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For-Profit Institutions' Goals

- 1. Offer Value-Adding Learning Opportunities
- 2. Improve students' lives with training & education
- 3. Meet a demonstrated need for career fields
- 4. Produce a reasonable return on investment and earn a profit
- 5. Maintain accountability to students, employers, faculty and shareholders

Types of For-Profit Governance

- 1. Corporately Owned, Non Publicly-Traded
- 2. Corporately Owned, Publicly-Traded
- 3. Closely Held: Venture Capitalist/Private Equity Owned
- 4. Family-Owned (9 of 10)

Each type has *different* goals and styles.

Traits of For-Profit Institutions

- 1. Tuition-dependent, must be market "savvy"
- 2. Serve non-traditional students who face challenges
- 3. Sensitivity to the needs of employers
- 4. Adaptability: embraced Distance Learning early on
- 5. Scalable and replicable curricula
- 6. Build an exemplary customer service organization that generates significant percent of student referrals
- 7. Provide accessibility for the adult learner
- 8. Optimize convenience to the adult learner

Management Tactics

- 1. Plan continuously
- 2. React quickly to external environment
- 3. Improve continuously
- 4. Measure Results Frequently—Measure Everything!
- 5. Outcomes Focused—retain capable students
- 6. Hold everyone accountable
- 7. Build a productive and efficient model
- 8. Target Marketing

For-Profit Characteristics

- 1. Centrally controlled, managed top-down
- 2. Curricula is standardized
- 3. Curricula is developed with industry input
- 4. Uniform and reproducible classes are the standard
- 5. Assessments are metrics-driven
- 6. Culture of regulatory compliance
- 7. Responsible community citizens

For-Profits Are Growing Because...

1. Faculty are part-time, active in the field, and share experiences from their profession

- 2. Marketing is sophisticated and professional
- 3. Long-term quality trumps short-term profits
- 4. Emphasis on what is essential for students' employability
- 5. Streamlined, convenient enrollment processes
- 6. Do not need non-academic facilities (dorms, gyms, etc.)
- 7. Ultimately, they are convenient, accessible and goal-focused

Challenges in Accrediting For-Profits

- 1. Understand the unique characteristics of for-profits
- 2. Know who owns the institution, and know their goals
- 3. Understand how the metrics are created: graduation rates, placement rates, etc.
- 4. Evaluate the role of Distance Learning and how it impacts quality
- 5. Assess how the shareholders' goals match up with the mission
- 6. Analyzing the threats to the institution—is it prepared?
- 7. Evaluate the competence and the integrity of management

What Can Go Wrong At a For-Profit

- 1. Excessive growth—without needed infrastructure
- 2. Over-aggressive & misleading marketing
- 3. Admitting unqualified students
- 4. Failure to monitor recruiting
- 5. Out of balance spending on marketing v. academics
- 6. Inflating credit awards
- 7. Unprepared graduates
- 8. High loan defaults

How Accreditors Can Address the Challenges

- **1.** Have clear, measurable standards
- 2. Adopt specific rules for marketing and promotion
- 3. Use bright-line benchmarks for outcomes
- 4. Establish high expectations for ethical conduct
- 5. Analyze annual reports; monitor growth rigorously

How Accreditors Can Address the Challenges

- 6. Firm but fair complaint resolution action
- 7. Survey students, regulators and employers
- 8. Train institution staff on the rules and expectations
- 9. Conduct onsite reviews frequently
- 10. Limit initial grants to new institutions
- **11. Consult with For-Profit Institution Experts**