

**Vetting a Claimed Expert in Business Engagement**  
*Ten-Questions for Your Consideration*

Question	Why Ask this Question	How Business U Answers the Question
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Have you ever asked a training provider if their organization or training curriculum is accredited?</p> <p>How about who is their accrediting agency and what are the standards they must adhere to?</p>	<p>This question will help protect your investment by understanding the difference between an accredited certification and certificates that are <i>not</i> third-party validated.</p> <p>An expert has a verified process to receive critical feedback so that they can continue to improve and replicate.</p>	<p>Business U went through a rigorous 18-month review process by a third-party to reach a level of accreditation that no other organization in our industry has accomplished in the deliberate practice of business engagement.</p> <p>Every product and service Business U develops and delivers are standardized and accredited by the International Association for Continuing Education &amp; Training (IACET)– the originators of the CEU. Business U adheres to the ANSI/IACET Standard for Continuing Education and Training.</p>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Is business engagement the core focus of the vendor’s mission?</p>	<p>Training providers claiming to be experts with a laundry list of topics in a variety of specialties and occupations is not realistic. These providers might be knowledgeable, but they can’t be all things to all consumers.</p> <p>It is deliberate practice in a specific field or study that develops expertise.</p>	<p>Business engagement is Business U’s only focus. To be outcomes-driven, we go deep within the subject matter by funding primary research projects and analyzing our field work to inform the market and the development of our curricula.</p> <p>What we have noticed is that while many training vendors claim a “demand driven” approach in their promotional materials, the subject matter reverts back to the comfort level of delivering business services from the job seeker or student perspective, which is not business engagement.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>When sending staff to a business engagement training, what data do you track that demonstrates the learning outcomes have been achieved?</p>	<p>It is indeed an achievement if your staff leave a training motivated, but consideration needs to be given to how they will apply their new knowledge and skills.</p> <p>A fundamental focus when practicing business engagement is to expand your reach so that you can provide greater opportunities for your job seekers and students. You achieve this outcome by attracting and garnering the support of employers and providing them with access and</p>	<p>At Business U, participants have to <i>earn</i> their certification and designation as a Certified Business Engagement Professional™ by demonstrating their new knowledge and skills using standardized and accredited instruments assessed by Business U’s recognized subject matter experts.</p> <p>Business U graduates are the ones who report their verified results such as expanded reach and increased market penetration, not Business U.</p>

	<p>connections to your larger network of partners you are leveraging to help solve their business challenges.</p> <p>An expert training provider will be able to demonstrate how their trainees have achieved these outcomes.</p>	
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>When reviewing the vendor’s advertised business engagement training outcomes, what new abilities, knowledge and skills will be learned?</p>	<p>You want to think about the sticking points that staff experience getting businesses to engage with your organization’s mission. Make sure those sticking points are aligned to measurable learning outcomes.</p> <p>If measures can’t be produced and replicated, then you are probably not talking to a business engagement expert.</p>	<p>Business U’s vetted learning outcomes are developed by business professionals with decades of executive-level experience in the private sector, which are further validated by our nationwide studies and field work with workforce and education experts to stay current and laser-focused on the key challenges staff experience engaging with industry.</p> <p>Business U’s learning outcomes align to all program assignments and capstone projects evaluated by our business engagement subject matter experts. Additionally, because curricula are institutionally accredited with a standardized development process, Business U can tailor learning outcomes that align with the needs of your organization and the specific challenges in your local area and region.</p>
<p><b>5</b></p> <p>Has the training vendor you are considering been recognized in their industry as an exceptional businessperson?</p>	<p>Running an award-winning training organization that specializes in business engagement means that the vendor understands business and has vast experience in this field, especially if the vendor is “selling” business engagement and/or business services professional development training courses from a demand-driven perspective.</p> <p>It’s difficult to teach business engagement if you are not one of the recognized “best” in your own industry.</p> <p>Many times, expertise is further demonstrated by external recognition based on proven results.</p>	<p>In 2019, Business U received the following national awards: two Stevie American Business Awards and NAWDP’s Workforce Development Professional of the Year Award for advancing the skills and competences of the workforce professional.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>6</b></p> <p>What is the difference between business services and business engagement?</p> <p>How does the training provider you are considering differentiate between these two concepts?</p>	<p>Simply stated, if the vendor cannot explain this to your satisfaction and they are using supply-side language (from the job seeker and student perspective), the vendor is not an expert in teaching business engagement.</p> <p>Additionally, if the vendor’s promotional materials and learning outcomes mix these concepts and audiences (job seekers, students and employers), then you are not talking to an expert in business engagement.</p>	<p>To learn more about the differences between delivering business services and implementing business engagement strategies that are demand-driven and market responsive, please read Business U’s article, <a href="#"><i>Flipping the Lens on Business Engagement</i></a>.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7</b></p> <p>What percentage of participants who have already taken the business engagement or the business services course you are considering would recommend it to a colleague?</p>	<p>If someone is teaching a business engagement course, it’s important that they are actually engaging the participants; and that there are measurable objectives attached to the training event to help ensure the learning outcomes have been achieved.</p> <p>The vendor needs to be able to answer the question by producing these results such as the number of participants attended, sessions taught, and their associated and aggregated end-of-course evaluations.</p> <p>If the training vendor you are considering does not have this data then you might want to also consider if they are serious about improving their course so that the learning outcomes are achieved and that there is a demonstrated increase in participant engagement.</p> <p>As the HBR article makes clear, experts produce concrete and measurable results that can be replicated.</p>	<p>Of the more than 5,000 Business U graduates, over 99.6% of participants would recommend a Business U learning event to a colleague.</p> <p>We review and analyze each learning event’s measurable objectives, we then send the results to leadership, and from there we apply the gathered data to improve course facilitation, instructional methods, delivery, and learning outcomes. These efforts are part of our accreditation standard, all of which has contributed to earning the <i>2017 Innovation of the Year Award in Learner Engagement</i> from our accrediting agency, IACET.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>8</b></p> <p>Is the curriculum the training vendor is using underpinned by third-party validated instructional methods, and as importantly, a training philosophy that supports the professional adult learner?</p>	<p>The professional adult learner has a lot of demand for their time. They all pulled in and out of differing priorities, all of which requires them to wear many different hats. An expert trainer understands this by making sure that their engagement will result with demonstrated learning that can be immediately applied on the job.</p> <p>An expert trainer does not use anecdotal stories of experience from previous “one-off” events they’ve facilitated to mislead the participant into thinking that they are an expert.</p>	<p>Business U’s professional training programs move beyond pedagogy to andragogy, an approach that bridges the gap between passive knowledge and active field application for successful execution. Business U’s curricula are instructionally designed to deliver learning events that are problem-centered as opposed to content-oriented with feedback and support mechanisms built into each program to ensure that performance outcomes are sustainable.</p> <p>Our training philosophy ensures that learning events also move beyond motivating a trainee by providing a solid foundation to execute new skills successfully.</p> <p>This is why Business U’s approach to training is outcome driven and founded on developing learning experiences that have a long-term impact, well beyond the end of the actual event. This philosophy serves to underpin Business U’s instructional design, facilitation activities and the technical assistance and coaching it provides.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>9</b></p> <p>If a training vendor says that “communications” such as branding is part of their business engagement curriculum, ask them to share examples and then follow-up with the question:</p> <p><i>“How have you branded and marketed workforce (or education) organizations to expand reach specifically to employers?”</i></p>	<p>Think about the outcome—if the vendor is claiming expertise in branding, marketing and communications, then they should have at a minimum an extensive portfolio that can demonstrate a track record in workforce and education that has resulted in an expanded reach and brand awareness. Also take a look at the professionalism of their marketing materials and website. If the portfolio and/or results aren’t present and readily available for you to review, you are probably not talking with an expert.</p>	<p>Business U’s sister company has a 16-year track record of branding, marketing and communications in workforce and education with a portfolio that consistently demonstrates results. For example, one workforce organization increased brand awareness from 6 – 54% among high growth sectors by using “cause” marketing to form a media partnership that was valued at \$1.8M, but at no cost the workforce board. These are the types of results that have earned the company more than 60 global awards for workforce and education customers.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>10</b></p>	<p>Experts work hard to replicate and scale with every opportunity. And we know that “not all practice makes perfect.</p> <p>You need a particular kind of “practice” to effectively share, collaborate and coordinate your business engagement efforts as well as expand opportunities for job seekers and students.</p>	<p>Business U conducts, writes and funds <a href="#">research studies and publications</a> to advance the field of business engagement.</p> <p>We also take <a href="#">social responsibility</a> seriously by providing three annual scholarships that cover the entire cost of the Certified Business Engagement Professional™ program.</p> <p>Business U is committed to continue funding and providing a web-based platform of the entire GED preparation course. The GED prep course is free to anyone who is interested in studying for their GED exam, and to any organization that would like to offer the free course to its job seekers and students.</p> <p>In 2020, Business U is launching its peer-to-peer community of practice to our graduates at no cost to them so that they can sustain the learning outcomes and stay current on the best and promising business engagement practices nationwide.</p>
<p>How do the training vendors that you are considering share their knowledge to improve the practice of business engagement and contribute to the workforce or education community?</p>		

At Business U, we do not focus on what we do well, instead, we deliberately practice and concentrate on what we need to do better. As a reminder to us from the HBR article:

*Deliberate practice is different. It entails considerable, specific, and sustained efforts...You cannot consistently improve your ability...without considerable practice, reflection, and analysis....Only when you can see that deliberate practice is the most effective means to the desired end—becoming the best in your field—will you commit to excellence.*

To learn more, please visit us at [Business U](#).