

Introduction: A Call to Educate

This section appears at a time when fiscal crisis grips the world. Governments and corporations are facing hard questions, and management education and research are also being called to account. Some of the fundamental questions raised are as follows:

1. What caused the crisis and what is likely to be its magnitude in the foreseeable future?
2. Could the crisis have been avoided?
3. What does it say about our discipline that we failed to foresee the crisis and alert society of what was happening in the business world?
4. Why as a body of scholars did we largely fail to criticize the business activities that brought about this crisis?
5. What can our discipline contribute to assist the management of the crisis?
6. What can we as a body of scholars do to ensure the world is changed so that a crisis of this magnitude does not occur again?

We are currently putting together a special section of Books & Resource Reviews on this very topic, and we welcome your suggestions and your reviews on books and other resources. We hope to use this space to collectively reflect on these important questions.

In this issue, we are pleased to present four reviews that contribute to a broader perspective on how we educate future managers. The first book, *Management Education and Humanities* by Gagliardi and Czarniawaska, offers a variety of insights on how we might improve what and how we teach. More specifically, as Akbari notes in his review, at least some of the chapters offer an alternative to the economic paradigm that permeates much of our writing and discussion in the classroom. The book includes chapters that range from theoretical advocacy, practical how-to, and even critical analysis. In one of the critical chapters, Akbari paraphrases the chapter author as saying, “we are all better off to preserve the current separation between management and humanism unless there emerges a serious problem that truly necessitates a merger between the two.” In the time since the book was published, a serious economic problem has emerged around the globe, and most would agree that the problem is driven by management decisions in large companies and in our governments. Is the lesson that separating management and humanism exacts too large a cost on society? Whether the approaches advocated in

this particular book are the best way to prepare the next generation of managers, we leave to you.

The other three books provide theoretical and practical advice for management educators. The first review is Cataldo’s, of *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge* by Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder. This book provides a theoretically driven how-to for communities that typically exist outside the classroom. Nonetheless, management educators can learn how to create community with this book, using the ideas in their classrooms or to extend the reach of their efforts to facilitate learning deeper into an organization. The second review is Williams’, of *Next Generation Management Development: The Complete Guide and Resource* by Cecil and Rothwell. This book also bridges the gap between theory and practice and offers guidance that is relevant for management educators, both in and out of the classroom. Williams does an excellent job of noting the underlying theoretical basis for the volume, as well as the associated strengths and weaknesses.

Finally, Soriano’s review of the two-volume *Handbook of Research in Entrepreneurship Education*, edited by Fayolle, provides highlights from this comprehensive compilation. The handbook demonstrates the vast range of activities that comprise the domain of entrepreneurship and why a multidisciplinary and long-term educational approach is required. Given that entrepreneurial activities are the engine of economic growth, shaping the kinds of products, services and organizational behavior we witness in society, attention is required to not only the capacities associated with successful entrepreneurs, but also to the character qualities that differentiate ethical from unethical entrepreneurial behavior. While the handbook provides a great deal of insight on the former, the latter is an important consideration of educators, especially given the economic events of recent times.

We close with a call to educate. While there are riots and protests in some parts of the world, our job should be analysis aimed at understanding. It is important that we do all that is possible to learn from the causes, responses, and consequences of the present financial crisis. The future of the next generation and the well-being of

our planet depend upon it. We welcome your thoughts and suggestions for what and how we should be teaching to make that happen. In our corner of the journal, we hope to collect and disseminate resource reviews that will help us understand and avoid repeating the problems facing our world today.

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