

## Epos Multiplier event University Kassel, 2016 07 07, 13 – 17 h

Invited:	20 Stakeholders		
Participated:	4 stakeholders	Address	Field of business
	Dr. Robert Herrmannowski	FIBL.de, General manager	Research
	Dr. Ludger Klempt	GfRS, Manager	Certification
	Jürgen Serr	BioTeeManufaktur	Entrepreneur
	Dr. Christian Krutzinna	Research farm Uni Kassel	Farm management

Programme	Prof. Dr. Peter von Fragstein und Niemsdorff	Presentation of EPOS programme, various activities (e learning, summercourse, survey with stakeholders)
	Discussion	Experiences and actual needs of employers in the field of organic sector
	Small survey	Demands for student profiles as acceptable new employees
	Final evaluation of the meeting	

This event was only taking place in a small group of stakeholders which have a long experience in the Organic sector, three of them as former PhD students of the faculty, one as former B Sc graduate with a professional life as advisor and later as manufacturer of organic herb teas. The fourth guest made his PhD about issues of organic farming at the University of Gießen, had a long experience in the organic trade before he became the manager of the German affiliate of the reknown Swiss Research Institute of Organic Agriculture.

Result of the discussion was a strong plea

- to include more practice-based issues into the curriculum of organic agriculture,
- to integrate soft skills as training part into the curriculum in order to improve time management, team work capacity, project management,
- to prepare students more for the needs and demands of the labour market, in specific personal skills, behaviour, attitude of young professionals.

An internal survey reflected the results of the discussion:

As beneficial for the profile of a graduate was pointed out: **soft skills (5<sup>\*</sup>)**, **practical experience (3.2)**, **theoretical skills (3.4)**, **capacity for teamwork (4.6)**, **leadership skills (4.2)**, **motivation (5)**. The majority of participants scored the necessity for theoretical knowledge and understanding as more important as practical experiences. Nonetheless the latter issue should be an essential part of a study in the context of applied sciences.

Suggested addition for the programme of study were: **Self management, time management, project**

\* Fixed answers from 1(=lowest relevance) to 5(=highest relevance)

*management, information management, strategies for problem solving, crisis management, guidance for manner, speaking, convincing.* One further aspect of increasing importance: *successor establishment.* A last items, presumably very peculiar for the study at the University of Kassel: *Knowledge about conventional agriculture.*

Which other suggestions could be useful for young professionals with regard to find a job? *Graduate as a master, socialize during study (learning groups for examinations, networks for the future), longer (obligatory) practical periods before study, master study after another practical internship, combination of theoretical study and vocational training (Dual study).* Three aspects are quite distinctive: (a) use the study-time for sufficient socialization (emotional & intellectual support during study and the time after), (b) the practical approach should be enhanced wherever possible, (c) the graduation as master is a better indication for sustaining demanding study and learning conditions.

A *council of external experts (stakeholders)* was valued as very important although not all interviewees would be available for such a task.