EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN

WIRTSCHAFTS- UND
SOZIALWISSENSCHAFTLICHE FAKULTÄT

School of Business and Economics

Integrating IR into University Curricula

… and increasing institutional effectiveness

07 September 2016 | 13:50 - 14:15 | Dipl.-Vw. Stefan M. Buettner

Setting the Scene

© 2016 University of Tuebingen

In most organisations…

… there is potential for improvement and further development.

Who is identifying and harnessing this potential?

Often: strategy advice department, in-house consulting, or institutional research and quality management.

In this session:
role project seminars can play in

- optimising strategies for institutions
- promoting knowledge about what IR is all about
- serving as a screening and recruiting pool for future IR staff or student assistants.

© 2016 University of Tuebingen

Why?

- Principals, presidents and deans still often do not even know about existence and portfolio
- There is only few staff members that go beyond the minimal requirement of reporting to the statistical offices
- Tasks are *covered* by others already
- The national *critical mass* is not yet achieved (IR at very few institutions)
- **Most important: students know best what administrative aspects of their studies and what student services have potential to be improved**

© 2016 University of Tuebingen

How?

- students learn about the principles of institutional research

  (e.g. P. TERENZINI: On the Nature of Institutional Research and the Knowledge and Skills it Requires)
- relevant techniques, software skills and case-study exercises.
- apply these skills in a one-stop-shop exercise aimed at improving the performance of a project partner, usually a university service provider.

© 2016 University of Tuebingen

In detail

- compact blocks over eight weeks (40 in-class hours with an overall workload of approximately 120 hours).
- Seminar participants are purposefully heterogeneous, coming to the project from diverse subject areas, in different semesters and studying for different degrees.

In the project seminars,

- not only get to know what IR is and what it can do,
- working on a real project with real practical effects,
- institution itself shows that it is inclusive in its decision-making.

The central advantage for the institution itself is that it gets projects performed relatively cheaply and quickly, while having to provide very few if any IR staff.

© 2016 University of Tuebingen

The student‘s motivation

- Bachelor students can use the 4 ECTS credits towards the mandatory soft skills requirement of post Bologna Bachelor degrees.
- **More important:** students in programmes with empirical aspects often only get a snap shot (just surveying, just analysis, just conclusions, rather than the unique chance to do one process from A-Z including all relevant steps from research question to management advise.
- Course is called “Data collection, analysis and strategic planning” to indicate the content as clearly as possible.

© 2016 University of Tuebingen

Success story

- **Win-win situation** for institution and students
- **run six times**: enrolment services, university libraries, the Language Centre, the computing centre, dining services, and sports services.
- All project partners have **successfully implemented** many of the **suggestions** made by the seminar group, and are now providing a better, more efficient service and hence a better student experience.

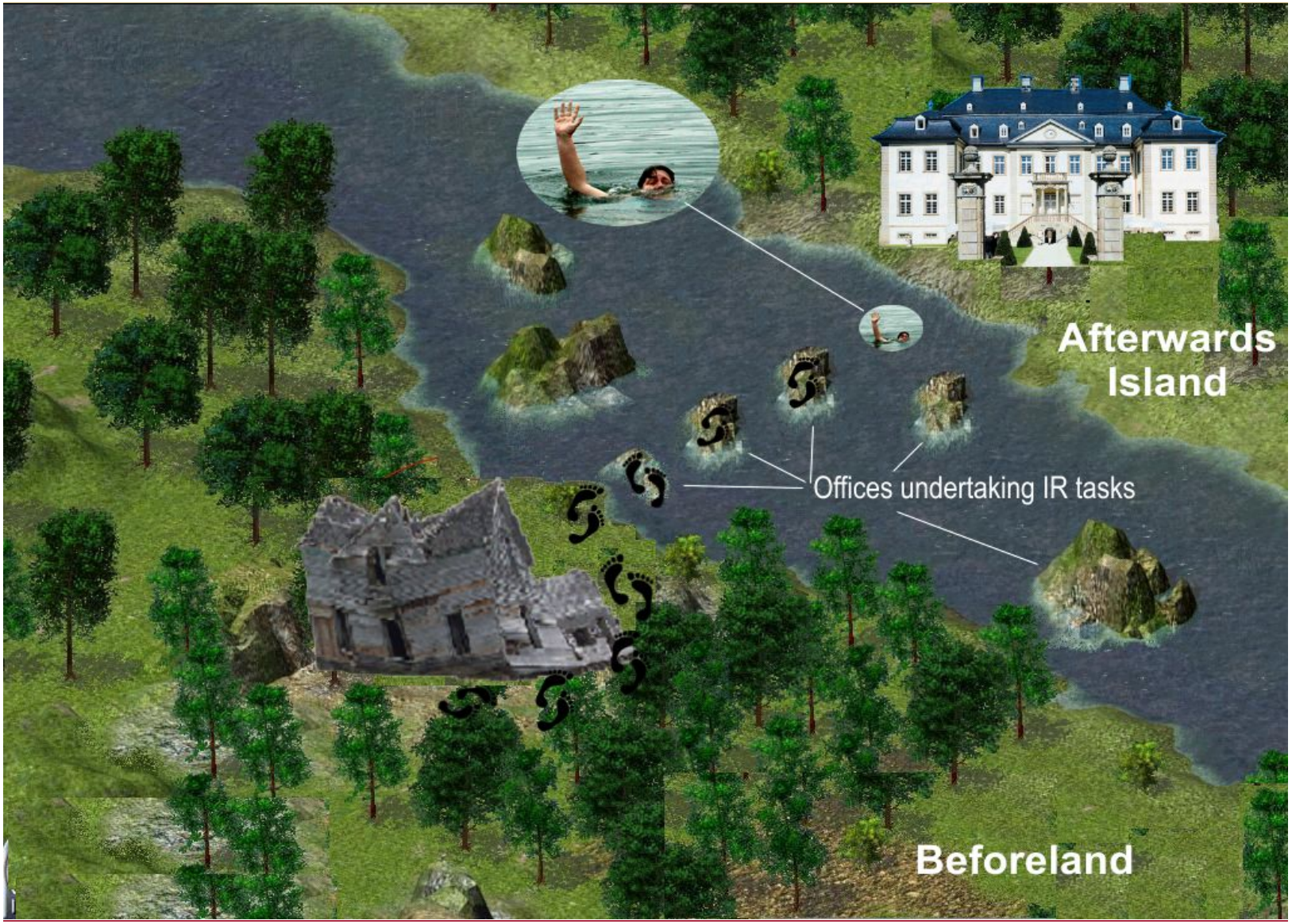
- an originally IR-resistant administration has begun to understand and to apply the benefits of IR activities.
- For institutions with a pre-existing IR office, the project seminar concept delivers a platform for Human Resources signalling and screening: drawing interested students to the field while looking for potential new student assistants and staff.

© 2016 University of Tuebingen

Appendix

A metaphorical explanation of what IR is all about…

© 2016 University of Tuebingen



© 2016 University of Tuebingen

Institutional Research is the substance that is filling the gaps and building the bridges between the stepping stones (offices doing IR tasks) in a wide river of data to allow for a safe, dry and speedy crossing over. And no matter what and how many stepping stones exist at an institutions' river crossing, Institutional Research can always link them up and bridge the gaps.

© 2016 University of Tuebingen

Thank You!

Questions & Feedback welcome!

© 2016 University of Tuebingen