

RIKKYO UNIVERSITY RECEIVES THE WIAL GLOBAL AWARD IN THE ACADEMIC SECTOR!

The Business Leadership Program at the College of Business (COB), Rikkyo University was awarded at the Action Learning Global Forum 2014 in India for its distinctive approach that develops student's leadership by using action learning. WIAL Japan reported this successful achievement.

Prof. Higano mentioned that by implementing action learning, he was not only able to encourage students' independence, but also was able to build up the culture at COB. He stressed the high evaluation that the program is receiving even from outside of the university: The COB's activities were



selected as an excellent model and as GP (good practice) for education from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's (MEXT). A clear and important measurable indicator of the program's success: the COB's evaluation and employment rate after graduation is on the rise. Prof. Higano received applause from the participants in the Global Forum, especially by illustrating his presentation in the Japanese style of utilizing videos.

[Comment by Prof.Higano]



"I used the following metaphor in my presentation in Delhi. The status of BLP at COB at Rikkyo University was like parachuting down to the middle of people who do not understand the purpose of leadership education, barricading in a trench, and waiting for the main unit to advance (meaning the purpose of

leadership education to be understood broadly). "Leadership without authority" was not popularized in Japan when we started the program. While being surrounded and not being able to escape (and not wanting to escape), one of the tunnels dug to resupply from the faraway allies was action learning. With this approach, faculties and student assistants (SA) learned their function during

project-based learning (PBL) classes, and students learned leadership based on questions. This created a culture of feedback at COB. The advancement of the main unit (meaning the purpose of the leadership disseminating in the society) happened around 2011. First, Rikkyo University received the Excellent Award from WIAL-Japan. Winning an award from WIAL, I am very happy that patiently waiting in the trench has finally paid off.”

[Application of action learning in BLP]

In BLP, concepts and action learning sessions are integrated into activities, and professors and staffs utilize their skills as action learning coaches in the classes. First, 500 newly-enrolled students in COB experience action learning in the Welcome Camp, the one day introductory orientation. By organizing action learning sessions in the Welcome Camp, teambuilding and relationship-building between the new and sophomore students is developed allowing them to socialize easily. Secondly, action learning sessions are conducted in the middle of the term when the PBL-style class is offered to give opportunity for students to reflect back on their activities as team.



To support such programs, faculty and staff at COB entered certified action learning coach program provided by WIAL-Japan. Professors and staffs utilize their skills and functions as coaches to question, which they learned in and out of the training courses. This has created an active communication between students and faculties, some of them asking the typical action learning question “how can we do it better?” in the middle of the class. As Prof. Higano presented, action learning is used at COB as a useful tool, and it also contributed to build up the culture at COB by sharing the importance of asking questions.

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