

UNIVERSITY BUSINESS

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Flagship Enterprise

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Nick Petford explains
why The University
of Northampton is
going where no university
has gone before



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CAMPUS SERVICES

Turning over a new leaf
Grassroot activism nurtured by
staff has seen some universities
shoot up the Green League

CATERING AND HOSPITALITY

Propping up the bar
The University of Warwick's
Duncan Parkes discusses the latest
student bar trends

FINANCE AND MARKETS

Lighting the fuse
Continued funding sparks
a new lease of life for STEM
subjects

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Why HE is like...

An ant colony



When Rousseau said, "it is unnatural for a majority to rule, for a majority can seldom be organised and united for specific action," he might have done well to look at the humble ant. The most successful inhabitant of the planet, ants have colonised almost every landmass on earth without any discernible hierarchical structure. Even the "queen" is misleading; the most fertile, not most powerful. Is the higher education system going the same way? Despite increases in fees, student colonies are expanding every year and UCAS expects the trend to continue. With an increasing student populous and a government obsessed with consumer competition, the humble student has found itself with an unprecedented power. This shift has led to an unrecognisable hierarchy, with the once autarkic chancellor and vice-chancellor fertile with cash but not much else. The government white paper, released in June, was an attempt to give the student even more of a say and piling even more accountability on the establishment. But what's the problem, you may ask? Surely this is a good thing, egalitarianism at its best. Orwell would be proud. No. Students don't need the level of transparency that the government is promoting. Surely university isn't simply a machine to produce factory-processed graduates. Students will come and go, it is the management that defines an institution, giving it individuality, efficient or inefficient. By putting the power in the hands of the masses we are at risk of turning British universities into a franchise, owned and managed by those who inhabit them. Yes there should be accountability, but when colleges become colonies we should start to worry.

Words: Joel Plaza



How to...

Gain the positive advantage

In times of austerity, redundancies, stress and subsequent staff sickness, it can be difficult for business leaders to stay positive. Gina Gardiner, an international speaker, trainer and executive coach, believes that better outcomes in all aspects of life can be determined by a better quality of thinking. Here she lists her top five tips to help individuals, teams and organisations discover 'The Positive Advantage'.

1 Be mindful about the quality of your thinking. Positive thoughts create positive results. If you expect to fail, you will only set yourself up for failure. If you expect to succeed, the decisions you make and the actions of people you affect because of this will promote success.

2 Leadership starts with you. Be the change you want in others, represent what you want to achieve, communicate this effectively and engage your team to share this vision with you. If you have high expectations of your team and acknowledge their contribution generously, your business will reap the benefits of their motivation, self-belief, productivity, happiness and fulfilment.

3 Happiness leads to success. You can make the choice to be happy and create a working environment that encourages a "can do" approach to wellbeing and success, which in turn can have a positive impact on performance and satisfaction at work.

4 Challenge those beliefs that limit you. Your sense of self worth and potential is driven by your beliefs. Changing the limiting beliefs about yourself opens greater possibilities for you and those around you.



Gina Gardiner

5 Surround yourself with people who are positive, enlightened optimists. Research shows that optimism and happiness are contagious and that people who embody that approach to life are far more successful.

6 "Believe you can, and you will," says Gina. "It's like Roger Bannister running the four-minute mile after being told by medics it was impossible to run that fast and survive. Within a month of Bannister proving them wrong, 30 more people had done the same – the only thing that had changed, is their belief that this was possible."

Gina's current workshop 'The Positive Advantage' empowers delegates to use these straightforward, accessible principles and strategies of positive psychology.
www.ginagardiner.com

Quote of the Month

"It is amazing that a white paper that has been so delayed can be so confused on the key issues. We welcome the focus on students' unions and the drive for better information for students in the white paper, but the Government must not confuse information with power. Market competition alone will not drive up quality."

Aaron Porter, NUS Vice President

