

CONNECTION

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EDITOR'S MEMMO

If, as the fashionable argument goes, governments, schools, hospitals and a multitude of other organizations should act *more like businesses*, how then should businesses act? How should business professionals act? The "Cover Stories" in this issue of CONNECTION focus on the changing shape of business and management education — so, in a sense, they also focus on those questions.

The curricular reforms touched upon in this issue are ultimately efforts to reconstitute the American manager and redefine success in business. Which is not to say that some old measures of success don't stand up well.

Four years before his appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court, Justice Louis Brandeis warned Brown University's Class of 1912: "While loss spells failure, large profits do not connote success." Success will be found, Brandeis continued, "in the advancing of methods and processes; in the improvement of products; in more perfect organization eliminating friction as well as waste; in bettering the condition of the workingmen, developing their faculties and promoting their happiness; and in the establishment of right relations with customers and with the community."

Of course, today's successful manager must strive to better the conditions of a more diverse group of "workingmen" — and women — who may require not only fair compensation and safe working conditions, but also opportunities to pursue lifelong learning and support for a host of other contemporary needs such as child care. The attention to community, meanwhile, must extend beyond the glassed atriums of Stamford and Boston, to places like Lynn, Mass., or Jay, Maine, or for that matter, Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

For the most part, however, Brandeis's recipe for business success is as relevant today as it was 80 years ago. And indeed, many of the curricular revisions now taking place in New England management programs are designed to emphasize teamwork, awareness of foreign cultures, environmental sensitivity and a developed sense of ethics — crucial qualities for a manager seeking to improve products and relationships.

"But what about the bottom line?" some proactive, rightsizing, facilitating reengineer will ask. Not to worry. Today, as in the years leading up to World War I, attention to workers and community makes good business sense. In his speech at Brown, Brandeis applauded the Filenes of Boston for policies that, by the standards of those days, empowered workers and, in the process, promoted efficiency. "They have demonstrated that the introduction of industrial democracy and of social justice is at least consistent with marked financial success," observed the Harvard-educated jurist.

Our point in this issue of CONNECTION is not to put B-schools and management programs under the microscope. Plenty of curriculum committees and business magazines are doing that. Our goal is to explore New England's management education enterprise in the context of a region committed to social justice as it seeks renewed financial success. As always, we thank our contributors for sharing their insights.

John O. Harney is the editor of CONNECTION.