

# Educating Tomorrow's Thought-Leaders: Distinguished Scholars Answer a Burning Question



Edited by

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*“We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.”*

*T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets*

# Foreword

It was an unashamedly simple and courageous plan: Approach leading scholars from around the world and see if they would take up the challenge to answer a burning question (within 200-300 words): “*What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?*” As you will see in the pages that follow, the response has been overwhelming and we owe them all our deepest gratitude!

Each contribution (arranged in alphabetical order) has something thought-provoking to say about our craft. Each has been written with conviction, passion, compassion and a longing for betterment. We have published entries “as-is” to ensure their unique message is heard in their own voice. Some felt prompted to discuss doctoral education and others graduate education. Still others focused more broadly on how we develop leaders and run our business schools. Taken together, we hope that the diversity of their perspectives combined with the commonality of purpose will enable us all to think more deeply about how we educate the next generation of thought-leaders, and in the process, help improve our practice as educators.

We believe this booklet of thoughts from some of the world’s leading scholars has the power to captivate the imagination and inspire us all to work together to help make this world a better place.

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## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Nancy J. Adler**

S. Bronfman Chair in Management  
Desautels Faculty of Management  
McGill University

### **My Answer:**

Leading Artistry: Finding Beauty in a Fractured World

Think for a moment about the condition of global society and the planet. During the 20th century, the world seems to have conducted a long experiment in ugliness. Now in the 21st century, we find ourselves relegated to the results of that experiment. Whether we look at the incessant wars and lack of peace or at the ecological disasters; whether we look at poverty or at disease, the evidence of ugliness assaults our senses and our sensibility. How do we lead when confronted with such ugliness? How do we teach leadership in the 21st century? The answer is by reclaiming our ability to see and by daring to care.

Leadership demands, among a set of other core leadership skills, artistry; leadership approaches that we can learn from great artists and that have the most potential to transform the world's ugliness back into beauty. That means collectively refocusing our 21st-century leadership on transforming recessions back into vibrant economies; on transforming environmental disasters back into flourishing ecologies; and on transforming poverty back into prosperity. It means taking responsibility for returning the world to beauty. It does not mean merely attempting to make the world a little less ugly, nor certainly, to define success merely by financial returns reported in an incessant cacophony or daily stock prices and quarterly earnings' reports. That's not the goal. Maximizing individual success alone, whether for individuals, organizations, companies or countries guarantees collective financial, societal, and ecological failure. "Less ugly" is not good enough, and we know it.

Film: See Adler's Leadership Artistry: Finding Beauty in a Fractured World keynote - <http://www.mcgill.ca/desautels/integrated-management/beyond-business/teaching-and-research/art-leadership/film-leadership-artistry-> - first presented in Europe at the joint PRME (Principles of Responsible Management Education) Conference, CEEMAN (Central and Eastern European Management Schools), and Challenge Future conferences. The keynote is accompanied by world renowned pianist Diana Baker.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Paul Adler**

Harold Quinton Chair in Business Policy and  
Professor of Management and Organization  
USC Marshall School of Business  
University of Southern California

### **My Answer:**

As I see it, the biggest challenge facing us as management educators is to equip our students to deal with the increasingly intense and contradictory pressures to which their organizations will be subjected in the coming years. Pressure for lower costs will surely not diminish, but will contend with greater pressure for innovation. Pressure for higher productivity will contend with intensified pressure for environmental sustainability. Pressure for greater efficiency will contend with growing pressure for higher pay and richer opportunities for personal development.

As such contradictions intensify, the better established, more rigorous, technical-scientific elements of our knowledge-base will lose their value — unless students learn how to combine these elements with a deeper understanding of the historical, sociological, and political-economic character of those contradictions. Our students will be ineffectual as managers and frustrated as individuals — unless they understand the theoretical debates and deep value disagreements that characterize these issues.

We therefore urgently need a broadening of the management education curriculum. Unfortunately, however, many management degree programs do not require any courses at all targeting this broader context. And of the texts and courses that are available, many fail to engage students in the difficult debates that characterize the issues here.

Beyond creating new courses and teaching materials, another key task is to encourage our schools to engage more deeply with a broader range of stakeholders. Most business schools see the business community as their primary stakeholder, because of course it's business enterprises that recruit most of our graduates. But if we are training our students to work in organizations that engage with multiple stakeholders expressing contradictory demands, then our institutions should model this engagement in our own governance, curricula, and extra-curricular activities.

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### **Véronique Ambrosini**

Professor of Management  
Department of Management  
Monash University

### **My Answer:**

What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world? I wish I had the answer and I hazard that this answer is likely to be multi-faceted. This said, I would like to share some thoughts, many based on my current frustrations, regarding what we should be thinking of.

In view of my background I will take the teaching of strategic management to illustrate my view. Clearly there are some exceptions but if we read most strategic management textbooks, one can notice that the large majority of the content emphasizes rational choice, especially top managers' and is based on equilibrium assumptions. The books are also jam-packed with tools and techniques that can give students the illusion that managers can have complete control and make unbiased, fully informed decisions.

We all know that the content of these books is not a reflection of what happens in practice. While there is no need for research to know that, even our academic research (e.g. cognition, strategy-as-practice) stresses that this is a myth. However we still teach as if rationality and equilibrium were the norm. There are of course many advantages to do so: it is easier to tell students 'the truth', 'the answer' etc. and words such as control, analysis, command are salient to non-experienced students, however by doing so we are in effect lying to our students. We are not depicting the world in which they will have to work in. We are not preparing our future leaders to cope and strive in a world where uncertainty, ambiguity, emotion and intuition reign. So to conclude I strongly believe that if we, as management educators, genuinely care about educating our future thought-leaders we need to get out of our comfortable bubble. Let us stop being unrealistic about the world we live in!

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Elena Antonacopoulou**

Professor of Organizational Behavior  
University of Liverpool Management School  
University of Liverpool

### **My Answer:**

The Experience of Learning: Making Connections Afresh in Time and Space

Exploring how we disentangle this complicatedness in ways that foster fresh thinking and acting lies at the core of what could be termed a 'Strategic Organisational Learning Agenda'. The focus of such an agenda has been at the core of my own scholarship and work in leading GNOSIS (see [www.gnosisresearch.org](http://www.gnosisresearch.org)) which is orientated towards three priorities:

1. Supporting 're-search' as a common practice that can engage the pandemonium of perspectives (academics, executives, policy makers)
2. Re-turn to reflexivity to mobilize new ways of learning and changing
3. Rethinking 'leader-ship' and 'man-agement' with a focus on impact

These three priorities would form critical responses to the question, because they foster a better understanding of the experience of learning. The experience of learning reflects a complex – a symplegma – set of connections between the content, process and context of learning. In this sense, the symplegmatic nature of learning as a temporal, relational, social space, essentially propounds its emergent nature.

This view of learning brings into closer focus the importance of connections and possibilities in multiplicity. It invites a new mode of learning - 'learning in crisis' that recognizes the emergence and emergency in learning practices in our going engagement with the unknown (that defines the perceived complicatedness of the world).

The experience of learning therefore, embraces the interdependence between time and space of individual and collective learning in action, for action and from transaction. It draws attention to the process of creating connections when and where these were not thought possible. It signals the ways in which we become alert, energized, awakened and attentive, when we are able to see things differently, because we no longer operate by logic nor emotion alone. The experience of learning reflects the struggle and the sense of freedom to be authentic as one experiences learning to feel safe being vulnerable.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Steven J. Armstrong**

Professor of Organisational Behaviour  
Hull University Business School  
University of Hull

### **My Answer:**

Without doubt, the nature of managers' work is becoming increasingly more challenging as they struggle to operate in a more volatile, uncertain and complex world - a world in which they must react to increasing turbulence and uncertainty, often in culturally, economically and institutionally diverse locations. So what are the challenges facing management education in business schools? Leading authors from the field assert the phenomena that characterize the curriculum in business schools lead to the passive ingestion of inert ideas that are merely received into the mind without being utilized, or tested, or thrown into fresh combinations. They are also accused of being too focused on scientific research, hiring professors with limited real-world experience and graduating students who are ill-equipped to wrangle with the complex, unquantifiable issues facing managers. It is also known that neither possessing a management degree, nor the grades achieved correlate with career success. Nor is there much evidence that business school research is influential on management practice! So what will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders? Business schools need to break with established norms and adopt long-term radical reform rather than tinkering at the margins of existing provision that already delivers a poor product. This means dismantling previous offerings. Management careers now cross boundaries of function, organization, industry, cultures and political borders. Management education should therefore change from its current functional 'silo type' disciplinary mentality toward a provision that is organized around the key constituencies that a manager needs to engage in order to be effective. Without radical reform of this type, business schools are likely to continue to fail to impart useful management skills, fail to instill norms of ethical behavior, and fail to prepare the next generation of thought-leaders.



## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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**Neal M. Ashkanasy**  
Professor of Management  
UQ Business School  
The University of Queensland

### **My Answer:**

An aphorism I give to my students is as follows: “The most irrational thought a person can have is that people are rational.” In fact, examples of human irrationality are all around us: from our irrational fear of flying to people’s rigid beliefs in religious dogmas. It is also reflected in the “tragedy of the commons,” where individuals pursue short-term personal gain to the detriment of their future well-being.

Unfortunately, much of what is taught in business school curricula ignores this propensity for irrationality, assuming that somehow students can be taught to use rational formulae that will result in optimal decision-making. Our educational systems need instead to equip students for a fast-moving world, where decision-making is informed by what Argyris and Schön refer to as “double-loop learning,” i.e., where individuals learn to question the underlying assumptions of orthodoxy. In particular, students need to be trained to engage in mindfulness, which I define in terms of personal conscious awareness, including awareness of own feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations.

Consistent with this view, truly rational human decisions derive from an ability to take on board real feelings (i.e., mindfulness) and to use these to guide thoughts and behaviors. One way to achieve this is through emotional intelligence training. According to Mayer and Salovey, emotional intelligence is an ability to perceive, to assimilate, to understand, and to manage emotional states in self and others. Indeed, without mastering of these emotional abilities, individuals are likely to remain trapped in an illusory world of rationality, thinking other people are somehow “rational.”

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Don Bacon**

Professor of Marketing  
Daniels College of Business  
University of Denver

### **My Answer:**

Management Education Must Become More Scientific and More Courageous

To educate future generations of thought-leaders in an increasingly complicated world, the field of management education must become more scientific. For too long, management educators (a term I use here for business educators in general) have often operated on faith, adhering to pedagogical theories and approaches that are not appropriately evidence-based. In recent years, management education studies have shown that actual student learning as measured by tests or scored with rubrics (direct measures) is unrelated to student perceptions of their own learning or student evaluations of teaching (indirect measures). Unfortunately, most of what we currently accept as wisdom in management education is based on indirect measures of learning. For example, I recently scanned the back issues of the *Journal of Marketing Education*, the journal that I now serve as Editor. Only about 5% of the articles published in *JME* used direct measures of learning, and of those, about half meet the more rigorous standards of educational research, such as use of control groups, distinct treatments, and adequate sample sizes embraced by organizations such as the *What Works Clearinghouse*. I believe this journal is typical of many management education journals.

At the same time, management educators must be more courageous and willing to challenge accepted practices. For example, methods such as case teaching and peer learning are widely accepted as effective, but these methods have little or mixed support when studied using direct measures of learning. We also know that much of the management concepts that students learn in school are quickly forgotten not long after their last exam. We must have the courage to conduct studies that might reveal that much of what we are doing in the classroom is not optimal. Only then can new and more productive theories of management education and related pedagogies be developed.

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### **Helena Barnard**

Director of Research  
Gordon Institute of Business Science  
University of Pretoria

### **My Answer:**

In South Africa, the country with the highest income inequality worldwide, a malfunctioning education system, massive unemployment and a crime epidemic reinforce each other to trap millions of South Africans in poverty. Commuting to work I pass familiar beggars on “their” streets and a phalanx of security guards earning a pittance protecting others and their belongings.

Once at GIBS I’m in a place of privilege and excellence. Our students and delegates are the beneficiaries of good education, more cosmopolitan than most managers from Europe or North America – often due to extensive diasporic networks – and often operate in tough, turbulent business environments. Thought-leaders will likely come from their ranks, and as business school faculty, our challenge is how best to guide them.

The rapidity of technological advances has made it impossible for individuals, firms and even, evidence suggests, countries to master all technologies. But much as technological development is increasingly specialized, progress comes from combining diverse knowledge worlds, not only from focused advances. Although well-understood in technological innovation, its importance in the social domain is often neglected.

Yet the principle remains. One manifestation is in general management: Successful business leaders are able to integrate the different elements of the business. But this does not constitute thought leadership. Thought leadership requires an even wider understanding of different worlds.

This challenges us, the faculty, to be brave and open doors to worlds where our students may be scared to venture alone. We need to guide future leaders to engage more fully with the world. We need leaders who can look at the “margins” and not just the “centre” of business; leaders who can question those categorizations. The mechanisms of deprivation – poverty, poor education, crime – shape economies and business as much as mechanisms of privilege and excellence. We need to connect both those worlds.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Donald (Don) Bergh**

Louis D. Beaumont Chair of Business Administration and  
Professor of Management  
Department of Management  
Daniels College of Business  
University of Denver

### **My Answer:**

Educating the next generation of thought-leaders will likely require a balance of core and timeless concepts with as close to hands-on practical experience as possible. We are likely to have a whole new set of organizations in 5 to 10 years, so preparing our students to be ready for those new firms and environments is essential, as well as instilling upon them to become life-long learners. I believe that our students need to have a platform of content knowledge skills from the classroom that can be blended with working with leaders at the cutting edge of technologies and knowledge development.

Pedagogically, I would recommend that we consider integrating several approaches to create a diverse learning base that will help prepare our students: (1) we incorporate presentations from YouTube to introduce and reinforce enduring concepts like industry analysis, business model types, value-creation, growth actions to complement our lectures; (2) we require students to apply concepts to explain current events described in the media; (3) we use case studies so students develop analytical and problem solving skills; (4) we employ group competitions on strategy problems, and (5) provide an in-depth exposure to a new firm(s) that is starting to succeed. This latter element is introduced early in the class through a guest speaker who discusses the organization's history and then describes some of the problems that they have and are currently facing. The students would visit the organization, meet the people, try to understand the perspectives of all the stakeholders and learn about future plans.

Overall, we provide students with a blend of concepts and application alongside an organization that is preparing for its future.

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### **Jon Billsberry**

Chair in Management  
Deakin Graduate School of Business  
Deakin University

### **My Answer:**

That Business Schools (B-schools) are regarded in many universities as cash cows is now well established. As such, they are milked of their revenue and starved of investment. This is exemplified by the physical design of the teaching spaces in B-schools. Stroll through the corridors of most B-schools and you will find multifunction lecture rooms, meeting rooms, and offices. They may be plush and contain up-to-the-minute technology, but scrape away the gloss and underneath these are just rooms containing chairs, tables, and presentation equipment.

The comparison to the investment made in other parts of the university is startling; operating theatres for medical students, particle colliders for physicists, telescopes for astronomers, theatres for drama students, cameras and control desks for media studies students, and laboratories for chemists. As described by Leavitt (1989: 40), “Business schools have been designed without practice fields.” Not surprisingly, B-school instructors resort to rigorous theory-rich teaching approaches in the denuded academic environment within which they must work.

B-school practice fields will be real organizations (owned and run as commercial operations by the university) in which specific managerial roles are reserved for business students. After an initial induction, I see undergraduate students cycling through a series of different managerial roles spending three months in each one managing real people in meaningful jobs. The student managers might work in the morning coming into the university in the afternoon to receive instruction on matters determined by their specific experiences. This would drive a practical curriculum revolving around process, judgment, behavior, and skills and probably require teams of multidisciplinary faculty who are able to tackle real world problems with minimal preparation. It would be a root and branch transformation of management education, but one capable of producing graduates who are able to go straight into managerial roles and be effective.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Michael Harris Bond**

Visiting Chair Professor of Psychology  
Department of Management and Marketing  
Hong Kong Polytechnic University

### **My Answer:**

Premise #1: we are all “thought-leaders”, be it as teachers, parents, counselors, lawyers, managers, line supervisors, religious authorities and so forth. What varies is the focus and abstraction of our educational contributions to our “student’s” development.

Premise #2: we are more than thought-leaders; we are motivators, modeling, exhorting and supporting goals of personal and interpersonal priorities in the lives of our “students”.

Premise #3: the world has become complicated across time, and the degree of complication is increasing asymptotically with respect to the speed of changes introduced into our lives and the inter-relatedness of the ecological factors and shareholders involved in making any decision.

One growing complication for us academic “thought-leaders” is the cultural complexity of the students in the schools where we work and in the cultural groundedness of the knowledge and values we transmit as we go about our academic “bus-iness”. It behooves us then to discover and apply more of what we know and can help our students to discover about how our own cultural backgrounds as teachers and students facilitates and constrains what is possible for us to achieve in and out of class, and how the interface of our different cultural traditions potentiates and limits the influence we can exercise on the thoughts and motivational profiles of the students who pass through our stewardship. In short, I believe that we teachers must bring ourselves to rigorous cultural account in our chosen careers as thought [and value-] leaders, and educate our charges accordingly. *“Caveat praeceptor”*.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Bala Chakravarthy**

Professor of Strategy and International Management  
IMD Business School

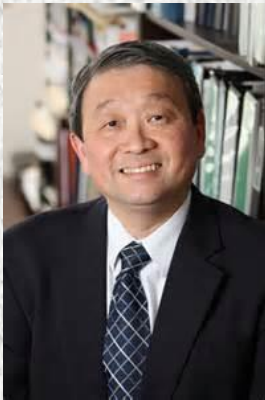
### **My Answer:**

The mounting criticism in several quarters of the short termism in business and its myopic focus on financial performance to the exclusion of social and environmental performance may finally be having some effect. Sustainable development will be more than just PR. Leaders will have to work harder to meet their social and environmental responsibilities, mostly to protect their firm's license to operate. A firm's own employees, especially the newer generation, will also seek such a change.

Many of the celebrated qualities of a leader: creative strategist, a thoughtful organizational architect, and an effective mobilizer of people will remain. But achieving sustainable development will require the leader to make difficult tradeoffs between strategies, among organizational designs and across motivational initiatives as these may promote financial v/s social v/s environmental performance differently. The effective leader of tomorrow must become adept at dynamically balancing how the firm meets these competing performance goals. If the focus thus far has been on decision making (often to serve a single goal), the next generation of thought-leaders will have to show mastery in managing dilemmas (two goals) and trilemmas (three goals).

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Ming-Jer Chen**

Leslie E. Grayson Professor of Business Administration  
The Darden School  
University of Virginia

### **My Answer:**

Ambicultural Thinking: A Mindset for Tomorrow's Leaders

“The world is getting smaller” - a common refrain in business - suggests simplicity but conceals an inverse correlation: the “smaller” the world gets, the more complicated it becomes. But what if this apparent paradox indeed presents an opportunity for simplicity and clarity, for efficacy and achievement, not only in business but in our overall lives? The greatest pledge we can make to the leading thinkers of tomorrow is to show how to simplify complexity - and the highest hope for doing this, I believe, is through “ambiculturalism.”

Ambiculturalism integrates and optimizes the best of disparate “cultures” (which I view expansively as encompassing not only business or social cultures but all human affairs). The ambicultural approach is clear, direct, and simple: extracting the best of apparent opposites, while leaving out the worst - separating the wheat from the chaff - produces a better product, service, manager, and person. Looking deeper, we see an equally simple, if not obvious, idea supporting the notion of ambiculturalism. This is the perspective that every incident or view which challenges assumptions, runs counter to intuition, or contests long-held beliefs contains the seeds for learning and new understanding.

Ultimately, what makes for a complicated world are the tensions and complexities that arise from interconnectedness, from the sudden clash of “opposites.” The idea that seemingly irreconcilable differences can exist in harmony, therefore, offers us a guide for making the world felicitously smaller. Ambiculturalism - integration that transcends “either-or” to “both-and” - is a map for how we can grow and prosper, as business professionals, organizations, and societies. This is the key to educating tomorrow's thought-leaders in a “simply” complicated world.



## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Robert Chia**

Research Professor in Management  
Adam Smith Business School  
University of Glasgow

### **My Answer:**

We live in a relentlessly fluxing and changing world; a dynamic and complex global environment characterized by perpetual novelty, surprises, reversals and the unintended consequences of human actions.

The knowledge we currently possess ‘does not keep any better than fish’ says the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead. For him, critical to any proper educational process, therefore, is the need to cultivate the ‘art of utilizing knowledge’ rather than focusing on the systematic dissemination of knowledge. This is because the true process of personal discovery resembles the flight of an aeroplane: It begins with a particular observation, makes a flight in the ‘thin air of imaginative generalization, and then and it again lands for renewed observation rendered acute by rational interpretation’. Genuine thought-leaders are those equipped with what Anton Ehrenzweig calls this ‘syncretistic’ capacity to take ‘flying leaps’ over large areas of incomprehension and then to settle on only those aspects that appear immediately promising or appealing. This is the essence of ‘artistic (as opposed to a scientific) rigour’ which is grounded on an ‘uncompromising democracy of vision’; a capacity for seeing pristinely, that provides the generative basis for the imaginative conjecturing that follows. Such a capacity for *relevation* i.e., making the seemingly irrelevant, relevant, is what enables thought-leaders to make/discover connections/relations hitherto unthought or unthinkable and hence to expand their horizons of comprehension so that what was previously unnoticed, overlooked or unattended to becomes increasingly viewed as being pertinent and relevant to decisional/epistemological considerations. To *relevate* is to learn to see, think and imagine anew. This is a crucial capability required of thought-leaders of the future.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **John Child**

Chair of Commerce  
Birmingham Business School  
University of Birmingham

### **My Answer:**

The complication (complexity) of the emerging world will derive primarily from the continuing explosion of knowledge and the increasing number of people who have the potential to add to that new knowledge and who are interconnected to share and debate it.

This suggests to me that the process of what you call “thought leadership” could become increasingly a collective process aided by social media. It would emerge from discourse among the many rather than from a selective few. [Though no doubt there will always be a role for the creative genius]. Despite the forebodings of George Orwell [in 1984] about the rise of the surveillance society in which “big brothers” are the thought leaders for the rest of us, my view is that thought leadership has the potential to become a more democratic process. It could be less confined to the privileged few than before. If so, it will also become more expressive of conflicting views which increasingly transcend the comfortable traditional disciplinary and philosophical boundaries that we have inherited.

So, I think your question might be better phrased as “what will it take to educate us to share in, and contribute constructively to, thought-leadership in a complicated world?” Qualities such as tolerance for different and unfamiliar views will be required, together with an ability to reflect on and synthesize them constructively. These qualities require open-mindedness and humility. We can educate people to appreciate the virtues of such qualities through incorporating debate and discourse in our education – not just the learning of “facts” but the personal experience of arguing for their interpretation and realizing that interpretations are usually multiple. Utopian? Maybe, but the alternative would surely leave us with the risk of that we – the majority – opt out of coping with complication, and allow the possibility of “thought leadership” by the many to become a “thought dictatorship” of the privileged few.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Stewart Clegg**

Professor of Organization Studies  
Nova School of Business and Economics  
University of Technology, Sydney

### **My Answer:**

The next generation of global leaders should be draped by an education in virtues and in wisdom, premised on research that embodies phronesis. Contemporary concerns with phronesis meld inquiry with value reflection and a program for political action. We need to create leaders able to ask and not be afraid of answering the following questions:

- What are the illusions that both academic and everyday sense making sustain?
- Who gain and who loses, by which mechanisms of power, from extant illusions and relations of power?
- How can these practices be justified and to whom should they be justified?
- What are the underlying pre-assumptions that frame present practices?
- What should be done? What are the consequences of the knowledge and practice one is engaged in?
- What is the political rationale of one's work as a leader – who benefits, how do they, why should they?

All these questions need to be addressed if business schools are to make leadership more ethically political through re-conceptualizing notions of phronesis and wisdom as central to their public role. We need to consider the ideological assumptions of US-Anglo models of business; consider far more sustainable approaches for inclusion of people and society in business strategy; address inequality and imbalances of power in organizational practice and business strategy and provide a more nuanced understanding of the “global” in business. Inherent in each of these tensions are ethical, or moral (as in relational) concerns. Business Schools should teach phronesis as their particular form of the sciences: they have nothing to lose but sterile formulations premised on inappropriate scientific models and the widespread cynicism of those upon whom they are inflicted.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Russell (Russ) Coff**

Associate Dean for PhD and Research  
Wisconsin Naming Partners Chair of Strategic Management  
Wisconsin School of Business  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

### **My Answer:**

Strategy in the Future

All elements of the learning environment will need to be richer and deeper. First, online educational programs will need to be much more interactive. Gone will be streamed PowerPoint presentations or talking head videos. Even highly produced videos will be used sparingly. In the place of books, we will see highly interactive eBooks that emphasize integrated content such as videos, polls, hyperlinks, and threaded discussions. Online simulation exercises will take the place of many cases since they put the student in the driver's seat. We see that now with short specialized simulations on managing strategic change, competitive dynamics, and M&A.

Second, the classroom will offer a richer environment. Flipped classrooms often imply more one-on-one instruction. In strategy education, much of this will take place at the team level. More of the class time will be used for experiential exercises that help students develop a deeper and more lasting understanding. In this vein, cases will continue to be an important learning tool.

Finally, it is important to address the uncertain and complex environment in which decision-makers must act. Students do not like ambiguity and many of our case materials are designed to limit ambiguity (e.g., the problem is stated and all the necessary data are included). Students will have to make strategic decisions in the absence of solid data – documenting and testing their assumptions. This will be a challenge since students may be uncomfortable with such ambiguity – faculty will have to make a strong case for why managing under uncertainty is so critical.

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### **Gerald (Jerry) Davis**

Wilbur K. Pierpont Collegiate Professor of Management  
Professor of Sociology  
Stephen M. Ross School of Business  
University of Michigan

### **My Answer:**

For most of the past century, business schools have been organized like Eastman Kodak to train people to work at traditional corporations or (in recent years) to them, sell consulting or investment banking services. The enterprises we see now are more dispersed and more transient. Their supply chains often extend far beyond their own line of sight—witness how many Western brands are evidently shocked to discover that goods bearing their label are produced by unauthorized sub-contractors operating in fatally unsafe conditions in Bangladesh. And today’s enterprises are often short-lived, sometimes careening from industry dominance to liquidation in mere months. We may think of corporations as solid and lasting, like the Parthenon; yet many are more like a tent city.

Learning to navigate a corporate hierarchy is not sufficient to lead in a complicated world facing conflicts and disruptions from the regional to the planetary level. The problems and opportunities of our world do not respect functional or disciplinary boundaries, and their solutions will require the ability to collaborate across boundaries. These can be boundaries of functions, companies, nation-states, or categories like for-profit and non-profit. Universities can take the lead by enabling collaborative learning environments that connect the knowledge and practice of business, law, policy, social work, health care, information systems, and the natural and social sciences. The contemporary business schools should not be a fortress surrounded by a moat, but a portal to collaboration focused on solving the world’s most vexing problems.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Timothy M. Devinney**

University Leadership Chair in International Business  
Leeds University Business School  
University of Leeds

### **My Answer:**

In answering this question I would like to look back and ask two slightly different questions. First, “how did we educate the great leaders of the past so that they were able to achieve what they achieved?” The answer, surprisingly, is that we either did not educate them or educated them in a very traditional way – some with a very simple education that went little beyond basic literacy and others with traditional classical educations that contained a heavy dose of the ‘classics’. Second, “is our world more complicated to us than our ancestor’s world was to them?” Not having lived our lives in their past, we will never know the answer to this. However, I would argue that it is a bit disingenuous to believe that we are special in that our reality is in any way more difficult than theirs. What we can say is that it is different.

I am going to make a very traditionalist argument. In a violent storm a sailor can try and navigate every wave, every current, and every wind pattern. However, this is simply too difficult and will usually lead to disaster. What sailors are trained to do in such circumstances is to fall back on basic rules and utilize fundamental skills. Those skills represent systemized knowledge from centuries of learning – both scientific and practical. My view is that the next generation needs to go back to basics. Certainly they must be up on everything that is current in their field, but they also need to understand that the key to today’s reality is the history, philosophy, literature, and cultures that precede us. Hence, I believe we need a ‘classic’ approach to educating the next generation or put more classically: *ab actu ad posse valet illation*.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Miriam Erez**

Professor Emeritus

The Mendes France Chair of Management & Economics

William Davidson Faculty of Industrial Engineering and Management

Technion - Israel Institute of Technology

### **My Answer:**

To answer this question we need to first ask: what next generation thought-leaders should be like? What do we expect from them? What kind of model should they serve? In what kind of environment are they going to lead?

It seems that their work context is going to be highly complex, dynamic and uncertain, multidisciplinary, with high cultural diversity and geographical dispersion, with an increasing concern to environmental issues and to the gap between rich and poor, in addition to concern for profit. In this context, who should be the next generation thought-leader and what will it take to educate him/her?

I propose that the next generation thought-leader should be one who has a high level of cognitive complexity, who could process lots of information, taking a multi-perspective approach to problem-solving. This leader should accept diversity and be able to solve paradoxes, such as integrating a global and local perspective, cooperate with competitors, generate creative ideas but also concentrate on their implementation, be materialistic as well as spiritual and humanistic.

To educate such thought-leaders the curriculum should enable us to develop a person's cognitive complexity by posing multiple dilemmas, multiple perspectives, and multiple needs that require integrative solutions, thinking in terms of "both", rather than "either/or". The curriculum should also emphasize ethical behaviors and should be driven by a variety of values, rather than solely by economic considerations. This may reduce the profit but may increase the well-being of more people, reducing the gap between rich and poor.

Teaching should be in the form of knowledge transfer through class interactions. Class should be heterogeneous and their members should gain experience in studying and doing projects with others who vary in their disciplinary and cultural background, and in their location. Teaching will partially become virtual, using communication technology. Thought-leaders should gain their status by a combination of expert and referent power, rather than by reward and coercive power.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Ray Fells**

Professor, Management and Organisations  
Business School  
University of Western Australia

### **My Answer:**

An interesting part of the time of turmoil, innovation and change that is otherwise known as the Industrial Revolution was a group that became known as the Lunar Society (so called because they met on the day of the full moon – for ease of travel home afterwards). This eclectic group comprised, amongst others, Matthew Boulton (manufacturing), James Watt (steam power) Josiah Wedgewood (pottery manufacture), Erasmus Darwin (doctor and inventor) and Joseph Priestly (chemist). The reason they came together was to share ideas, discoveries and problems –Darwin’s latest invention idea – could Boulton use it in his factory? Could Priestly help out Wedgewood by doing something in his laboratory to make the clay more workable in the pottery?

These men were, of course, already successful and were in a privileged place in society so they had the time and space to be creative – not circumstances that the majority of us find ourselves in. However two things we can endeavor to replicate. The first was their willingness to look anywhere for a solution to their problem not just back into the roots of what they already knew. This suggests an education model that is across disciplines and involves deep learning that seeks to gain understanding of one area with insights from another. Second, the group was a mix of what we might now regard as academics and practitioners though they would not have made any distinction between the scientist, the inventor or the businessman. The availability of knowledge on the internet is something of a leveller but knowledge isn’t wisdom, the ability to exercise sound judgment in your own part of the complex world. It is the application of a new perspective that matters – not the book sales. Perhaps it is ‘thought doers’ that we need the most.



## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Jeanie M. Forray & Kathy Lund Dean**

Jeanie M. Forray  
Professor and Department Chair  
Western New England University



Kathy Lund Dean  
Board of Trustees Distinguished Chair in Leadership and Ethics in  
Economics and Management  
Gustavus Adolphus College

### **Our Answer:**

If we want to change the future, we have to change the people who build it. And to do that, we must focus on PhD students as teachers. In other words, to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world, doctoral education in management must rid itself of an exclusive focus on organizational theory and research to include a substantive focus on the craft of teaching. We must stop abdicating our academic community's responsibility for teaching doctoral students how to be effective in the classroom – be it on ground or online – if we hope to obtain enhanced outcomes in management education. PhD students need to be taught to teach, not simply expected to teach.

It is rare that a PhD program includes a curricular focus on teaching or the learning process. Doctoral programs that take teaching seriously are among the minority. The current paradigm in management education is that teaching involves spouting research outcomes and theories to students with little if any consideration for form or process as these relate to learning. If our approach to doctoral education continues, the conceptual models and management practices that future leaders take into the workplace will never change.

Our role as a community is to recognize that our value system – as it is represented in our apprenticeship of future management educators – needs changing. How can we expect the next generation of thought-leaders to address the challenges of the future if we don't address the foundation upon which their management education is built?

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Paul N. Friga**

Associate Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship  
Kenan-Flagler Business School  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

### **My Answer:**

Move to the Matrix

Let me start with what I think business schools do well today. I see three primary value-adding functions: applicant screening, theory sharing, and vocational training. Business schools have certainly established a reputation as a source of motivated talent who possess at least an introduction to key business concepts in strategy, finance, marketing, operations, and organizational behavior. They have learned the nomenclature of business and spend a significant amount of their time exploring, preparing for, and securing post-graduation positions. This is not enough.

As far as the next generation, I see three key missing elements to address: critical thinking, handling ambiguity, and cultural sensitivity. Most business schools do not offer courses or programs in this space. Learning objectives around these topics need to be elevated.

I propose a major paradigm shift in the primary pedagogical approach in business schools. Just as there was a gradual shift from lecture to case study, we need to move from case study to experiential education. I feel that the functional core concepts can serve as a foundation and should be codified and shared widely by charismatic and deep thought-leaders via brief videos and electronic delivery. However, this should be “pre work” and “just in time” around application opportunities. Our current system of hours of traditional class time and redundant faculty creation and delivery of such concepts is extremely inefficient and at times, ineffective.

Imagine a business school program with no core function classes but immediate assignment of students into consulting teams. A faculty member serves as the “Partner” overseeing the team as it structures problems, creates work plans, tests hypotheses with data, and delivers recommendations. Teaching is no longer in classes but through teams, including guidance as to knowledge to download and apply, with constant feedback mechanisms. Imagine a business school meets *The Matrix*.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Robert P. Gephart, Jr.**

Professor, Strategic Management & Organization  
University of Alberta School of Business  
University of Alberta

### **My Answer:**

From Rational Economic Thinkers to New Generation Thought-Leaders

A strong argument can be made that business schools have been very successful in recent years in training business students at all levels to be rational economic thinkers. Strategic management is a key discipline that trains students how to give individual and organizational self-interest first priority in decision making. This focus has legitimated greed by encouraging students to put personal rewards and advancement as key goals of career and business life. Now, individuals and organizations can enhance their performance by engaging in almost any form of as long as it is legal, produces competitive advantage, and brings forth compensation. Such conduct can be labelled “strategic” behavior and thus can be promulgated as acceptable, even insightful action. Left in the background are broader social values such as contributing to others, supporting non-economic aspects of quality of life, and producing a just society with environmentally sustainable enterprise. Self-interest continues to trump social interest despite the rise of sustainability and persistent calls for broad co-operation to address current economic, social and environmental problems. To move beyond producing narrow, rationally economic thinkers we need to broaden business curricula and training to incorporate philosophical and social science concepts and ideas so students can understand and realize the social, economic and environmental importance of their actions as business people. Students need to be trained regarding the nature of society and the responsibilities that enterprise has to enhance to undertake ethical, moral, political and environmentally responsible actions that go beyond producing the highest possible profit. A new generation of thought-leaders will be managers who understand how business enterprise can put the needs of others front and center in business planning and practice and thus contribute to general social welfare.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Robert A. Giacalone**

Daniels Chair in Business Ethics  
Department of Business Ethics and Legal Studies  
Daniels College of Business  
University of Denver

### **My Answer:**

We have educated students on the facts and realities of the business environment we live in, teaching them to live and prosper in that domain. But in a quickly changing world fraught with social, ecological, and financial problems (often as a result of business itself), the next turn of business education requires both content and mindset changes. We need to shift from teaching about what is, to helping students aspire to what can be. We need to turn from educating solely about economic thinking and goals to educating students in how to build a world that establishes human well-being as its core goal. The content of that education will emerge from an entirely different worldview - one where business exists not simply for the purpose of self-advantage, but for the purpose of constructing a better world.

Equally important is a mindset shift in business faculty and administrators. We need to shift away from the ubiquitous preoccupation on the status of our schools, departments, journals, citations, and rankings metrics, as well as our obsession with the shallow kudos and limited fame and applause they bring. We must instead strive to establish our importance to the world. We must shift collectively to help our students achieve meaningful outcomes that will assist a world wrestling with weighty issues. Anything less leaves behind the kind of shallow impact that is lost forever when our revered journals and ranking magazines inevitably find their resting place in the recycling bin and are forgotten.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Scott Graffin**

Associate Professor  
Terry College of Business  
University of Georgia

### **My Answer:**

I was recently reading an article where Bill Gates discusses his all-time favorite business book - *Business Adventures*. This book is authored by John Brooks and was published in 1969. In this article Bill Gates notes, “A skeptic might wonder how this out-of-print collection of The New Yorker articles from the 1960s could have anything to say about business today”. The idea that the founder of one of the world’s largest corporation still finds wisdom in a book published over 40 years ago, reminds me of an issue I grapple with on an annual basis as I review my course materials and decide which aspects of my previous year’s preparations will be retained, what will be dropped, and what will be added. The greatest temptation I face is to focus entirely on current trends and base most of my course on these trends in new technology, innovation, and other topics that my students likely see in the Wall Street Journal. I can sense nearly instant skepticism from students every time I discuss research or cases that are more than a few years old. While current examples and trends in industry are an important part of any business education, I contend that to educate the next generation of thought-leaders, we need to ensure that the content we provide is based on research and solid business principles. It is incumbent upon educators to provide content that is relevant and current, but not at the expense of conveying to our students that the latest technological innovations completely redefine what it means to be an effective leader. It is once again time for me to update my MBA classes for the upcoming academic year and I plan to add to my required reading list a book that was published in 1969.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Loizos Heracleous**

Professor of Strategy and Organization  
Warwick Business School  
University of Warwick

### **My Answer:**

I interpret “thought-leaders” in this context to refer to reflective practitioners. By that I mean people who do not follow the herd, can see things from different points of view, can recognize systemic interdependences, can go up and down the ladder of abstraction, and who hold a healthy dose of irreverence and the penchant for substance rather than superficiality. Combined with a hefty dose of grit, these are the people who can make a difference in almost all fields of endeavor.

There is no fixed recipe for developing such capabilities, and inborn traits do matter, but the educational system can nevertheless do a lot to increase the possibility that such capabilities will blossom. We need to immerse people in different types of learning experiences, both within and outside the classroom, both analytical as well as pragmatic. The design of these experiences should foster the stretching of mindsets, taking initiative, digging beyond the obvious, framing and reframing, recognizing patterns and interdependencies between actions, events, and trends, involve both competition as well as alliances and networks, and conclude with debriefing that can push established understandings.

Further, feedback should go beyond the traditional approach of “this is how you did and here are the reasons”, to encompass components of self-reflection, peer assessment, and even on occasion the outcomes of initiatives or projects conducted in industry, involving real products or services.

In this process we should not forget our own role as educators. Like the leaders of noble military traditions, we should ensure that we lead from the front. That means we should put ourselves through the above types of learning experiences occasionally so that we have the credibility, legitimacy and understanding to facilitate others’ learning along these lines.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Gerard P. Hodgkinson**

Associate Dean (Programme Quality)

Professor of Strategic Management & Behavioural Science

Warwick Business School

University of Warwick

### **My Answer:**

As the varied responses to the ongoing financial crisis demonstrate, rational, and even boundedly models of decision making have reached the end of their shelf lives. Devoid of emotion and affect free, at root, such models portray people in a manner that denies their fundamental essence as human beings: always boundedly rational, but manifestly driven by emotion. The continued denial of this fundamental insight will result inevitably in the perpetuation of concepts, theories, and tools and techniques unfit for purpose. Next generation management thought-leaders, therefore, must learn to embrace the emotional and visceral fullness of life, both in fashioning their ideas and in communicating them, blending scientific ideas on an equal footing with those of the arts, humanities, and other disciplines. Only then might it be possible to address the complex and messy challenges that lie ahead and which threaten to harm beyond repair the global economy and society.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Morten Huse**

Reinhard Mohn Endowment Chair of Management and Governance, Witten/Herdecke University  
and  
Professor of Organisation and Management  
BI Norwegian Business School

### **My Answer:**

I have decided to spend some of my late career years at the University of Witten/Herdecke in Germany. This is the first private university in Germany, and it is based on anthroposophical values. The students are learning to use both brain and heart, business disciplines are integrated with other disciplines, long term societal values are integrated with sustainable business values, and the teaching is based on discussions and reflection. I believe that this approach is important for educating generations of both business leaders and thought-leaders for a complicated world. This will also imply that we should educate our Ph.D. students and new generations of scholars to value contributions and relevance at least as high as rigor. They must learn to believe in what they are doing in addition to learning the handicraft of publishing.

There are needs for joint efforts among scholars to bypass the pressures for publications, and to focus on contributions. The present pressure in Europe to publish in certain journals will have a significant negative impact on doing meaningful research in a complicated world. Research needing innovative theories and methods, and based on local cultural heritage and empirical settings, are in the evolving publishing society discouraged. We need joint efforts in encouraging alternatives.



## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Quy Nguyen Huy**

Professor of Strategy  
INSEAD, Asia Campus, Singapore

### **My Answer:**

As director of the International Masters for Practicing Managers (IMPM) for many years—described in Henry Mintzberg’s book, *“Developing Managers, Not MBAs”*—and now current director of the INSEAD senior executive Strategy Execution Program, I became increasingly convinced that the next generation of thought-leaders will be the one that can work comfortably with business and social organizations in diverse parts of the world. Future education programs have to foster the shared exchange of management experience and more importantly, reflection about similarities and differences of the challenge of management in diverse contexts. Such a program would emphasize, in particular, the following aspects:

- Improve leadership skills through constant and humble practice of state of the art management, through reflection and critical thinking, not through quick fix, mindless copying and benchmarking.
- Maintain continuous, reflective life-long learning, rather than just a short one or two year formal training in management (e.g. MBA) or EMBA so as to stay current on trends in management in a diversified and complicated world.
- Encourage formal, explicit exchange of diverse management modes in diverse contexts; fostering mutual understanding and open debate of sensitive subjects that are often avoided in management education such as political ideologies (e.g., Socialist, Communism, Capitalism); religious beliefs influence on societies (e.g., Islam, Protestant, Catholics, Buddhism); governmental politics (dealing with representatives of governments at both national and local levels, corruption and lobbying); dealing with low-status groups representation in management (e.g., how do multinationals deal with the management role of woman or some ethnic groups, who are still treated very unequally in many parts of the world).

The next generation of thought-leaders should be inspired and trained to be not just leaders for organizational performance - which is already challenging - but to be increasingly conscious of their roles in contributing to the development of mutual respect and understanding among diverse groups and belief systems as I described above, and thus become one of the peace makers of the world.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Susan E. Jackson**

Associate Dean for Strategic Planning  
Distinguished Professor of Human Resource Management  
School of Management and Labor Relations  
Rutgers University

### **My Answer:**

What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world? Answering this provocative question requires first answering several other questions. Doing so will help establish a few core operating assumptions and shape the initiatives pursued. First and perhaps foremost: Who are the thought-leaders of interest? Future managers, consultants and management scholars will surely be among the targets, but perhaps more influential on the global stage will be the media, state governments, and various nongovernmental organizations who advocate on behalf of the general citizenry, so educating them may be as important as educating those who typically populate our classrooms. Should we treat thought leadership as, mainly, an individual-level phenomenon? If so, educational initiatives that focus on individual learners may be sufficient. How important are social structures such as interpersonal networks, professional associations, and formal institutions for the development and longevity of thought leadership? Should we design initiatives to educate large networks of people and entire organizations, or focus on educating individuals? Finally, if we aim to influence the quantity and quality of influential management ideas, should we strive to influence the supply of ideas, or the dissemination and up-take of ideas? That is, should our initiatives focus on idea creation, or can we assume great ideas will be plentiful and focus instead on ensuring that the best ideas are surfaced, sorted and circulated? Is the ascendance of an influential idea facilitated or constrained by the status and legitimacy of the agent who promulgates the idea, and if so, what are the implications? What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world? I don't have the answer, but I am confident that this ongoing conversation will yield new initiatives that improve upon many of our current approaches.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Ken Kamoche**

Professor of Human Resources and Organization Studies  
Nottingham University Business School  
University of Nottingham

### **My Answer:**

Educating the next generation of ‘thought-leaders’ will involve not only the use of novel technologies, techniques and fanciful methodologies, but more importantly, a reassessment of the role of universities in driving global change. Advances in technology and social media create opportunities both to understand and change the world at a faster pace than within the traditional classroom context, amongst increasingly diverse student populations. These are aspects of the university landscape that are not often recognized as attention focuses on the multinational nature of the business world. Yet, ‘thought-leaders’ will not and do not only emerge from business schools. Leadership must be seen in terms of the collective effort of learners contributing to make the world a better place in every aspect of human endeavor. A rich mosaic of cultural backgrounds not only epitomizes the ‘complicated world’ we live in, but also offers fascinating opportunities for the student population to learn from each other. As educators, we must harness the experiences and ideas of our students and encourage them to be proactive in challenging conventional wisdom, and also provide opportunities to validate the experiences and observations of those who possess ‘local knowledge’. Hence, classroom debates and case study analyses must be informed by the observations and experiences of learners from those contexts in question. To conclude, we must ask ourselves whose interests are served by current pedagogical paradigms and whether we are merely equipping students with skills to secure employment or with a deep understanding of their responsibility to contribute toward a sustainable world.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Cynthia Lee**

Professor, Management and Organizational Development Group  
D'Amore-McKim School of Business  
Northeastern University

### **My Answer:**

Thought leadership is increasingly seen in the context of setting trends and bringing about change in an industry. If this view is an accurate characterization, then I think thought-leaders should have training in entrepreneurship skills and be able to lead change and set trends globally. Other than the ability to take risk and work with internal and external customers, thought-leaders have to work with competitors as well. With these diverse roles, people skills such as social and political skills must be nurtured and developed. In order to enable students to acquire these skills, institutions should form global partnerships and engage their charges in exchange programs so future thought-leaders can learn from both classroom and overseas internship experiences. This student exchange experience should include Ph.D. students as well since they will eventually teach future thought-leaders. In preparing for these global experiences, institutions can offer learning activities at home with global partners so students can collaborate with their overseas peers in joint projects (e.g., a project matching students from Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Northeastern University on a project where they can learn from each other's culture, norms, etc.). Through various learning platforms, programs, forums, discussions and panels, students can work and learn from their fellow students at other institutions. Such peer-to-peer learning can facilitate the development of our students as thoughtful leaders. Moreover, by using industry leaders as mentors, the conversation can be imbued with greater scope and relevance.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Kwok Leung**

Choi-Ming Li Professor of Management  
CUHK Business School  
Chinese University of Hong Kong

### **My Answer:**

Culture-Savvy Leaders

Migration and international business have led to rising cultural diversity in many regions of the world, and people with different cultural backgrounds often work under the same roof. Intercultural contact is a double-edged sword. The confluence of cultures spurs magnificent creativity. Some Hollywood movies feature dazzling kung-fu style fight scenes after Bruce Lee stunned the world with his martial art. Japanese took the ideas of Deming seriously and developed quality control circles and the Kaizen System. Howard Schultz was inspired by the coffee bars in Italy and founded Starbucks.

Cultural diversity can also be a source of intense conflict because of the general tendency for humans to favor in-groups and denigrate out-groups, and because of the intercultural difficulties brought about by differences in subjective culture, such as values and norms. There have been numerous intercultural conflicts throughout history, and some of the interethnic conflict in our time seems hard to resolve, if not intractable. In the workplace, the propensity of cultural diversity to induce negative interpersonal dynamics has been extensively documented. Intercultural contact may disintegrate into lose-lose conflict for everyone involved.

Cultural diversity is an important facet of the complex world that we live in, and we need thought-leaders to help navigate the traps of intercultural contact and leverage the potentials of cultural diversity. To nurture such leaders, young people must be educated about the negative dynamics responsible for the pitfalls of cultural diversity and the strategies to keep them at bay. It is important to nurture in them the proclivity to appreciate and learn from cultural differences. Opportunities must also be provided for them to experience first-hand the stimulation and inspiration presented by cultural diversity. The world is definitely a much better and more beautiful place if thought-leaders can help steer culturally diverse groups towards a positive spiral of collaboration and success.

# What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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## **Arie Y. Lewin**

Professor of Strategy and International Business  
Fuqua School of Business  
Duke University

### **My Answer:**

Some Observations from Discussions at Deans Forum 2014 IACMR Bi-Annual Conference Beijing June 18 - 22

Business schools around the world are increasingly faulted for producing graduates and future executives inadequately prepared for 21st century challenges. Journalists in *Business Week*, *The Economist*, and other periodicals have called for a radical overhaul of the US-dominated MBA “industry”, calling it too quantitative and removed from the real world. *Harvard Business Review* (May 2005 and June 2009) launched a community-wide debate over current MBA education model. The blueprint for most MBA programs is “long in the tooth”, largely based on 1959 reports by the Carnegie Commission and Ford Foundation which strongly advocated academically rich social science research to legitimize business teaching and research in universities. Ensuing outpouring of academic scholarship greatly advanced social science research and legitimated business education within universities. But the ensuing “publish or perish” culture had the unintended effect of reinforcing the ivory tower perception of B-schools as places only remotely relevant to management.

### Fast forward to the new millennium

The reality is that most graduate B-school programs are more similar than dissimilar to the radical model launched fifty years ago and executives, professors, deans, journalists, and even MBA students recognize that something is wrong with the way management is taught in American style B-schools.

On the fiftieth anniversary of the Carnegie and Ford Foundations reports, the time to rethink the entire business education model is overdue. Some of the transitions facing business and society that are not being met by current MBA model include:

- China missed the industrial revolution. But by 2050 the GDP of China and rest of emerging economies are predicted to be double the GDP of G7 economies.
- Purchasing power of the middle class in Asia Pacific region is predicted to more than double by 2030 and account for about 75% of global middle class spending.
- Companies are increasingly interconnected in spheres such as sustainability, global warming, and the *Internet of things*.
- Sourcing of innovation globally, emergence of on-line communities of STEM talent, open sourcing, emerging economies brain drain.
- New counter globalism trends and need to reinvent traditional bases of the developed economies.
- Formal organization co-opted by Facebook generation and adoption of intra company social and professional networking with implications for organization of work and leadership of self-organizing processes.
- New breed of MNEs emerging from newly industrialized economies.

The above observations highlight disconnect between traditional MBA curricula and front page business issues. At a minimum this state of affairs calls for many new experiments and competition in business education. Several experiments are already underway such as the 50+20 Vision for Business Schools serving people and the planet led by Lausanne Business School. However, the business curricula itself must be re-invented to incorporate and address new transitions such as implications of inevitable intergenerational undercurrents and conflicts; transformation of low endowment economies to high endowment economies; imperative of systematic re-skilling and re-educating of multiple generations; competing varieties of market economies; implications of national diasporas of talent for home country economic development; and redefinition of careers and the growth of part time employment as well as growth of new “gig to gig” life styles.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Marianne W. Lewis**

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs  
Professor of Management  
Carl H. Lindner College of Business  
University of Cincinnati

### **My Answer:**

As educators, I believe it is vital that we help the next generation think more critically and creatively. Solving problems in a world of competing stakeholders, tremendous complexity and rapid change will require leaders who think both logically and paradoxically. Logic requires a disciplined weighing of pros and cons, formulating choices that recognize the influence of context and implementation needs that guide resource allocation. Do we make or buy a product, where do we locate a new option, how do we reduce waste? Such issues often prove daunting when alternatives all have benefits and downsides, but a choice must be made. Paradoxical thinking, on the other hand, entails systematically exploring seemingly conflicting alternatives, seeking both/and solutions that cope with tensions to sustain high performance along many dimensions. How can my project, team, organization foster profit and social responsibility, innovation and efficiency, collaboration and competition, and beyond? A challenge for future thought-leaders will be determining when to apply each approach. While logic suits dilemmas that require a one-time, either/or solution, paradoxical thinking becomes critical when tensions represent persistent demands that may appear contradictory yet prove interwoven, even synergistic.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Saku Mantere**

Professor, Management and Organization  
Hanken School of Economics, Helsinki  
and  
Warwick Business School  
University of Warwick

### **My Answer:**

As I see it, the world is characterized by heightened institutional complexity and escalated hostilities between fragmented realities. We see this in, for instance, issues around social (in)equality and (im)mobility within and across geographical contexts, as well as in the escalated conflicts between civilizations and value systems. The kinds of thought-leaders that are in the shortest supply tend to be those able to integrate between such disconnected domains: domains of knowledge, of value, of interests, of meanings, of identities.

In a narrow sense, integration has always been the role of business leaders, whose task is to negotiate order and direction between the differentiated specialists and divisional interests within the organization. I believe the world needs more leaders who are good at, rather than in winning battles for a particular cause, in building bridges between different causes.

What the university (who employs management professors like me) can do better is also a form of integration; the kind taking place between research and teaching, the kind that the university was supposed to be about in the first place. By involving future thinkers much more tightly in the practice of our own research, we will expose them to the challenge of integrating new knowledge across diverse academic discourse. A university degree should not be a package of knowledge but rather a period of serious reflection about organizations and society. University is only a step in one's education, however, as diversity of experience is a crucial source of both tolerance and confidence in acting as an integrator.



## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Catherine A. Maritan**

Professor of Management  
Whitman School of Management  
Syracuse University

### **My Answer:**

Many business educators see a need to broaden what we teach students to better prepare them for the complicated world they will deal with in their careers. One approach for doing this is to integrate more content from the liberal arts into the undergraduate business curriculum. Most business schools are part of larger universities and we are fortunate to be able to draw on institutional resources and work with our colleagues in the liberal arts disciplines on this new content.

Building connections with the liberal arts makes our business programs stronger. However, the flow between the liberal arts and the business school does not have to be one-way. Our students are not the only ones who go on to careers in business. Graduates majoring in arts, sciences, humanities, and social sciences do as well. Although they may be armed with many of the desirable intellectual perspectives and skills that we are trying to develop in our business students, they lack specific business training.

Encouraging liberal arts students to take courses to learn technical skills and the language of business is a start. But we, as business educators, can and should do more. These students' primary training has taught them to be intellectually curious, skilled in critical thinking and complex reasoning, and given them an understanding of the broader societal context in which businesses function. Just as we are working to truly integrate elements of a liberal arts education into business programs, we should develop new approaches for teaching our content to liberal arts students that does not simply add to their knowledge base but helps them leverage their intellectual strengths and translate what they already know to a business context.

Building bridges to a liberal arts education with a two-way flow of knowledge will better position us to educate the next generation of thought-leaders, whether they major in business or not, and to help prepare them to navigate and contribute to a complicated world.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Costas Markides**

Robert P. Bauman Chair of Strategic Leadership  
Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship  
London Business School

### **My Answer:** Educating the Next Generation

Imagine being a senior executive in 2050. What skills and knowledge would you need to be successful? Anybody pretending to have the answer to this question is simply misleading themselves. Nobody has a clue what skills will be necessary 5 years from now let alone in 2050. Yet we are asked to educate today's generation so that they have the necessary skills in 2050. How do we do that?

I believe we need to change in a dramatic way *what* we teach people and *how* we teach them. For example, consider just this thought: in our current system, people come to a centralized location (i.e. the university) to receive “education”—which is mostly information and analytical techniques. In the future, we need to decentralize the process and allow people to receive whatever education they need from people that are not necessarily professors and in ways that are not necessarily classroom-based. For example, the Khan Academy's use of videos to deliver the lecture at home while students do their homework in class may be one way to decentralize the educational process. There are many others—the technologies of the social era have made this possible and easy to achieve.

Another thought: in the past, people could go through life in one predictable sequence—go to school, work, retire. However, the demographic and technological changes of the past 20 years have made this only one of the many options available to people. Today's generation can start their adult life by working for a few years, then going to school, then working again, then taking a sabbatical to travel, then going to school again, then working again and so on. In short, the current generation has many different permutations to live their life and they do not have to follow the “linear” model of their parents' generation. We need to revamp our educational systems as well as what we teach to accommodate the needs of the new generation.

One final thought: since we don't really know how the world will look like in 50 years, we should stop pretending that we know what skills we need to teach people. As educators, the best we can do is to create the right conditions in our schools for individuals to decide what they want to learn and how. In this sense, education must become a “customized” experience as opposed to the mass-market standardized assembly line process it is now. To achieve this transformation, *individuals* (not professors) should be allowed to design the educational experiences they see appropriate for themselves and the schools should create the environment for such customized solutions to be provided.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Rita Gunther McGrath**

Professor of Management  
Columbia Business School  
Columbia University

### **My Answer:**

Ned Bowman, one of strategy's greatest thinkers and a much-missed mentor, said that there were four elements of theory utilization. You could describe, explain, predict and control. Academic thought-leaders were good at description and explanation. Consultants and businesspeople focus on prediction and control aspects.

This brings me to how legitimate academic thought leadership takes place. Our training suggests two routes to knowledge. One is deduction. A deductive argument derives its predictions from general rules – knowing the starting point dictates the outcome. An example of a deductive argument is “All high-performing workplaces have highly engaged employees; Company A has highly engaged employees, therefore it must be high-performing.” Inductive reasoning, in contrast, is linked with hypothesis creation. An example of an inductive argument might be something like “companies with at least 3 women on their boards perform more highly than companies with no female board members; therefore we hypothesize that adding female board members will increase company performance.”

Abduction in reasoning, however, is something entirely different. In the abductive process, a thought-leader connects patterns of activity to derive an “aha”. An “aha” moment suggests an appropriate course of action, given the contours of the current situation. In this way, abduction connects the four elements of Bowman's description of theory. For instance, if one looks at a company's innovation process and observes that a) it is episodic; b) it falls between the cracks of the structure; and c) managers are punished for deviation from plan; it would be an abductive conclusion that the company will struggle with organic innovation and that addressing these practices will encourage more innovation.

To create thought-leaders that have a facility for abductive reasoning, there is no substitute for considerable exposure to the many patterns of real business in the field. Before you can store and recognize a pattern, you need to see it in multiple forms. To educate the next generation of thought-leaders for abductive reasoning, there need to be opportunities to see patterns over time as they unfold, in the field. This could consist of consulting, teaching in executive education, or problem-solving with practitioner partners. Mining databases for statistical significance? Probably not.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Danny Miller**

Full Academic Researcher

Rogers-J.A.-Bombardier Chair of Entrepreneurship

HEC Montréal

### **My Answer:**

Too often, firms have fallen victim to catering to too few stakeholders, while pursuing short-term and quite local rewards. The recent financial crisis was a result of that opportunistic short-sightedness, as are the enormous difficulties that many successful organizations have in staying successful.

I would urge organizational thought-leaders to pay more attention to two sources of complexity – dynamics that extend over longer periods of time, and the multiplicity of stakeholders and constituencies that feed and rely on organizations. This is a tall order, as situations become more unpredictable the further out we go in time, and things become more complex as we are forced to consider more implicated parties – human and ecological. Nonetheless, the only way we can create and sustain socially responsible firms is by grappling with these complexities.

Academics have broached these issues. But too often, in the quest for prestigious publication, they restrict the scope of their inquiries to the theories and hence lenses of the day, and to research projects that fit career parameters more than the problems facing today's organizations. This is unfortunate as before we can teach sustainable best practices, we have to learn what they are, and that is apt to vary considerably across different situations. Thus I would urge more problem-driven research approaches that are increasingly specific as to the nature of the organizations studied and increasingly fine-grained and detailed in the characterization of those entities and their extended evolution.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Henry Mintzberg**

Cleghorn Professor of Management Studies  
(Strategy and Organization)  
Desautels Faculty of Management  
McGill University

### **My Answer:**

Not much, I expect, except to get past our obsession with leadership and with education as the answer. I don't think we have any generation of creative, bright, insightful people, just random appearances of them here and there.

For example, I have no idea how Einstein was educated in this regard. Maybe he had a clever mentor at the age of 2. Role models can be a factor, and a few of them may even be university professors, although by then it's probably mostly too late. Birth is a big factor too: being born with the courage to think for yourself is a great advantage - also, of course, being raised in a family that encourages such thinking.

As for education, the more we set out to train for novel thinking, the less of it we seem to get. There's no model, no formula, except perhaps not to get in the way of kids especially, adults too, who show some propensity to think well and for themselves. In this regard, of course, I have to mention our novel masters programs, the IMPM.org for business and the IMHL for health care. We try not to lecture at them excessively or to throw pre-formulated cases at them. We start with people who have substantial experience and then give them the chance to reflect on that, and share the insights with each other. Sometimes that 2-year-old curiosity comes back!

Finally, I don't think this world is complicated so much as confused.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Will Mitchell**

John deButts Professor of Business Administration  
The Fuqua School of Business  
Duke University

and

Anthony S. Fell Chair in New Technologies and Commercialization  
The Rotman School of Management  
University of Toronto

### **My Answer:**

We need to teach leaders about managing in the face of uncertainty. Currently, many of the analytic and leadership skills that we teach assume an underlying risky world, in which potential outcomes have reasonably clean distributions. The world of risky environments is suited to basic strategic and financial analysis that leads to a limited number of “best options” and suits leaders who prefer strong central control. In practice, though, many strategic situations that companies and other organizations face are highly uncertain – whether due to changes in emerging markets, technology, regulatory change, emergence of new strategies, dynamics of partnerships, social norms, or many other critical strategic contexts. Leading in the face of uncertainty requires the ability to embrace ambiguity, generate multiple options, sequence choices to avoid early over-commitment, and, perhaps most importantly, take an “expeditionary” view of leadership and control that demands wide ranging strategic leadership and then works to identify viable paths that emerge from the multiple minds. We need to develop pedagogy and mindsets that move beyond the basic tool box of risk-based strategy and embrace uncertainty-based strategy.

Intriguingly, this mindset is central to our strongest research – great research moves beyond the boundaries of existing theory and empirical knowledge to seek insights in the uncertain frontier, learning how to identify rich new continents of knowledge while avoiding falling over the edge of the world. This lesson from great research needs to feed our ability to provide great teaching.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Linda Ronnie**

Senior Lecturer in People Management and Organisational Behaviour  
Graduate School of Business  
University of Cape Town

### **My Answer:**

What is our role in growing new thought-leaders? The academic context needs to create the most conducive learning environment that it can for our new generation of leaders. That means we have to shift our thinking about what works and what's needed. Education is truly transformative when we acknowledge that not only the student has to grow through the experience.

We should set the bar high for those about to lead organizations in private, public and non-governmental organizations. As academics we must strive to be principled and fair and model respectful and equitable relations between ourselves and the students. An ethos of respect should permeate the classroom environment where students are required to treat not only us, but their peers with the same levels of respect that we accord them. These values that we instill need to be enthused throughout the organizations these students will lead one day.

Here in South Africa and Africa, in some of the most complicated settings in the world, we are committed to developing a cadre of managers and leaders through mediating the acquisition of suitable managerial skills that allow them to operate in diverse contexts. In particular, this generation of new leaders needs to be able to make decisions based on a full range of information. Critical thought, innovation, and the notion of sustainability is central to this.

At the core of what we do is the development of a reflective, authentic leader that cares. That cares about others, the environment, and especially the marginalized. I feel incredibly privileged to be part of the new generation's learning journey. They are the future of our country and are going to determine, in many instances, the role of business, not only in terms of its contribution to the economy, but also to broader society.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Denise M. Rousseau**

H.J.Heinz II University Professor of Organizational Behavior and Public Policy

Heinz College and Tepper School of Business  
Carnegie Mellon University

### **My Answer:**

Future thought leaders should be prepared to engage in evidence-based practice. Tradition, authority and assumptions just aren't going cut it in a more complicated world. Evidence-based practice means doing three things. First, thought leaders confronted with complicated problems need to *identify what questions require answers* in order to make a good decision or solve a problem - or to advise others in doing so. Asking the right questions is a matter of critical thinking, to get beyond assumptions and old habits to identify potential drivers of good outcomes. Second, thought leaders need to *know how to get answers* to those questions. This means being able to search the scientific research related to their questions and appraise the relevance and value of what they find. It also can mean getting and analyzing existing data related to the question, appraising and interpreting it. Perhaps even more important than the latter ways of obtaining answers, future thought-leaders need to know how to run experiments to figure out what decision or solution might be appropriate. Doing experiments to test out ideas is going to become very important in the future, as unforeseeable situations arise for which there is no precedent (that is, no research, no data). In truly novel circumstances, the only way forward is learning by doing (or computer simulation!), which can be a slow and frustrating process unless several competing courses of action are tested at the same time. Third, thought leaders need to know how to *bring the array of stakeholders together* to integrate their concerns in the decisions made.



## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Timo J. Santalainen**

President of STRATNET (Geneva)

Adjunct Professor of Strategy and International Management

Aalto University Business School

### **My Answer:**

Thought-Leaders Excel in Strategic Thinking

Leaders and professionals will confront an increasing number of messy challenges; challenges that are difficult to cope with because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements. Messy challenges have no stopping rule: irrespective of the particular solution, newer problems arise.

Thinking strategically is key to taming messy challenges. Strategic thinking means thinking imaginatively, conceptually and systemically about the past, present, future, and links between the three to generate insights with respect to messy challenges.

Unlearning creates space for learning. For an academic researcher, a journey towards thought leadership might begin from understanding that the impact of research is not based on number-crunching technical sophistication but on contextual insight. This is equally true for business practitioners in the light of their fascination with Big Data and linear management models. These are valuable only if the insights gained from data enhance ambidextrous strategic thinking and action. Consultants need to move away from a template approach to solving problems and approach each problem as being “unique”, even though the contours of the challenge might seem similar to earlier ones.

How to educate potential thought-leaders in strategic thinking? A top down, “professor knows best” approach does not work. Consequently, educators have to change their approach from dissemination of knowledge to “sparring partners”, who facilitate action learning processes that involve internships and projects in companies to help tackle the messy challenges. An example of such an approach is the *Global Leadership Fellows Program* at World Economic Forum. 80% of this program is undertaking challenging projects at such Davos and Regional Forums. Visits in outlier organizations such as CERN teach out-of-the-box thinking, too.

People, who are good in straddling in different worlds, e.g. Academia, Business and Consulting, are best positioned to provide insights. Sparring discussions in ABC-networks are powerful vehicles for mental growth. Reflection deepens insights. Those who excel become thought-leaders.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Theodore R. Schatzki**

Senior Associate Dean (Dean of Faculty)  
Professor of Philosophy and Geography  
Department of Philosophy  
College of Arts & Sciences  
University of Kentucky

### **My Answer:**

My answer is tried and true: success in this endeavor rests on society's determination to continue offering liberal arts educations to college students. By "liberal arts educations" I mean solid groundings in the traditional humanistic, scientific, and creative disciplines oriented toward the achievement of a meaningful life and the advancement of a good society. The skills and understandings that result from such educations are critical to lives being well led, to the preparation of professionals and an educated citizenry, and to the cultural and economic health of our society. This is because such educations teach students to reflect and to consider alternatives, familiarize them with some of the breadth of human ways of being, impart skills of analysis, dialogue, clear thinking, teamwork, empathy, and the like that are invaluable in all walks of life, and educate people in matters of interpretation, meaning, diversity, and value.

Liberal arts educations continually need updating in a changing world. Three updates are particular pertinent today. Because the interconnectedness of the world is so great, the liberal arts have, and must become more, international, imparting familiarity with the wider world. This education also must boast multidisciplinary curricula and activities since multidisciplinary work is excellent preparation for a complex, uncertain world. Students, finally, must learn to live amid diversity, in their own lives and in the surrounding world. Multiplicities of religion, class, ethnicity, race, age, political viewpoint, and the like mark contemporary life.

Additionally buoyed by commitments to service learning and to preparing students for an information rich digital world, a liberal arts education as the centerpiece of the college experience is the best path for producing thoughtful leaders in a complicated world. Advocacy of this path, however, cannot be left to the academy. Its value must also be trumpeted by professionals and alumni.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Sim B. Sitkin**

Professor, Management and Organizations  
The Fuqua School of Business  
Duke University

### **My Answer:**

Emergent trends have fostered an ever more urgent need for seven attributes in those we hope to educate to influence others more effectively. Our education system is currently oriented toward skill and knowledge training rather than educating thoughtful individuals prepared to lead consequentially.

The seven attributes are:

1. *Curious.* Leaders need to be learners who are driven by the desire to understand how things work and how to make them work better.
2. *Courageous.* It takes courage to take a risk or to take a stand that may turn out to be wrong or unpopular. Transparency also takes courage when it allows scrutiny of one's decision processes or outcomes.
3. *Resilient.* Curiosity and courage almost inevitably imply ambitious goals and experienced failure. Resilience underpins the ability to bounce back and persist.
4. *Responsible.* The ability to effectively influence must be accompanied by a sense of stewardship to ensure that power and capability are used responsibly.
5. *Complex.* We live in a multi-cultural, multi-functional, uncertain world and those who exercise influence need to understand complexity well enough to be able to both respond to the complexity and to simplify it for others.
6. *Facilitative.* The "Battier Effect" is named for NBA basketball player Shane Battier who never led in scoring, rebounding or shots blocked, but superceded the All-Stars in the degree to which his team did better when he was on the court than when he was not. We need to educate leaders to influence in ways that make others more effective rather than highlights their personal star qualities.
7. *Reflective.* The best leaders may have raw talent, but like the best athletes they leverage that raw talent by reflecting on what they do, how they can get better, and then practice to achieve. Reflection is no longer a luxury; it is a necessity for excellence.

The implications of these attributes for educating future thought-leaders involves

- creating space for reflection about how learning related to each student individually
- fostering risk taking that can both provide exposure to failure and the opportunity to build resilience
- focusing learning around inter-disciplinary problems that require knowledge synthesis and cross-silo collaboration.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Wendy Smith**

Associate Professor of Management  
Alfred Lerner School of Business  
University of Delaware

### **My Answer:**

Educating the next generation of leaders will require humility – to know how much we don't know.

By 2050, the global population is projected to approach 9 Billion people. More people will own cell phones than cars. Information and ideas will spread faster than physical goods, enabling new opportunities, while also introducing new social ills.

This fast-paced, global, and interconnected world surfaces paradoxical strategic demands. Innovative technology and shifting demographics requires organizations to be agile and adaptive, while also remaining stable and firm. Blurring organizational boundaries create hybrid organizations that demand attention to both social good and financial success. A diverse worldwide workforce compels leaders to enable global integration, while addressing local needs. And complex problems demand competitive organizations to learn to cooperate.

Our existing business models, strategic insights, and leadership lessons provide background to enable leaders to address these paradoxical demands. We can help leaders embrace paradoxical thinking, adopting a both/and approach to contradictory demands, in contrast with a traditional either/or contingency approach. We can help leaders understand the value of addressing contradictions by differentiating – seeking distinctions, and integrating – seeking synergies.

But mostly, we don't know what we don't know. As a result, to effectively embrace the paradoxes of tomorrow, leaders will need to create new knowledge and insights. Doing so requires us to not only rethink what we teach, but how. Enabling complex, creative and empowered leaders demands us to step back and allow them to teach us. Rather than impart wisdom, we need to create the conditions for students to face thorny problems, and learn from their responses; to facilitate their ability and confidence to generate and implement novel insights.

Tomorrow's leaders will be our teachers. Our job as teachers is to be humble, curious and demanding students.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Philip Stiles**

University Senior Lecturer in Corporate Governance  
Cambridge Judge Business School  
University of Cambridge

### **My Answer:**

Thought-leaders tend to come in two styles – one, the deep narrowly focused person of insight into a particular discipline, or the synthesizer, pulling together ideas from a range of disciplines creating something brilliant from the integration. The temptation is to say that in an increasingly interconnected and instrumented world, there needs to be new forms of education to deliver the thought-leaders of both kinds tomorrow. Already the rise of MOOCs, for example, is seen to be threatening traditional models of education. However, for both kinds of thought-leader, what remains constant through all changes in technology and society and media is the need to think rather than just absorb information, and to enhance the possibility for insight and for combinatorial genius. John Henry Newman wrote his great work ‘*On the Idea of a University*’ in 1852. He said: A man may hear a thousand lectures, and read a thousand volumes, and be at the end of the process very much where he was, as regards knowledge...(knowledge) must not be passively received, but actually and actively entered into, embraced, mastered.’ The secret to thought leadership is not the amassing of information but its transformation into something new and for this there is a need for mastery. And for this we need spaces of reflection – the university, the college, the retreat – where this can be done, and where one can meet fellow travelers eager to change the world. For the university this means the end of factory style education and instead a reversion back to the original ideals of providing a space for people to seek knowledge for its own sake, to allow ideas to flourish.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Roy Suddaby**

Eldon Foote Chair of Law and Society  
Alberta School of Business  
University of Alberta

### **My Answer:**

In order to educate the next generation of thought-leaders in management, leading business schools must incorporate more humanities and liberal arts into their curricula. For decades management scholars and external critics have observed that management education is narrowly focused on technical skills that fail to teach students to think creatively, question assumptions, or to understand the role of business in its broader social context. Management research has been similarly criticized for its lack of engagement with practice, its fetish for theory and its lack of relevance.

Scholars have long understood the critical role played by the liberal arts in cultivating the citizen. When I first attended university, the intent of liberal arts degree was to cultivate a citizen for the nation-state. Increasingly, however, contemporary societies have become interested in developing global rather than national citizenry, and the business school, with its intimate connection with the multinational corporation, is the ideal context within which that curriculum can be delivered.

The civilizing effect of a humanities education not only tempers the technical base of scientific education with a sense of the importance of ethics and the common good, it also demonstrates the inherent complexity and artfulness of management leadership. Business problems rarely present themselves as a “finance” problem or a “human resources” issue. Rather, they occur as complex and thorny bundles of interrelated threads that must be teased apart by thoughtful judgment and nuanced reasoning – a degree of integrative thinking offered by training in philosophy, history and rhetoric.

Introducing liberal arts into management education will also rebalance business schools in several respects. Clearly, an emphasis on arts will offer a useful counterpoint to technical skills. However, it will also rebalance the current emphasis of theory over practice, and research over teaching. All of these are positive changes for management schools which are woefully behind current changes in the contemporary corporation. After an ongoing series of global economic crises and ethical embarrassments, corporations are becoming acutely aware of their global civic responsibilities. The modern corporation is an ascendant institution, rapidly displacing the nation state in a broad range of social activities. Corporations have woken up to the fact that the “man in the grey flannel suit” is no longer the ideal employee. Management curricula need to adapt accordingly.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **James Jian-Min Sun**

Associate Dean, School of Sciences  
Professor and Fulbright Scholar  
Chair, Department of Psychology  
Renmin University of China

### **My Answer:**

A thought-leader is an individual or firm that is recognized as an authority in a specialized field and whose expertise is sought and often rewarded. The thought-leader will be the crucial determinant in the direction and the model of the development of a nation as well as an organization. Education for thought-leader is/should be on the first priority of business education

To educate the next generation of thought-leaders will take both the institutions and educators lots of effort, wisdom, passion, and techniques in the complicated world. Education itself would be a learning process for both the learners and educators/trainers.

It requires both the institutions and educators to adapt a new paradigm in terms of the content, methods, and evaluation systems in the curricula. Multicultural mind and international collaboration will be imperative for educators and trainers besides the traditional requirements such as academic background, business experience, and teaching skills. Business knowledge (whether with economic, social, or psychological perspective) and pedagogical expertise would not be enough as an educator, rather, cultural, political, philosophical, even historical knowledge could be catalyst for the educators to guide, stimulate, and facilitate students and professionals to be more open-minded, visionary, socially responsible, and humanistic in implementing leadership.

Educators themselves should be a generator of thought with diversified perspectives and ideas in order to educate thought-leaders. At the same time, they should be idol of the learners because the next generation enjoys novelty more than authority.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Kathleen M. Sutcliffe**

Bloomberg Distinguished Professor  
School of Medicine/Carey Business School  
Johns Hopkins University

### **My Answer:**

Leading and managing in future dynamic, complicated worlds requires that the next generation of thought-leaders be prepared to *manage the unexpected*. The unexpected is all around us. You just have to pick up the front page of any newspaper in any city in the world to find example after example of organizational leaders and members being “caught by surprise” by events they “didn’t see coming.” Yet, when we examine these surprises more closely we see that they rarely come without warning. Their seeds are sown long before the turmoil arrives, evident in small problems, mistakes, or failures that are ignored, overlooked, discounted, or misunderstood, and subsequently link together and escalate into bigger problems or catastrophes. Managing for the unexpected is about curbing the temptation to treat small perturbations and discrepancies as normal, and then dealing with the consequences when curbing that temptation fails. But curbing the temptation to normalize is harder than it looks, in part because of the tendency for people to focus on and exaggerate the best case characteristics, the most optimistic outlook or outcomes. Small problems/mistakes/mishaps/lapses are a natural part of organizational life, but strong tendencies to pay careful attention to best-cases and careless attention to worst-cases often means that small details don’t get attention until too late. Future thought-leaders must learn how organizing practices and routines can help them to become alert and aware of small disturbances and vulnerabilities as they emerge, to make sense of their possible problematic consequences, and to make adjustments to ongoing action before they can turn into a tragic flaw.



## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Chris Quinn Trank**

Senior Lecturer in Organizational Leadership  
Department of Leadership, Policy & Organizations  
Vanderbilt University Peabody College  
Vanderbilt University

### **My Answer:**

I can think of few things more important for future thought-leaders than to have themselves been exposed to the greatest classical art, the most beautiful words written, and the most adventurous, avant-garde and creative departures from the every-day.

Thought-leaders do not just have ideas before others do, and their ideas are never created from whole cloth. Ideas come from seeing things in new ways, adapting, recombining and redefining what was known. It is critical we expose future thought-leaders to the very best of human creativity as both source material and inspiration.

Thought-leaders also get others to see and feel the beauty—the perfection—of a new idea. This kind of aesthetic sensibility can only come from studying language, rhetoric, literature and culture. Remember when Steve Jobs was introducing cover flow on the iPhone? He told us we could now “touch our music” then carefully chose the classic Sergeant Pepper’s album to connect us to his product. (Yes, the arts and humanities come in many forms and genres.) Jobs’s own love of music and art drove many of his most creative ideas and sensibilities, but it also connected him to the rest of us. In the era of data mining, looking for those patterns that sort, classify and separate us, the arts and humanities tie us together.

My greatest fear for education in the future is the gutting of general education, and especially the humanities, in favor of the calculus of employment and employability. This is a possibility made all too likely because of our current obsession with “value” (not values) in education. It may be heresy that someone connected to business education advocate that we must look to the arts and humanities as the essential foundation, but in them we find our soul.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Anne S. Tsui**

Professor Emeritus, Management  
W.P. Carey School of Business  
Arizona State University

### **My Answer:**

According to a 2013 book *“Management Education for the World”* (Muff, Dyllick, Drewell, North, Shrivastava, and Haertle), the important qualities for the next generation of globally responsible thought-leaders include having a vision and conviction to make this world both livable and worth living in; the ability to see the problems of the current business model in terms of resource depletion, environmental damages, and social injustice; the moral compass to ensure that profit maximization does not occur at the expense of the natural environment and social development; and the courage to make this world a better place for all the stakeholders and not only the shareholders. To develop these qualities, it would require a new breed of faculty who has the courage and conviction to depart from the traditional model of business and traditional method of teaching and research. They must be willing to develop and test new business models that will promote positive returns to all resource providers including owners, employees, customers, supplies, and the local and global communities. These new models must contribute to the long-term sustainability of both the firms and the societies. This new breed of faculty members must commit to research that solves future-oriented societal problems. They must have the moral conviction to do the right thing and not succumb to the pressures of publishing, and only satisfy the preferences of editors and reviewers. They must put the spirit of science (seek truth and improve the human condition) above career concerns or other personal benefits. They must be willing to serve as role models by embodying the qualities they aim to “instill” in their students. To develop the next generation of thought-leaders for the world will require a new generation of thought-leaders among the faculty with character, conviction, compassion and commitment to serve the public good.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Eero Vaara**

Professor of Management and Organization  
Hanken School of Economics

### **My Answer:**

There is a great deal I would like to say about management education and thought-leaders, but if I have to focus on one thing, it must be critical thinking. First, management education should not anymore simply focus on sharing information or teaching basic managerial skills, but concentrate on helping people to make sense of all information that is readily available and to develop new ideas and innovations that hopefully create value. This as such requires critical thinking of one kind. Second, this value creation should not, however, be merely seen as short-term financial gains benefiting a limited number of people, but placed in a wider societal, cultural and historical context. To cultivate this kind of critical thinking is one of the most central practical and ethical challenges in contemporary management education, and may in fact be needed to sustain what is good in our societies and economies in the longer run. Third, critical thinking must also deal with management education itself. The nightmare scenario is that it will be increasingly serving to legitimate prevailing – and often problematic – business practices and to reproduce elitism. This is not the way I would like to see the thought-leaders of tomorrow to be raised and selected. Hence, I would call for critical thinking in terms of pluralism in values and practices and appreciation of alternative views and even encouragement of resistance to be able to change things for the better.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Russ Vince**

Associate Dean Research  
Professor of Leadership and Change  
School of Management  
University of Bath

### **My Answer:**

A complicated world requires a more complex approach to the education of leaders. This means letting go of assumptions that oversimplify leadership learning and development. These include: that we are developing the individual, that leaders only have positive attitudes and intentions, and that reason is what primarily informs leaders' behavior.

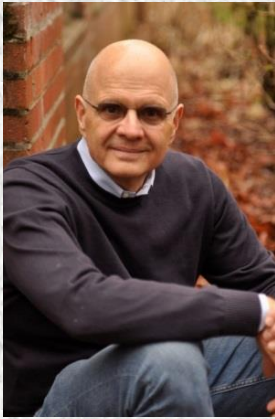
Leadership in practice is full of contradictions. The education of leaders has to be aligned with the emotional and political complexity of organizations, and the paradoxical tensions that are integral to leadership. For example, our attempts to transform can contribute to things remaining the same; our efforts to facilitate change may well inhibit it; and our strategies to empower individuals may contribute to the establishment of forms of compliance and control. We need to help leaders to acknowledge and engage with the messy, complicated and power-filled world of organizations.

Educating the next generation of thought-leaders will mean less emphasis on the development of individual leaders and more on the efforts of groups of leaders and followers to effectively combine their knowledge, learning and capabilities. We have to get better at accepting leading and following as interchangeable roles with shared responsibilities. The specific character of this interchangeability will differ across the varied organizational contexts in which leadership is required, but it will always be connected to relations of power.

In our education practice, it is important to engage directly with the social emotions, interpersonal dynamics and organizational assumptions that groups of learners bring into development opportunities. In this way, we can help people to better understand the emotions and politics that underpin their work as leaders and followers.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **James P. Walsh**

A.F. Thurnau Professor; Gerald and Esther Carey Professor of Business Administration; Professor of Management & Organizations; Professor of Strategy  
Stephen M. Ross School of Business  
University of Michigan

### **My Answer:**

The worldwide demand for business education is nearly insatiable. We certainly have an opportunity to educate the next generation of thought-leaders. What will it take? There are many answers to that question. We can talk scholarship, staffing, curriculum, pedagogy, technology, student services, costs, pricing, and so much more. But most fundamentally, I think we need to talk about ourselves, especially those who lead our universities. We need thoughtful and courageous leadership today if we ever hope to educate the thoughtful and courageous leaders of tomorrow.

Eager to learn how to organize and manage in a complicated world, society anxiously tries to appraise how well we educate our students. Our business schools, degree programs, departments, and faculty are rated and ranked in all manner of ways. I am not arguing against these rating and ranking schemes. After all, they embody a deep interest in our work. What troubles me is our response to them. All too often, we organize ourselves to meet these limited expectations. Unfortunately, too many of us now find ourselves working in a hyper-rational world of close assessment and high-powered incentives. More and more, our research aspiration is not to pursue some fundamental truth or to best inform business practice but rather to get a “hit” in a journal with a high-impact factor. Teaching can be reduced to gathering high course evaluations in a world marked by higher and higher student-teacher ratios. Talk of student transformation can be dismissed as sentimental or naïve.

What to do? We need to remind ourselves why we entered our profession in the first place. Resisting the temptation to create an audit culture in our universities, we need to create an environment where faculty and students alike are free to be their best selves, to question, explore and imagine, to think carefully and deeply, to try and fail until we try and succeed, and ultimately, to cultivate wisdom. We need to tell our story. We need to tell the world of our scholarly quests and our work with students. And finally, we need to celebrate our courageous alumni, students, and colleagues who lead well in this complicated world of ours. With any luck at all, we will create virtuous learning cycles that inspire and enable us all.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Albert Wocke**

Associate Professor  
Gordon Institute of Business Science  
University of Pretoria

### **My Answer:**

Nelson Mandela proclaimed that “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” The future thought-leaders will increasingly come from today’s emerging markets, including Sub-Saharan Africa. Globalization, the spread of mobile IT, and the influx of MNCs cause a creative tension in underdeveloped societies that motivate thought-leaders to create new services and business models. Thought-leaders from Africa often have a personal rags-to-riches history and a global network that they access daily. This creates an acute awareness of the impact of their decisions on their societies and a desire to make a difference to future generations.

What does this mean to those of us involved in educating the next generation of thought-leaders, particularly those from emerging markets? It means that context pervades everything in what we teach and that context-neutral content will not find support. For example, the model of a successful business leader in Sub-Saharan Africa is one who is able to make good profits, reduce risk and make a contribution to the overall good of the society in which they operate. Such leaders are highly visible and are active in public affairs. It follows then that effective educational programs will need to include ethics, stakeholder management, and cross-cultural and conflict management.

The second issue that we need to think about is accessibility. Education solutions will need to be cheap and accessible to enable skills transfer in inconvenient locations. Our greatest challenges will be to find education models that incorporate diversity, complex context and provide value for money. This will drive the innovative education models of tomorrow.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Jia Lin Xie**

Magna Professor in Management  
Rotman School of Management  
University of Toronto

### **My Answer:**

The environment in which organizations operate is increasingly complex: it is a new landscape characterized by intensified international competitions; it is a changing world full of ambiguity and uncertainty. “*What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?*” To address this important question, we need to first identify the unique, additional qualities that future thought-leaders should have. It seems to me that unique qualities are extremely important: (1) globe leadership; (2) creativity; and (3) resilience.

First of all, the next generation of thought-leaders should be equipped with a globe perspective of leadership and skills in cross-cultural management. That is, they should develop a culturally synergistic approach to leadership and management, and abilities and skills to adapt, adjust, and lead successfully in multicultural and global environments.

Second, the future thought-leaders should be high in creativity. Uncertainty and ambiguity inherent in a complicated world require leaders to be able to predict in seemingly unpredictable situations and explore solutions that are not readily available. Creativity, guarded by a strong sense of social responsibility, is a key to survive and excel.

Third, the future thought-leaders should develop high resilience. The more complex the environment, the more likely leaders will face challenges and failures. Thought-leaders should have the capacity to endure unexpected adversity, turn negatives into positives, and learn from challenging experiences effectively.

How to help the development of the next generation of thought-leaders? This is the challenge that all business schools are facing. Moreover, it is an opportunity that we all have in further fostering excellence in business education.

## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Shaker A. Zahra**

Department Chair

Robert E. Buuck Chair of Entrepreneurship and Professor of Strategy

Carlson School of Management

University of Minnesota

### **My Answer:**

Educating Future Thought Leaders

Thought-leaders use their insight and foresight to offer a vision of a new world and how to get there. They articulate and communicate their ideas or visions and their consequences to others. In tomorrow's complex world, there is a need for creativity, clarity, decisiveness and simplicity. As a result, business schools need to make major changes in what and how they teach:

- The curriculum should offer opportunities to build on and crystalize insight and foresight. Thought leadership is usually grounded in human intuition, honed through experience, observation, and analysis.
- Business schools should also inculcate a deep appreciation of human aspirations, motivations, abilities and limitations. Ideas that transform the world usually put the human agent at their core. Systems matter, but humans and their values matter even more.
- Given that ideas are early sketches of great discoveries, business schools should develop thought-leaders who will move us from drawing sketches to making discoveries. Thought-leaders and their ideas endure questioning and suspicions. Business schools need to prepare leaders who combine mental toughness with emotional intelligence.
- Education should nurture and exploit the intimate link between knowledge creation and use. Discovery should be used and exploited. Use of discoveries fuels innovation and further discovery. Business schools need to train the next generation of thought-leaders to see these links, and exploit them.
- Promoting questioning what we know and its value, challenging our assumptions and conclusions. Insights from the humanities, fine arts and other disciplines could sharpen this skill.
- Thought-leaders need to learn moral values and place them at the core of what they do - exhibit great integrity in what they do and how they do it.
- Ideas are the building blocks of progress. Business schools should become idea factories, creating daring thought-leaders.



## What will it take to educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world?

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### **Yan (Anthea) Zhang**

Professor of Strategic Management  
Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Business  
Rice University

### **My Answer:**

To educate the next generation of thought-leaders for a complicated world, I would like to emphasize three issues: global mindset, team approach, and experiential learning.

*Global mindset.* Today's business is becoming increasingly global in scope; managers are challenged to manage within a global perspective. Managers need to ask themselves how to create (greater) value by taking advantage of differences among countries, how to prepare their firms to compete with domestic and foreign competitors, and what they need to do if they want to enter foreign markets. Business education needs to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and sensitivity required to attain and maintain sustainable competitive advantage within a global environment.

*Team approach.* Team work is important in business. However, in today's complicated world, team work is challenging. People need to work with colleagues, as well as suppliers and customers, with different cultures, languages, religions, and possibly even in different time zones. Tolerance for diversity is the minimum requirement. Firms need to learn how to create value from diversity. Business education needs to prepare students for working and excelling in an increasingly diverse working environment.

*Experiential learning.* How to teach students cutting-edge knowledge in each discipline as well as develop their global mindset and team-work skills? Experiential learning is the key. Cases and current-event discussions can help students develop analytical and decision making skills. Real-world consulting projects allow them to use their knowledge, identify problems, develop options, and make decisions in the real world. Such projects, if organized as team-based work, also provide opportunities for students to work with others. They may hate the process; but they will gain from the pain.

*“In pursuit of knowledge,  
everyday something is acquired.  
In pursuit of wisdom,  
everyday something is dropped.”*

*Lao Tzu*



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