

2013 PRME SUMMIT – 5TH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
New Ways of Developing Leaders for The Future We Want

Yalova University

Vision at Global, Action at Local

Introduction

Yalova University, Department of Management has completed some important steps to build partnership and dialogue with local actors to establish a productive base for responsible management education. Concurrently, the department also has a global vision for attaining success and leading by example. This case discusses the actions and steps taken to reach emphasised targets.

Challenges, Actions taken, & Results

According to our understanding, the main challenge in the business world is to sanctify the global business system and big companies while small local players are generally neglected and not seen as traditional valuable actors. But, to create a sustainable business environment, small players at local levels should be protected through some tools in the long-run period. For Yalova University, Department of Management, to overcome this challenge, we created a strategy that focuses on collaborating with local actors/firms and support them through the transfer of this knowledge into practice. We believe that more sustainable business environment can be created through such support.

First, through partnership and dialogue the Department interacts and gets in touch with local managers of firms located in Yalova. In previous years, local firms of the region were managed with traditional methods, operating in isolation from academics and modern business management. The Department organises regular visits and meetings with managers of local firms to exchange ideas and experiences. As an example, bright and talented managers are invited to teach in undergraduate and graduate programmes. This helps managers of local firms to get familiar with the academic environment and students also have the change to unite their theoretical and practical knowledge.

Some challenges were faced during the process, especially since not all traditional companies believed the value of getting in touch with academics. Generally, local managers and firms emphasised the limited time they had and underlined their heavy workload. However, specific actions were taken to overcome the mentioned problem. For example, local managers and firms were invited to courses and seminars, so that they could get familiar with academics and realise their place in the value chain. Furthermore, technical visits are made to local businesses and accounting offices with professors and students. This partnership allows students to monitor the professional job environment closely themselves, thus enabling them to prepare for their futures in advance. Definitely, innovative collaboration with local businesses also creates an environment for the Department to realise Principle 1 - Purpose, improving the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy. So, while the global economy may dominate big cities and developed areas, small cities like Yalova can have a sustainable business system with supporting local small firms and businesses.

Moreover, the research strategy of Yalova University, Department of Management has also changed its direction to local. With special effort of the Department, currently some managers and staff from local

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businesses continue their education in the Yalova University MBA programme. The thesis and graduation project phases initiate conceptual and empirical research that advance our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental, and economic value, and stress studies that focus on the city, Yalova. In depth and high quality research are run with professors of the Department of Management and MBA students, then turned into publications. With this publication, local business systems accumulate a knowledge that can help them to be sustainable over the years.

Again, some challenges were faced. One of the primary difficulties was funding thesis and graduation projects and student fees. Action taken to overcome this challenge was to sign an agreement with Yalova Municipality, which now funds and sponsors theses related to the city of Yalova and with local firms/institutions that offer special discount for student fees. Also, in order to make the graduate education more feasible for local organisation personnel, several agreements and contracts were signed with firms of the region. These agreements and contracts offer flexible/adjusted course hours and fees, which make a graduate education much more attractive. All of these efforts created a kind of atmosphere where many local managers and staff from different local firms meet each other's and share their experience and expertise. This dynamic environment also helps professors to focus on problems in local business system.

As an action taken, the Department supports entrepreneurship performance of the local community. Since the low participation of women in the business life has been a problem in Turkey and Yalova, one of female staff members of the Department attended a local "Women Entrepreneurs Board" in Yalova Chamber of Commerce and Industry to support local women to perform well regarding entrepreneurship. With the collaboration of the local development agency, MARKA, 25 final year students attended the "Practical Entrepreneurship Training Programme" with financial support from the government. Consequently, the Department has been focused to develop all types of partnership with local actors to facilitate entrepreneurship performance of the local community.

Regarding partnership and dialogue, the Department organises a Business Summit each December at the local level. The purpose of the summit is to bring academics and businessmen together to share their thoughts and experiences. During the programme, representatives of the local firms share their experiences and success stories and the programme motivates local businesses through symbolic prizes. Students of the Department are also invited to the programme, where they also create networks with local businessmen.

Finally, the Department facilitates several training programmes/courses intended for unemployed, elders and students via the University's lifelong education centre. One of the challenges faced has been low participation, but educational programme/course days and hours were adjusted accordingly and successful participants were awarded with certificates. These actions were helpful to increase the participation rate for educational educations/courses. Some of the mentioned participants are now employed, elders are armed with new capabilities, and students work under better conditions at their jobs.

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Consequently, the Department has been focused on building strong partnership with local actors to support sustainable business systems in the local environment. Through the steps and actions taken, many high-quality relationships have been established with the Yalova Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Yalova Active Businessman Association, Yalova Municipality, and many other local firms/institutions. Since the Department is a newly founded academic group, this is still an ongoing process, and final results will come out in near future.