

**Emma MacDonald & Hugh Wilson, Faculty members,  
Cranfield School of Management  
Session Summary: The Customer of the Future: Co-Creating Value**

Emma and Hugh led a lively and interactive discussion about the need for executive education providers to co-create value with their clients.

They began by differentiating between “embedded value” – what we put into a given course – and “value-in-use” – the customer’s outcome, purpose or objective. We need to shift our focus from talking about who teaches our programs, what material is covered, which segments of the population might find them appropriate, etc. to having real discussions with clients about their expectations, and how we can best meet them.

This shift from talking about program features to engaging with the customer in a more meaningful way will begin to tease out what constitutes value-in-use for them. The key aspects of this conversation are:

- Personal – it needs to take place with the right people
- Dynamic – listen and respond
- Authentic – only do it if you mean it
- Inclusive – seek multiple opinions

Emma and Hugh recommended integrating a challenge into the program curriculum – something that can be evaluated objectively as long as six months after the conclusion of the program. This will help prove the value of the program to the only audience that matters – the client.

**UNICON Directors’ Conference, April 2013  
Cranfield School of Management**

