

2006 Executive MBA Council Survey Results Offer Industry Insights

Two annual research surveys conducted by the Executive MBA Council highlight Executive MBA industry trends. The Program Survey offers a comprehensive overview of worldwide programs, and the Student Exit Benchmarking Survey highlights the perceptions and opinions of Executive MBA Program graduates. Approximately 312 member programs participated in the Program Survey and 2,933 graduates responded to the Student Exit Benchmarking Survey.

The 2006 Program Survey results reveal the following trends:

Many new programs are international programs.

More than two-thirds of the Executive MBA Council member programs have entered the market since 1990, and 28 percent since 2000. In the U.S. market, 60 percent of member programs started in the last 16 years, compared to 91 percent for Asia, 83 percent for Latin America and 78 percent for Europe. Within the U.S., the Southeast and Southwest regions continue to account for the greatest growth in new programs.

Program length remained steady past four years.

The average program length in 2006 was 20.4 months, comparable to 20.3 months in 2003. The majority of programs—some 75 percent—continue to offer programs that range between 17 and 24 months to complete. The most common program length is 21 to 22 months (29 percent in 2006, 27 percent in 2005). On average, Canadian programs are the shortest (18 months) and Middle East/Africa programs are the longest (27 months).

Costs maintaining.

Average total program costs for all Executive MBA Council member programs worldwide rose slightly from \$50,006 in 2005 to \$50,239 in 2006.

Program delivery methods change.

Forty-three percent of member programs have replaced classroom contact hours with distant or distributed learning, an increasing trend since 2004.

On average for all programs, 7 percent of total program hours have been replaced with distant or distributed learning. The four Middle East/Asia programs participating in the survey use distant learning for 63 percent of their program content. The average for Canada was 1.5 percent vs. 9 percent for Europe. The most common technology used in 2006 is groupware (37 percent) and asynchronous (16 percent).

Fewer programs require a residency.

The percent of Executive MBA Council member programs that required a residency has decreased about 4 percent each year, from 61 percent in 2003 to 48 percent in 2006.

China most popular destination for international trips.

In 2006, 62 percent of Executive MBA Council member programs required an international trip, down slightly from 65 percent in 2004. China was by far the most popular destination (42 percent), followed by India and Hong Kong (each at 13 percent).

Students entering member programs with slightly less full-time work experience.

In 2006 and 2005, students entered Executive MBA Council member programs with an average of 12.2 years of experience, compared to 13 years of experience in 2003. The decline in experience seemed to level off this year.

Average student age holds steady.

The average age of students in Executive MBA Council member programs was 35.9 years in 2006, 2005 and 2004.

Number of female students slowly increasing.

Twenty-eight percent of Executive MBA students in 2006 were female, up 2 percent from 2005.

Number of students paying for their degree increasing.

Study results revealed that the number of students paying their own way in both 2005 and 2006 was 32 percent. The number of organizations offering students full reimbursement was 35 percent both years, down from 40 percent in 2003.

Member programs offering more career services.

Executive MBA Council member programs offering career counseling jumped from 67 percent in 2004 to 74 percent in 2006. Programs arranging on-campus interviews increased from 18 percent in 2004 to 31 percent in 2005. Member programs that provided career-related workshops also rose from 55 to 64 percent. Fifty percent of programs offer leadership and personality testing. Overall, there is an increasing trend of offering career seminars to students.

The 2006 Student Exit Benchmarking Survey results reveal the following trends:

Steady increase in number of students receiving promotions.

The percentage of students enrolled in Executive MBA Council member programs who received promotions increased from 34 percent in 2004 to 43 percent in 2006, an increasing trend.

Students' salaries increase.

In 2006, the salary mean for students entering the program was \$108,392. The salary mean leaving the program was \$129,740, a 20 percent salary increase. The salary mean for students entering the program in 2003 was \$60,926, and the salary mean leaving the program was \$78,977, a 30 percent increase.

Performance, value and quality of programs remained steady.

Overall, programs are maintaining high levels in student evaluation of performance, value and quality. The loyalty index remained high with 60 percent of graduates in the “champion” category.

Students value their programs.

The vast majority of students – 84 percent – would definitely recommend the Executive MBA program.

About the Executive MBA Council

The Executive MBA Council fosters excellence and innovation worldwide in Executive MBA Programs, as well as in other business-related degree programs for professionals. The council provides a place for programs to share best practices and gathers data that helps members improve their programs and that reveals the importance of business degree programs for professionals. The council has more than 200 members worldwide, which offer more than 300 programs. Research for the council is conducted by a third-party supplier.

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