The above cited factors reiterate the point that relationship marketing is grounded in the way an organization is managed and controlled. In order to devise and implement a strategic marketing approach it is necessary to incorporate a management facility into the organizational configuration in order to audit, evaluate and manage the partnership arrangement. The role played by a centre of entrepreneurship is depicted in Figure 1 (Trim, 1999b, pp. 12-13). The centre of entrepreneurship focuses attention on new methods of income generation and is integrated into the strategic planning framework of the partner institutions. The main role of the centre is to implement the

Figure 1
A conceptual framework for auditing, evaluating and managing a partnership arrangement
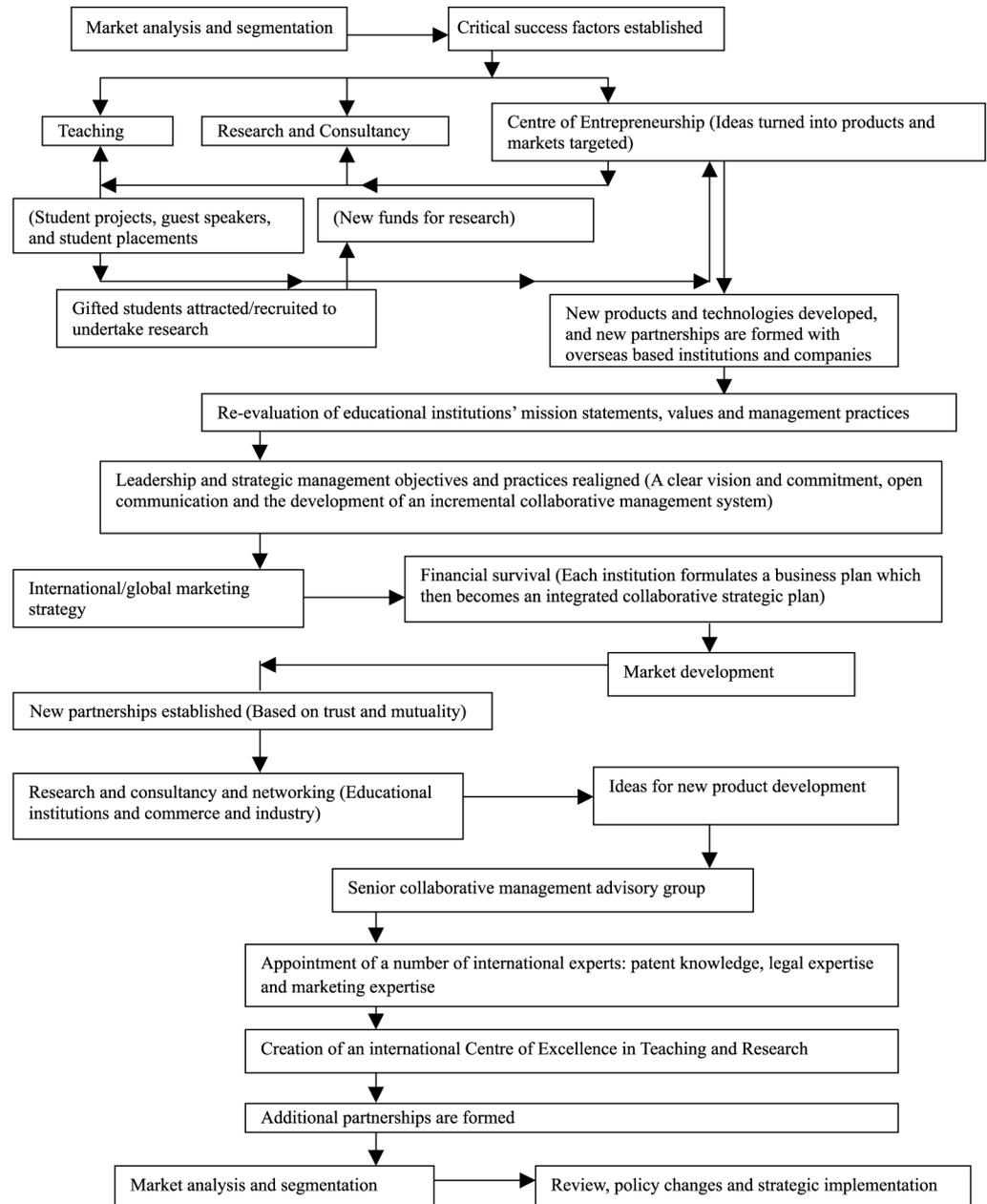
strategic plans relating to fund raising and to bring in outside expertise which helps to turn ideas (originating from student projects and research projects) into marketable products. The centre of entrepreneurship can act as a catalyst for developing partnerships with commerce and business (home and abroad). It can also promote the research and consultancy services of the partner institutions to public and non-public organizations. This suggests that senior management needs to have a firm understanding of who the stakeholders are and what they expect from the partner institutions. However, with respect to the stakeholder model, it is essential that the person in charge of the centre is perceived as having a legitimate power base (Hinterhuber and Krauthammer, 1998, p. 150). This will result in the continued support of the stakeholders (both internal and external). The Appendix contains three brief examples of centres of entrepreneurship in Canada, the UK and the USA.

The centre of entrepreneurship requires firm leadership. There are different views as to what leadership entails and what fashions a leader (Bhindi and Duignan, 1997; Allix,

2000). However, it is clear that organizations are different and have in place specifically defined management models, therefore, care has to be taken when recommending which type of leadership model needs to be adopted. There is, however, a move towards viewing leadership from a certain stance, known as transformational leadership (Kakabadse, 2000). This has significance because the person who is appointed to manage the centre of entrepreneurship needs to be both competent and inspirational. They also need to be enthusiastic and believe in their own judgement (Harris *et al.*, 2000, p. 10). The leadership style exercised in a collaborative venture needs to be fashioned so that new opportunities are identified and then exploited. This should lead to wealth creation for those involved (Rangan *et al.*, 2000, p. 42). Furthermore, in order to counteract the threat of complacency, it is essential that future leaders are identified and are given the required mentoring which will enable them to become a leader at sometime in the future (Danzig, 1999, p. 17).

Conclusion

Partnership arrangements are complex and multi-faceted affairs. They are based on close working relationships that are underpinned by trust, loyalty and mutuality. By adopting both a relational and a strategic marketing approach, senior management in educational institutions will find it possible to devise and implement effective strategies that meet customer expectations and result in the desired degree of strategic positioning. A centre of entrepreneurship can be established which facilitates the link between academia, and commerce and industry, and this in turn should enable educational institutions to gain additional revenue from the exploitation of marketable ideas that are turned into commercial products and services.

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Appendix. Centres of entrepreneurship

1 *University of Calgary* (Menzies, 1998, pp. 55-6). The centre of entrepreneurship (known as the Venture Development Group, Faculty of Management) was established in 1984. It has a professional management team in place and has a number of objectives, one of which is to focus on providing education for students: credit courses for undergraduate programmes, the PhD in Entrepreneurship and MBA (Enterprise Development), for example.

2 *University of Stirling* (University of Stirling, 1999, p. 5). The Department of Entrepreneurship, Faculty of Management, was established in 1997. Entrepreneurship courses are available to undergraduate students; there is an MSc programme in Entrepreneurial Studies (available full-time or by distance learning); and a PhD programme is in being. The department has several objectives, one of which is to help people start their own business.

3 *Massachusetts Institute of Technology* (MIT) (Massachusetts Institute of

Technology, 1998, p. (i) and pp. 13-17). The Entrepreneurship Center at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology employs about 30 people and has a clearly defined purpose:

> The mission of the MIT Entrepreneurship Center is to train and develop leaders who will make high-tech ventures successful. To that end, we offer educational programs to inspire, train, and coach new generations of entrepreneurs from all parts of MIT. To support this mission, MIT's Entrepreneurship professors and staff conduct basic research to enhance our fundamental understanding of the dynamic process of high tech venture development.

The MIT Entrepreneurship Center has on offer a number of educational courses such as New Enterprises and the Entrepreneurship Lab which are aimed at providing students with a whole range of skills, experience and network they need in order to turn their ideas into successful new ventures. There is also an annual MIT US$50,000 entrepreneurship competition that is aimed at encouraging business startups.