

# PARTNERSHIP AS PEDAGOGY: POSSIBILITIES AND PITFALLS

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**2017 Learning Showcase**



# INTRODUCTION



# ENGAGEMENT

- Partnership between students and community
- Mutually beneficial outcomes
  - Addresses community-identified need
  - Through an intellectual activity of importance
- Reciprocity
  - Enhances community capacity
  - Enhances student learning and/or research studies
- Knowledge exchange relationship
  - Two way relationship



# POSSIBILITIES

- Business students are exposed to the 'real world':
  - Industry in context
  - Professional expectations
  - The application of research
  - Problem-solving in real time
  - Creative thinking and ideation
  - Evidence-based decision making
  - Leadership and team dynamics
  - Result-driven practice



# POSSIBILITIES

## Client?

- They receive 'free' research and thinking on a range of issues
- They can tap into the graduate market early
- Marketing of goods and services
- Expansion of professional networks
- Connect with University

## Students?

- Build a portfolio that will be useful in seeking employment and/or changing jobs
- Obtain experience in the development and evaluation of policies and processes in practice
- They can have a dress rehearsal for the 'real world'
- Confidence building
- Interact with professionals

## Staff?

- Professional interaction and networking
- Expertise in Work Integrated Learning
- Exposure to contemporary practice
- Research opportunities
- Satisfying to witness student transformation

# FOCUS

- 200575 Processes & Evaluation in Employment Relations
- PEER utilises a single client based in Western Sydney to establish specific projects for the students to act as HR Consultants by researching best practice and creating a system for implementation within this organisational context
- Client history 2010-2015:
  - Public Sector (WSU Pilot Program)
  - Private Sector (Abbot, Baxter, Pearson)
  - Not for Profit (House with No Steps, Northcott)
  - Presented at 2017 Learning Showcase on Politics and Pitfalls

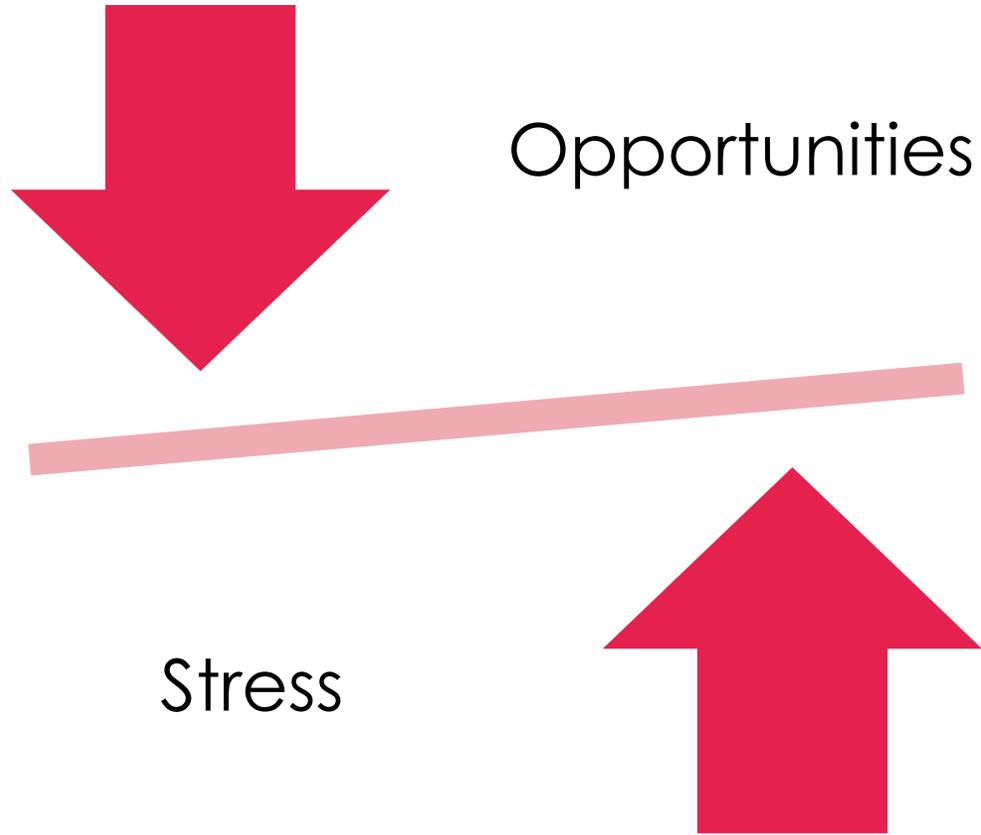


# PITFALLS

- Stakeholder relationship management:
  - Access to the 'client'
  - The 'pitch'
  - Managing expectations
- Student/Client interaction
  - Communication
  - 'Free work'???
  - Not everyone's a star...



# PITFALLS: ACADEMIC CRISIS



# POSSIBILITIES: PARTNERS

- Partnership as pedagogy
  - Context is critical
  - Exchange and the notion of trust
  - Opportunity for applied learning
- Key question is...**WHO** is the partner???



# INSIGHT: ALYCE HANSON

- And now for a quick story...
- Craig Kenny:
  - PEER Student Spring 2014
  - Place Manager, The Hills Shire Council
- Alyce Hanson:
  - PEER Student Spring 2015
  - HR Business Partner, The Hills Shire Council



# INSIGHT: 2017 CLIENT, RAFIC BECHARA

- Students in unit 200575 Processes and Evaluation in Employment Relations worked on a range of projects for our client (and former PEER tutor), Rafic Bechara.
- Rafic is currently the HR Business Partner, Australia & New Zealand for *Shire*, the leading biotechnology company focused on serving people affected by rare diseases and highly specialised conditions.
- Rafic graduated from UWS Nepean in 1996 with Honours in Commerce and is a proud supporter of the WSU HRM program.



# INSIGHT:RAFIC BECHARA

**Q1:** Why did you agree to be an industry partner?

*“I believe that both students and the business partner benefit from this relationship. Students have some real practical exposure to the business issues and make connections with an industry person that happens to also be a Western Sydney University Alumni.”*

**Q2:** Has it added any value to your professional work, career, networks?

*“The opportunity to work as a Sessional Lecturer, Tutor and Client for PEER has been invaluable. Business recognises the importance of education and in a HR role to have an opportunity to teach and be so closely linked to a University adds to my skill set and brand as a HR Practitioner.”*

**Q3:** As an alumni, does this alter your relationship with our students?

*“I believe the students see how being an ex-student of the University and an Alumni have shaped my career in very positive ways. It adds credence to the value of education and in particular the University itself.”*

# INSIGHT:RAFIC BECHARA

**Q4:** Did you need to seek permission to make this type of professional decision?

*“The decision is ultimately up to me but I inform my General Manager of my participation with the University.”*

**Q5:** Would you come back again to be a partner for another student cohort? Internships? Professional workshops?

*“Yes absolutely. I believe industry connecting with the University is one of the best initiatives that should be promoted more.”*

**Q6:** Can the Uni do anything to make this easier or offer greater recognition for your support?

*“Just the logistics or making it easier to attend, e.g. car parking.”*



# TAKE HOME MESSAGE

- Partnership is essential in contemporary pedagogy
- However, not all partnerships provide a positive student experience
- Utilising alumni is a win-win-win model for partnership

Shire



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THE HILLS  
Sydney's Garden Shire