

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Department of Natural Resources
and Environmental Sciences

College of Agricultural, Consumer
and Environmental Sciences
W-503 Turner Hall
1102 South Goodwin Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801



February 23, 2008

Mr. Mark Paul
Synergy Consulting Group, LLC
PO Box 91507
Portland, OR 97291-0507

Re: The value you provided my department

Dear Mark:

I wanted to thank you for the help advice and counsel you provided me when I was the Department Chair of Oregon Graduate Institute's Environmental Science and Engineering (ESE) department.

I felt we needed to bring in outside business expertise in the areas leadership, management, and organization. Specifically, I was interested in improving how the department viewed students, and not only how we responded to their needs but also to position ESE as the leader in environmental post-grad education. We did an excellent job of educating students for eventual academia leadership, but felt we could do even better – and thereby exceed the expectations of our students and their employers.

You worked with faculty, students, and staff to assess our students' needs, alumni perspectives, industry's requirements, then guided our strategic planning, and even supported ESE relationships within other parts of the Institute. You were able to collaborate and encourage participation so that we were able to gain full buy-in by a majority of the faculty. This was better than I anticipated.

The results were impressive: We gained tremendous insights into the specific needs of past, current and future students. So much so, that we adjusted our curriculum to take into account the identified needs of students. Based on the insights we gained from your efforts, we expanded the 12-month, intensive Master of Science program. As a result, we quadrupled our student body of those looking to enter industry (not academia) after graduation - within the first couple of years after your consulting services!

I just wanted to thank you for your insights and helping our faculty through the difficult process of using business best-practices to help us meet our growth objectives. I gained great insights into management in general, and particularly into similarities and

differences among academic and business management practices. I still remember and apply many of the insights and lessons we developed together. Thanks again!

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wes Jarrell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Wes Jarrell
Professor, Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resources
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign