

## **New Insights for Soft Skills Development in Vietnamese Business Schools: Defining Essential Soft Skills for Maximizing Graduates' Career Success**

**Authors :** Hang T. T. Truong, Ronald S. Laura, Kylie Shaw

**Abstract :** Within Vietnam's system of higher education, its schools of business play a vital role in supporting the country's economic objectives. However, the crucial contribution of soft skills for maximal success within the business sector has to date not been adequately recognized by its business schools. This being so, the development of the business school curriculum in Vietnam has not been able to 'catch up', so to say, with the burgeoning need of students for a comprehensive soft skills program designed to meet the national and global business objectives of their potential employers. The burden of the present paper is first to reveal the results of our survey in Vietnam which make explicit the extent to which major Vietnamese industrial employers' value the potential role that soft skill competencies can play in maximizing business success. Our final task will be to determine which soft skills employers discern as best serving to maximize the economic interests of Vietnam within the global marketplace. Semi-structured telephone interviews have been conducted with the 15 representative Head Employers of Vietnam's reputedly largest and most successful of the diverse business enterprises across Vietnam. The findings of the study indicate that all respondents highly value the increasing importance of soft skills in business success. Our critical analysis of respondent data reveals that 19 essential soft skills are deemed by employers as integral to business workplace efficacy and should thus be integrated into the formal business curriculum. We are confident that our study represents the first comprehensive and specific survey yet undertaken within the business sector in Vietnam which accesses and analyses the opinions of representative employers from major companies across the country in regard to the growing importance of 19 specific soft skills essential for maximizing overall business success. Our research findings also reveal that the integration into business school curriculums nationwide of the soft skills we have identified is of paramount importance to advance the national and global economic interests of Vietnam.

**Keywords :** business curriculum, business graduates, employers' perception, soft skills

**Conference Title :** ICETIRED 2016 : International Conference on Entrepreneurship, Technology, Innovation and Regional Economic Development

**Conference Location :** New York, United States

**Conference Dates :** June 06-07, 2016