



## Building a Bridge between Education and Industry:

### The Malta Chamber's Perspective

Presentation by Malta Chamber HR Committee Chairperson

Catherine Calleja

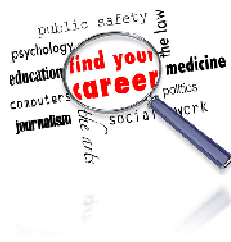
Tuesday, 16 December 2014

## Agenda

- Building closer links and indeed institutionalising these links with Guidance Teachers
- Related to this, the developing of an Employability Index
- Addressing Skills Mismatches and again this through involving industry
- Promoting Job Exposure – here is where we can help.
- Facilitating Research and Development

## Institutionalising Industry Links with Career Guidance

- Career guidance plays a key role in aiding labour market operation and the education system's abilities to meet its objectives.
- We need to
  - make career guidance a key element of the curriculum alongside personal development
  - expose guidance teachers regularly to the different sectors of the economy through an institutionalised structure

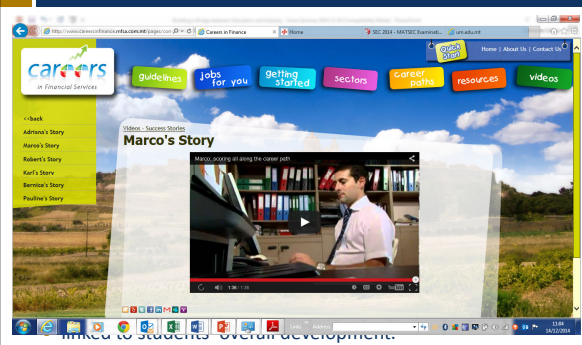


## Career Guidance Teachers and Industry Needs

- There needs to be a formal structure that exposes teachers, career guidance teachers and the students to the world of work. Efforts are currently under way to work towards this end.
- The Malta Chamber participated in the 'Entrepreneurship through Education Scheme – 2012', providing a number of educational sessions to LSAs, teachers and school leader.



## Institutionalising Industry Links with Career Guidance (contd.)



## Towards an Employability Index

- The Malta Chamber is currently assisting Government to formulate an **employability index** that can further support in the career choices of our future workforce.
- The Chamber would like to see the index focusing on career progression and incorporate average incomes across industries to make this data available to guidance teachers and students. This will require linking to ETC database over time.

## Addressing Skills Mismatches



- The Chamber has proposed the establishment of National Sector Skills councils. The primary focus on such skills Units could be
  - to provide integrated industry intelligence and advice to the Ministry of Education and Employment, other Government agencies, and enterprises on workforce development and skills needs;
  - to actively support the development, implementation and continuous improvement of high quality training
  - to provide independent skills and training advice to enterprises, including matching identified skills gaps in the different sectors with appropriate training solutions.
  - Skills councils can also support employers in developing apprenticeship standards and managing and improving productivity, areas which employers in Malta are very concerned about.

## Addressing Skills Mismatches (contd.)



- The following segments of the economy are seen as possible areas in which Skills Councils could be developed through the Council's business sectors:
  - Information and Communication Technology
  - Creative sector
  - Specific Manufacturing segments
  - Retail
  - Construction
  - Hospitality and Catering
  - Financial
  - Shipping and ancillary services (inclusive of leisure yachting)

## Addressing Skills Mismatches (contd.)



*It is of great concern that 16-year old students should be leaving school with such a poor command of the language after having been exposed to it throughout their school life. If standards are to rise there has to be a greater effort on the society as a whole to instil in students an increased awareness of the importance of English as an international language. More too should be done to practise the language in all its forms and for it not to be merely regarded as a school subject. Only then could there be a marked improvement in candidates' performance in the future.*

Report by examiners for the SEC level English language session of 2014

## Addressing Skills Mismatches (contd.)



- Malta had the lowest number of tertiary science and technology graduates aged between 20-29 years in Europe with only 3.1% graduating in such areas. Malta would have to increase its graduates fourfold to reach the European average.
- We need to change the misconception that science is boring and attract a wider pool of resources in STEM-related subjects.
- ICT related education needs to be integrated also at vocational training eg machine operators in the manufacturing industry and mechanics in the auto repair sector.



## Job Exposure



- The Malta Chamber promotes job exposure at various stages of the educational system through internships, apprenticeships and work placements.
- The vocational route is one way forward for solving the NEETs issue and the Chamber strongly supports the current reform of the apprenticeship system.



## Collaboration between Malta Chamber and Academia



*A Memorandum of Understanding between the Malta Chamber Foundation and the University of Malta (UoM)*

- To help identify experts from the business community for their involvement in different project.
- 'The Malta Chamber Student Internship Scheme' was recently launched as a pilot programme with the Faculty of Engineering.

## Collaboration between Malta Chamber and Academia (contd.)

*A Diploma in Green Energy Technologies launched by the Malta Chamber and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (IEEE)*

- To provide opportunities to students wishing to embark in a career in electronics and engineering, specifically focusing upon **renewable sources of energy**.
- An urgent need is arising for qualified technicians who hold all necessary knowledge.

## Collaboration between Malta Chamber and Academia (contd.)

*A Diploma in Manufacturing Excellence launched by the Malta Chamber and the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)*



- To support foreseeable trends in the local manufacturing industry.
- To develop initiatives relating to the provision of industry-demanded programs and courses.

## Collaboration between Malta Chamber and Academia (contd.)

*MCAST Industry Action Committee*

- Since July of this year, The Chamber has been actively involved in the MCAST Industry Action Committee. This committee will oversee the reform of Malta's apprenticeship scheme
- The new scheme will be modelled on the German dual system and will primarily focus on the accreditation of work based learning. The idea is that these apprenticeships will be part of the curriculum of all vocational courses and there will be a stronger monitoring of the competencies acquired during the apprenticeship. A pilot project will be launched in January 2015.

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## Closing Remarks

- We strongly recommend the institutionalising of contact and facilitation of exposure of guidance teachers to the workplace
- We recommend our involvement in the identification and addressing of skills gaps in various sectors
- We back job exposure as a tool in the various stages of the curriculum through guidance teachers but also **through internships, apprenticeships etc**
- The Malta Chamber stands in full support of **strengthening the links across industry and academia** to ultimately establish a workforce that is characterized by valuable skills; knowledge and capabilities.

Thank you