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STRENGTHENING  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
FOR A SUCCESSFUL  
WORKFORCE

*Editors*

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## ENHANCING GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY THROUGH KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

*Zabeda Abdul Hamid*

### **Introduction**

In the recent 9<sup>th</sup> Malaysia plan, the Malaysian government has highlighted the issue regarding preparing the Malaysian workforce to face the challenges of the dynamic global environment. The challenges include among others, advancements in science and technology, globalisation, social and economical changes as well as increased innovation by other nations. The 9<sup>th</sup> plan will focus on Human Capital Development to meet these challenges and therefore, one of its key thrusts is to increase the nation's capacity for knowledge and innovation as well as nurture a 'first-class mentality' among the workforce. In order to achieve this, the Malaysian government has allocated over RM18 billion for the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) to increase access to higher education for those aged between 17 and 23 years old. At the current moment, only 29 per cent of youths from that age group have access to higher education and the government hopes to increase the percentage of enrolment by 40 per cent by the year 2010 (Munir and Shukran, 2006).

It is estimated that there were nearly 200,000 graduates of public and private universities as well as polytechnics and community colleges in 2006 (MoHE, 2007) and this number is expected to increase every year. Despite the aims of the Malaysian government to develop a knowledgeable workforce, the current unemployment rate of Malaysia is an estimated 3.4 per cent (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2007). The government has made this issue a priority and intends to reduce the unemployment rate by offering more job opportunities to fresh graduates and those currently unemployed. At a post-mortem discussion with industry representatives after the 1<sup>st</sup> National Career Carnival 2006 held at the International Islamic University Malaysia, it was found that