50+20 Management Education for the World:
PART 1: Designing a Radically New Vision of Management Education

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Business schools are – at least in the public eye – key representatives of management education. Substantial material exists which describes how business schools are performing, including increasingly critical voices concerning their performance over the past decade. Interestingly, we find very little available material concerning the wider landscape of management education, in contrast to the wealth of information and critical analyses on business schools. Despite this lack of information, the vision is not limited to business schools but rather addresses the whole management education landscape, defining and developing key roles its various players can fulfill.

The 50+20 vision seeks to define areas of responsibility and opportunity, identifying clear roles which management education can play in order to assume responsibility in contributing to the creation of a society and world worth living in. These roles can be embraced by any player involved in management education, including corporate universities, consultancies, executive training centers, vocational training, think tanks or research centers – as well as business schools and management departments within the larger universities.

Thus far we examined what is needed in society and the world, and what different players in the field of management education can contribute to make the world a better place. But what about our own stakeholders? We engaged with key representatives of our broader community to better understand how various stakeholders interrelate and influence each other in the complex system of management education. During our retreats we shared and developed points of view with members of this community as equal partners. The global survey, the resultant discussions and the integration of new members into our visioning process stirred very different feelings towards these people. Our shared experience led us to identify a potential paradigm shift from a more mechanical "stakeholder involvement" to a "community engagement" approach: an emotive, whole-person collaboration similar to an animated family discussion.

The perspectives and expectations of our community point toward a very different model of management education. These views further shaped our thinking as we continued to study the challenges of the world, the economic system, business, leadership and management education. In the process we developed a sense of tapping into the higher consciousness of the broader global community concerned with the future of management education. From this larger field, a new vision slowly emerged, outlining a new type of management education.

Who and What is 50+20?

The environmental, social and economic state of the world demands deep change in many domains. 50+20 offers a vision of how management education can contribute to a world worth living in. At its core, the vision creates a space: a collaboratory for stakeholders to resolve transdisciplinary issues. To achieve this, business and management schools must educate and develop globally responsible leaders; enable business organizations to serve the common good; and engage in the transformation of business and the economy. 50+20 is a collaborative initiative between GRLI, WBSCSB, and PRME, reflecting the concerns of students, parents, entrepreneurs, and scholars world-wide.

To date, business and management education efforts at large function in line with an agenda that was set during the 1950s by the Carnegie and Ford Foundation reports.

Over **50** years have passed since the agenda for management education was set. The RIO+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (June 2012) marked the 20th anniversary of the 1992 Rio Earth summit: **20** years have passed since governments were urged to rethink economic development and find ways to halt the destruction of irreplaceable natural resources. It is at this juncture in history where the **50+20** project takes action to reset the management education agenda for the coming **20** years.

For a comprehensive list of resources, references, information, and news, please visit the website at: **www.50plus20.org**.



Educating
- Transformative learning
- Issue-centered learning
- Reflective practice and Fieldwork

Enabling
- Research in service of society
- Supporting companies towards stewardship
- Accompanying leaders in their transformation

Engaging
- Open access between academia and practice
- Faculty as public intellectuals
- Institutions as role models

COLLABORATORY
- The preferred place for stakeholders to meet
- Collaborative action learning and research platforms

A New Vision for Management Education

Rather than train managers for organizations that operate within twentieth century logic, management educators need to answer the call of service to become custodians who provide a service to society. The 50+20 project is searching for ways to tackle the challenge.

The management school of the future understands that transforming business, the economy and society begins with its own internal transformation. A school that embraces the vision will make the leap in a transparent and inclusive manner, leading by example by *being the change* it wishes to advance. More concretely, we envision three fundamental roles in management education that refine and enlarge the current purpose of education and research:

- ***Educating*** and developing globally responsible leaders,
- ***Enabling*** business organizations to serve the common good,
- ***Engaging*** in the transformation of business and the economy.

We also refer to the vision as the *Triple E vision*: Educating, Enabling and Engaging.

Each of these roles holds significant implementation challenges and is supported with enablers that aim to facilitate the transformation ahead for any management educator interested in embracing the vision.

The 50+20 vision is founded on the insight that providing responsible leadership for a sustainable world is first and foremost about creating and holding a *space* for the incarnation of these three roles. The various visioning exercises conducted in the creation process of the vision revealed a profound and multi-dimensional connectedness with a larger field – from the single individual human being to organizations, societies, animals, plants and the natural world in general. This larger field is directly related to the philosophy of creating a space.

The central feature of our vision is expressed in the *collaboratory* (the inner circle in the figure on the left) – a powerful space of co-creation where issues relevant to local, regional and global societies are resolved. The collaboratory represents the core mission of management educators adopting the role of transient gatekeepers who hold a space for responsible leadership for a sustainable world. Holding such a space enables an individual to connect to their full potential, while also reconnecting with all parts of society and the world. We found the circle of the collaboratory to be an appropriate symbol, representing a universal meeting place for discussing communal matters. It is rooted in many cultural traditions, such as gatherings around a large tree (the German *Dorflinde*), a fire (a Native American symbol for honoring future generations), and countless other examples in indigenous cultures around the world.

Educating, Enabling and Engaging

Implementing each of these new roles represents a challenge in its own right. While not every player in the landscape needs to embrace all the roles, management educators may want to use this vision to reflect on their strategic choices for the coming decades.

The realization of this vision requires individuals with a certain mindset, typified by a deep awareness and understanding of the global challenges we face, a sense of urgency to bring about change, and an unwavering belief that all of us "own" the responsibility to create change and contribute to making the world a better place.

Our vision consists of the three roles for management education (Educating, Enabling and Engaging), each of which is supported by three underlying enablers. These elements represent not only the essential roles of management education for the world but also point to three different levels of engagement:

- **The Individual Level**: educating and developing globally responsible leaders
- **The Organizational Level**: enabling business organizations to serve the common good
- **The Societal Level**: engaging in the transformation of business and society

Let us consider each of these roles in more detail to gain an understanding of the underlying enabling forces.

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Role 1: Educating and Developing Globally Responsible Leaders

Educating globally responsible leaders is fundamentally different from what management education has achieved to date. Rather than acquiring desirable traits or isolated knowledge, leadership development is about developing the potential to act consistently on behalf of society. It requires the development of capacities that may lie dormant within a leader or an organization, including the ability to embrace complex transdisciplinary issues and hands-on collaboration with other members of the larger community. A systems-based approach is important to develop the key dimensions of globally responsible leaders. Holistic development approaches provide a healthy foundation to treat the human being, the organization and society as an open, emergent and dynamic system that progresses (and can regress) without ever acquiring a perfect state.

Our interaction with various societal groups also identified the challenge for management education: it is to assume a very different attitude towards educating potential leaders in developing countries. A key issue is that the poorest are denied access to management education, together with many more from the developed world. No comprehensive vision of the future of management education can leave this situation unaddressed.

Different cultures (simplistically defined as Eastern and Western) hold different views on what it takes to develop a leader and what roles they play in society. Insights from all approaches enable marrying the art of *being* and *doing*, bridging the interdependence with the world and the leader's inner values into an ethical and globally responsible approach. Prolonging the dimension from *me* to *we* and to *all of us*, and developing a reflective awareness and a felt sense of being truly connected with other sentient beings opens up new perspectives of collaboration, purpose and direction.

> One of the goals of transformative learning is for future leaders to develop and expand their reflective awareness.

Learning on Different Levels

We need to adopt whole person learning in order to educate our leaders. This requires pedagogies which are very different to the dominant paradigm of management education today, which is built on the "sage on the stage" and the case study method, reflecting a cognitive intellectual approach which assumes a defined set of pre-established knowledge which can be captured, packaged and shared. Traditional techniques largely focus on what others have done in the *past*, which might conceivably make sense in a stable system – but not in today's world, where the challenge is to forge an entire future that is different in almost every respect from the present. The pedagogical framework for developing a whole-person human leader equipped with the required skills, competences and knowledge to "walk on the bridge as it is being built" has only started emerging recently.

Currently, we consider the three key enablers for educating and transforming globally responsible leaders to be:

- **Transformative learning**

Leadership development is first and foremost personal development, meaning that we need to go about developing the *whole person*: mind, heart, body and soul. At its core, transformative learning transforms problematic frames of reference into perspectives that provoke exploration into previously unknown solutions. The ability to consider different and new perspectives occurs through the development of consciousness, leading to a new way of relating to oneself and the world. The entry ticket for transformative learning is a powerful and safe learning environment. Such a transformation may be achieved by multiple avenues. A common denominator for any of the applied methods is that they trigger personal responsibility in co-creating a world within an evolving, interdependent movement. One of the goals of transformative learning is for future leaders to develop and expand their *reflective awareness*, which is considered the basis of globally responsible leadership.

- **Issue-centered learning**

Future learning needs to be organized around societal, environmental and economic issues both globally and locally – rather than around disciplines. A key element of issue-centered learning is a transdisciplinary, systemic approach to problems and dilemmas, potentially enabling complex decision-making processes. Another element is the active involvement and participation of societal stakeholders. Subject knowledge (such as finance, marketing, human resources and strategies) is acquired alongside issue-centered learning. When learning is conducted around issues, subject experts and teachers act as curators of knowledge and contribute relevant expertise when appropriate, favoring the integration of theory within a practical context. The collaboratory is a good example of issue-centered learning and represents a significant evolution from the traditional case study method, providing a new methodological approach to develop functional knowledge, transdisciplinary breadth and critical thinking.

- **Reflective practice and fieldwork**

Most learning occurs on the job, while common wisdom dictates that leaders cannot be developed without work experience. At the same time, adding fieldwork and practice to a curriculum is not enough. The path towards skilled performance in a new domain needs to be accompanied by guided reflection. The ability to self-reflect cannot be learned in one day but resembles the daily practice of personal hygiene. Fieldwork as part of a course should include exposure to different social domains, particularly in emerging and developing countries.

Role 2: Enabling Business Organizations to Serve the Common Good

Business organizations require a shift in philosophy in order to transform from the current paradigm of short-term profit

maximization in the interest of shareholders to a paradigm of creating sustainable value for society and the world. Such a shift implies moving beyond the conventional triple bottom line approach of balancing issues of people, profit and planet to simultaneously create positive environmental value, positive social value and positive economic value in every aspect of a business and its related supply chains. This may require not only practical tools and methods to change practice inside organizations, but potentially includes the fundamental redesign of the modern corporations as well as the legal and other frameworks in which they operate.

Such a shift will favor the common good. We define the common good as the greatest possible good for the greatest number of individuals: a world where all citizens live well and within the limits of the planet. The common good requires that business organizations direct their economic and technical creativity towards societal progress. In the context of management education, this presents opportunities for the creation of new hybrid models between consultancy and academic research, between business schools and corporate universities, and between personal and professional development.

The three enablers for business organizations to serve the common good are:

- **Research in service of society**

Future management education should adjust its research orientation to serve society by encouraging the creation of businesses, business methods and solutions which address global and local challenges around environmental, societal and economic issues. Such an agenda includes a critical reflection of dominant theories in management, finance and economics. In the future, researchers should redefine their role primarily as developing, testing and adapting alternative research methodologies that allow future-oriented problem solving. They should further engage in an ongoing dialogue with stakeholders in order to jointly identify research topics and add value by ensuring academic rigor and a critical academic perspective (see the collaboratory). As a result, management education institutions would develop solutions for societal stakeholders rather than their peers.

- **Supporting companies towards stewardship**

Creating long-term societal value requires organizations to view their business in the context of environmental, societal, economic, political, cultural and systemic dynamics. Understanding and evaluating the potential impact of strategic choices requires a new framework to evaluate if and how companies can embrace stewardship and how they can take steps to implement the related transformational changes. Such a framework includes the development of useable and comparable measures between and within industries. One suggestion is the adoption of a hybrid model, situated between current consulting and traditional academic research, helping organizations with simulations, crowdsourcing, research action labs, reporting and analysis beyond the existing limits and the framework of day-to-day perspectives within an organization.

- **Accompanying leaders in their transformation**

Leadership development is a life-long learning adventure that progresses along different stages of mastery. Retraining *existing* leaders in positions of responsibility is a different challenge. Businesses adopt stronger leadership by enabling their managers and leaders to think "outside the box," to determine how to make their business truly sustainable. We envision combined corporate university, business school and leadership centers to facilitate the learning process of an executive, both on the job and away in guided reflection – a concept further discussed in our framework of the "sanctuary."

The management school of the future has no walls that prevent a free and liberal exchange between various contributors to learning and research.

Role 3: Engaging in the Transformation of Business and the Economy

Leadership is needed to manage the debate concerning the necessary transformation of the economic system towards a system that serves societal progress. The scale of the task across the world requires multiple simultaneous approaches across the globe. As sustainability and scenarios beyond growth gain momentum, management education providers will need to support business and other stakeholders in achieving the challenges ahead. Business and management scholars can lead the public debate concerning new economic and business models, enabling the general public to understand the stakes and direct relevant community action to drive these changes. This will require new and wider forms of collaboration between academia and the professional world. Management educators themselves must become role models supporting the concept of the common good.

The three enablers for engaging in the transformation of business and society are:

- **Open access between academia and practice**

The management school of the future has no walls that prevent a free and liberal exchange between various contributors to learning and research. Titles and tenure are no longer to be venerated. Both professors and practitioners will shuttle back and forth between management schools and applied work in organizations, be it in business, public office or NGOs. Likewise, the management schools' doors are open to experienced practitioners from business and any other field of activity, to reflect on and contribute their insights, experience, and knowledge to the learning and research environment. These forms of interaction serve as a key ingredient when creating an effective platform for action-learning and research (the collaboratory).

- **Faculty as public intellectuals**

The far-reaching changes in our economies and societies require that scholars accept the role of public intellectuals, addressing critical developments, and providing knowledge and expertise to public debates. Business and management scholars need to move away from highly ambitious scholarly work chiefly aimed at other scholars or the scientific community. The regular tasks of all business and management faculties should be to serve as public intellectuals who are proactively engaged through their research, teaching, and public services. Further, management schools need to find ways to reward these tasks through performance appraisals and promotions.

- **Institutions as role models**

Management educators need to fundamentally rethink their own organizational models in order to become role models for a world seeking socially, environmentally and economically just organizations that contribute to the well-being of society. Such a change will involve new models in funding, decision making, governance, compensation and value creation. Faculty and administration are challenged to display the same levels of globally responsible leadership they would wish to see in their fellow learners and participants. As such, the organization serves as a showcase of transformation, thereby shaping the revised definitions of for-profit and not-for-profit organizations under the new paradigm of *shared value creation*. Ideally, management educators become role models in a learning journey that reveals new methods of leading and managing an organization.

Part 2 (to be published in the next TEBR issue) will cover key insights with input from key stakeholder groups of management education (students, alumni, civil society, the business community, NGOs, and management scholars and administrators). It also develops the essence of the vision, the collaboratory, in more detail.

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