

“CLEAR DATA MEANS CLEAR INFORMATION AND A CLEAR FUTURE. ASSESS THE CRITICAL INFORMATION NEEDED FOR YOUR BUSINESS.”

ALEXANDER BOREK,
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, UNITED KINGDOM

Management in the 21st Century

WRITERS Tina Morganello and Annabel Mansfield
PHOTOGRAPHER Randy Larcombe

They are the leaders of tomorrow—the bright minds of today that are seeking business solutions for the future. These young thinkers represent the next generation of business leaders. So what challenges do they see for management in the 21st century?

This was the question posed by the School of Management in its inaugural PhD competition. The challenge sparked the interest of over 100 international PhD candidates, with 12 exceptional students travelling to Adelaide, South Australia, to share their vision of management for the future. Here we present some of their ideas, from their ongoing research, and discover synergies, not only across management, but also across nationalities, ethnicities and industries.

Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Jonathan Bundy (University of Georgia, USA) explores the implications of economic and environmental disasters, advising companies to avoid deflective and defensive communications strategies that can irreversibly damage their brand. Offering a similar perspective on CSR, Diana Bustani (Technologico de Monterrey, Mexico) asks whether the Global Financial Crisis was caused by careless attitudes to risk, or by the nature of capitalism. She proposes compensation plans based on performance and regulatory reforms to make Directors non-exempt from liability.

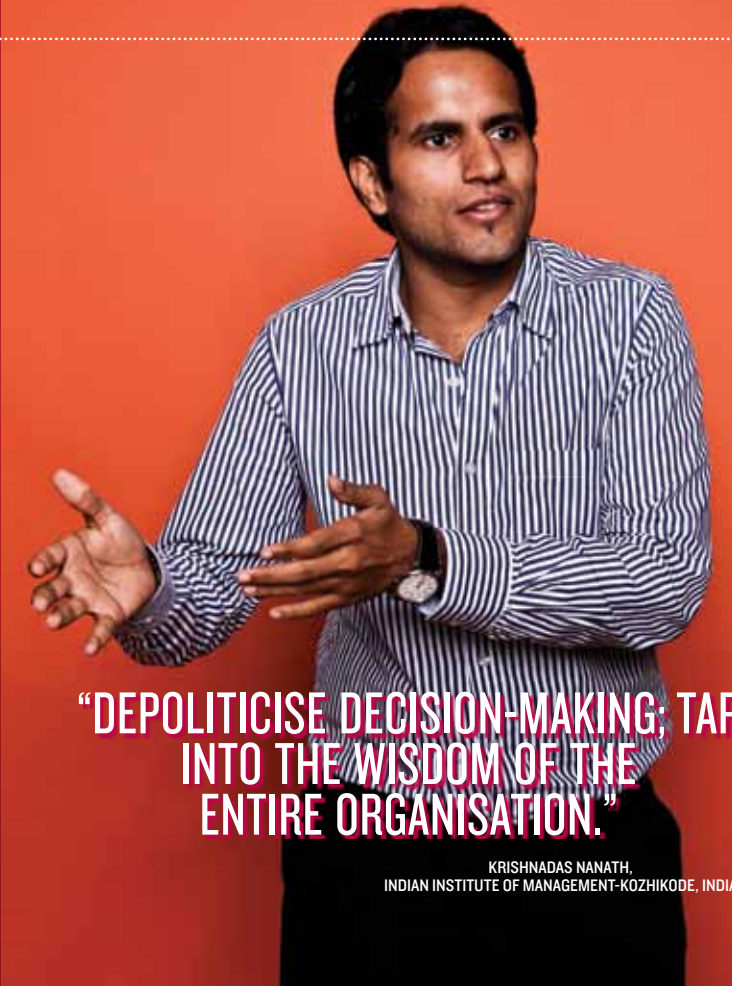
Presenting a formula that shows which measures of CSR can lead to value creation, Christopher Wickert (University of Lausanne, Switzerland) suggests it's possible for organisations to be both profitable and responsible—and says that leaders should strive for an ethics-case for business, rather than a business-case for ethics. Sanjukta Choudhury Kaul (Monash University, Malaysia) agrees, stressing that corporations must encourage an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society. She advocates an innovate approach to disabled workers, who currently represent the world's largest minority group.

Leading in the Information Age. Alexander Borek (University of Cambridge, UK) claims that knowledge and information are the only remaining differentiators in a world where everything can be outsourced. He questions whether future leaders will be able to manage the increasing amount



“THE RATIONAL ORGANISATION IS OBSOLETE. EMOTION MANAGEMENT WILL LEAD TO BETTER LEADERSHIP.”

JENNY WEGGEN,
UNIVERSITY OF HAMBURG, GERMANY



“DEPOLITICISE DECISION-MAKING; TAP INTO THE WISDOM OF THE ENTIRE ORGANISATION.”

KRISHNADAS NANATH,
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT-KOZHIKODE, INDIA



“WE MUST PUT THE SPOTLIGHT BACK ON THE HUMAN AND SOCIAL ELEMENT OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.”

SANJUKTA CHOUDHURY KAUL,
MONASH UNIVERSITY, MALAYSIA



“HOW CAN KNOWLEDGE-INTENSIVE SERVICES BE EFFECTIVELY OUTSOURCED OFFSHORE?”

KRISTIN BRANDL,
UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK, UNITED KINGDOM



“OPAQUE, OVERLY OPTIMISTIC, OR DEFENSIVE CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES WILL IRREVERSIBLY DAMAGE YOUR BRAND.”

JONATHAN BUNDY,
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



“FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAINS MUST CONSIDER OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT.”

NATHAN KUNZ,
UNIVERSITY OF NEUCHÂTEL, SWITZERLAND



“EVERYONE SEES CSR AS THE HOLY GRAIL. BUT IS IT ETHICAL TO ACT RESPONSIBLY WITH THE MINDSET OF INCREASED PROFITABILITY?”

CHRISTOPHER WICKERT,
UNIVERSITE DE LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND

of information and warns that as the value of information increases, so too does its risk. He advises managers to consider using advanced data analytics to ensure better decision-making in the workplace.

Kristin Brandle (University of Warwick, UK) is equally cautious about knowledge management. She argues that while it makes economic sense to extend offshoring to services such as research and development, companies must also learn to overcome language challenges, cultural barriers and quality control issues, particularly if they fail to communicate tacit knowledge about their core competencies.

Logistics. Nathan Kunz (University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland) explains that logistics today is a complex process, encompassing a range of sustainable, ethical and multinational issues. He says that organisations must consider additional performance indicators (other than those based on customer satisfaction and shareholder value) to fundamentally benefit society and the environment.

Supply chain challenges are also affecting the ocean transport industry, as Samsul Islam (University of Auckland, NZ) points out. He addresses the increasing demand for container port use and the increasing congestion created by the explosion in sea trade. He proposes improved facilities and better port/rail connections to ease increasing costs.

Innovation. Krishnadas Nanath (Indian Institute of Management-Kozhikode, India) discusses the need to depoliticise decision-making to tap into the collective wisdom of an entire organisation. He says that successful management in the 21st century should entail a move from ‘great leaders’ to ‘great groups’, and that this fundamental shift will ultimately benefit the organisation as a whole.

Human resources. The widening talent gap is analysed by Sharmaine Sakthi Anathan (University of Hull, UK) who highlights a lack of confidence in the next generation of potential leaders. She says that getting the right person for a leadership role will require innovative thinking, particularly around capacity and competency issues.

Engaging and inspiring employees is central to a harmonious and productive work environment, notes Krista Hoffmeister (Colorado State University, USA). She says that strategic leaders must engage employees to generate positive values and boost employee confidence, as both are empirically related to positive work behaviours and job performance. The role of emotional management is also addressed by Jenny Weggen (University of Hamburg, Germany), who explains that behaviour and decision-making are always intertwined with people’s emotions and that management strategies must systematically include emotion work.

The ideas presented by these students certainly identify common themes for management in the 21st century, but they also show a group of young leaders who share a genuine passion for improving the world. There’s no doubt that future leaders must learn to harness a multitude of management issues. They will need to inspire, enthuse, adapt and regenerate. But most importantly, these leaders will need to be resilient, innovative and entrepreneurial in order to thrive. ■

For more information, visit: unisa.edu.au/management/phd_competition



“A SUPERB LEADER CAN COORDINATE AN ENTIRE COMPANY INTO A BEAUTIFULLY ORCHESTRATED SYMPHONY OF SYNERGY.”

KRISTA HOFFMEISTER,
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



“WE MUST EMBRACE GENERATIONAL AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES TO CREATE NEW LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES FOR THE FUTURE.”

SHARMAINE SAKTHI ANATHAN,
UNIVERSITY OF HULL, UNITED KINGDOM



“REGULATORY REFORMS WITHOUT ETHICS ARE NOT ENOUGH.”

DIANA BUSTANI,
TECNOLOGICO DE MONTERREY, MEXICO



“THE TRADE EXPLOSION HAS LED TO CAPACITY SHORTAGES AT SEAPORTS – WE MUST DEVELOP STRUCTURAL MECHANISMS TO EASE THE CONGESTION.”

SAMSUL ISLAM,
UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND