



EXECUTIVE GUIDE
TO ACADEMIC
ENGAGEMENT





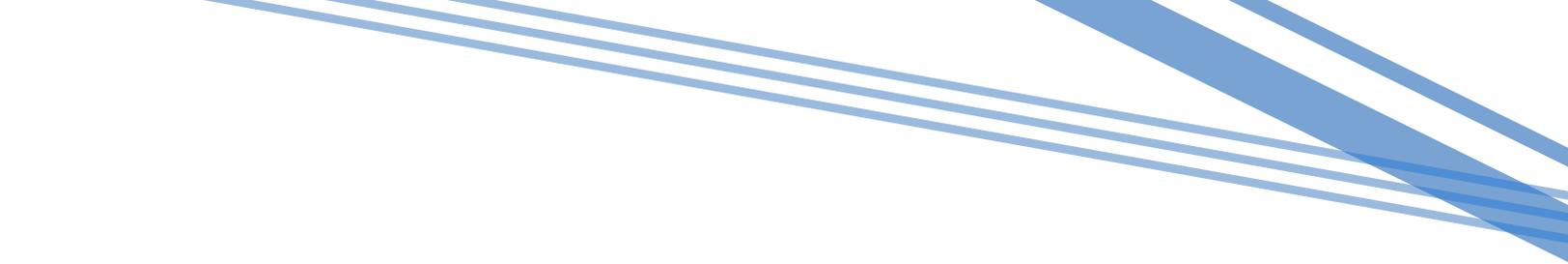


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ABOUT THE DIRECT SELLING EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The Direct Selling Education Foundation (DSEF) engages and educates the public and key audiences – including academics, students, consumer protection officials, government regulators and the media – on the ways direct selling empowers individuals, supports communities and strengthens economies worldwide. We strive toward a global marketplace that understands and embraces direct selling.

DSEF ACADEMIC INITIATIVES

DSEF partners with members of the academic community to support research and education programs that expand the knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles of direct selling. The Foundation works with professors in a variety of disciplines – including entrepreneurship, marketing, ethics, consumer studies, business and economics – to commission academic research, case studies and white papers and to sponsor direct selling education programs on university campuses across the country. These efforts provide students, professors and the public with insights into the direct selling channel and its latest trends and innovations, offer solutions for better business management and help educate the next generation of entrepreneurs and industry leaders about opportunities in the space.

EXECUTIVE GUIDE TO ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

This guide was developed to provide direct selling company executives with information about how to partner with the Direct Selling Education Foundation on academic initiatives that advance the understanding of direct selling, build credibility and produce measurable outcomes. The guide also serves as an executive resource for company-to-university partnership development and the benefits of academic engagement.

BENEFITS OF ENGAGEMENT

Academic engagement can benefit your company and the industry at large in many ways. For companies, strategic investment in academic partnerships can challenge and enrich academic thinking and strengthen company brand and image. Projects initiated with academics and students can demonstrate that direct selling companies have the same business challenges as their traditional market counterparts and in turn, result in innovative solutions in response to those challenges. DSEF-academic partnerships advance the understanding of the direct sales channel of distribution, counter myths and misperceptions and build trust over time. Trust and understanding, however, cannot take root unless there are opportunities for academics to engage with direct selling companies. It is our hope that, through this guide, you will develop a better understanding and appreciation of DSEF academic initiatives and the mutual benefits of academic-industry partnerships.



INTRODUCTION

The *Executive Guide to Academic Engagement* is an executive resource for direct selling company senior executives on how to connect and partner with leading academics and institutions of higher learning. The guide provides valuable insights, resources and opportunities in three areas of engagement:

- How to Engage with Academics through Your Foundation
- How Your Company Can Engage Academics Successfully
- What Benefits and Opportunities DSEF and Your Companies Bring to Academics and Students

THE GUIDE: FORMATS AVAILABLE AND RESOURCES

The guide, including the latest industry performance figures, model programs and sample presentations, is available for browsing and downloading from the DSEF website at www.dsef.org/academic-engagement-guide. Printed copies are available upon request.

DSEF CAMPUS PROGRAMS

Since 1989, DSEF has partnered with dozens of universities across the country to bring senior executives from a variety of direct selling businesses—including Fortune 500 companies and high-growth start-ups, both privately held and publicly traded—to campuses and classrooms. Direct selling company executives speak to undergraduate and graduate students about their companies, the industry and the important issues and challenges relevant to most businesses. Programs are designed to be interactive and are customized to ensure that they are relevant to participating students, faculty and institutions.

Key objectives of DSEF’s campus events include:

- Enriching and broadening academic knowledge about the direct selling industry
- Advancing relationships with academics and institutions to fuel achievement of Foundation academic priorities, such as embedding our industry in the teaching of business and development of strategic research partnerships
- Demonstrating that direct selling companies have the same business challenges as their traditional market counterparts and in turn, developing innovative solutions in response to those challenges
- Helping students better understand direct selling, a global channel of distribution with annual revenues of more than \$180 billion world-wide
- Bringing “real world” examples of marketing, entrepreneurship, research, sales management, ethics, consumer behavior and other aspects of direct selling as applied to the study of business
- Making students aware of a variety of corporate and entrepreneurial opportunities within direct selling

Executives involved in this program often focus on an aspect of the course curriculum from a direct selling practitioner’s perspective, while sharing “real world” experiences with students.

2015 UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA PROGRAM RECAP

INDUSTRY EXECES TELL UGA STUDENTS HOW TO “START SOMETHING...ON YOUR OWN”

For more than 25 years, DSEF's Campus Days at colleges and universities across the country have connected direct selling executives with thousands of students and educators to advance understanding of our industry.

The Foundation's most recent Campus Event on March 27 provided a powerful venue to shine a light on direct selling—both as a channel of distribution and as an entrepreneurial and opportunity. Connie Tang, CEO, Princess House, and Britney Vickery, Founder and CEO, Initials, Inc., were featured presenters during the University of Georgia's (UGA) *Think* Week—an annual campus-wide initiative designed to inspire entrepreneurship among students and faculty.

“Participating in the UGA *Think* event was an exhilarating experience to meet, see, hear and talk to tomorrow's entrepreneurs,” Connie said. “The opportunity to share insights to what independent business ownership means in our direct selling world hopefully opened their eyes to how our industry can be a vehicle to achieving their goal of being in business for themselves, which they might not have otherwise considered.”

DSEF Board Member and UGA Professor Dr. Brenda Cude hosted the Foundation presentations as part of “Start Something...On Your Own,” an event for undergraduate students in five different courses at UGA as well as students from Athens Technical College.

Britney and Connie shared their “real world” experience with more than 400 students who will be among tomorrow's entrepreneurial and business leaders. “The enthusiasm, encouragement and strong personalities of these powerful women are so inspiring!” one student said. “I have always had an interest in starting my own business but was afraid to try as I don't feel ‘smart enough.’ After hearing these women, I am motivated and driven to ask for help and live my dream.”

Britney and Connie capped off their visit with a panel discussion attended by more than 130 students as well as UGA faculty and staff. Rich McCline, Senior Public Service Associate for UGA's J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development, moderated the panel.

“It was a remarkable day!” Britney said. “Not only was I given the platform to talk about being an entrepreneur, but I was also able to show students how I harnessed my passion for entrepreneurship through a very unique business model. Many of the students knew someone who had sold products through direct sales, but they had no idea how large and far reaching our industry was.”

CAMPUS PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

DSEF Campus Programs are designed to go beyond one-day interactions between executives, professors and students. DSEF's strategy is to leverage these events to create layers of value and opportunity to meet Foundation goals, deepen relationships with professors and institutions, spur tangible outcomes such as academic publishing, research, and follow-up opportunities for students, including internships and experiential learning. This strategic approach will also lead to the principles of direct selling embedded in business and marketing curriculum, thus advancing industry understanding and acceptance.

These programs are customized to match executives and their respective companies to the interests of professors and their institutions, the learning objectives of the course, class size and specialization (e.g. graduate/undergraduate, core class/elective and field of study) and to maximize student interaction. Executives typically speak to classes, seminars and larger groups brought together in auditoriums or classrooms by invitation. Typically, DSEF and its representative executives host a luncheon or dinner in honor of participating university faculty and other university or community VIPs.



CAMPUS PROGRAM PRESENTATION RESOURCES

The following resources are provided to support direct selling executives in building their campus program presentations.

The executive presentation deck, *Direct Selling and Business Ethics PowerPoint Presentation*, is designed to help executives communicate priority information about the direct selling industry in the US and globally, including the industry's commitment to ethical business practices, and is intended to supplement your own presentation.

In addition to sharing your company's story with students and faculty, the Foundation wants to measure the effectiveness of our campus programs. The Student Perceptions Questionnaire complements the executive presentation slides and enables DSEF to learn what students understand and retain about direct selling and ethical business practices.

Download the following Campus Program Presentation Resources here:
www.dsef.org/academic-engagement-guide.

- **Direct Selling and Business Ethics PowerPoint Presentation**—Slides provide an industry overview and highlight relevant Code of Ethics protections and are designed to supplement your Executive Presentation
- **Student Perceptions Questionnaire**—The Student Perceptions Questionnaire was developed to measure the current and post-program perceptions of direct selling with the primary objective of educating college-level students about direct selling
- **U.S. and Global Industry Statistics**—Access the latest industry statistics for inclusion in your presentation to ensure students and professors gain an understanding of economic impact of the channel
- **Campus Program Partnership Roles and Responsibilities**—Detailed responsibilities for DSEF, participating faculty and guest executives

DSEF RESEARCH PROGRAM

Research is a primary vehicle through which the Foundation builds relevance and credibility for the industry. The Foundation's ambitious research agenda focuses on educating the public and key stakeholders (policymakers, thought leaders, media, consumer protection officials/organizations and academics) by providing meaningful, informative and usable research that highlights the Foundation's key focus areas:

- the direct selling business model
- leadership in industry self-regulation and consumer protection
- economic and personal development benefits of direct selling entrepreneurship opportunities
- driving academic research

The Foundation partners with leading academics and other thought leaders, including its Academic Advisory Council, to produce publishable research, articles, white papers and other products.

DSEF RESEARCH— HOW YOU CAN HELP

To ensure success when partnering with DSEF on data-driven research, it is critical that your company dedicate an employee knowledgeable about data systems, research and/or project management who will serve as the key point-of-contact for DSEF and its academic partners. Every effort should be made to ensure that the academic and/or his or her students and the company are well-matched and that the academic is provided with a detailed overview of the company, its corporate culture and the industry.

Direct selling executives and companies can support DSEF research efforts in a variety of ways:

PARTNER with academics on company case studies or DSEF Research Priorities—www.dsef.org/academic-engagement-guide.

PROVIDE actionable data to DSEF academic partners to drive needed research

PARTICIPATE in the Direct Selling Association's Industry Research Committee, the Association's premier source of information on direct selling trends and their impact on the industry.

RESPOND to DSA requests for company and salesforce data on research surveys and QuickPolls, such as the DSA Growth and Outlook Survey and the DSA National Salesforce Survey.

INQUIRE about serving on DSEF Committees or its Board of Directors.

DSEF ACADEMIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

PURPOSE

The Academic Advisory Council (AAC) is a DSEF strategic advisory group comprised of leading academics representing various disciplines – business, ethics, marketing, consumer studies, entrepreneurship and economics – relevant to direct selling. The AAC will provide strategic insight and guidance to DSEF leadership on the development of DSEF Academic Initiatives that advance the understanding of the direct selling channel. These Initiatives include academic research and publishing as well as classroom and campus programming. The Council will also have a role in designing collaborative opportunities between corporate leaders, academics and students, such as working with companies to address real-world business challenges, corporate internship programs or other experiential learning and career exploration pursuits for students.

MISSION

To strengthen DSEF's connection to the academic community and to advance the understanding of the direct selling business model, value proposition and the industry's commitment to ethical entrepreneurship.

MEMBERSHIP SELECTION

The Council seeks active participants who have strong academic backgrounds in business, management, ethics, consumer studies, entrepreneurship, economics or marketing and a desire to collaborate with DSEF on research, case studies, white papers, campus events and experiential learning programs for students. Council members also play an important networking role by connecting direct selling company executives to academics. The Council is comprised of 10-15 academics who represent a range of disciplines and serve for a two-year term.

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

The Foundation provides multiple opportunities for company executives to engage and interact with academics, including an annual Academic Advisory Council meeting each fall to strategically and inclusively plan next years' Academic Initiatives. If you are interested in learning more about opportunities to engage with the Council and its members, please contact Kimberly Harris Bliton, Director of Academic Initiatives, at khbliton@dsef.org.

AAC MEMBERS, 2015-2017

MEMBERS	UNIVERSITY	DEPARTMENT	SPECIALTIES/ INTERESTS
Dr. Victoria Crittenden	Babson College	Marketing	Entrepreneurship
Dr. Brenda Cude *	University of Georgia	Financial Planning, Housing and Consumer Economics	Consumer Studies
Dr. Elizabeth Davis *	University of San Francisco	Business/Management	Business Policy/Strategic Management, Organizational Theory, Management Systems, International Management
Dr. Susan Duffy	Babson College	Center for Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership	Entrepreneurship
Dr. Linda Ferrell *	Belmont University	Jack C. Massey College of Business	Business and Marketing Ethics/Corporate Strategic Social Responsibility
Dr. O.C. Ferrell	Belmont University	Jack C. Massey College of Business	Business Marketing Strategy/ Ethics
Dr. Joseph Hair	Kennesaw State University	Marketing/Professional Sales	Research Methods, Multivariate Data Analysis and Data Mining, Sales Management
Dr. Michael Hartline	Florida State University	Business/Marketing	Frontline Service Encounters, Services Marketing, Human Resource Linkages and Marketing Strategy
Dr. Robert Mayer	University of Utah	Family and Consumer Science	Social and Behavioral Science
Dr. Julie Guidry Moulard	Louisiana Tech University	Marketing	Marketing/Consumer Behavior
Dr. Robert Peterson	University of Texas at Austin	Business/Marketing	Consumer Behavior, Marketing Research, Quantitative Methods, Sales Forecasting, Marketing Strategy
Dr. Charles Vance	Loyola Marymount University	Business/Management	Human Resource Management, Training and Development

* Board Member, DSEF Board of Directors

HOW TO ENGAGE ACADEMICS ON YOUR OWN

Academic engagement benefits companies in many ways. Strategic investment in academic partnerships can lead to opportunities to share your company's business model and leadership principles with students and future leaders, case studies at top business schools, sections in college textbooks about your company, and company brand awareness and image enhancement in your community and among academics and civic influencers. Your Foundation stands ready to support you in these efforts with tools and resources.

Below are several ways you can engage academics.

- **Download** *Benefits and Opportunities for Academics and Students* to use in your academic outreach: www.dsef.org/academic-engagement-guide.
- **Survey** your employees about their current academic/university connections. Survey results can be used to coordinate outreach to various universities. (See Sample Survey on page 16)
- **Stay informed** about the latest college alumni news and events, including alumni-faculty receptions, homecoming weekend activities, reunions, regional alumni receptions and sports events.
- No faculty-alumni networking events? **Sponsor** a networking reception or breakfast for business leaders and business school faculty.
- **Add** university professors to your company newsletter and holiday card mailing lists.
- **Send** personalized notes or e-mails inviting university professors and/or their students to corporate events including company tours, community events and especially your annual salesforce conference.
- **Invite** academics to serve on your company's board of directors or advisory board.
- **Offer to be** a guest speaker for entrepreneurship and business course lectures and special events.
- **Participate** in college career fairs.
- **Become** a student mentor.
- **Partner** with business school faculty to write company case studies and sponsor company-specific research projects.
- **Introduce** your academic connections to the Foundation to further foster their involvement with the industry.
- **Support** annual university fund-raising campaigns. Even small gifts make a difference.
- **Financially support** student organizations and student-directed campus events.
- **Financially support** a scholarship or graduate student stipend.

KNOW THE VALUE YOU BRING

Through academic engagement—whether through the Foundation, or on your own—you're not only benefiting your company and the direct selling industry, you're providing professors and students with valuable opportunities.

FOR STUDENTS

- Potential corporate opportunities/internships
- Real world learning opportunities

FOR PROFESSORS

- Access to leading industry executives
- Access to data that can drive industry research



EMPLOYEE ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT SAMPLE SURVEY

Employees at your corporate headquarters may already have existing relationships at local universities or their alma maters. To help you and your company identify existing and potential academic partners, we've included a sample survey below. You may also download it here: www.dsef.org/academic-engagement-guide.

Did you know that our company has (or is initiating) an academic outreach program targeting universities and college professors? We partner with top universities around the country to share our business model and leadership principles with students and future leaders. These relationships have led to (e.g. case studies at top business schools, sections in college text books and on-going brand awareness with academic, community and civic influencers, etc.).

We could use your help in identifying academic relationships company-wide, by completing a brief survey. This survey will help us learn more about:

1. The various partnerships each department has with a professor, college or university.
2. The existing connections that our employees may have with a university.
3. How our team can better support or align with these relationships.

Please provide us with the following contact information:

Name: _____

Department: _____

Extension: _____

Email: _____

Do you or your department have an ongoing professional partnership or personal relationship with a university, college professor, program or department?

Examples include, but are not limited to, coordinating internships, serving on a board or panel, coordinating promotional tours and speaking engagements.

If yes, please describe the partnership or relationship.

If yes, please provide the contact information for the professor(s) or university.

If no, do you know someone who does?

CONCLUSION

All of us at the Foundation hope you've found this guide valuable and we look forward to working with you to further our Academic Initiatives.

For more information, please contact:

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