

Episode 10 – The Value of Collaborative Networks

Ashleigh King: Welcome to this podcast created by Newcastle University Business School, or NUBS for short. The Oxford Dictionary states that the nub of something is the central or essential point of a situation or problem. So we hope that in this series, we can help you to get to the nubs of it. This podcast series looks at a key theme of value: the value of our creative economy, the value of our student experience, the value of our research, the value of our collaborative networks.

In this series, you will meet academics, alumni, students, graduates, and professional staff of Newcastle University Business School as they talk about what value means to them.

In this episode, join your host, Ashleigh King, as she speaks with Sam Waterfall and Mac D Silva about the power of collaborative networks. Sam is an Executive Careers Consultant and also an alumnus of Newcastle University Business School, while Mac is a current student studying his Masters in Business Administration, MBA at Newcastle University Business School.

Hi, Sam. It's so great to see you. Thank you for coming all the way from London to be with us in Newcastle upon Tyne today.

Sam Waterfall: Thank you so much. It's a pleasure. It was a long old ride, but as always, good to back. So thank you.

Ashleigh King: Well it's not just a long ride here, you actually have quite a late end on your train back home, don't you?

Sam Waterfall: Not thinking about that.

Ashleigh King: I like that. Thinking about things one step at a time. Well, I'm delighted to have you here today because one of the things about, um, your, yourself in particular, you are an alumnus of our BA, uh, honours is in, uh, Finance and Economics, is that correct?

Sam Waterfall: Financial and Business Economics, yeah.

Ashleigh King: Financial and business economics. Thank you. Um, and I think one of the things with that is, you know, our alumni network is really large, uh, overall at the university. We've got more than 230,000 in over 200 countries. But for the Business School specifically, it's 25,000 in 140 countries. So it's pretty, pretty big. And, uh, that means that, you know, our alumni network is really important to us,

but it also means we've got a duty of care and a uh, you know, a responsibility to look after our alumni and our alumni network.

And one of the things as an alumni myself that I really admired about the Business School, um, is the loyalty of their alumni, and you are one of our alumni and one of our most loyal alumni. So it's really great to have you here to hear more about you and hear about, you know, your involvement in the alumni network. But not just that - your involvement in other collaborative networks.

So we'll be chatting about a couple of things today, but before we get into that, I wanted to ask, just to hear more about you as a person, who is Sam Waterfall?

Sam Waterfall: Sure. Well, these days, uh, certainly since that degree, uh, I'm a dad. Uh, which is hugely important in, in my life. So that's the first thing now. Uh, and I'm also a marketer. Uh, it, it was a small part of, as you can imagine, Financial and Business Economics, but I went on straight away to go into marketing. Starting in the corporate world, uh, first with P&G and then with Boots, and then with Kraft Foods. And that gave me a sort of corporate background, and it was always marketing as the common thread throughout that. But along the way, it was less about the products and it started to become about the people.

And I discovered that people need marketing just as much as products. And it was really that sort of transition. So these days I'm in this happy space of working as a Brand Strategist, as a Marketing Consultant on products for people. And also, as a cons- a Career Consultant helping people with their career transitions. And so it's always about the product and it's always about the people.

Ashleigh King: I like that because, uh, one of the things that popped into my head when you were talking about your previous experience with large corporations like the ones you mentioned is that, often, you know, when we think of marketing, um, we can think of it from many different directions, but, um, you can have, you know, very small start-ups, you can have digital marketers, um, there's so many aspects to it.

But I think being in the roles that you have, and also having a background in economics and banki- not banking, business finance, all of these different things actually would give you the, um, the, the real knowledge that you would need to excel in those areas and in those big corporations. So that's really great that, um, you've also got the experience of looking at what's going to make the profits, because that is one of the things that can be really challenging for many organisations. So it's really nice to hear about some of your journey. Um, I'm also interested in your, um, Career Consultancy where you help people with their transitions. I think transitions is a key word.

Um, there is research which shows that, you know, nowadays we will have multiple careers. We won't just, you know, working the same company for 20 years, or work our way up necessarily. So what do you find, um, you know, you,

your, your clients that you speak to - are there any key transitions that are happening or key changes that you're finding?

Sam Waterfall: I think, um, I tend to help people with two main areas often as a redundancy. A corporate life is not forever. Um, it's very rare. You know, you look at that very often, the culture is up or out. And so at some point, most people are, whether it's their choice or somebody else's choice, shown the door. Uh, and because of that, it's just so, so important to be able to transition out of that to something which is the right next move.

And that's what I always talk about, the right next move. It's relatively easy. I've been doing this for 18 years now. I can't believe that, but it's 18 years. And in that time I've seen a lot of patterns. And it's helping people through the patterns to be able to accelerate their job search. Now I can do that.

I can help them get into a job more quickly, no problem. But the important thing is helping them find the right job and get them into that. And that's really what the scale is all about. And it's taking time with people to work out, what's the transition that they want to make? What do they want to keep, for the elements they want to keep from the past, and what do they really want to leave behind? So that's, that's really what I specialise in doing now.

Ashleigh King: I think it's quite interesting, because you mentioned about redundancy and I've experienced redundancy myself. It's not the nicest feeling. And one of the things that I would imagine some of your clients might be going through, is that sense of loss of identity, or who am I, what are my skills, and almost a loss of confidence that comes with going through an experience like redundancy, you know?

Uh, so do you find that often your clients are coming to you with the types of issues where they maybe are just wanting almost a mirror to show them their strengths, or to show them a different version of themselves from outside rather than what they think they know about themselves.

Sam Waterfall: Well you touch on something which is really important, which is really the other, the other side, the second group, which is the people who realize they want to change, but don't know what they want to change, to become or to do. They know that just don't want more of what they've got at the moment. And so sometimes that not knowing is really clear in their mind, but trying to work out what the options are - so what we do is we help them to... yes, look at themselves. We ask some pretty good introspective questions, but we also do a lot of exploration.

And I always, I always think about making multiple options for my clients first, and then - without judgment, so that we can get all of those options together - and then what we do is we start to narrow those down. So they end up with not

necessarily a definition of precisely what they want, but a focus. Because the focus means that there's still some leeway.

Otherwise they feel like they're too constrained. So it's about our focus for the future so that they know, and what falls out of that is some criteria. So they can start to bring others into their job search. Because if job search and career transitions is you looking at LinkedIn or looking at Indeed, that is very, very narrow. And especially for my senior clients, it, that those opportunities through jobs boards as we might call them is about 15% of all of the moves that I see made. Everything else is coming from network and collaborations with people that they know.

Ashleigh King: So that's an interesting point. 'Cause you mentioned your senior clients. So I'm expecting with that, you're talking your C-suite executives, those types of, um, leaders. And I'm wondering there, since we're talking about the power of collaboration and collaborative networks, you know, for yourself, are you finding that you're able to match make almost, uh, you know, high level, um, executive roles with, with clients? Or are you, because you're not a recruitment consultancy, right? But are you able to, through your networks, funnel the right opportunities and the right leaders together?

Sam Waterfall: Sometimes, sometimes. And it's, it really depends just outside waiting to speak to you. Interesting conversations. And this is the way it goes. It's 'cause you- the thing with networking is you don't necessarily meet someone and find that there's an immediate, uh, benefit from knowing each other, but it's about keeping in touch. And it's also about having explored enough with that person to be able to understand, what are they about? What world are they in?

Because there's people I can connect just from this, uh, from waiting in the waiting room outside. And that's just how this really works. So it's important for us all to almost have a label that our networks know about. What is the thing? And it's too much. We can't all remember six things from each of us, but one ideally, and maybe a couple of things.

If we can be known and even slightly famous amongst our group for that thing, that's why people come to me for career transitions because they just know that's what I help with. They don't know all the detail, but it's enough for them to say... and the best thing is, and this is where the alumni network has been helpful for me, because people say, oh, I know this guy, you should speak with him, this is what he does. And they don't need to know all the detail. I can work on the detail, but it's just the fact that they've got clarity on the kind of thing I help with. And so I think we need to all work on badging ourselves so that we've got that outward display which is easy and clear for other people to really understand.

So often we know that our knowledge of all the things that we do is very complicated, and we need to display it in a really simple way so that other people can pick up and then tell other people to go and see that person as well.

Ashleigh King: Absolutely. And it's, it's, I love what you've said there about, um, the value of the alumni network, because that's actually how we first met, uh, several years ago, 2018. And, uh, sorry, 2019.

And I'm just thinking, you know, one of the things that we first talked about, I interviewed you, uh, for a, um, a piece about networks, and you told me about Granovetter's paper on, um, uh, weak ties and, and just ties anyway. And so that was a really helpful piece of information for me. And it's funny what stays with you and what doesn't, but networks do become really powerful.

And as you've said, just today, you know, being in a waiting room, waiting for your podcast recording, you've been able to, um, make some new networks, make some new connections in your mind. Um, but also what I was going to point out is, you know, you have very generously stayed connected with the school, connected with the university, uh, in a wider sense.

Uh, you know, you were one of our TEDx Newcastle University speakers, which was really wonderful to have you, uh, come back and be on that stage. And one of, one of my questions is, you know, even now, you continue to gift your time, uh, with, with things like today or, um, we recently worked together on a, um, an MBA, um, Hackathon.

So a New Ventures Living Lab, and you were one of our expo boots. And I know that, although from your perspective, there wasn't much to do, we, we took your logo, we featured in an online booth, there were some social links. You still had inquiries, right? So, uh, what, what do you get out of being involved in these networks?

That's what I'm wondering. If someone's listening now and they're thinking, well, why should I stay connected with my university, with my business community, with the local chamber of commerce, with international virtual networks they're in, what do you get out of it?

Sam Waterfall: It's a great question. Um, I think I've just done it naturally because it feels right. I have done exactly the same thing with, uh, other universities. I've done exactly the same thing with my, uh, high school, my grammar school as well. Because what I think is so clear to me, and I'm not sure that everyone sees it the same way, but it's not about where we are today, it's about where we're going to be in maybe 5 years or 10 years from now.

And we might look around our class and think, well, you know, I'm not sure about him, or I'm not sure about her. And, and we might think, well, you know, what's their value to me right now? And you could be right in this instant, but you know, everyone has got into this. They've all qualified. They've been part of this group and probably most likely you've got to know them pretty well, especially in that sort of tight knit MBA cohort, like here at Newcastle in the Business School.

So these people are going to go on, I think more likely than not, to go and do great things. You're going to really want to make sure you stayed in touch with them. So for me, it's, it's a very simple, uh, thought process. It's like, well, get to know them before they're famous or before they're, you know, sort of up there in the stratosphere or the C-suite, and they'll remember you. And the way to stay remembered is to keep nurturing that network. And so you don't sort of just, you know, link in with them and then forget them, which is of course what happens a lot of time with a lot of people. But it is about nurturing the relationship. And the important thing is not just where they're going to be in 5 years or 10 years time.

What's really important is, it's people that elevate you. So in your life, if, if you've got ambitions, if you're wanting to get to a different level, if you're wanting either more status and more money or more happiness, whatever the, the motivators are for you, it's people who are going to help you. You know, we can't sit on our own a room and then think, well, I hope I get rich, or I hope I get noticed. It doesn't work. It's done through people.

So other people, by finding they are able to give you that hand up. And if you don't know the people, they can't introduce the people they know. And one important thought on that - you remember, we've had a lot of sort of, um, restrictions recently, but for the most part of our lives, we'd be able to go to weddings, we'd be able to go to all kinds of, um, all kinds of parties or gatherings where we meet people. And what happens at these gatherings is very often people like to do a little bit of matchmaking. They like to introduce people. Maybe it's their, their new partner. Fantastic. So, and we all love doing that, when you think about it. Don't forget that people love to do exactly the same thing for careers as well. So while it's lovely to introduce someone maybe to their future partner, it's absolutely brilliant as well to be able to have the pleasure of introducing someone to the next level of their career or the next opportunity. It doesn't have to be a, a new job.

So really by making sure people know what you're looking for, it's a huge opportunity for you to give them the pleasure of helping you. Because really, people love to do that.

Ashleigh King: I love everything you've said, and I love the idea of, um, the pleasure of helping people. It, that, that sounds really beautiful. I think as well, you're right, uh, your network can mean so much to you. And it's funny because it's like a garden. You have to really nurture your garden. You have to take the weeds out, you have to, you know, um, make contact and, you know, um, feed it water. You need to nurture it and grow. And that's how you have a beautiful garden.

Um, one of the things that I'm very mindful of is sometimes I fi- I feel like if I ever need and a volunteer for an alumni event, or if I ever need something, uh, it's great actually, because my pool of people is quite broad and I add to it all the time. But also, because I have niche interests such as TEDx Newcastle University, or social justice or, um, particular topics and themes.

It means that you can then, uh, tap into those resources and different networks. One of the things I wanted to ask you about is, do you think there's ever a time when you can be, when you can have too big a network? Or maybe when... Have you, have you seen any bad actors in the networking space or in collaborative networking? Uh, what would you say is bad practice in networking or having collaborative networks? What's the kind of thing that, as someone who's very people orientated yourself, would actually make you want to take someone out of your garden?

Sam Waterfall: It's a very interesting question. Uh, fundamentally it's about respecting each other. Everything about each other. And really valuing our differences. People are not all the same, thank goodness. It's about knowing who in your network, and ideally a very broad network because you don't know exactly who you're going to need, and it's brilliant to have the opportunity to go to different people.

I think one of the worst things people can do within a network is refer to their number of connections as if it's just a numerical goal and as if these are connections, rather than people. These are real people. They're like you and me, they've got their own hopes, dreams, fears. And if you interact with them as connections, and one of the things I really am not a huge fan of is the bluntness of some of the bots for networking, where people are sort of, literally, someone asked me this week, they said, how are you finding the restrictions on LinkedIn that you can only send a hundred Link- LinkedIn connection requests in a week?

And I said, I hadn't noticed because that's not my goal. I'm not trying to spam a join and connect with as many people as possible. I'm trying to have valuable relationships where it can count and where I can help. And the other important thing is, networking and relationships need to be two way. You've got to look at, what can you give? Not just, what can you get? And very often, it's what can you give first. You know, you, there's that whole idea about the fire. You know, you can't sit there looking at a, an unlit fire saying, give me some heat. You've got to provide the fuel and the oxygen and the ignition for it to work. So we've got to give first, and I think there's, there's a huge thing about persuasion, which is about reciprocity.

It's about giving. And, you know, and if you set things up in a relationship by being helpful... and what you, do not have to do, you don't have to do something which is super expensive or super difficult for you. Just try to be nice. Try to be generous, try to be kind. And just working like that with your network, you don't have to go hugely out of your way to be useful for people.

And I always think usefulness is incredibly important. So just by- and LinkedIn is fantastic. You can just be sharing useful stuff. Giving, and then people notice you. And so I think that way we set things up. But the people who are trying to take first... it's like the people who connect with you and then instantly pitch you on something, which, that's a huge no-no.

I don't always get rid of that person because I try to go beyond it. But for me it's a huge frustration, because it's, I am clear that I've been identified in Sales Navigator. I am a prospect and I have been treated instantly as one, not as a person. So I think that the main tip is treat people as people and treat them for the long-term.

The thing about networking is it's two way and the rewards are not instant. So sometimes we need to wait a little while to get the benefit of working on that connection. And there's more to it. Sometimes the benefit, honestly, is emotional in terms of the giving. It can be as nice to give, you know, that's why we give gifts, right, at Christmas or any other celebration.

It's, it's the pleasure of giving. So it doesn't have to be that there's an immediate reward for everything that we do.

Ashleigh King: Absolutely. Thank you so much. That's a really beautiful way that you've shared that. Um, yeah, I like that advice. And I also think that, um, it's one of my absolute pet hates, is the idea of pitching someone and then straight away trying to sell them something.

Um, and I think that, that is why, um, you know, treating people like real people, like you say, they may have dogs or cats or parrots. So whatever else they might have, a goldfish, you know, they've got hopes and fears and dreams and, and children and spouses and real things going on. And, you know, um, there is value in being kind and, you know, nurturing the people around us and our ecosystem of, um, people we're working with.

So, uh, it's wonderful to have had you on the show today and you know, been chatting to you. I do have one final question for you, Sam. So we're going to be putting in your show notes all the information on how people can find out about you, all your links to your social sites. But I just want to ask, you know, you've been so involved with the Business School overall and just stayed connected with your alumni network. I would like to ask you, if you could say in one word, what Newcastle University Business School means to you, what would you say?

Sam Waterfall: Can I hyphenate it?

Ashleigh King: Yes. Go for it. Why not?

Sam Waterfall: Well, no, seriously, it's ongoing opportunity. It's always been an opportunity. Uh, and I think there's a bright future with that. So one word, one word, opportunity.

Ashleigh King: Perfect. And what I like about the word opportunity is, is that is so broad and it can be broad. It can be, you know, doing a podcast. It can be, um, uh, speaking at an event. It could be being on a photo shoot. There's so many ways

that our alumni can stay connected. And it is, I would hope to think. A two-way street, you know. So it's like anything else, you have to nurture it. So thank you so much for joining us today. It was an absolute pleasure to chat to you.

Sam Waterfall: My pleasure to be here. Thank you so much.

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Ashleigh King: Hello, Mac. So nice to see you.

Mac DSilva: Hi, Ashleigh. Great to be here.

Ashleigh King: Yes, absolutely. So I'm so excited to talk to you because I did my MBA and I graduated in 2020, uh, in December. And you yourself are one of our current MBA students, correct?

Mac DSilva: Right. Yeah, it's been a great journey, I think. I reached out to you as well in the beginning. And I reached out to a couple of other cohorts, as well as the cohort before that, I think 2019 as well. And I got some good feedback and I think that helped me decide and, uh, and my move to Newcastle as such was pretty enlightening. And I was excited at that point of time and I'm still, I'm looking at, uh, things forward.

Ashleigh King: Absolutely. So one of the things that I have noticed since first meeting you on a couple of occasions... so for instance, before the MBA, you reached out on LinkedIn made a connection, asked questions. Similarly in person, you know, you also wanted to know who you should go to, to ask about a particular industry or where to find connections or where to find out about events in the start-up space or about particular areas of interest to you in technology or computing or, um, tech sector generally.

And so I really liked that because I think that level of, um, just interest in what's going on around the world, and going around your space when you come and visit somewhere, like you have, you are here in the UK for a year, you know, maybe a little bit longer, depending on how long you choose to stay.

You've actually made networks while you're here. And I'm curious for you about networks. What does that mean to you? So when you go back to India, or even now, are you still making much contact with your networks? Are you still nurturing them?

Mac DSilva: Uh, yes, I am. So I think I'll answer this like this, right? So. You make a network in order to ensure that you have the visibility. One, you have the right connections and the right, uh, um, knowledge base as you will, to tap in when you require help maybe or require information.

Uh, so I am tapping my, uh, network where as and when I need it. And also one key aspect is not only receiving that information or the help, but also giving it, you know, passing it on. Right. So like you mentioned, I reached out to you, I reached, and still I reach out to a lot of people trying to, you know, build up my network, trying to make connections, trying to understand which are the industries I should be targeting and what I should be looking for.

I think the key in today's busy world is if you will, will be, to be very specific in terms of what you need of the person, right? I'm not like, I'm not, I'm not being very, you know, I'm being very straightforward in terms of you connect with a person because everybody's busy. So until then, unless you are being very straightforward, they do not know what to come back to you with. I think that's very key if you're building a network. And yeah.

Ashleigh King: I think that's a really valid point because you want to save your network's time as well as save yourself time. So it's almost a respect of a someone else's time.

Mac DSilva: Right.

Ashleigh King: It's the same with almost how we send emails. You know, uh, we can, uh, introduce people and save them time by if you... What I'm trying to say here is I've experienced exactly what you said there. I'm often introduced to people if I email.

Mac DSilva: Right.

Ashleigh King: And I'm thinking, well, why have I been included in this email? Or why do they want to introduce us? But if you take the time to say, I think you would be really great to connect with each other because you have a similar interest in starting a business or in podcasting or whatever it is, or for you, for yourself, your own interests, then it gives people the understanding of why you think there is a connection, because they might not have time to have a zoom call with them or, or want to.

They might think, well, why is this important in my workload? Whereas if you make it worthwhile and you tell them... So I really liked that point about valuing and respecting someone else's time. Have you ever tried to network with someone where it hasn't worked out or, um, collaborate with someone and been disappointed?

Mac DSilva: Well I think everybody has that, uh, especially, uh, I use LinkedIn a lot. That's my primary. And then I connect with people, you know, like yourself and try to reach out to people. But yeah, I have faced these issues a lot of with regards to LinkedIn, if you will. Uh, I think this is something that I speak to a lot of HR as well, you know, um, Human Resource consultants as well.

What do you do when you're building a network and if somebody is not responding? So one aspect is, you try to be persistent, you know, you try to be persistent at that. The other one is you cannot seem like a stalker, so you need to kind of scale it down and say, all right, this is not the time.

But one point I would like to make here is, you know, my mentor had said this to me: you need to market yourself. Nobody else will do that for you. Right. Now, consider a case that is person A, uh, who is not reaching out to you. Right? However, when you market yourself in the sense that you say, all right, I have changed the job and this is what I'm looking for. And you both should have, right. Somewhere down the line, he's also looking at the post. And probably at that point of time, when that aligns no problem, he says, okay, this person is doing something, he will reach out to you. I think that's, that's a viewpoint I have, you know, kind of come down to at this point.

Ashleigh King: I really liked that viewpoint because I feel like, um, when you market yourself, you bring the right people to you. So you could be persistent and knocking down on all of the doors to try and ask someone to take the time to notice you. At the same time, if you, if you share things about your life, if you share things about your projects that you're working on and really let yourself and your personality and your passion shine through, it brings the people that are, I like to say, um, my soulmate clients. But you know, the, the people you want to attract start to come to you. And, um, so I think I really agree with that.

The other point I've noticed is when, when you like and engage with other people's content, um, when you do something for them, so you make it a little bit more about them rather than you, it actually creates a much better network and it feels much nicer for them. They want to engage with someone, with you more.

Mac DSilva: I agree to that point. So here's a tip I would say first of all. So when HR or maybe a Human Resource consultant reaches out to you and says, okay, this is a job that I have, but it's not what you're interested in. Right. You probably have somebody in the network who, you know, you could, who is maybe interested in that. You try to connect the HR along with that. So I think that also, so what I'm trying to get at is you show your gratitude. Okay. You say, you try to help them out. And I think that also has helped me build relationships, so.

Ashleigh King: Yeah, it's almost like reciprocity, reciprocity, isn't it. You're doing something to, maybe for you that's not the right thing right now. But you're gonna connect them with someone who would really value that information. And again, that's, that's more about giving and about your time and, you know. But then later on, if you know that you need a HR consultant or you need a recruit, uh, a recruiter, you may have someone you can send a message and say, hey, I've actually got something I'm stuck with, could you help? And they're more inclined to support you. Yeah, I like that.

Um, I would like to know, so you are currently studying your MBA, which is amazing. And I would love to hear a little bit about your experience so far with the program. But also how, uh, and if you have connected with any alumni and the alumni network, and has that helped you to increase your own network and, um, how you see that going forward?

Mac DSilva: Okay. Um, so I'll answer this in two bits, right? So first part, uh, with regards to the program, it's been an awesome experience, right? Um, I was looking for a solid break in terms of taking a sabbatical from work. Uh, I have around 12 years experience now in IT project management. Uh, I was looking at a pivot in my career, not away from IT, but from project management to product management.

So I think in that sense, I am, I'm very specific into, in terms of what I'm expecting out of this project, uh, program as such. So having said that it's going very well. It aligns exactly with what I had planned. And a lot of that helped, uh, reaching out to yourself as well as the other alumni, you know?

So yeah. The project program has been awesome. Uh, and I think the second is, first semester is a little bit, uh, taxing is what I'm told. However, I'm finding the second semester more taxing. I don't know why. But yeah, that's the general consensus across the alumni network. But, uh, yeah, it's, it's been very good so far. Uh, with regards to the alumni, I think I'm reaching out to a couple of them trying to build, you know, connections.

I think I have reached out to a couple of guys from Malaysia and you know, Egypt, and, uh, I think, um, the US as well. So I think that's helping me. Um, and that's something that I'm looking forward to, right. Um, I think that is a long way to go in the next six months. I hope to build on that as well. Yeah. So it has been a pretty good experience, overall program, as well as the alumni network.

Ashleigh King: Absolutely. And it's interesting what you said there as well about, um, gosh, you know, all the people you've been able to reach around the world. There are lots of alumni and our MBA alumni are particularly engaged, more than any of our other, uh, student networks.

Um, but I think as well, um, it's just nice to hear that you, what you've said there is, you've been planning from even before coming, you know, taking a sabbatical and then planning for your future. So I really love to hear that. Um, and I think as well, attitude is everything. So it's so nice to hear yours.

Um, so I have one final question for you. I just want to know, if you could sum up Newcastle University Business School in one word, what would that be?

Mac DSilva: Um, I don't know if I can do it in one word. It's been, so if you say, it's been awesome, if that, that, that, that works, but I'll give a perspective, right? Um, from an, from an academic perspective, it has been very good.

Uh, from, from the standpoint of the academics who are teaching as the lecturers and, you know, the support staff that's been there, I think that's fabulous, right? It's been extremely helpful. Everyone has been extremely helpful to me. Uh, be it lecturers, personal tutors, the mentors. I think it has been an awesome experience.

I do not think I would receive such, uh, sort of support in other universities. I think one thing that came out when I spoke to the cohort, right, uh, previous cohort or the alumni is that the MBA cohort is more like a community of, well, neat, a well-oiled community as such. I think that's key and then that helps a lot. So yeah, that's, that's been my overall.

Ashleigh King: It's really nice to hear that. And just to, as a disclaimer, I didn't ask you to say any of those things. So it's very nice for me to hear them as well. But yeah, I think, as an MBA alumni myself, I'm very fortunate to have done the program and to be connected with so many wonderful people.

And I look forward to when you graduate, staying connected, regardless of where we go in our professional careers.

Mac DSilva: Sure. Thank you so much.

Ashleigh King: Excellent. Thank you so much for coming in, Mac.

Mac DSilva: Thank you for having me.

Ashleigh King: Thanks for listening. We'd love to hear your feedback. You can drop us a line at nubspodcast@newcastle.ac.uk, and you can also tag us in any of our Newcastle University Business School social media channels. You can find these links in our show notes. Don't forget to like, subscribe, comment, and share with your friends.

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