Designing And Delivering Customized Programs With Impact

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In this report, I describe the results of a UNICON survey designed to identify the key elements of a customized executive education program.

One hundred sixteen UNICON clients and prospects recruited by twenty-three UNICON schools completed the survey.

The results reveal the program elements that clients value most, and they provide practical guidelines for designing and delivering customized programs with impact.

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Designing And Delivering Customized Programs With Impact

In this report, I describe the results of a UNICON survey conducted in 2014. The survey was designed to identify the key elements of a customized executive education program. The survey listed thirty-three program elements falling into five broad categories: 1) activities to build networks and help participants learn from each other, 2) activities to transfer learning to the workplace, 3) other learning activities, 4) coherence of program design and delivery, and 5) faculty attributes and behavior. The survey was offered in English, Spanish, Portuguese and simplified Chinese characters.

UNICON member schools asked their clients to complete the survey. They also asked prospects who did not become clients to complete the survey.

The survey comprised four parts. First, all thirty-three program elements were listed, and respondents rated the importance of each one for the success of a customized executive education program. Second, the program elements were listed in categories, and respondents ranked the items within each category in order of importance. Third, respondents listed any other essential element of a customized program that was not included on the survey. Fourth, respondents described themselves.

Overview of this Report

In Section 1, I describe the group of clients and prospects who responded to the survey.

In Section 2, I present the importance ratings for each program element and identify key themes describing what UNICON clients and prospects want in a customized executive education program. In Section 2a, I compare the importance of each element for North American, South American, and European respondents, and in Section 2b, I compare clients to prospects.

In Section 3, I report the rankings of program elements in each category for all respondents.

In Section 4, I summarize responses to the question: “Are there other elements of a customized Executive Education program that you believe to be essential for its success?”

In Section 5, I integrate results from the four parts of the survey to summarize what we learned about successful customized programs.

SECTION 1: RESPONDENTS

One hundred sixteen clients and prospects recruited by twenty-three UNICON schools completed the survey.

- 44% of the respondents work in North America; 27% work in South America; 22% are in Europe; 5% are in Asia; and 2.5% are in Central America. There were no respondents from Australia, New Zealand, the Middle East or Africa (see Figure 1).
- 53% of the respondents completed the survey in English, 43% answered in Spanish, 2.5% answered in Chinese, and 1.5% answered in Portuguese.
- Half of the respondents work in companies of 10,000 people or more, and only 13% work in small companies with 500 people or less (see Figure 2).
- The respondents work in a wide range of industries, with the largest groups in Manufacturing (17%), and Finance, Insurance and Financial Services (16%) (see Figure 3).
- A large majority of the respondents work in corporate headquarters (81%). Sixteen percent work in regional headquarters, and only a few work in P&L units (see Figure 4).
- The group was fairly evenly split between having worldwide responsibility for executive education (39%), being responsible for executive education in their regions (28%), and having responsibility in their local areas (33%) (see Figure 5).
- Nearly all the respondents had worked with a business school on a custom program within the last three years. Only 9% were prospects that did not become clients (see Figure 6).
- When asked about the importance of leadership and management development in their companies, a large majority said it was increasing (78%), 19% said it was staying about the same, and only a few (3%) said it was decreasing (see Figure 7).

Figure 1. Where are you located?

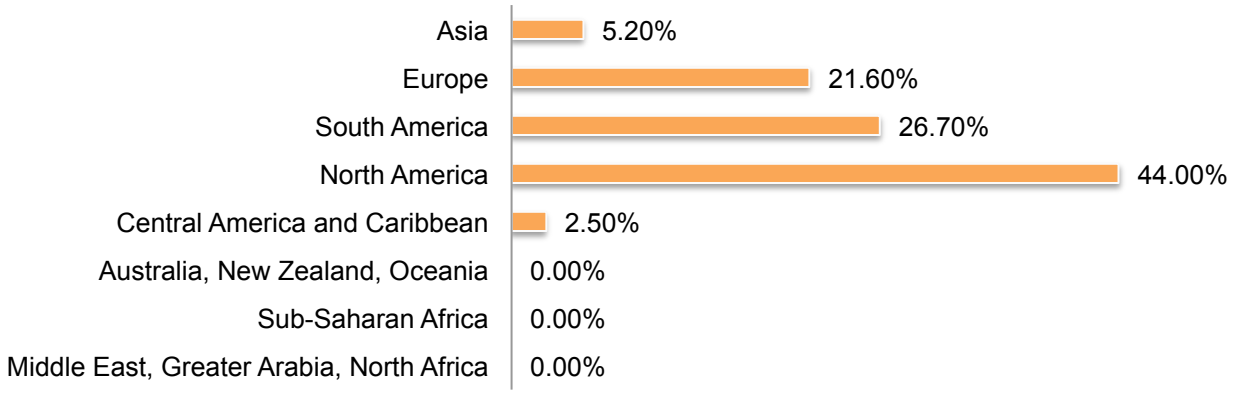


Figure 2. How many people work for your company worldwide?

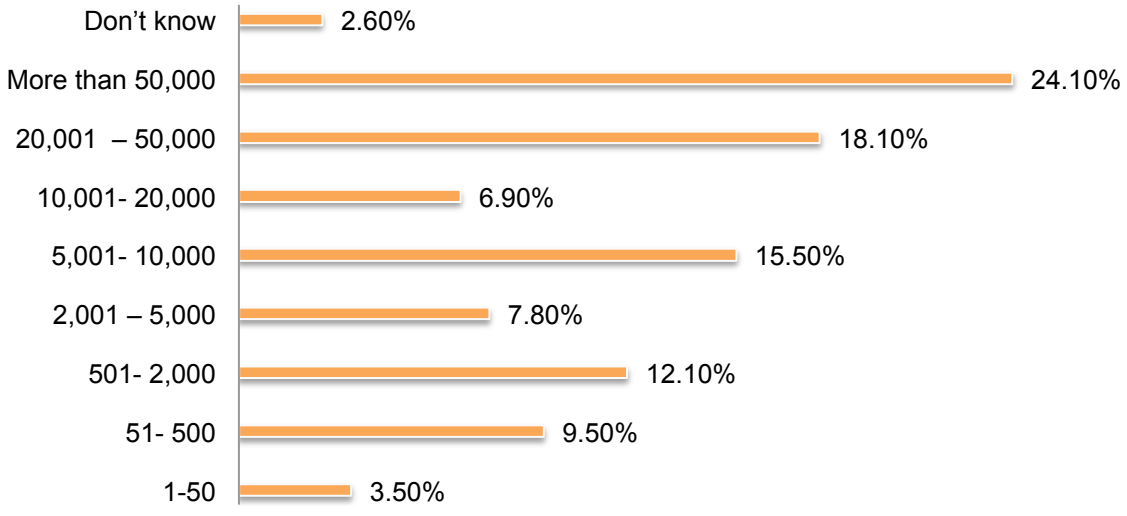
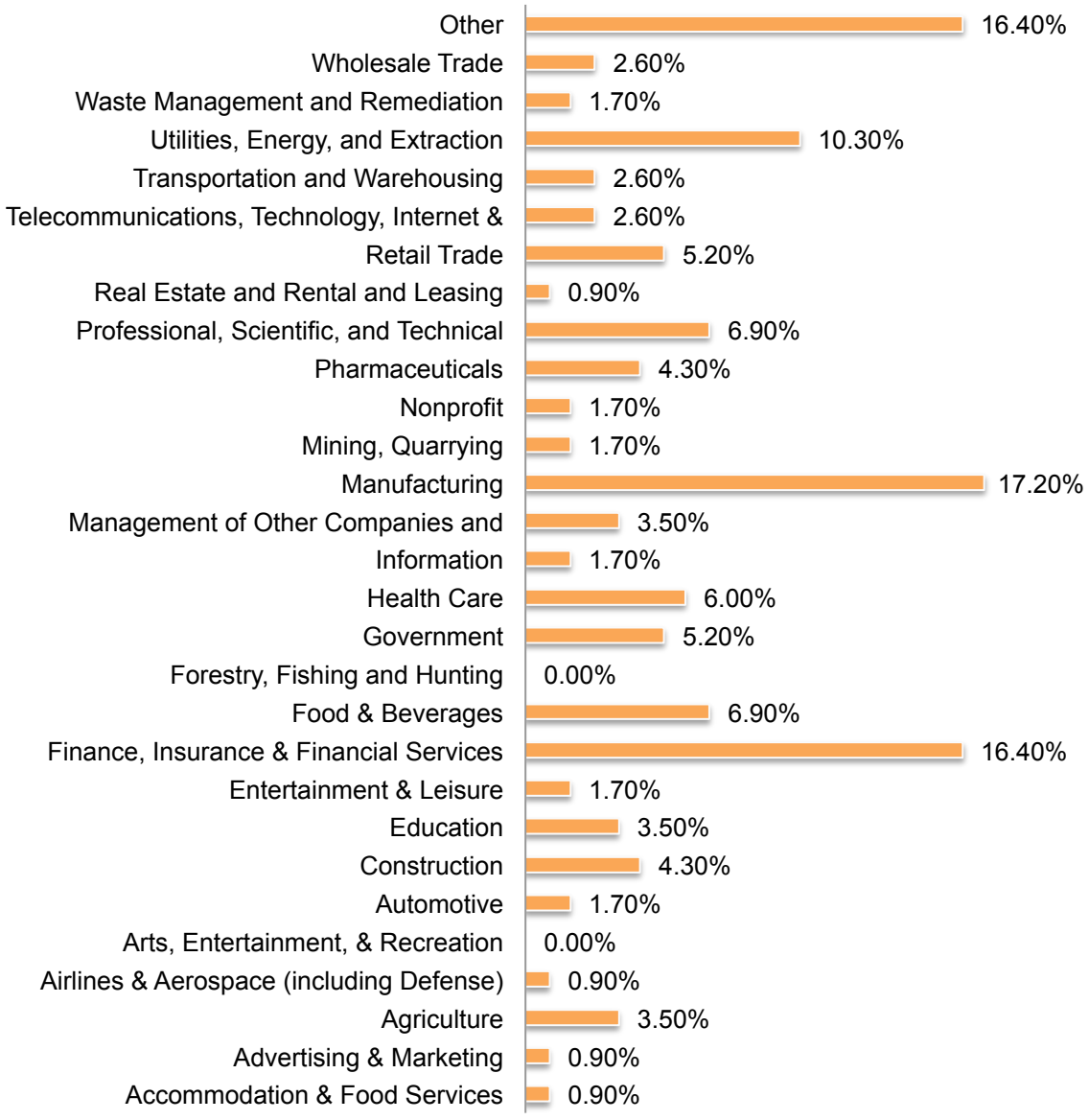


Figure 3. What industry or industries does your company work in?



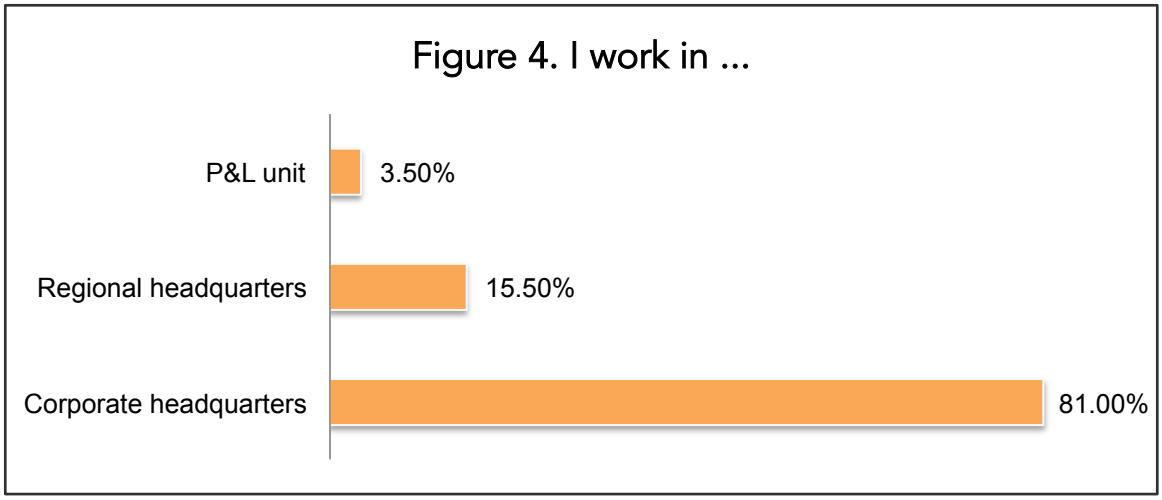


Figure 4. I work in ...
P&L unit
3.50%
Regional headquarters
15.50%
Corporate headquarters
81.00%

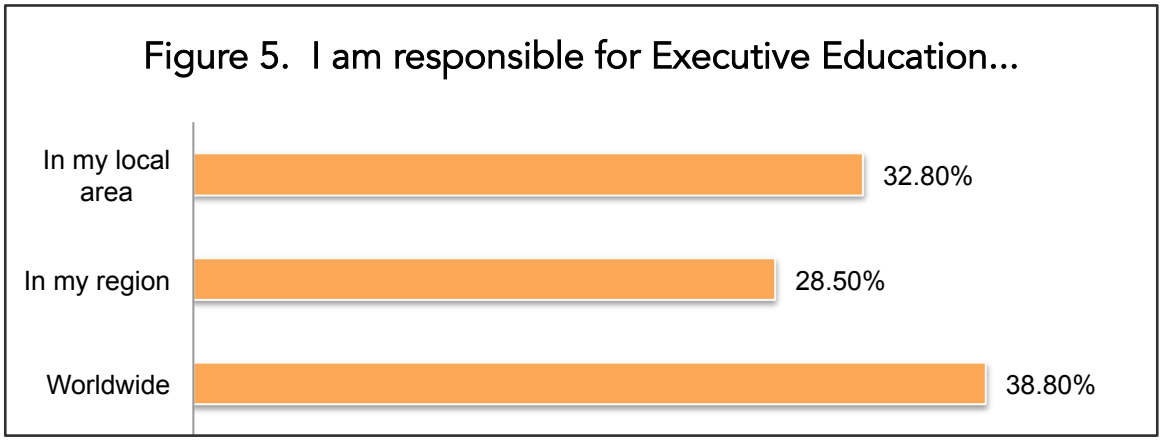


Figure 5. I am responsible for Executive Education...
In my local area
32.80%
In my region
28.50%
Worldwide
38.80%

Figure 6. When was the last time you worked with a business school to design and deliver a custom executive education program?

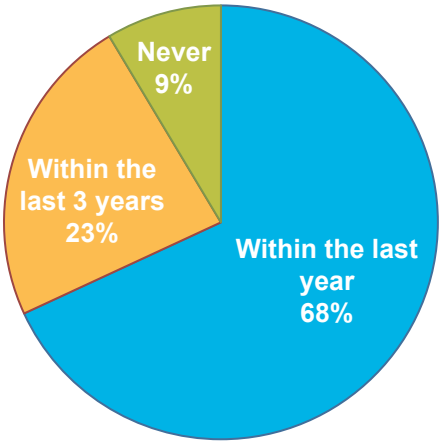
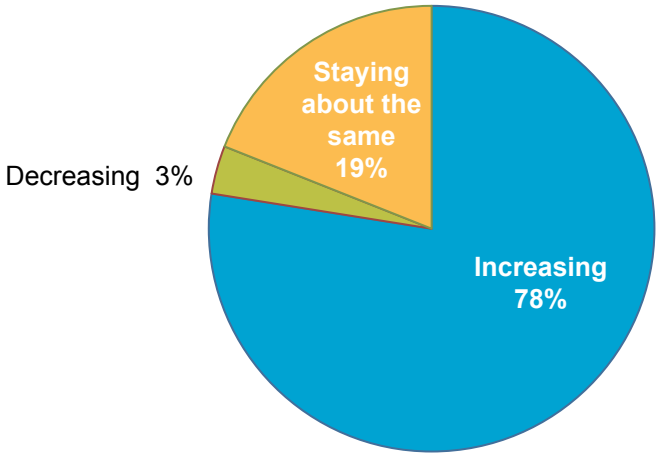


Figure 7. How important is leadership and management development in your company? Is it increasing, decreasing or staying about the same?



Section 2. Importance Ratings

What Do UNICON Clients and Prospects Want in a Customized Program?

Table 1 shows the importance ratings for the thirty-three program elements.

Six extremely important program elements

As you can see, six items received an average rating of five or more on the 6-point scale, indicating that these elements are extremely important to the success of a customized executive education program.[1] Together these six items illuminate three important themes: 1) application, 2) integration, and 3) the desire for practical and inclusive professors.

Application. UNICON clients want program activities that help participants apply what they learn. This item received the highest rating of the thirty-three items on the survey. Desire for application also appears in the high value placed on having professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems, and professors who give real and practical examples during class.

Integration. Clients want an integrated learning experience. They want the parts of the program to work together in a logical and consistent way, and they want the connections between the parts to be clear. They also want a skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities.

Application exercises, professors who are practical and inclusive, and an integrated learning experience are extremely important to the success of a customized program.

Practical and inclusive professors. UNICON clients want professors who link ideas, principals, concepts and theories to practical problems, professors who give real and practical examples during class, and professors who can facilitate group discussion and encourage participants to share their ideas.

Sixteen very important program elements

Looking further down Table 1 to items scoring between 4.0 and 5.0, we see the importance of application and integration again, and we learn more about the kind of professors UNICON clients want. We also see the importance of building relationships and sharing knowledge.

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[1] The rating scale is: 1 = Not important; 2 = Somewhat important; 3 = Fairly important; 4 = Very important; 5 = Extremely important; 6 = Essential, should be in every program.

Application. Clients believe that reflection and action-planning sessions, sessions where participants work together to apply the program material to their own work, and action-learning projects are very important to the success of a customized program. They also believe that case analyses and examples featuring companies working in their own industries, cases analyses and examples featuring companies working on similar challenges but outside their industries, and professors who design sessions that are driven by a problem the company is facing are all very important.

Integration. Clients want the program to be integrated with other elements of their leadership development process, and they like to have key program themes identified and repeated throughout the program.

Professors. UNICON clients want professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience, professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions, professors who co-deliver with company executives, professors who listen and professors who balance their own input with that of the participants. They also value professors who use research-based frameworks to structure the issues and discussion.

Building relationships and sharing knowledge. Clients want activities that build relationships among participants, help participants share their knowledge, and provide opportunities to ask other participants for advice.

Eleven fairly important program elements

Looking even further down in Table 1, we find eleven program elements scoring less than 4.0. Of these items, the one focused on research is of particular relevance to business schools. As the results show, having professors who ground their sessions in research is very important (M=3.93), but not as important as the other program elements with higher scores. Moreover, a similar item asking about professors who use research-based frameworks scored just barely above 4.0 (M=4.03).

Section 2a. Importance Ratings Across Regions

In this section, I compare importance ratings across South America, North America and Europe. Asia and Central America are not included, because only a few people from these regions completed the survey.

Preferences are quite similar across North America, South America and Europe.

Table 2 lists the top ten program elements in South America, North America and Europe. As the color-coding shows, seven items appear in the top ten in all three regions. The other three program elements appear in two of the three regions.

These results show that client preferences are quite similar across regions.

Appendix 1 shows the complete set of ratings for each region, including Asia and Central America.

Section 2b. Prospects compared to clients

Appendix 2 shows how the prospects who did not become clients rated each of the thirty-three program elements. Table 3 compares the top ten elements for prospects and clients. As you can see, seven of the top ten are shared.

Table 1. Importance of each program element: All respondents (n=116)

How important is each one to the success of a customized program?	Average	sd
Activities that help participants apply their learning to the workplace.	5.48	0.85
Professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems.	5.23	0.84
Professors who give real and practical examples during class.	5.14	0.95
Professors who can facilitate a group discussion and encourage participants to share their ideas.	5.05	0.99
An integrated learning experience where all parts of the program hang together in a logical and consistent way and the connections between the parts are clear.	5.05	1.03
A skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities.	5.01	0.97
Professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.	4.82	1.21
Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions to energize discussions.	4.80	1.01
Reflection and action planning session where participants identify their key insights from the program and prepare an action plan for implementing what they have learned.	4.76	1.20
Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material to their company or to their own work and present the results to the class.	4.71	1.16
Action learning projects.	4.66	1.17
Case analyses and examples featuring companies working in your industry.	4.59	1.10
Professors who design sessions that are driven by a problem the company is facing.	4.59	1.12
Integrating the executive education program with other elements of your leadership development process.	4.53	1.15

Table 1, continued.	Average	sd
Activities that help participants share their knowledge and learn from each other.	4.53	1.10
Professors who listen to participants and balance their own input with that of the participants.	4.49	1.21
Activities that build relationships among participants.	4.47	1.20
Articulation of program themes, which are repeated throughout the program.	4.33	1.19
Small group sessions where participants describe challenges they face and ask for advice.	4.17	1.12
Case analyses and examples featuring companies working on challenges similar to yours, but outside your industry.	4.16	1.27
Professors who co-deliver with company executives.	4.10	1.35
Professors who use research based frameworks to structure the issues and the discussion.	4.03	1.09
Professors who use models and theories to analyze practical problems.	3.97	1.20
Impact diaries used between modules or after a program to record how participants used program learning back at work.	3.94	1.35
Professors who ground their sessions in research.	3.93	1.27
Professors who focus on a few key points and show only a few slides.	3.69	1.45
Social networking tools to share ideas during the program.	3.67	1.29
Simulations and role-plays.	3.57	1.43
Sessions where participants volunteer to prepare and discuss a topic on which they are experts.	3.49	1.51
Participant led sessions where participants divide into groups, research a topic related to program content and present their findings.	3.40	1.34
Alumni presentations where alumni from previous programs return to share their experiences when applying program learning to their work.	3.10	1.28
Study trips to other companies to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	3.08	1.33
Study trips to other countries to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	2.76	1.43

The rating scale is: 1 = Not important; 2 = Somewhat important; 3 = Fairly important; 4 = Very important; 5 = Extremely important; 6 = Essential, should be in every program.

Table 2. Most valued elements of a customized executive education program by region.								
North America			Europe			South America		
(51 respondents)			(25 respondents)			(31 respondents)		
Activities that help participants apply the material …	5.5		Professors who give real and practical examples …	5.4		Activities that help participants apply the material …	5.6
Professors who link … to practical problems.	5.3		Activities that help participants apply the material …	5.3		Professors who link … to practical problems.	5.2
Professors who give real and practical examples …	5.3		Professors who can facilitate a group discussion …	5.2		Action learning projects.	5.1
An integrated learning experience …	5.2		A skilled faculty orchestrator…	5.1		A skilled faculty orchestrator …	4.9
Professors who can facilitate a group discussion ….	5.2		Professors who link … to practical problems.	5.1		Integrating the executive education program with other elements of your leadership development process.	4.9
A skilled faculty orchestrator …	5.0		An integrated learning experience …	5.1		Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material	4.8
Professors who respect executives…	5.0		Professors who respect executives…	5.0		Professors who give real and practical examples ...	4.8
Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions …	4.8		Reflection and action planning session	5.0		Professors who can facilitate a group discussion …	4.8
Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material	4.8		Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions …	5.0		Reflection and action planning session	4.7
Reflection and action planning session	4.7		Professors who listen to participants and balance their own input with that of the participants.	4.8		An integrated learning experience…	4.6

Table 3. Top ten program elements for prospects and clients.				
Prospects (10 respondents)	Average		Clients (106 respondents)	Average
Professors who give real and practical examples during class.	5.2		Activities that help participants apply their learning to the workplace.	5.5
Activities that help participants apply their learning to the workplace.	5.0		Professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems.	5.3
Professors who can facilitate a group discussion …	4.9		An integrated learning experience …	5.2
Professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.	4.7		Professors who give real and practical examples during class.	5.1
Professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems.	4.6		Professors who can facilitate a group discussion …	5.1
A skilled faculty orchestrator …	4.5		A skilled faculty orchestrator …	5.1
Case analyses and examples featuring companies working in your industry.	4.5		Professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.	4.8
Professors who listen to participants …	4.5		Reflection and action planning session …	4.8
Small group sessions where participants describe challenges they face and ask for advice.	4.4		Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions …	4.8
Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions …	4.4		Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material to their company or to their own work and present the results to the class.	4.8

SECTION 3. RANKING

In Part 2 of the survey, the thirty-three program elements were organized into five categories, and the respondents ranked the elements within each category. The five categories were:

1. Building networks and helping participants learn from each other,
2. Transferring learning to the workplace,
3. Specific learning activities,
4. Coherence of program design and delivery, and
5. Faculty attributes and behavior.

Building networks and learning from each other

Of the five activities for building networks and learning from each other, sessions where participants work together to apply the material to their companies or to their own work and small group sessions where participants describe challenges they face and ask for advice were valued quite a bit more than having groups research a topic and present their findings, sessions where volunteers prepare and discuss a topic on which they are experts, and social networking tools to share ideas during the program (see Table 4).

Transferring learning to the workplace

Of the three ways to transfer learning to the workplace, reflection and action-planning sessions were deemed to be the most valuable (see Table 5).

Specific learning activities

Of the six specific learning activities included in the survey, case analyses and examples featuring companies working in their own industries and action-learning projects were believed to be substantially more valuable than case analyses and examples featuring companies working on similar challenges but outside their industries, simulations, role plays and study trips (see Table 6).

Coherence of program design and delivery

Of the four elements that might be used to create coherence, designing an integrated learning experience where all parts of the program work together in a logical and consistent way, and where the connections between the parts are clear, were clearly the most important. These were followed by having a skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities, integrating the executive education program with other

elements of the leadership development process, and articulation of program themes, which are repeated throughout the program (see Table 7).

Faculty attributes and behavior

Of the ten attributes and behaviors of professors listed on the survey, having professors who give real and practical examples, professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions, professors who facilitate group discussions and professors who encourage participants to share ideas were ranked above all the others.

Table 4. Rank ordered preferences for building networks and helping participants learn from each other.

	Score[2]	Rank
Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material to their company or to their own work and present the results to the class.	469	1
Small group sessions where participants describe challenges they face and ask for advice.	430	2
Participant led sessions where participants divide into groups, research a topic related to program content and present their findings.	362	3
Sessions where participants volunteer to prepare and discuss a topic on which they are experts.	243	4
Social networking tools to share ideas during the program.	236	5

[2] Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks. The score is the sum of all weighted rank counts.

Table 5. Rank ordered preferences for transferring learning to the work place.		
	Score[3]	**Rank**
Reflection and action planning session where participants identify their key insights from the program and prepare an action plan for implementing what they have learned.	305	1
Impact diaries used between modules or after a program to record how participants used program learning back at work.	226	2
Alumni presentations where alumni from previous programs return to share their experiences when applying program learning to their work.	165	3

Table 6. Rank ordered preferences for learning activities.		
	Score[4]	**Rank**
Case analyses and examples featuring companies working in your industry.	542	1
Action learning projects.	528	2
Cases analyses and examples featuring companies working on challenges similar to yours, but outside your industry.	434	3
Simulations and role-plays.	380	4
Study trips to other companies to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	322	5
Study trips to other countries to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	230	6

[3] Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks. The score is the sum of all weighted rank counts.

Table 7. Rank ordered preferences for coherence of program design and delivery.		
	Score[4]	**Rank**
An integrated learning experience where all parts of the program hang together in a logical and consistent way and the connections between the parts are clear.	374	1
A skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities.	290	2
Integrating the executive education program with other elements of your leadership development process.	283	3
Articulation of program themes, which are repeated throughout the program.	213	4

Table 8. Rank ordered preferences for professor attributes and behavior.		
	Score[5]	**Rank**
Professors who give real and practical examples during class.	887	1
Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions to energize discussions.	826	2
Professors who can facilitate a group discussion and encourage participants to share their ideas.	799	3
Professors who design sessions that are driven by a problem the company is facing.	698	4
Professors who listen to participants and balance their own input with that of the participants.	681	5
Professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.	581	6
Professors who use research based frameworks to structure the issues and the discussion.	532	7
Professors who use models and theories to analyze practical problems.	525	8
Professors who co-deliver with company executives.	431	9
Professors who focus on a few key points and show only a few slides.	420	10

[4] Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks. The score is the sum of all weighted rank counts.

Section 4. Other Essential Elements of a Customized Program

After rating and ranking the thirty-three program elements on the survey, the respondents were asked "Are there other elements of a customized executive education program that you believe to be essential for its success?" Sixty-nine respondents wrote comments.

A summary of these comments is presented in Table 9. As shown, the three elements mentioned most often are 1) making sure the program is focused directly on the particular challenges facing the company; 2) making sure that professors and program designers understand the company's business and the industry it is in, and 3) the need for strong collaboration between the company and the business school.

It is interesting to note that three items that executive education professionals often worry about were mentioned only once. Only one person mentioned the importance of blended learning; only one mentioned keeping time out of the office to a minimum; and only one suggested that professors should have experience in academics and business. This doesn't mean that these concerns are not important, but they do not seem to be most important when UNICON clients think about designing and delivering a customized program.

Table 9. Are there other elements of a customized Executive Education program that you believe to be essential for its success?
Thirteen respondents said that a customized program should be directly connected to the challenges their companies face, including three who said that programs must be very practical and one who said that programs must provide a quick payback.
Seven said that the professors and program designers should understand the businesses there are in and understand the key issues facing their industries.
Six mentioned the need for interaction, collaboration and coordination between the business schools and the companies. Of those six, one said that a good match between faculty, business needs and company culture is important.
Six people mentioned the importance of interaction between participants and the value of group work focused on real problems. Two of the six suggested that cross functional groups work best.
Four suggested that the setting is important. One stated specifically that programs should be held off-site to ensure that participants disengage from work.
Four people said that business schools should be flexible when working with the company to customize and deliver the program. Of those four, one person suggested that they should work together to select cases, and one suggested that participants should be involved to co-create a solution when modules aren't working.
Three mentioned post program follow-up and support, most likely done by the company, rather than the business school.

Table 9, continued.
Three people suggested that professors must understand regional ethics, culture, and business environment, and they should be award of political and economic current events. One of these three would like to see presentations from politicians and economists who can put the company's situation into context.
Two suggested that individual feedback should be included to motivate people to learn.
Two people felt that individual coaching should be included.
Two suggested that programs should be interdisciplinary by drawing from different parts of the university.
Three mentioned the importance of academic and intellectual rigor and one of them said that this is what business schools are uniquely positioned to provide.
Two people suggested that having senior leadership from the company present real cases and have dialogue and discussion is a good way to make the program practical and focused.
Two said that faculty should understand and use adult learning theory to design and deliver their sessions.
One suggested that blended learning should be used.
One person pointed out that customization can mean different things to the supplier and the buyer and they should get that defined at the outset.
One suggested that managers of the participants should be told about the program so they can help transfer learning back to the workplace.
One mentioned that programs should be truly global.
One person suggested that the program should incorporate some kind of gamification or storytelling.
One suggested that the cost of the program should be linked to results obtained.
One suggested that professors should have experience in both academics and business.
One suggested that a variety of facilitators should be used when practical.
One suggested that some sort of a pre-and post-test should be done.
One suggested that the support of top management is important.
One suggested that sound logistical services are essential.
One believed that participants should be given time to reflect on key issues.
One mentioned follow-up presentations where participants report back on their action learning projects.
One mentioned that it is important to keep time out of office to a minimum.

SECTION 5. WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

In this section, I highlight what we have learned from this survey using the results from all the respondents. I do not discuss regional differences or differences between prospects and clients, because preferences are quite similar across these groups.

As you will see, the results offer practical guidance for designing and delivering the customized programs that UNICON clients want.

At the end of this section, I outline some actions you might take to apply what we have learned.

What have we learned?

UNICON clients want programs that are practical and applied.

1. UNICON clients want professors to provide practical ideas, tools, models, frameworks and examples that will help their managers do their jobs better.

2. UNICON clients want application exercises to help their managers apply these ideas, tools, models, frameworks and examples in their own work. Small group exercises asking participants to apply the material to their work, and reflection and action-planning sessions, are believed to be very valuable in this regard.

3. It is not essential or even extremely important that these ideas, tools, models, frameworks and examples be grounded in academic research.

4. UNICON clients like action-learning projects and cases featuring companies in their own industries, which they prefer to those involving companies facing similar problems but outside their industries.

5. UNICON clients are not enthusiastic about simulations, role-plays and field trips.

UNICON clients want practical professors.

6. UNICON clients want professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems.

7. UNICON clients want professors who give real and practical examples during class.

8. UNICON clients want professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions to energize discussions.

9. UNICON clients want professors who design sessions that are driven by a problem the company is facing.

10. UNICON clients want professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.

11. UNICON clients want professors who can co-deliver with company executives.

UNICON clients want activities that build relationships and share knowledge.

12. UNICON clients want professors who can facilitate a group discussion and encourage participants to share ideas.

13. UNICON clients want professors who listen to participants and balance their own input with that of participants.

14. UNICON clients want small group activities where participants share knowledge, learn from each other and ask for advice to meet the challenges they face.

UNICON clients want an integrated learning experience.

15. UNICON clients want an integrated program where all parts of the learning experience work together in a logical and consistent way, and the connections between the parts are clear.

16. They want a skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities during the program.

17. They want program themes that are repeated throughout the program.

UNICON clients want programs that will help them meet the particular challenges they face.

18. UNICON clients want the design team and professors to understand their challenges, to know how their companies operate, to understand the cultures of their companies, and to understand the industries they are working in.

19. They want to work closely with the design team and the faculty to create programs that fit their needs. For some clients, this means co-designing the program, even to the point of co-selecting the cases to be taught.

20. They expect the design team and the faculty to be flexible to make sure that their programs fit their needs.

What can you do?

These findings suggest several actions that you can take to design and deliver a customized program with impact.

1. Be sure that each program offers practical ideas, tools, models and examples.

    - Choose faculty who use practical examples, models and frameworks in their teaching
    - Help faculty find practical examples, models, and frameworks in white papers produced by consulting firms and in other publications for managers (e.g., McKinsey Quarterly, Harvard Business Review, books from Harvard Business School Press)
    - Help professors turn academic theories and research into practical models, frameworks and ideas by connecting them with research assistants or business writers who know how to do it

2. Ask faculty to use cases and examples featuring companies in your client's industry when possible. You might provide a research assistant to help your professors find them.

3. Continually improve the processes you use to collaborate with your clients.

4. Create a process to help professors work together as required to create an integrated program.

5. Make it easy for faculty to learn about the company and its industry. Create a process for collecting and sharing this information.

6. Be sure that your professors understand that knowing about the company and its industry is part of their executive education assignment.

7. Encourage faculty to include application exercises in each session.

8. You might include a comprehensive application exercise drawing on information from all the sessions.

9. Have program managers watch for application exercises that work, and share them among faculty.

10. Improve your ability to design and support action-learning projects.

11. Link the program's content to the action-learning projects so that these projects become application exercises.

12. When proposing simulations, role-plays and field trips, be sure that the practical benefits justify the time required to complete them.

13. Create an integrating framework for each program and use it to explain why the topics are important, and how they relate to each other. The framework could be based on the company's strategic plan, a challenge the company is facing, or a competency model. Explain how the program will help the participants implement the plan, meet the challenge or master the competency model.

14. Ask the program director to describe the integrating framework at the beginning of the program, and use it to connect the parts of the program as it proceeds.

15. Select professors who know how to facilitate a group discussion. Help other faculty build this skill by encouraging them to watch someone who is successful. You might also ask successful professors to coach others.

16. Identify professors who have a real interest in the practical problems that managers face, and help them become good executive education professors.

17. Identify professors who respect the executive's knowledge and experience, and help them become good executive education professors.

APPENDIX 1: IMPORTANCE RATINGS FOR EACH REGION

Table 10. South America (31 respondents)		
How important is each one to the success of a customized program?	Average	sd
Activities that help participants apply their learning to the workplace.	5.64	0.56
Professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems.	5.21	0.83
Action learning projects.	5.07	0.98
A skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities.	4.93	0.98
Integrating the executive education program with other elements of your leadership development process.	4.86	0.80
Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material to their company or to their own work and present the results to the class.	4.79	1.17
Professors who give real and practical examples during class.	4.79	0.99
Professors who can facilitate a group discussion and encourage participants to share their ideas.	4.79	0.96
Reflection and action planning session where participants identify their key insights from the program and prepare an action plan for implementing what they have learned.	4.71	1.05
An integrated learning experience where all parts of the program hang together in a logical and consistent way and the connections between the parts are clear.	4.64	1.19
Activities that build relationships among participants.	4.61	1.13
Professors who design sessions that are driven by a problem the company is facing.	4.61	1.29
Case analyses and examples featuring companies working in your industry.	4.57	0.63
Professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.	4.54	1.23
Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions to energize discussions.	4.50	1.11
Professors who co-deliver with company executives.	4.43	0.92
Articulation of program themes, which are repeated throughout the program.	4.43	1.23

Table 10, continued.	Average	sd
Activities that help participants share their knowledge and learn from each other.	4.36	0.95
Impact diaries used between modules or after a program to record how participants used program learning back at work.	4.36	1.34
Professors who listen to participants and balance their own input with that of the participants.	4.29	1.33
Cases analyses and examples featuring companies working on challenges similar to yours, but outside your industry.	4.18	1.02
Small group sessions where participants describe challenges they face and ask for advice.	4.07	1.02
Professors who use models and theories to analyze practical problems.	4.00	1.05
Sessions where participants volunteer to prepare and discuss a topic on which they are experts.	3.93	1.21
Professors who focus on a few key points and show only a few slides.	3.89	1.13
Social networking tools to share ideas during the program.	3.79	1.20
Professors who use research based frameworks to structure the issues and the discussion.	3.64	1.06
Professors who ground their sessions in research.	3.61	1.37
Participant led sessions where participants divide into groups, research a topic related to program content and present their findings.	3.54	1.32
Simulations and role-plays.	3.46	1.43
Study trips to other companies to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	3.43	1.17
Study trips to other countries to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	3.29	1.30
Alumni presentations where alumni from previous programs return to share their experiences when applying program learning to their work.	3.21	1.32

Appendix 1. Importance ratings for each region.

Table 11. North America (51 respondents)		
How important is each one to the success of a customized program?	Average	sd
Activities that help participants apply their learning to the workplace.	5.45	0.86
Professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems.	5.29	0.81
Professors who give real and practical examples during class.	5.29	0.81
An integrated learning experience where all parts of the program hang together in a logical and consistent way and the connections between the parts are clear.	5.18	0.95
Professors who can facilitate a group discussion and encourage participants to share their ideas.	5.18	0.95
Professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.	4.98	1.19
A skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities.	4.96	1.02
Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions to energize discussions.	4.84	0.92
Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material to their company or to their own work and present the results to the class.	4.82	1.26
Reflection and action planning session where participants identify their key insights from the program and prepare an action plan for implementing what they have learned.	4.67	1.32
Case analyses and examples featuring companies working in your industry.	4.59	1.25
Professors who listen to participants and balance their own input with that of the participants.	4.55	1.06
Action learning projects.	4.55	1.33
Activities that help participants share their knowledge and learn from each other.	4.55	1.12
Professors who design sessions that are driven by a problem the company is facing.	4.49	1.07
Activities that build relationships among participants.	4.35	1.31
Articulation of program themes, which are repeated throughout the program.	4.31	1.22

Table 11, continued.	Average	sd
Integrating the executive education program with other elements of your leadership development process.	4.27	1.30
Small group sessions where participants describe challenges they face and ask for advice.	4.12	1.24
Cases analyses and examples featuring companies working on challenges similar to yours, but outside your industry.	4.08	1.47
Professors who use research based frameworks to structure the issues and the discussion.	4.08	1.13
Professors who ground their sessions in research.	3.98	1.33
Professors who co-deliver with company executives.	3.94	1.61
Professors who use models and theories to analyze practical problems.	3.92	1.28
Simulations and role-plays.	3.80	1.41
Impact diaries used between modules or after a program to record how participants used program learning back at work.	3.69	1.42
Professors who focus on a few key points and show only a few slides.	3.55	1.70
Social networking tools to share ideas during the program.	3.53	1.33
Sessions where participants volunteer to prepare and discuss a topic on which they are experts.	3.22	1.68
Participant led sessions where participants divide into groups, research a topic related to program content and present their findings.	3.16	1.45
Alumni presentations where alumni from previous programs return to share their experiences when applying program learning to their work.	2.98	1.33
Study trips to other companies to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	2.82	1.49
Study trips to other countries to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	2.29	1.38

Table 12. Europe (25 respondents)		
How important is each one to the success of a customized program?	Average	sd
Professors who give real and practical examples during class.	5.36	0.70
Activities that help participants apply their learning to the workplace.	5.28	1.10
Professors who can facilitate a group discussion and encourage participants to share their ideas.	5.16	1.07
A skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities.	5.12	0.88
Professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems.	5.08	1.00
An integrated learning experience where all parts of the program hang together in a logical and consistent way and the connections between the parts are clear.	5.08	1.00
Professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.	5.04	1.02
Reflection and action planning session where participants identify their key insights from the program and prepare an action plan for implementing what they have learned.	5.00	1.00
Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions to energize discussions.	5.00	1.04
Professors who listen to participants and balance their own input with that of the participants.	4.80	1.15
Integrating the executive education program with other elements of your leadership development process.	4.76	1.20
Activities that help participants share their knowledge and learn from each other.	4.68	1.14
Case analyses and examples featuring companies working in your industry.	4.60	1.26
Activities that build relationships among participants.	4.60	1.15
Professors who design sessions that are driven by a problem the company is facing.	4.60	1.08
Small group sessions where participants describe challenges they face and ask for advice.	4.44	1.00
Action learning projects.	4.40	1.12

Table 12, continued.	Average	sd
Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material to their company or to their own work and present the results to the class.	4.36	1.04
Articulation of program themes, which are repeated throughout the program.	4.28	1.21
Cases analyses and examples featuring companies working on challenges similar to yours, but outside your industry.	4.16	1.34
Professors who ground their sessions in research.	4.16	1.11
Professors who use research based frameworks to structure the issues and the discussion.	4.16	1.07
Professors who co-deliver with company executives.	4.04	1.10
Impact diaries used between modules or after a program to record how participants used program learning back at work.	3.96	1.34
Professors who use models and theories to analyze practical problems.	3.88	1.13
Professors who focus on a few key points and show only a few slides.	3.68	1.28
Sessions where participants volunteer to prepare and discuss a topic on which they are experts.	3.60	1.41
Participant led sessions where participants divide into groups, research a topic related to program content and present their findings.	3.52	1.08
Social networking tools to share ideas during the program.	3.44	1.16
Simulations and role-plays.	3.20	1.32
Alumni presentations where alumni from previous programs return to share their experiences when applying program learning to their work.	2.96	1.14
Study trips to other companies to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	2.92	1.00
Study trips to other countries to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	2.80	1.47

Appendix 1. Importance ratings for each region.

Table 13. Asia (6 respondents)		
How important is each one to the success of a customized program?	Average	sd
Activities that help participants apply their learning to the workplace.	5.67	0.82
An integrated learning experience where all parts of the program hang together in a logical and consistent way and the connections between the parts are clear.	5.50	0.84
Professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems.	5.33	0.82
A skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities.	5.33	1.21
Professors who give real and practical examples during class.	5.33	1.03
Reflection and action planning session where participants identify their key insights from the program and prepare an action plan for implementing what they have learned.	5.17	0.41
Professors who design sessions that are driven by a problem the company is facing.	5.00	1.10
Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions to energize discussions.	5.00	1.26
Professors who listen to participants and balance their own input with that of the participants.	4.83	1.33
Action learning projects.	4.83	0.98
Professors who can facilitate a group discussion and encourage participants to share their ideas.	4.67	1.21
Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material to their company or to their own work and present the results to the class.	4.50	1.05
Cases analyses and examples featuring companies working on challenges similar to yours, but outside your industry.	4.50	0.55
Articulation of program themes, which are repeated throughout the program.	4.33	1.03
Participant led sessions where participants divide into groups, research a topic related to program content and present their findings.	4.33	1.21
Professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.	4.33	1.37
Professors who use research based frameworks to structure the issues and the discussion.	4.33	1.03

Table 13, continued.	Average	sd
Case analyses and examples featuring companies working in your industry.	4.17	0.98
Small group sessions where participants describe challenges they face and ask for advice.	4.17	1.17
Activities that build relationships among participants.	4.00	1.26
Integrating the executive education program with other elements of your leadership development process.	4.00	0.89
Activities that help participants share their knowledge and learn from each other.	4.00	1.26
Impact diaries used between modules or after a program to record how participants used program learning back at work.	3.83	0.75
Study trips to other companies to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	3.67	1.21
Professors who ground their sessions in research.	3.67	1.37
Social networking tools to share ideas during the program.	3.67	1.37
Professors who use models and theories to analyze practical problems.	3.67	1.03
Alumni presentations where alumni from previous programs return to share their experiences when applying program learning to their work.	3.50	1.38
Professors who co-deliver with company executives.	3.33	1.51
Study trips to other countries to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	3.00	1.26
Professors who focus on a few key points and show only a few slides.	3.00	1.41
Sessions where participants volunteer to prepare and discuss a topic on which they are experts.	2.83	1.47
Simulations and role-plays.	2.67	1.37

Appendix 1. Importance ratings for each region.

Table 14. Central America (3 respondents)		
How important is each one to the success of a customized program?	Average	sd
Social networking tools to share ideas during the program.	5.67	0.58
Professors who can facilitate a group discussion and encourage participants to share their ideas.	5.67	0.58
Activities that help participants apply their learning to the workplace.	5.33	1.15
Professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems.	5.33	0.58
A skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities.	5.33	1.15
Professors who co-deliver with company executives.	5.00	1.00
Professors who design sessions that are driven by a problem the company is facing.	5.00	1.00
An integrated learning experience where all parts of the program hang together in a logical and consistent way and the connections between the parts are clear.	5.00	1.00
Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions to energize discussions.	5.00	1.00
Case analyses and examples featuring companies working in your industry.	4.67	0.58
Cases analyses and examples featuring companies working on challenges similar to yours, but outside your industry.	4.67	0.58
Integrating the executive education program with other elements of your leadership development process.	4.67	0.58
Professors who ground their sessions in research.	4.67	0.58
Action learning projects.	4.67	0.58
Activities that help participants share their knowledge and learn from each other.	4.67	1.53
Professors who focus on a few key points and show only a few slides.	4.67	0.58
Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material to their company or to their own work and present the results to the class.	4.33	0.58
Activities that build relationships among participants.	4.33	0.58
Professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.	4.33	2.08

Table 14, continued.	Average	sd
Professors who use research based frameworks to structure the issues and the discussion.	4.33	0.58
Professors who use models and theories to analyze practical problems.	4.33	2.08
Alumni presentations where alumni from previous programs return to share their experiences when applying program learning to their work.	4.00	1.00
Reflection and action planning session where participants identify their key insights from the program and prepare an action plan for implementing what they have learned.	4.00	2.65
Professors who give real and practical examples during class.	3.67	2.52
Study trips to other countries to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	3.67	1.15
Simulations and role-plays.	3.67	2.08
Impact diaries used between modules or after a program to record how participants used program learning back at work.	3.67	1.15
Sessions where participants volunteer to prepare and discuss a topic on which they are experts.	3.33	1.15
Articulation of program themes, which are repeated throughout the program.	3.33	0.58
Study trips to other companies to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	3.33	1.53
Participant led sessions where participants divide into groups, research a topic related to program content and present their findings.	3.33	2.08
Professors who listen to participants and balance their own input with that of the participants.	3.33	2.08
Small group sessions where participants describe challenges they face and ask for advice.	3.33	1.15

APPENDIX 2: IMPORTANCE RATINGS FOR PROSPECTS

Table 15. Prospects (10 respondents)		
How important is each one to the success of a customized program?	Average	sd
Professors who give real and practical examples during class.	5.2	1.03
Activities that help participants apply their learning to the workplace.	5.0	1.05
Professors who can facilitate a group discussion and encourage participants to share their ideas.	4.9	0.88
Professors who respect executives' knowledge and experience.	4.7	1.16
Professors who link ideas, principles, concepts and theories to practical problems.	4.6	1.17
A skilled faculty orchestrator who can integrate program activities.	4.5	1.18
Case analyses and examples featuring companies working in your industry.	4.5	1.08
Professors who listen to participants and balance their own input with that of the participants.	4.5	1.08
Small group sessions where participants describe challenges they face and ask for advice.	4.4	1.26
Professors who identify interesting dilemmas and pose provocative questions to energize discussions.	4.4	0.84
Activities that build relationships among participants.	4.3	1.25
Reflection and action planning session where participants identify their key insights from the program and prepare an action plan for implementing what they have learned.	4.3	1.25
Action learning projects.	4.2	1.55
Professors who focus on a few key points and show only a few slides.	4.2	1.32
Professors who design sessions that are driven by a problem the company is facing.	4.1	1.29
An integrated learning experience where all parts of the program hang together in a logical and consistent way and the connections between the parts are clear.	4.0	1.33

Table 15, continued.	Average	sd
Professors who ground their sessions in research.	3.9	1.20
Cases analyses and examples featuring companies working on challenges similar to yours, but outside your industry.	3.8	1.14
Integrating the executive education program with other elements of your leadership development process.	3.8	0.79
Sessions where participants volunteer to prepare and discuss a topic on which they are experts.	3.7	1.77
Activities that help participants share their knowledge and learn from each other.	3.7	0.95
Professors who use models and theories to analyze practical problems.	3.7	1.16
Professors who use research based frameworks to structure the issues and the discussion.	3.6	1.17
Impact diaries used between modules or after a program to record how participants used program learning back at work.	3.6	1.78
Social networking tools to share ideas during the program.	3.6	1.07
Professors who co-deliver with company executives.	3.5	1.43
Sessions where groups of participants work together to apply the material to their company or to their own work and present the results to the class.	3.5	1.51
Articulation of program themes, which are repeated throughout the program.	3.5	0.97
Simulations and role-plays.	3.2	1.48
Participant led sessions where participants divide into groups, research a topic related to program content and present their findings.	3.0	1.70
Study trips to other companies to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	2.9	1.29
Alumni presentations where alumni from previous programs return to share their experiences when applying program learning to their work.	2.3	1.06
Study trips to other countries to talk to people, to observe and to experience the place.	2.1	1.20