University strategy for higher impact and visibility

_University Rankings Forum Hungary_
Empower your research for global visibility

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Higher impact & visibility

- Impact can be measured in many ways, including by rankings
- Visibility is achieved through communicating success
- Critical therefore to focus on the core problem: improve performance and outputs
- Performance is achieved through strong leadership and active, inclusive management
Successful universities realize that internal culture is critical

Leaders, academics and administrators must all
• understand the changing external landscape of research
• Recognise when old models/structures are outdated & implement change – disruptive change if necessary
• overcome resistance to change
• drive evidence-based decisions
• target funding
• devolve, incentivise and empower academics
• Deal with under-performing academics
What to do

• Focus on **quality not volume**
• Promote **focused international collaboration**
  (it’s not **how many** MoU’s but the quality of the **academic** relationship)
• Incentivise young academics (e.g. through **international movement**)
• **Reward** departments for number of PhD’s
  (e.g. UK universities are penalised for PhDs taking > 3 years)
• Promote **inter-disciplinary research**
  (break down barriers between departments – e.g. joint seminars)
• Promote **efficiency** for academics (e.g. central **support** for funding applications)
• **Manage** the IP
  (e.g. reward staff; have an effective tech transfer unit)
• Actively **translate** successful models from abroad
Transformation of Imperial College 2001 – 2014

• Was >20\textsuperscript{th} in QS/THE
• Had high research output; strong international collaboration
• Was Highly inter-disciplinary; much industry fertilisation
• BUT it had a traditional university structure
• AND an active tech transfer company (“Innovations”) which until 2000 was preventing success

2001-2010 Imperial dramatically changed its approach with huge success and reward

How?
Transformation of Imperial College 2001 – 2014

• New leadership (Rector and top team) – new culture
• Major changes in university structure: budgets & responsibilities passed to academic departments; senior team more fluid; empowerment; freer structure
• Lean and dynamic university structure and administration
• Business School created in 2003 which quickly became globally strong, focussing on entrepreneurship & innovation
• Established Imperial Create Lab (student led activity) embracing regional entrepreneurial community
• Transparent rewards for academics

▪ From a top-down traditional university it became a disruptive, risk-taking, innovative community
Successful leaders ....

• understand what is going on in their university (what is and isn’t high quality, efficient)

• understand changing external landscape of research

• understand who are competitors/collaborators (area by area)

• decide where they want to grow and shrink (divest/invest)

• encourage changes in behaviour such as collaboration & mobility (mobility increases funding)

• incentivise behaviours to achieve desired outcomes

• invest in the young

• champion academics
Successful leaders ....

• constantly review & change old models/structures
• overcome resistance to change
• drive evidence-based decisions
• realise that successful collaboration is between academics (not between universities)
• devolve, incentivise and empower academics
• involve academics in decision making & funding decisions
• create drivers which encourage change and improve

• Role of leaders is to facilitate & support ... not to control

• Success is not achieved playing games to fix rankings – but by fixing the engine room
Thank you

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