

**Challenges of business education in Kazakhstan**  
**Ibrayeva E.<sup>1</sup>, Ibrayev A.<sup>2</sup> (Republic of Kazakhstan)**  
**Задачи бизнес-образования в Казахстане**  
**Ибраева Э. А.<sup>1</sup>, Ибраев А. Т.<sup>2</sup> (Республика Казахстан)**

<sup>1</sup>Ибраева Эльмира Алпамысовна / Ibrayeva Elmira – доктор исторических наук, магистр экономики, ассоциированный профессор, факультет экономики и права,

Международная образовательная корпорация;

<sup>2</sup>Ибраев Алпамыс Туякович / Ibrayev Alpatys – доктор физико-математических наук, профессор, кафедра электроники,

Казахский национальный исследовательский технический университет им. К. И. Сатпаева,  
г. Алматы, Республика Казахстан

**Abstract:** *the article investigates major challenges for business education in Kazakhstan. The author discusses necessity to make business studies flexible and adaptable to local business needs, to make programs and courses of higher quality and more practically oriented.*

**Аннотация:** *статья рассматривает главные задачи для бизнес-образования в Казахстане. Обсуждается необходимость обеспечить гибкость обучения в бизнес-школах, адаптировать его содержание к местным потребностям бизнеса, а также совершенствовать учебные программы и курсы, повышая их качество и практичность.*

**Keywords:** *business education, flexibility, standards, curriculum, practical, quality, networking, career.*

**Ключевые слова:** *бизнес образование, гибкость, стандарты, практический, качество, установление контактов, карьера.*

Modern business education in Kazakhstan is constantly changing and improving, adapting to the local needs of businesses and to dynamically changing business environment of Kazakhstan. At the same time, education is based on global trends and standards and is aimed at satisfaction of the professional needs of citizens and of the labor market. Business schools in Kazakhstan face many challenges nowadays, especially in 2015-2016 - the years of economic crisis in the country. The main problem of institutions offering business education is the demand for their graduates in the labor market, which in the years of crisis is tough, and the market is highly competitive. It is logical, that to make their graduates competitive, it is necessary for business schools to cooperate with the employers, to know the requirements of companies to their human resources, the skills that are currently demanded.

Business schools should monitor the market, interview the top-managers of local and international companies, organize meetings with the top-managers and HR managers with students, so that students also understand the modern trends and requirements, and constantly rework syllabi and course contents and program contents. Moreover, it is possible to invite entrepreneurs and corporate representatives to take part in course and program revision.

“One of the most important priorities in the development of economic education in Kazakhstan is more active and enhanced cooperation of educational institutions with employers, intensive collaboration of the education with business”. [1, p. 167] Thus, if you are in the market of business education it is continuous improvement and adapting to dynamic business environment.

Let us analyze the ranking of the best business schools in Europe, North America and Asia, which was published by The Economist. We will see that the main criteria in the preparation of school rankings were career opportunities, quality of education and qualification of teachers, increased income of graduates, new contacts and networking [2, p. 77]:

According to these criteria, business schools should take care of the careers of their graduates and provide networking opportunities for them. As Serikbay Bisekeev, the successful entrepreneur, famous in Russia and Kazakhstan, mentioned in his speech at Bolashak business forum on May 28, 2016 in Almaty, Kazakhstan, that entrepreneurs, practicing business for several years, go to prominent business schools for MBA, mainly, for contacts, as building useful ties may expand their business opportunities. Thus, providing conditions for networking and training key “soft” skills is vital for the success of business school. “Training effective communication skills, being a demand for business, became the part of world business schools’ curricula” [3, p. 12].

These criteria of global business school rankings shall become our quality criteria and the orientation for the local educational institutions and the local controlling and evaluating educational bodies. Based on these criteria, issues of continuous professional development of business schools lecturers, provision of business training for them in companies, building close ties of schools with the entrepreneurs, active involvement of business people

in curricula development, quality management and other educational processes, and the development of services provided by school career centers for graduates appear relevant and appropriate. It is advisable to use experience of leading universities to establish departments in universities such as the quality monitoring center for education, an advisory board to work with the companies, the center of innovative educational technologies, business incubation centers, training centers, etc.

Most of the biggest universities of the country have implemented quality management system and are certified according to quality standards. Many business schools in Kazakhstan have quality monitoring and control centers. Still, much of work done by these centers is of bureaucratic nature, and the links between the key departments of the university are weak, communication is slow, and the work results are formal.

The basis for effective change in business education is to provide for fast communication and flexibility, when it is possible to adjust the program quickly in connection with the needs of the market and industry, to provide some academic freedom for experiments and innovations. The program structure and course contents may be corrected yearly, with consideration of new technological developments and trends in business and industry. In international practice, part of courses and professional training take place onsite in companies leading the industry. Students of business schools are involved in real-world business projects. This way, partnership with companies is not just the formal paperwork and signing of collaboration agreements.

In general, we can speak of very dynamic positive advancements in the sector of business education in Kazakhstan. There is an even longer road towards approaching world's leading standards. Further close collaboration of business schools' management representatives and businesses will provide for faster and effective improvement of educational services.

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