

Research Article

Risk Management Education for Executives in the Food and Agriculture Industry

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Abstract

Numerous universities have expanded their outreach efforts to include executive education. Offerings include a range of programs that vary in length, certification, topics, and price. Even though there are many offerings, there is a specific gap in the market for risk management executive education for the food and agriculture industry. There is also, to our knowledge, no existing research into preferences and willingness to pay for risk management executive education offerings. Understanding executives' preferences for risk management executive education programs would be helpful to academic units who wish to enter the space. We conducted an online survey of professionals in the food and agriculture industry, followed by phone or video conference interviews with professionals whose responsibilities included sending employees to executive education programming. Results indicate professionals in the food and agriculture industry highly value the content of a program and the ability to apply it to their business. They seek opportunities with highly regarded speakers with relevant real-life experience. Networking to build lasting relationships in their fields is also an important component. The price a participant is willing to pay for a two- to three-day executive education experience lands somewhere between \$1,500 and \$2,000.

1 Introduction

In 2022, expenditures by U.S. businesses for training employees exceeded \$100 billion, with \$8.2 billion of that spent on external products and services aimed at training employees (Freifeld 2022). A substantial portion of this amount was likely directed at executive education, which continues to be a growing sector of education, and is dominated by business schools and universities. Numerous universities offer executive education programs, which vary in length, certification, topics, and price (Stanton and Stanton 2017). Recently, our engagement with executives in the food and agricultural industries, many of whom participated in executive education programs, has led us to the conclusion that few executive programs specifically target risk management in the food and agricultural sectors. This realization motivated the present research because education to identify, assess, and manage financial, safety, reputational, political, compliance, and other risks is critical to both individual and business success. There is also limited research into preferences and willingness to pay for risk management executive education offerings.¹ Understanding executives' preferences for risk management executive education programs would be helpful to academic departments who wish to enter the space.

This study has two objectives. The first objective is to identify food and agriculture sector professionals' preferences regarding risk management executive education. The second is to synthesize the findings from the first objective to advise the creation of new programs in executive education in risk

¹ Some surveys of listed prices of offerings are available (e.g., Stanton and Stanton 2017). These sources, though very informative, rely on published prices and not preferences of executives.

management. Employing online surveys and video call interviews, we find that professionals in the food and agriculture industry deem the program content and list of speakers as among the most important characteristics of an executive education program. Participants further indicated that they seek opportunities with highly regarded speakers with relevant real-life experience. Networking to build lasting relationships in their fields is also an important component. The price a participant is willing to pay is between \$1,500 and \$2,000 for a two- or three-day executive education experience.

2 Background

Executive education describes a wide variety of non-degree programs for working professionals, with practical content that impacts their professional and personal development (Margulies and Gregg 2013). The evolution of university-provided executive education has a long history. Starting in the late 1920s, non-degree executive education programs were born out of MBA degree programs to fit the needs of older experienced managers, to give them a broad-based functional education (Crotty and Soule 1997). Universities at the forefront of this movement included Harvard and MIT. In the 1950s, executive education was a major innovation of the modern higher education industry and expanded rapidly to other universities, adding players in the market such as Northwestern and Wharton (Amdam 2020).

As decades passed, the structure of executive education programs evolved. Curricula that once highlighted lectures, case studies, and functional knowledge across industries moved toward active and applied learning that focused on realistic company issues (Jacobson et al. 2017). To be successful in today's market, executive education programs must go further than merely teaching concepts; they must empower individuals to make real-world impacts (Jacobson et al. 2017). Many programs are offered today, which differ in approach, structure, and focus depending on the target audience and its learning objectives. Programmatic approaches to executive education include executive forum and lecture series, short seminars, executive programs, certificate programs, conferences, or custom programs (Margulies and Gregg 2013). Recent research indicates that executive education must continue to evolve, especially in terms of content customization, delivery formats, and choice of topics to respond to industry leaders' needs (Tiberius, Hoffmeister, and Weyla 2021).

Risk management is an area into which executive education can potentially specialize. Risk is generally thought of as a current or future hazard having significant negative impact(s) (Bachev 2013). Risk management is the process of identification, analysis, and either the acceptance or mitigation of risk in the context of decision making (Wu, Chen, and Olson 2014). Understanding the broad topic of risk management is imperative to success in food and agriculture. Fortunately, throughout the past several decades, businesses have recognized the importance of risk management strategies in practice, and progress has been made in incorporating many philosophies and tools from various disciplines (Wu, Chen, and Olson 2014). However, in an ever-changing world, it is important for professionals to continue to increase skills and knowledge in risk management.

A common avenue professionals use to expand knowledge and skill is executive education. Agribusiness organizations have a challenge because risk management programs in the market do not focus on this industry. Current offerings either focus their efforts in risk management or target the agriculture industry, but it is our opinion that none do both. A variety of extension programs are designed to educate agricultural producers in risk management, but those programs are not targeted at current and future executives.

3 Surveys and Interviews

We used a mixed-methods approach to capture qualitative and quantitative data from executives in the food and agricultural industry regarding their preferences for executive education programs. First, we used an email invitation to an online questionnaire, which was developed and pre-tested by the authors. The contents of this questionnaire are shown in Appendix A. Second, we conducted phone and video

conference interviews to obtain detailed input from professionals who make executive and continuing education decisions on behalf of others. The script used to guide these interviews is presented in Appendix B.

An invitation to participate in a survey exploring their participation in and perceptions regarding risk management executive education was distributed via email to 727 recipients. Of these, 196 were alumni or advisory board members of Kansas State University Center for Risk Management Education and Research (CRMER); 531 were current or former Kansas State University Masters of Agribusiness (MAB) students; and the remainder were other professional contacts. The email campaign included a re-send option to non-openers three days after the initial distribution and a reminder two weeks later.² We collected 87 responses, with 56 of those being complete and usable. This translates to a 7.7 percent response rate. One reason for this low response rate is that we are targeting executives or those who are likely to be executives in the future. This is a very busy group of people whose time is in demand. Another possible culprit is survey fatigue as requests for online survey participation are increasingly common. This relatively low response rate raises concerns over how generalizable our findings may be. However, given the dearth of analysis in this area, we see our effort as a valid starting point for understanding executive education in the food and agriculture sector.

Two questions were asked to determine if the participant qualified for the remainder of the survey: (1) “Are you a decision maker in your company in regard to sending employees to executive education programming?” and (2) “Do you participate in executive education programming?” If the participant answered “yes” to one of those questions, they advanced to the rest of the survey. This resulted in 33 complete, qualified responses. Qualifying respondents were then asked about frequency, price expectations, past price experience, company budget, and company goals related to executive education programming.

The second section of the questionnaire asked questions specifically about risk management executive education. The first few questions were aimed at the demand for risk management executive education. The final questions collected information around details taken into consideration when choosing to attend an executive education program. Participants were then given an open text box to share any other thoughts, opinions, or insights they felt were important for the researcher to know.

After the online questionnaire results were collected, an email was sent to those who identified themselves as decision makers in sending individuals to executive education programs. These decision makers were invited to participate in a 30-minute phone or video conference interview. The purpose of the interview was to dig deeper into what qualities they value in an executive education program and, specifically, what they would expect from opportunities for executive education on risk management. Ten interviews were conducted, seven via video conference and three via phone call.³ The average length of time for the interviews was 31 minutes. Interviewees were asked a series of twelve open-ended questions⁴ focused on which qualities of a program make it valuable to a decision maker and what comprises the ideal risk management executive education program. Respondents were asked about venue, length of program, structure of program, time of year for meeting, and other practical aspects. Last, interviewees were asked what someone should know when building a high-quality risk management program for executive education.

4 Results

The 33 qualified responses came from individuals working in a variety of jobs and industries. Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents across industries. Eleven were identified as participants of

² The Institutional Review Board of Kansas State University determined this project (Proposal Number: IRB-10611) to be exempt from further review under 45 CFR §104, paragraph d, category: 2, subsection: ii.

³ Calls were transcribed electronically, and transcripts were used when needed.

⁴ See Appendix B.

Table 1: Industries in Which Respondents Work

Industry	Number of Respondents
Production Agriculture	7
Agribusiness	7
Agricultural Banking/Lending	3
Finance/Financial Services	6
Investment Management	2
Consulting	2
Energy	2
Agricultural Education	1
Agricultural Equipment	1
Logistics	1

Note: Agribusiness was used to denote firms that further process, transport, or market commodities or food.

executive education programming, 5 were identified as decision makers in sending others to executive education programs, and 17 were identified as both (Table 2).

Table 2: Participants vs. Decision Makers

Role of Respondent	Number of Responses	Percent of Total
Participants	11	33%
Decision Makers	5	15%
Both	17	52%

Forty-eight percent of respondents reported that they seek out executive education programs one to two times annually, and 27 percent seek the programs less than once annually (Figure 1). This number emphasizes the importance of ensuring a new program on the market meets the needs and preferences of industry professionals. There are few opportunities to capture their attention. Therefore, a new program must be well-marketed, high quality, and fit the learning objectives that business professionals are seeking.

To better understand what price the industry is willing to pay for executive education, the survey asked three questions surrounding expectations, previous experiences, and budget. When asked what price the respondent would expect to pay for a registration fee for a three-day executive education program, including meals, networking events, and opportunities to interact with reputable speakers, the average price reported was \$1,735 (Table 3). As a comparison, the average of the most recent prices the respondents actually paid to send themselves or an employee to an executive education event was \$1,824 (Table 3).

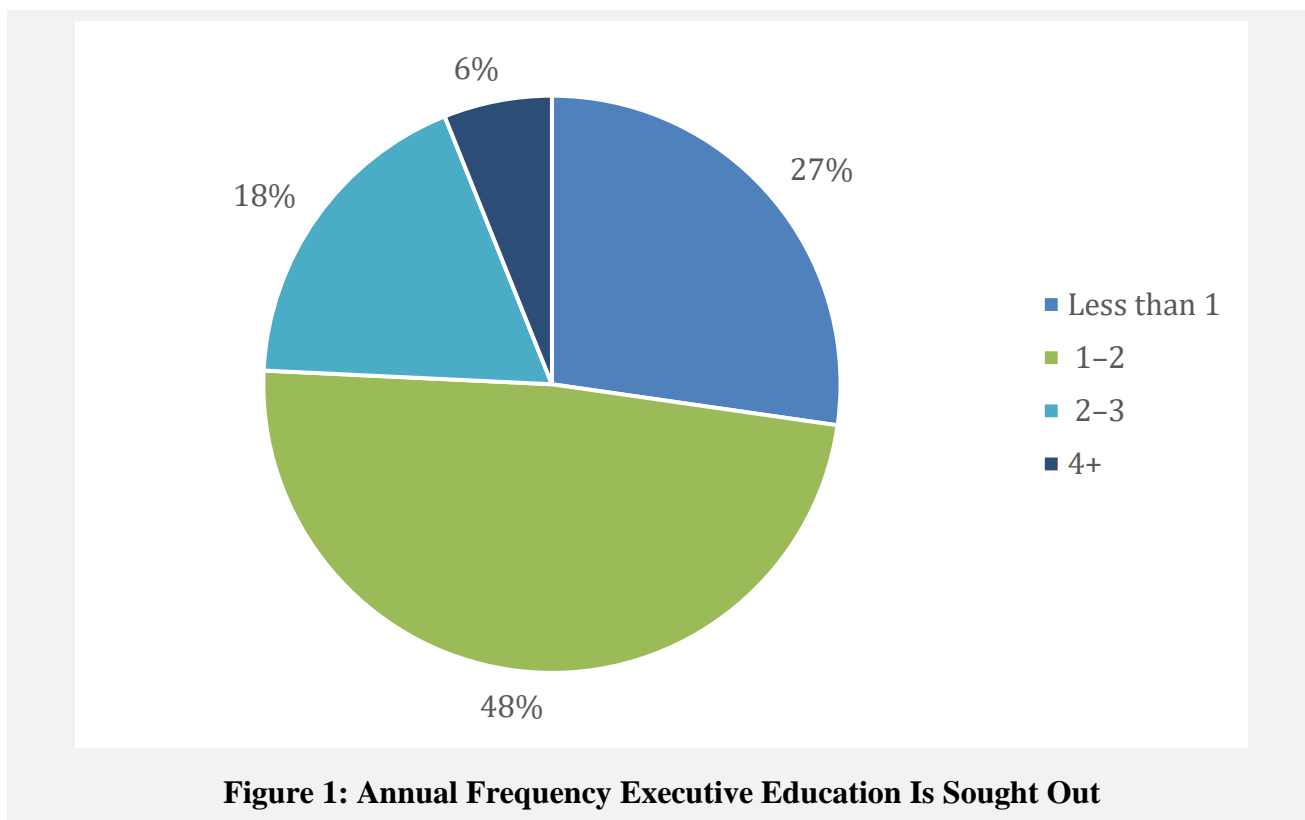


Figure 1: Annual Frequency Executive Education Is Sought Out

Table 3: Price Expectation vs. Previous Price Paid

Summary Statistic	Expectation (n = 33)	Previous Price Paid (n = 24)
Minimum	\$315	\$65
Maximum	\$3,494	\$10,000
Median	\$1,506	\$1,045
Average	\$1,735	\$1,824

Note: Eight participants did not list a previous price paid, and one listed a price of \$0 for a free event. We did not include the observation of \$0 in the calculation of summary statistics.

Answers to “What is your team’s annual budget for executive education? And how many employees is that budget for?” varied widely. Only 10 of 33 respondents were able to provide an estimate, and seven of those were also able to provide a team number associated with the annual budget. The budget values ranged from \$500 to \$100,000. Based on responses with both a budget amount and number of team members, average annual budget per teammate was \$2,032. Ten people reported their team did not have a defined budget but made case-by-case decisions based on quality of the program. Six respondents stated they did not know if there was an education budget or what their team’s budget was. Seven survey participants answered “NA” to the question. This response could mean there was either no defined budget, or they did not know what their team’s budget was.

The remainder of the survey asked questions specific to risk management executive education. Seventy-two percent of survey participants agreed to some degree that there was a need for risk management executive education in their organization (Figure 2). When asked if there are enough high-quality opportunities in the current market, 27 percent disagreed to some degree (Figure 3). These results demonstrate that some agribusiness decision makers see a need for executive education on risk management.

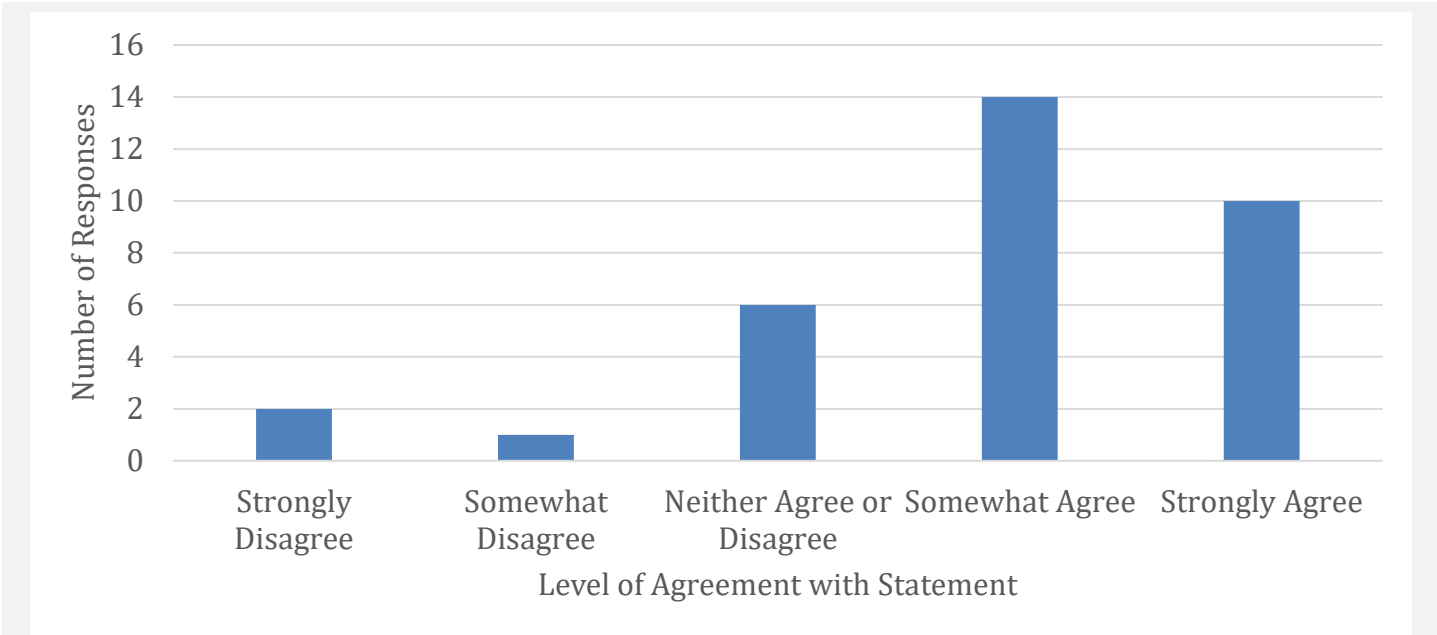


Figure 2: There Is a Need for Risk Management Executive Education in My Organization

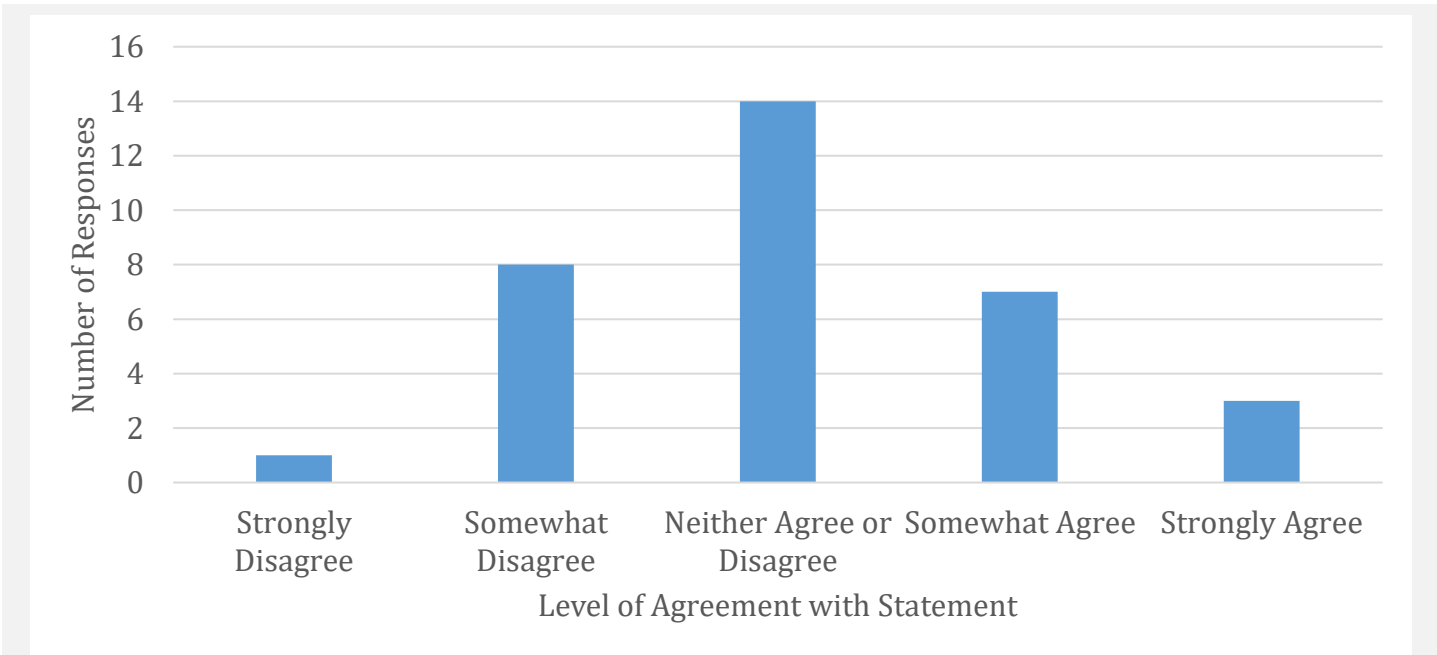


Figure 3: A Sufficient Number of High-Quality Opportunities for External Risk Management Education Exist in the Current Marketplace

The survey results showed most participants agreed that risk management executive education should happen early to mid-career (Figure 4). This indicates that experienced professionals, with potential to continue to move upward in the company, need opportunities to increase technical knowledge, as well as develop leadership and critical thinking skills.

In terms of how risk management executive education is prioritized, 45 percent reported their organization recommends risk management training, and 42 percent reported their organization neither requires nor recommends risk management training (Table 4). This could suggest that those who recommend training understand that risk management is an important concept to comprehend, but

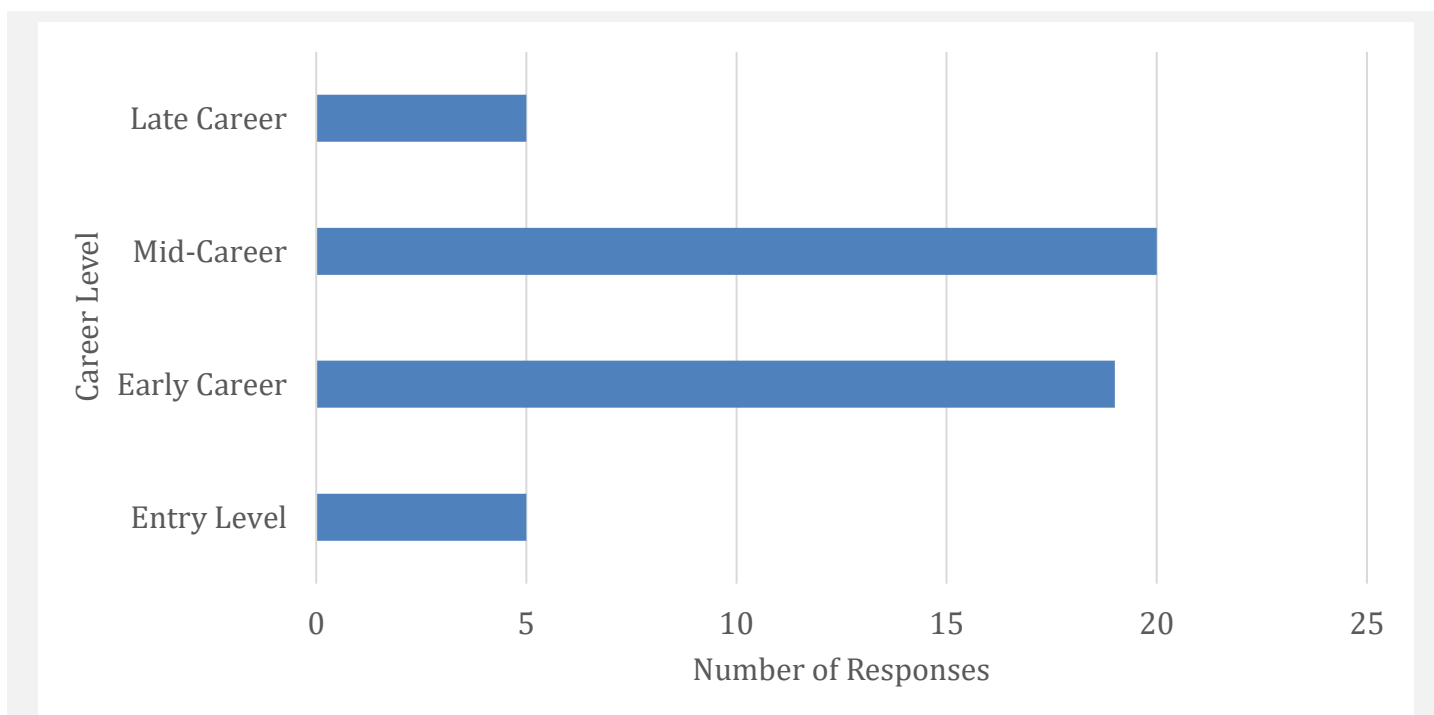


Figure 4: What Is the Typical Time in a Career Path Risk Management Executive Education Would Take Place?

Table 4: Do Companies Require or Recommend Risk Management Training?

	Percent of Total
Require	12%
Recommend	45%
Neither	42%

perhaps they cannot require training because sufficient opportunities in the market are not available.

We asked how much advance notice an employee needed to decide and plan to attend a program. Sixty-one percent stated they needed three to six months, and 27 percent needed less than three months (Figure 5). Understanding the advance notice that participants need is critical in developing a proper marketing plan for an executive education program. If a participant needs three to six months to decide, all the marketing materials including the speaker lineup and agenda must be finalized and distributed no less than six months before the program takes place. Arranging a venue, setting a schedule of events, putting together a slate of sessions, and booking speakers takes considerable time. Therefore, planning should start at least one year before the training is to occur.

When asked how many in-person, two- to three-day programs would be optimal to achieve a risk management certificate, 30 percent indicated three programs would be appropriate, and 36 percent did not feel a certificate was necessary. This result suggests that a certificate option would be a welcome addition to an executive education program. However, certification would not likely be the deciding factor of whether to attend.

Last, the survey participants were asked to rank the importance of six different program characteristics from most important (1) to least important (6). These characteristics included networking, location, reputation of speakers, time of year, cost, and ability to achieve a certificate. Table 5 reports an average of the rankings and frequency of a choice chosen as most important. Reputation of speakers was most important to the group, followed by networking, then cost. Location, time of year,

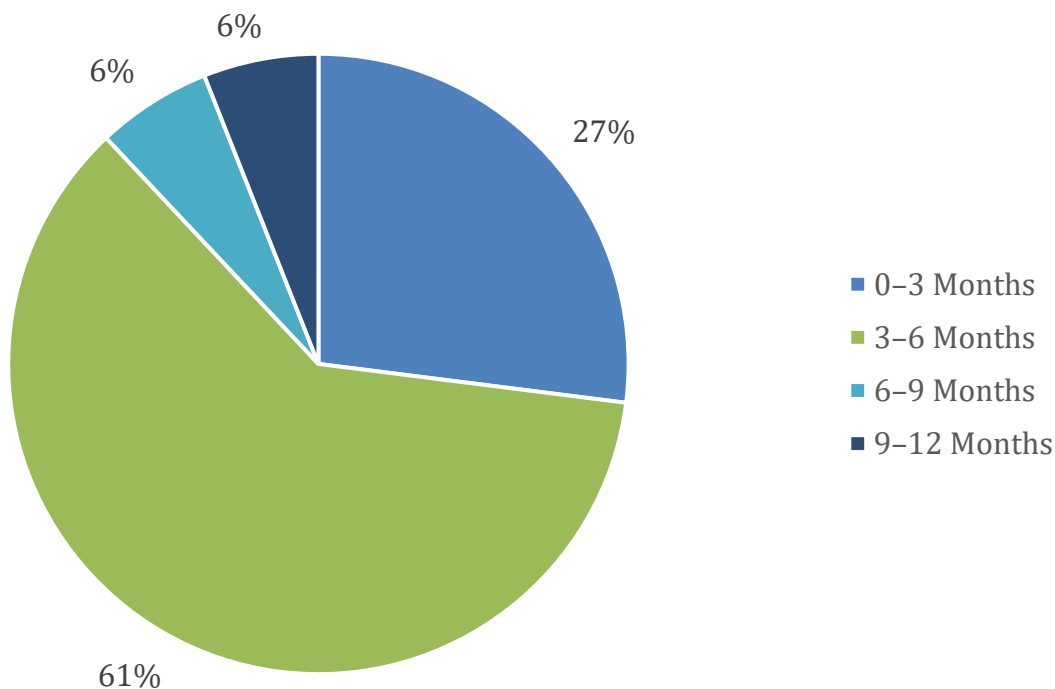


Figure 5: Advance Notice Needed

Table 5: Importance of Executive Education Program Characteristics

Program Characteristic	Average Importance Ranking	Frequency of #1 Rankings
Reputation of Speakers/Program	2.00	17
Networking	2.88	7
Cost	3.36	2
Location	3.91	2
Time of Year	3.94	2
Certification	4.91	2

Note: Respondents were asked to rank the six characteristics in order of importance, 1 = most important and 5 = least important.

and certification were the least important characteristics. Understanding the significance of each component of potential executive education programming is vital to be strategic in the allocation of resources when building a new program.

Interviews of ten executive education decision makers made it possible to gather more detail surrounding needs and preferences. Interviewees had many thoughts on what qualities of a program make it valuable to them as decision makers, with three main themes rising to the top. The first was relevant content, aligned with the goals of their organizations. Decision makers want to ensure they are attending and sending employees to programs with curriculum that will provide applicable knowledge. They want attendees to have the opportunity to both broaden their horizons, as well as become more competent in their professions. Next, interviewees wanted to see respected, experienced speakers on the agenda. Valued executive education programs put well-known speakers, with credibility in their industry, in front of participants. Last, networking surfaced as an important component. Professionals find a balance between educational time and the opportunity to meet new people to build lasting relationships in the industry, is essential.

Specific topics desired in a risk management executive education program varied widely within

interview responses, but there were general categories in common. Interviewees felt it was important to educate participants on the foundational elements such as market volatility, diversifying risk, and industry best practices. Many also brought up education on risk management outside of a participant's normal scope of view. Stated concepts included human development and recruitment of talent, embracing new challenges in the workplace, and management of risks associated with current events such as a global pandemic. Finally, numerous answers emphasized the importance of incorporating topics that are forward looking. Examples cited include environmental sustainability, cryptocurrency, and inflation. One interviewee stated it simply, "Where are we headed, what are the risks, and what tools will mitigate those risks?"

In terms of speakers desired, the response was nearly unanimous across the ten conversations. All appreciated and saw value in learning from someone in academia. However, the most important quality they look for in a lineup of speakers is real life experience. Business professionals value being taught by someone who has been in their shoes, and who can supplement a technical lesson with anecdotes and examples.

Next, the interview explored opinions regarding timing elements. Most people agreed that a two-day or three-day program is ideal. Many added, two is not enough, three is too many, suggesting a two-and-a-half-day program is best. Preferred days of the week varied. About half favored the beginning of the week, either Sunday through Tuesday, or Monday through Wednesday. Two preferred mid-week, or anything that did not overlap the weekend, and four did not have a preference. Finally, ideal time of year was discussed. Responses to this piece were even more varied than responses to the previous question. Many noted that all times of year are busy; however, if you provide a high-quality program, people will attend anyway. A few recommended the spring or fall, and one suggested avoiding fiscal year-end time periods, which occur typically either in December through January or June through July. Many noted that weather and location should be taken into consideration, adding that attendees will not be interested in coming to Kansas in January.

The interviewees then discussed who they think of when they think about providers of quality, risk management executive education. The most popular answer given was land-grant universities. Other responses included CME Group, Informa, and StoneX. Many took the chance to reiterate that they prefer a program with both an academic and an industry experience component. This suggests there is an opportunity for public and private partnerships to provide executive education.

Interviewees were asked, "What makes a risk management executive education program most valuable to the participant?" This question received the most consistent response of the entire interview. Everyone stated that "take-home" knowledge is the best thing a program can provide to the participant. The most used terms in these answers included *inspirational*, *relevant*, *tangible*, and *actionable* when describing content. A successful program will inspire participants to think of new, different, and better ways to look at and think about the work they do.

Interviewees then indicated if they preferred an off-site program that they traveled to attend, or an in-house program, bringing in external consultants to their company. A few explained that they appreciated both structures. However, the majority stated the off-site structure was more beneficial. Getting employees out of their office and disengaged from their day-to-day environment, would result in a higher level of focus and participation, and higher comprehension levels.

Those interviewed then discussed their preference among a list of connected, but standalone topics, or a coordinated track of courses to achieve a certificate. The popular opinion was that a certificate is not necessary. This allows the program to keep topics current, up-to-date, and fluid as the needs of the industry change. As one interviewee said, "Content is much more important than a certificate."

Interview participants were asked about programs they had attended previously and what made the programs good or bad. Most of the good components in these answers were discussed in previous questions. The best programs were relevant, and content was to the point. Programs provided speakers

of high quality and integrity, activities and discussion to engage participants, and quality networking opportunities with a diverse crowd. The biggest complaints included, programs not engaging the group, providing exclusively lecture style learning, and presenting irrelevant or generic content. Interviewees were also asked where they heard of the programs they have participated in. Most agreed that word of mouth is the best marketing tool, which can be difficult for a new program to utilize. Other methods included email solicitation, dispersing information through industry associations, and social media, specifically LinkedIn.

Finally, each interviewee was asked what else they would want someone to know when creating a risk management executive education program. Each participant provided diverse, insightful commentary. Ideas included considering how adults learn and accounting for that when building the learning environment. The importance of interaction, discussion, and engagement throughout the course was echoed here as well. Multiple answers stressed knowing and understanding your audience. Interview participants encouraged partnering with different departments across campus, as well as other organizations with experience in the industry. For content, one participant urged program developers to anticipate what will be relevant in the next five years, and another emphasized building the program with longevity in mind. Several interviewees confirmed that there is need for this type of programming in the market, and they look forward to Kansas State University entering the market.

5 Suggestions for Building Successful Risk Management Executive Education Programs

The data collected throughout both the questionnaire and interview process demonstrates industry professionals' opinions regarding a risk management executive education program. The research suggests an annual offering, a two-and-a-half-day program, during the beginning part of the week, in March or October. The price for the program should not exceed \$2,000, and should include parking, coffee, water, and light snacks during break times, as well as lunch each day. A networking event should be included. We would advise networking events such as a social hour with a cash bar to give the participants an opportunity to mingle and get better acquainted. The social event could culminate with dinner, featuring a keynote speaker who would address the group and discuss a current events topic.

The target audience includes early to mid-career agribusiness professionals, perhaps five to ten years post-college, who show leadership potential, and are advancing in their careers. They want to understand risk management on a deeper level, as well as stay current on future issues the food and agricultural industry will face. Given these findings, we suggest content for the program should include an equal combination of fundamental risk management concepts and emerging topics that successful players in the industry need to understand with clearly stated learning objectives. Our experience indicates the content should be delivered in an interactive manner. Tools to achieve this could include simulations, use of a case study, small group discussions, and requests for participants to share anecdotes. In cases where lecture-style sessions are needed, discussion questions should be prepared in advance to stimulate interaction and engagement.

As both the questionnaire and interview research showed, speakers are a highly important component. Though there is no exact formula to follow, we suggest a ratio of academic professors to experienced industry professionals should be at minimum 40/60, always leaning more heavily toward industry professionals. Speakers should be very well known and highly regarded throughout the industry. Biographies should be included in both marketing and workshop materials to create visibility. In the early stages of program creation, the largest amounts of time and financial resources should be allocated to developing the content and securing speakers.

Results show that several months advance notice is needed for most executives. We believe a focused marketing plan to advertise early will be critical to a new program's success. A first step could be to personally inform relevant contacts and ask them to help spread the word. Advertisements should

be submitted to as many university publications as possible. Email campaigns should be distributed to alumni. Advertisements should be placed in food and ag e-newsletters such as “Morning Ag Clips,” “The Scoop,” and “Agri-Pulse.” A comprehensive list of industry associations should be created and then called upon to help distribute the information as well. Finally, social media, especially LinkedIn, should be used to distribute marketing materials. For the timing, word of mouth marketing should begin as soon as possible. Formal marketing should be deployed no later than six months prior to the registration closing date and earlier would be better. Properly marketing the program will be costly in terms of time but will be vital for success.

6 Conclusions

The objective of this study was to identify components of a risk management executive education program that professionals in the food and agriculture industry will value, and the price they are willing to pay for the opportunity. The results of this research suggest that there is an opportunity for land-grant universities to provide risk management executive education targeted to the food and agriculture industry.

Professionals in the food and agriculture industry value the content of a program and the ability to apply it to their business. They seek opportunities with highly regarded speakers who have real-life experiences to teach from. Networking, meeting new people, and building lasting relationships across the industry is also an important component. The price a participant is willing to pay for a two- to three-day executive education opportunity is somewhere between \$1,500 and \$2,000. The information developed from this research offers guidance for beginning or improving a risk management executive education program.

The biggest limitation of this research is the small sample size of questionnaire and interview responses received. Future research can address this limitation by collecting more data and increasing the sample size. Additionally, there could be value in segmenting out different sectors of the food and agriculture industry and analyzing the responses independently.

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Appendix A: Online Qualtrics Survey

Below is the entire online survey as entered into Qualtrics, including the introductory instructions. We have left what-if instructions to make the survey progression clear. These are italicized and were not visible to participants. In instances where explanations of questions are needed, we also provide these in italics and note that participants did not see this text. In the case of short answer questions, we leave a blank, and for multiple choice questions, we include all choices which were available.

In this survey we use the term “executive education.” When we refer to executive education programming, we mean a seminar or workshop set up for employees from multiple companies to receive training to enhance skills, as well as network within the industry.

We also ask that you answer these questions based on your normal behavior, without COVID-19 pandemic travel and social distancing restrictions in mind.

Q1 Name

Q2 What industry do you work in?

Q3 What company do you work for?

Q4 What is your job title?

Q5 Are you a decision maker in your company in regard to sending employees to executive education programming?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q7 if Yes

Skip To: Q6 if No

Q6 Do you participate in executive education programming?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q8 if Do you participate in executive education programming? = Yes

Skip To: End of Survey if Do you participate in executive education programming? = No

Q7 Do you participate in executive education programming?

- Yes
- No

Q8 How frequently do members of your team seek out executive education programs?

- Less than once per year
- 1–2 times per year
- 2–3 times per year
- 4+ times per year
- Other _____

Q9 How much would you expect to pay in a registration fee for a three-day executive education program that includes meals, networking events, and opportunities to interact with well-known speakers? *(This question was answered using a slider bar format.)*

Registration Fee in USD (\$)

- 1,000
- 2,000
- 3,000
- 4,000
- 5,000
- 6,000
- 7,000
- 8,000
- 9,000
- 10,000

Q10 How much did you pay (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic) for the last executive education program you attended or sent someone to? *(This question was answered using a slider bar format.)*

Registration Fee in USD (\$)

- 0
- 1,000
- 2,000
- 3,000
- 4,000
- 5,000
- 6,000
- 7,000
- 8,000
- 9,000
- 10,000
- Not Applicable

Q11 Briefly describe the program.

Q12 What is your team’s annual budget for executive education? And how many employees is that budget for?

The remainder of the survey will ask questions specifically about Risk Management Executive Education.

Q13 Please state your agreement with the following statements.

There is need for external Risk Management Executive Education in my organization.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Somewhat Disagree (2)
- Neither Agree or Disagree (3)
- Somewhat Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

A sufficient amount of high-quality opportunities for external Risk Management Executive Education exist in the current marketplace.

- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Somewhat Disagree (2)
- Neither Agree or Disagree (3)
- Somewhat Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q14 How many employees in your company would be candidates for a Risk Management Executive Education program?

Q15 What is the typical time in a career path Risk Management Executive Education would take place? Select all that apply.

- Entry level
- Early Career
- Mid-Career
- Late Career (re-tooling seasoned employees)
- Other _____

Q16 Do you require or recommend risk management training?

- Recommend
- Require
- Neither

Q17 How much advance notice do you need about an executive education program to make a decision and plan to attend?

- 0–3 months
- 3–6 months
- 6–9 months
- 9–12 months
- More than 12 months

Q18 How many in-person, two- to three-day programs would be optimal to achieve a Risk Management Executive Education Certificate?

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- Other _____
- A certificate is not something I feel is necessary.

Q19 Rank the following risk management program characteristics in order of most important (1) to least important (6) in terms of choosing a Risk Management Executive Education program.

- _____ Quality networking opportunity with other participants
- _____ Location
- _____ Reputation of speakers/program
- _____ Time of year based on seasonality of industry/work
- _____ Cost
- _____ Accredited certification or continuing education credit

Q20 Are there other thoughts or opinions you would like to share related to choosing Risk Management Executive Education programs or insights you have gained from past experience with Risk Management Executive Education programs?

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Interviews with agribusiness executives were conducted by phone or video conference. Each interview was unique in terms of exact progression of questions, time spent on each topic, and total duration. The following script was used to guide the interviews and provide consistency regarding information gathered.

1. What qualities of a program make it valuable to you?
2. What topics would you like to see in a Risk Management Executive Education program?
3. What does the ideal Risk Management Executive Education program look like?
 - a. Speakers (background, training, experience)
 - b. Days of week
 - c. Number of days
 - d. Time of year (best and worst)
 - e. Other things you look for?
4. When you think of quality Risk Management Executive Education, who is involved in providing it?
5. What makes a Risk Management Executive Education program most valuable to the participant?
6. In general, do you prefer an off-site or an in-house program with external consultants coming in?
 - a. Elaborate on the strengths/weaknesses of each and why you favor one
7. Which do you prefer:
 - a. A list of connected but stand-alone topics to choose from
 - b. A coordinated track of sessions or courses to achieve a badge/certificate in a broader area of risk management (e.g., certification in hedging with futures, certification in Enterprise Risk Management, certification in investment analysis)
 - c. Elaborate on why that is your choice
8. In the executive education programs that you or your employees have participated in, what program qualities or activities made them good/bad?
9. How did you learn of previous programs that you or your employees have participated in?
10. What else do you want a person looking to build a quality Risk Management Executive Education program to know?

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