

Editor's Introduction to Teaching & Learning Section

“Never make forecasts, especially about the future.” (Samuel Goldwyn). This thoughtful comment is from “Exercise: Scenario Planning” by Paul Miesing and Raymond Van Ness in one of two articles in the Teaching & Learning Section of this issue of *OMJ*. Along with the timely and interesting study by Peter Hess and Julie Siciliano titled “A Research-based Approach to Continuous Improvement in Business Education,” the T & L Section focus is on understanding how knowledge is generated, put into operation, and understood in our management classrooms.

Miesing & Van Ness share their classroom innovation for sharpening thinking and improving the quality of decision-making. The development of what the authors' call “what if” thinking takes advantage of the scenario analysis technique to help students develop their critical thinking abilities in an environment that simulates the turbulence of actual strategic business decisions. *OMJ* readers will find an excellent Teaching Note with a full description of the exercise as well as helpful ideas for conducting and debriefing the activity.

Critical thinking is further addressed by Hess and Siciliano in suggesting a research-based improvement model to better understand the outcomes of management education. In calling for a “substantial and fundamental redefinition” of the role of faculty in outcomes assessment, the authors get at two timely and important issues. The first is the matter of responsibility for downstream efficacy of our disciplines and teaching strategies. Simply put, we need to be actively engaged in the study of what matters to our students.

The second issue addressed here is the very reasonable assumption that our training as social scientists be put to work to better understand the first issue. As the authors point out, the commitment to make the design of our teaching strategies a function of research-based knowledge is “only consistent with our commitment to scholarship in the other dimensions of our roles as professional educators.” This process of inward looking study may be a change for many management educators but one that will be surely appreciated by our many stakeholders.

I hope that T&L readers will find these articles interesting, useful, and challenging. I will look forward to hearing from you and to learning your thoughts on these subjects.

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