

# Mindfulness and Integrity: The On-Going Challenge of Leadership Development

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What's a company for? (Handy, 2002)  
What are our goals as management educators?  
What should we try to avoid?

We are the hollow men  
We are the stuffed men  
Leaning together  
Headpiece filled with straw.  
Alas.

Our dried voices, when  
We whisper together  
Are quiet and meaningless  
As wind in dry grass  
Or rates feet over broken glass  
In our dry cellar

Shape with out form, shade without color  
Paralyzed force, gesture without motion

Those who have crossed  
With direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom  
Remember us—if at all—not as lost  
Violent souls, but only  
As the hollow men  
The stuffed men

T.S. Eliot, *The Hollow Men*



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## The Context of Management Education

- The American disease is not just a matter of dubious personal ethics or of some rogue companies fudging the odd billion. The country's whole business culture may have become distorted. This was the culture that enraptured America for a generation, a culture underpinned by a doctrine that proclaimed the market king, always gave priority to the shareholder, and believed that business was the key engine of progress and thus should take precedence in policy decisions.

• Charles Handy, *What's a Business For?* HBR, 2002



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## Integrity, Trust, Mindfulness

- Core concepts
  - Integrity—of individual, organization, and society
    - Soundness,
    - honesty,
    - firm adherence to a code
  - Trust—the stuff of which markets are built, foundational
- Corporate failures are those of trust, integrity, and lack of mindfulness
  - Individual
  - Organizational,
  - Societal/ecological



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## Aspen Business & Society Study Results

2002

- According to surveyed MBA students, hallmarks of a well-run company include:
  - Attracting and retaining good employees
  - Excellent customer service
  - Operating according to a code of conduct
- But what is corporate social responsibility?
  - <50% say investing in employees
  - <30% say compliance with the law
  - <6% say environment
  - >70% do believe (lack of) individual ethics contributed to scandals
  - On a -1 to +1 scale respondents rated 'advocate alternative values' at +.6, they also rated 'not mind too much at' at -.7

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## Management education works...

- Instills a perspective, a point of view, values
  - Neoclassical economics
  - Economic globalization (free trade)
  - Maximization of shareholder wealth
  - Problem solving skills via functional expertise with little integration
  - Little or no attention to stakeholder and ecological issues, ethical concerns
  - Systemic pressures for ever-improving (financial) performance and (market) growth...
    - Whatever it takes mentality



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## Issues for the ethics of management education

- **Narrow functionalism, single stakeholder orientation**
  - Root cause: 'overemphasis of American corporations ...to maximizing shareholder value' (Kochan, 2002, p. 139)
  - Intense individualistic orientation → individual corporate good only
- **Intractable problems highlighted in Porter/McKibbin (1988)**
  - Need for team players and individual initiative, written and oral communication skills, enhanced personal awareness (mindfulness) and interpersonal skills to work within diverse cultures/peoples.
  - Need to learn to work with multiple stakeholders (conflict and controversy) under public/governmental scrutiny
- **Corporate responsibility/ethics curriculum is marginal at best**
  - ...not even well accepted in research (Walsh, Weber, Margolis, 2003)
- **Faculty problems (AACSB, 1996)**
  - Lacking in real-world experience, understanding of global and technological environments
  - Do not understand the need for change (narrow disciplinary orientations, pressures for publication in 'status' journals, limited rewards for collaboration or integrative work)




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## What is business for? Handy's (2002) Question What is management (education) for?

- New definitions/perspectives needed
  - Business *in* society
  - Ethics *in* business...
- Contribute to the overall health and 'good' of society...which can only be defined by stakeholders...a 'soft stuff' issue
- Implies attention
  - to social and ecological sustainability and
  - the needs of future generations as well as our own
- Starts with the needs of societies, communities, families (even nature), not companies...




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## Integrity

- **Reality:**
  - Markets rely on trust.
  - Businesses rely on trust.
  - Stakeholder relationships rely on trust.
  - Loyalty of all sorts relies on trust. Trust is built on integrity.
- Trust is at a premium today.
- There is a need for great integrity...
  - All meanings




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## Integrity... an integral vision of management education

- **Definitions...from the same root as integral**
- Honesty, forthrightness
  - Implies transparency and accountability
- Integrative wholeness, completeness, soundness
  - Implies systemic understanding, including ecological
- Firm adherence to a code
  - Implies standards and trust of adherence to them
    - E.g., global standards and values (Global Compact, Caux Principles, Sullivan Principles, OECD guidelines)
  - Human(e)/subjective implications, not just objective measures




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## Mindfulness

- Presence, self-awareness, awareness of implications Ackoff (2001) calls this wisdom or the capacity to think through the consequences of actions.
- Key to understanding stakeholders' perspectives
  - Qualitative v. quantitative considerations/perspectives
  - Subjective v. objective criteria of effectiveness
- System integrity: Understand the whole system...
  - and the consequences of decisions long and short term
- Performance measured in multiple new ways.
- Balance multiple interests/constituencies (not one)




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## How to Understand differences... Wilber's Framework

	<u>Left-hand side</u>	<u>Right-hand side</u>
<u>Individual</u>	Subjective Intentional  "I" experienced	Objective Behavioral  "it" observed
<u>Collective</u>	Intersubjective Cultural  "we" experienced	Interobjective Social  "its" observed




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## Need the both/and of... An Integrative Perspective

• Subjective  
"I"



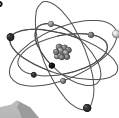
• Objective  
"It"



• Inter-subjective  
"we"



• Inter-objective  
"its"




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## Inspiration and Meaning

A good business is a community with a purpose, and a community is not something to be 'owned.'

Charles Handy, 2002




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## Integral Management Education...

...some tentative ideas

- **Speak to higher purpose: vision (inspiration)**
  - Soul-filling, aesthetic appreciation, mindful practice that generates self- and other-awareness
  - Relationship-oriented
  - Qualitative as well as quantitative considerations valuing: Ethical/moral values/foundation as well as economic Experiences...of awareness, aesthetics, love, spirit...and Impacts of business activities
- **Wholes, not fragments**
  - Societal/ecological orientation
    - Generational and ecological sustainability over time
    - Long-term perspective (7<sup>th</sup> generation out)
    - Integration of multiple perspectives...with more equal weighting of objective and subjective criteria
  - Historical context of management/the firm
  - Future search...where is the world going?




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## Integral Management Education...

...some tentative ideas

- **Stakeholders' perspectives considered**
  - Even when subjectively-defined (requires broadening the meaning of what management and leadership are beyond the financials)
- Teach stakeholder engagement, perspective-taking, mindfulness practices that demonstrate values beyond economic,
  - including aesthetic appreciation, ecological or nature appreciation/value, emotions, and even meaning-making/spirituality



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## Integral Management Education...

...some tentative ideas

- **Explore moral foundation of management/business *in* society**
  - Trust and integrity (systemic)
    - Provide historical context
  - Societal/ecological health not just organizational/corporate performance
    - Systems thinking, systems dynamics
  - Responsibility to multiple stakeholders, accountability and transparency
  - Redefine the purpose of the firm...
    - finally ...
    - think about how to embed new vision in law



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## Integral Management Education...

...some tentative ideas

- Revision the Organization/Corporation
  - Identify, articulate, implement core values
  - Recognize comprised of multiple stakeholders and has necessary relationships with others
  - Match organizational values to global standards
    - E.g., hypernorms or fundamental values
    - Serious exercise to identify hypernorms via codes and standards
  - Envision corporation comprised of empowered, independent, and articulate stakeholders multiple interests and perspectives
  - Take stakeholders' experiences into account, too
- Teach accountability mechanisms that resemble accounting and auditing processes and standards
  - Meet demands for accountability, transparency, responsibility



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## Integral Management Education...

### ...some tentative ideas

- **Individual values orientation/moral development**
  - Personal vision
    - inspirational and meaningful
    - Personal exploration
  - Linked to personal and organizational values
  - Ways of contributing to the whole
    - ...organization, society...and family
- **Move from conventional to post-conventional stages of development**
  - Cognitive, moral, and emotional (minimally)
- **Initiative, risk-taking, creativity to solve business/social problems**
- **Collaboration (multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration)**
- **Individual and institutional responsibility**
- **Self- and organization-efficacy**
- **Reflection on consequences of decisions/actions**
  - Mindfulness practices, engagement, perspective-taking



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## Some ideas...

### for shifting management education

- **Individual, institutional, system (society) integrity**
- **Systems thinking**
  - Synthetic, holistic, integrative (societal, ecological)
- **Perspective taking**
  - Implicit in stakeholder thinking
  - Attention to stakeholder 'subjective' experiences (the 'I' and 'we' dimensions of life)
- **of decisions/actions**
  - Mindfulness
- **Ecological knowing (Gardner)**



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## Some topical suggestions

### ...for business in society

- **Balance, integrity, effectiveness business in society**
  - It's not (just) the stupid economy...or the economy, stupid.
- **Integration: Body, Mind, Heart, Soul and Spirit**
  - Integrity speaks to wholes and parts within wholes
  - Awareness of consequences
- **Systems thinking: We Are All One Planet**
  - "We are all one people of earth," inherently connected.
  - What if manager/leaders understood this quantum reality?
- **Diversity in the Global Village**
  - Yet the world is and wants to be incredibly diverse.
  - Conflicts and consequences are inevitable
- **Change, Dynamism, Power and Complexity**
  - Are constants...necessitate collaboration, dialogue, listening, openness, reflection, transparency, responsibility, and accountability at individual, organizational, and societal levels



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## Lest we educate hollow men (women)...

**This is the dead land  
This is cactus land  
Here the stone images  
Are raised, here they receive  
The supplication of a dead man's hand  
Under the twinkle of a fading star.**

...

...

**Between the idea  
And the reality  
Between the motion  
And the act  
Falls the Shadow**

...

**This is the way the world ends  
This is the way the world ends  
This is the way the world ends  
Not with a bang but a whimper.**



T.S. Eliot  
The Hollow Men

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