



Understanding Business – University Interactions (II)

*Some Observations on Critical
Aspects of Business – University
Interaction*

Outline of Ideas

- Interaction Model
- Importance of Relationships
- “Gatekeeping” Function and Boundary Spanning Roles
 - Role In Project Specification & Implementation
- Knowledge Repositioning Perspective
- Importance of Company Capability & Capacity

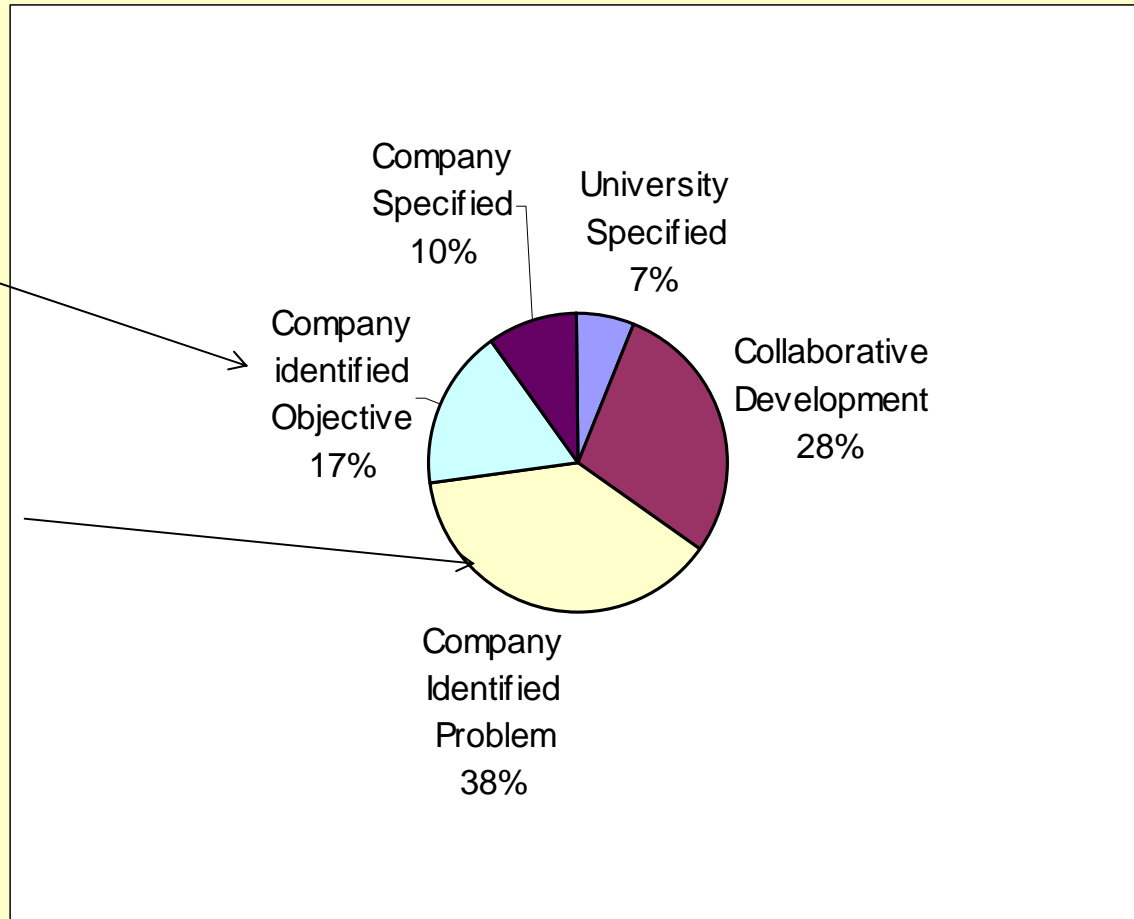
Interaction Model

“Buying and selling in industrial markets could not be understood as a series of disembodied and serially independent transactions in the way that consumer markets are described and understood. Instead, transactions could only be examined as episodes in often long-standing and complex relationships between the buying and selling organisations.”

The importance of social exchange is emphasised; this is particularly important where there is a high cultural or physical distance between the two organisations, where it is necessary to “learn” the social system pertaining in the other organisation or its market and where it is necessary to determine how and in what way a product or service may be supplied which will meet a buyer need. Repeated episodes are important in the build up of trust before a high dependency relationship may be developed. Interpersonal contacts perform roles in problem solving, exchanging social values and demonstrating commitment to and credibility with the other party.

How the Project was Specified

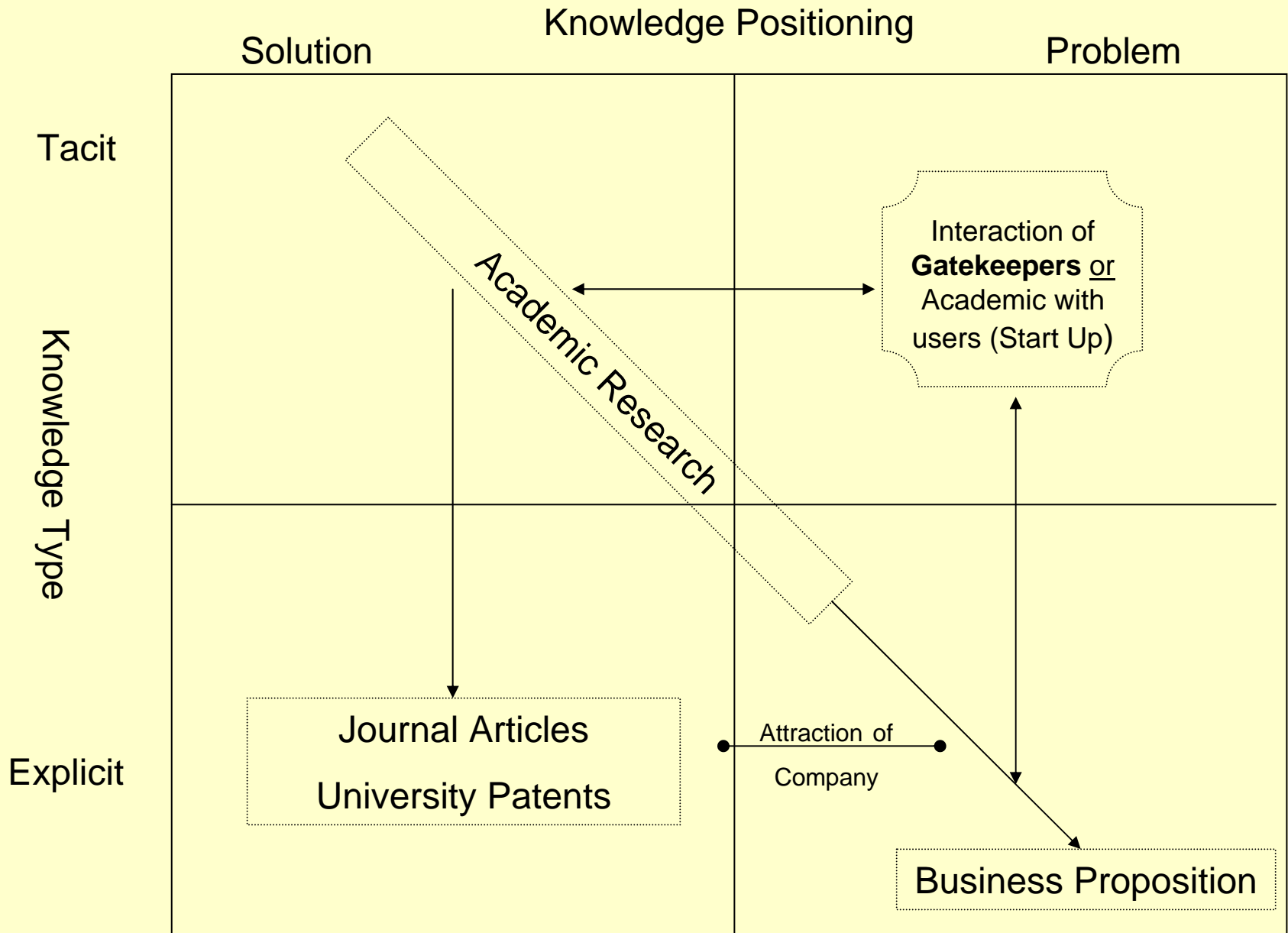
In these cases the Company identified the objective or the problem and the university responded with a project



The majority of cases (83%) involved both University and Company in Specifying the Project; a licence agreement based on pure university IP would be “University Specified “ (c/f collaboration followed by licence)

Gatekeeping and Boundary Spanning Roles

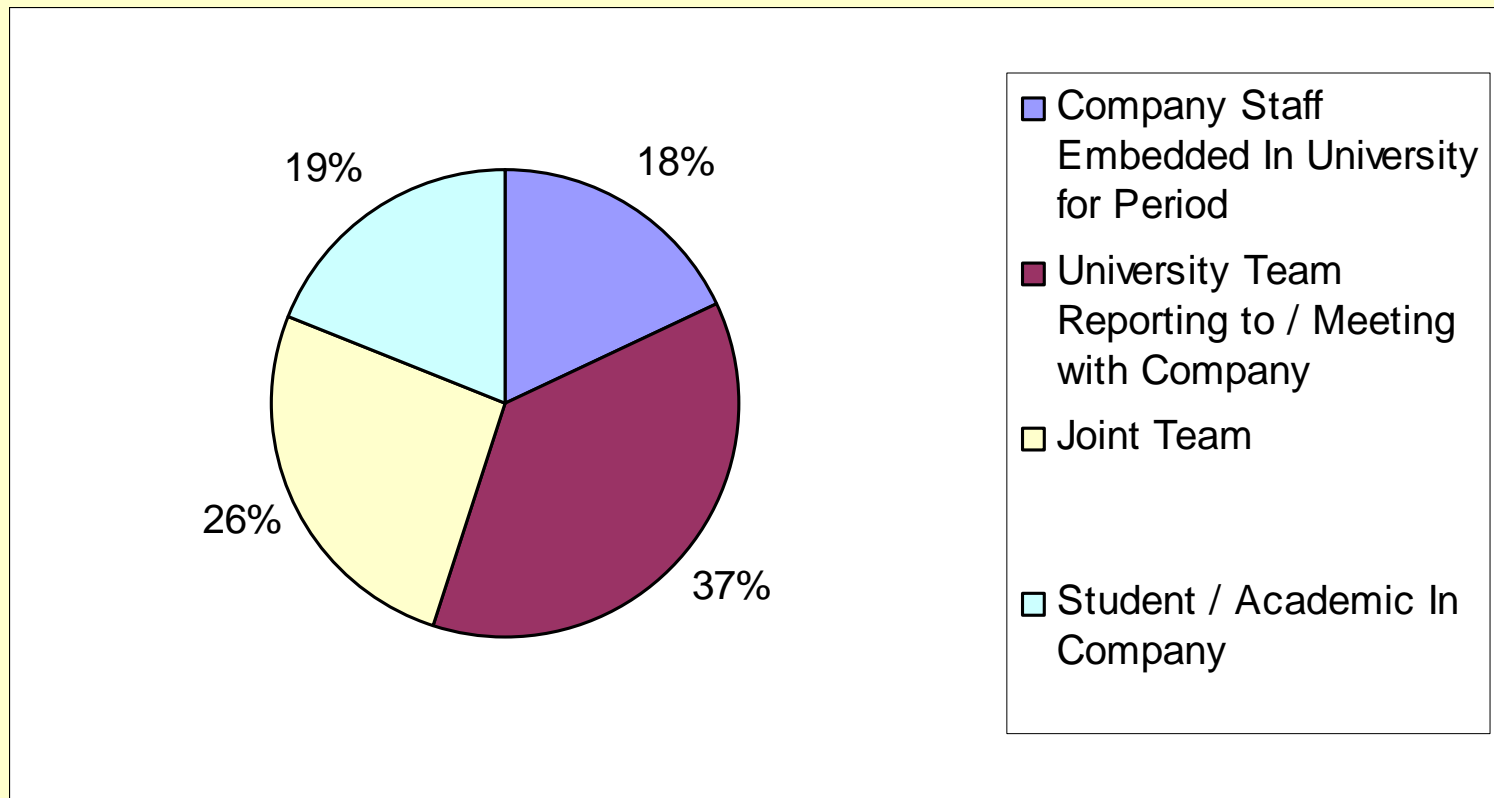
- Co-recognition of Opportunity and Co-creation of projects occurs between Boundary Spanners
- Knowledge Repositioning” against business application
- Described as “Gatekeeping” Function
- Development of Trust and Understanding
- Uses Tacit Knowledge
 - Of Research
 - Of Company Technology & Process



Why is Interaction So Important?
 Knowledge Re-positioning

How is Knowledge Transfer Achieved

How the company becomes able to use academic knowledge or jointly created knowledge in the company context – “learning by doing”



In all cases there is a recognised means of achieving knowledge transfer; meetings and reports have a varying degree of success.

Research Typologies

- Companies interact with Research at different distances from Market
- Basic / Applied Dichotomy Over-Simplistic
 - Applied Needs further localisation
 - Some companies interested in Exploratory or Basic Research
- Recognise applicability of Stokes Model
 - Examples of stimulating basic research

STOKES MODEL

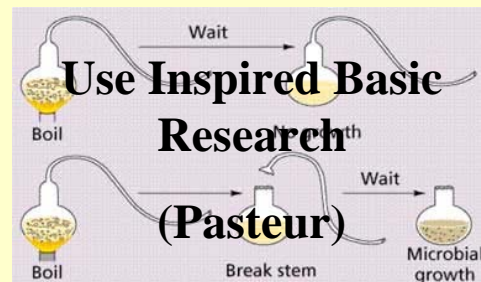
Research Inspired by
Consideration of Use

No

Yes

Research Inspired by
Quest for Understanding

Yes



No

Pure Applied
Research
(Edison)

From Lal & Messeri-http://www.wren-network.net/resources/2005AEA_CES/ThinkTank-Operating.in.Pasteurs.Quadrant/Lal.and.Messeri.ppt

Importance of Company Capability and Capacity to Interact

- Co-recognition of Opportunity
- Co-Creation of Specification
- Gaining acceptance and Commitment
- Perform and Interact to Embed
 - Generation of Company Specific Tacit Knowledge
 - Codify into Company Specific Explicit Knowledge
- Evaluate and Develop

Possible Implications for Discussion

- What characteristics do we need in “Boundary Spanners” ?
- How can we increase opportunity recognition ?
- Matching Mode of Interaction to Company.
- How can we develop Company Capability and Capacity ?
- Interaction of Business with Research Agenda.