

The Human Person - the Heart of Business

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Abstract

Ghoshal's critique of business school practices highlights the neglect of intentionality in management theory. Lonergan's analysis of intentionality offers a way for business schools to reclaim a central place for a full account of the human person in their practices and pedagogies. This does not imply a revolution but a way of examining more closely what we are doing in our value-adding activities in business, and discovering therein a fuller set of guiding norms and precepts. This set can occupy a central place within the mission of business schools, standing naturally alongside the inspiration of faith.

Sumandra Ghoshal, in a paper published posthumously in the *Academy of Management Learning and Education* in 2005, drew attention to a systemic and serious issue affecting business schools.² He argued that bad management theories in research and teaching contaminate good business practice and, in the worst case, can lead to business collapse, such as that of the energy company, Enron.

Ghoshal's paper is wide-ranging and thought provoking. It directly implicates the mission and purpose of business schools and suggests, to my mind, questions relevant to this conference, such as: Does "mission driven" in a post-modern world mean that the business school has a clear position on the nature and purpose of business and of institutions generally, including their management, governance and leadership? Would such a position shape management practice of the school itself? Would it provide a sharper, competitive "edge" for the school and turn out more competent business people? What would such competence look like? These questions, to my mind, address the foundations of a business school and are most relevant to this conference.

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² Sumantra Ghoshal, "Bad Management Theories Are Destroying Good Management Practices," *Academy of Management Learning and Education* 4, no. 1 (2005): 75 - 91.

They also shape my response to Ghoshal, for I think he was also looking in that direction as the means to remedy what he saw as institutional dysfunction.

In this paper, I respond to Ghoshal with a position where both secular and sacred can meet, namely, in an account of the human person. My approach has to do more with natural law and reason than with faith; and it was reason which both John Paul II, in *FIDES et Ratio*, and Benedict XVI, in *DEUS Caritas Est*, affirmed the need to strengthen and purify. My account places the human person at the heart of business, a position that, arguably, has a central place in all business schools, but particularly those that are Catholic and mission driven. For the living and acting human person is, as I will show, the source of all value-adding upon which business depends.

In the first part of this paper, I review the issues Ghoshal raised in his analysis of business schools. In the second part, I draw out the main lines of a response relevant to business, based on the ideas on Canadian Jesuit philosopher and theologian, Bernard Lonergan.³ I discuss Lonergan's work as an exploration of "thinking", with emphasis on thinking's role in "value-adding", because these terms are more likely to be of interest to business people and to business schools. My working assumption is that good thinking underpins good theory and good practice, and good practice means high value-adding. Lonergan's ideas, however, present a unique pedagogical challenge, which I address in the third part of my paper.

Lonergan's account of "thinking" invites one to examine one's own thinking and to discover within it the elegantly simple structure of human consciousness. Beyond the possibility this might offer for "purifying reason", it also opens out a new way to view the dynamic and open processes of organization, governance and leadership. It can also provide a specification of the core competencies of management that have, in my view, foundational value for its theory and practice, and for the range of matters which Ghoshal raised in his paper. In brief, it offers to place the human person at the heart of business and of "mission".

1. Ghoshal's lament

What caused Ghoshal so much concern? In effect, he was looking at, and was dismayed by the large picture. He saw the flurry of activity following the collapse of Enron - business schools implementing programs of ethics and governments introducing new legislation – and thought it all misdirected. It would be better, he maintained, for business schools simply to stop doing a lot of what they are currently doing, namely, using and teaching bad theory. He gave examples of bad theory – agency and competition theory were two – that influenced business practice in negative and unproductive ways.

³ I refer to his two classic texts, the first being a study of "thinking" itself (as in knowing), the second as the collaboration involved in a comprehensive project of "thinking and doing", in this case, theology. Bernard Lonergan, *Insight - a Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran, vol. 3 of the Collected Works (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). Bernard Lonergan, *Insight - a Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick Crowe and Robert Doran, vol. 3 of the Collected Works (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972).

Ghoshal probed into the foundations of business, exposing structures beneath the complex edifice of management theory, teaching and practice. There he saw the influence of social science and, below this, he discerned unexamined assumptions about human nature, creating in business schools, what he called, “the pretence of knowledge”.

His criticism of social science hinged on its neglect of human intentionality and, hence, of ethics and morality. This neglect, he maintained, has shaped minds and attitudes, not only within business schools but also within business itself, where it has led to the displacement of ethical and moral considerations from decision-making. Hence, the collapse of Enron and other corporate entities. He referred also to the destructive influence of the Chicago School across many academic disciplines where philosophical ideas, such as those of Hume, Bentham and Locke, are used to justify faulty ideas regarding human nature and business purpose and practice. The notion of self-interest was one example, maximising shareholder return was another, competition theory yet another.⁴

Ghoshal thought that a resolution of this state of confusion and disarray was to be discovered somewhere within the field of intentionality, but he could see no way to bring about the corrective needed. He likened this quest to the integration that physicists were seeking in a grand unifying theory. To the extent that a solution would remain elusive, he urged business schools to reform through adopting a pluralist approach that recognised the distinctive characteristics of scholarship in discovery, integration, application and teaching⁵. Furthermore, as this problem of bad theory was serious and systemic, its resolution required a wider involvement beyond faculty members. He appealed to Deans and patrons from business, the governing bodies, even the Academy, to take a more active role. This was an urgent issue affecting the whole business community.

Ghoshal’s paper was wide-ranging and provocative, albeit published posthumously by the Academy. This was not the first time he had presented these ideas about the destructive and narrow views of theory and the need to reform management thinking and practice.⁶ In those earlier presentations, he discussed ideas about social capital, the integral role that organizations played in society and the self-concepts of managers. In this, his last paper, restating the themes that had so concerned him, he was plainly, urgently and passionately seeking to stimulate new directions in management and business research, and in consequence, management and business practice. But equally, he also recognised the difficulty in changing deeply set ways of thinking.

⁴ These are examples where a narrow view of self-interest is dominant, leading to value being appropriated by select groups at the expense of others, such as employees and the community generally.

⁵ These four categories were developed by Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered - Priorities of the Professoriate* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 17 - 25.

⁶ Sumantra Ghoshal, Christopher A. Bartlett, and Peter Moran, "A New Manifesto for Management," *Sloan Management Review* 40, no. 3 (1999): 9 - 20, Sumantra Ghoshal and Peter Moran, "Bad for Practice: A Critique of the Transaction Cost Theory," *Academy of Management Review* 21, no. 1 (1996): 13 - 47.

His paper generated much discussion in the Academy. Kanter, Mintzberg, Pfeffer and Donaldson, among others, responded respectfully.⁷ None contested his essential argument. All agreed in some measure with the points he made; each offered some corrective or brought forward a notion which Ghoshal had not considered. His argument, as such, stood - his more compelling and serious points left hanging solemnly over the Academy. No one took up his points concerning the neglect of intentionality and the consequences of this neglect in bad theory, or intentionality's role in a recovery. One respondent later argued for the scientific method, in particular that Popper's falsification theory has a role to play.⁸ Ghoshal's contentions seem to have been put to rest, posthumously, with him.

In a way, Ghoshal and his respondents demonstrated that pluralist views are the nature of business theories. But the consequence of this position is that there is no foundational position from which to critique another, or to ground a theory in reality, or to propose a way to resolve differences.

Ghoshal, however, seemed to be going beyond pluralism by having raised questions about epistemology and the need to use common sense. He did not make clear his own epistemology, though he advocated an "imaginative common sense" of the kind, he maintained, that had guided Freud and Darwin in their discoveries.

On the one hand, Ghoshal argues that business schools are teaching bad theories. On the other, he offers some solutions – presumably good theories – but does not indicate the base upon which the good theories are formed and established, nor from where the bad can be critiqued. He intuits a solution in the field of intentionality, but seems to deny the possibility of this being fruitful in the short term. Within this horizon, he advocates, in the meantime, a new pluralism for faculty scholarship along lines proposed by Boyer.

Ghoshal saw that the "infection" from social sciences in particular was far advanced, spreading beyond the business school into the minds, values and attitudes of those engaged in business. It was difficult to treat and more difficult to reverse.

2. Lonergan's intentionality analysis

Neither in this nor in his earlier papers, did I detect in Ghoshal's wide scholarship and cited references, any familiarity with the thinking of Lonergan. Although he had raised the matter of

⁷ Rosbeth Moss Kanter, "What Theories Do Audiences Want? Exploring the Demand Side," *Academy of Management Learning and Education* 4, no. 1 (2005): 93 - 95, Henry Mintzberg, "How Inspiring. How Sad. Comment on Sumantra Ghoshal's Paper," *Academy of Management Learning and Education* 4, no. 1 (2005): 108, Jeffrey Pfeffer, "Why Do Bad Management Theories Persist? A Comment on Ghoshal," *Academy of Management Learning and Education* 4, no. 1 (2005): 96 - 100, Lex Donaldson, "For Positive Management Theories While Retaining Science: Reply to Ghoshal," *Academy of Management Learning and Education* 4, no. 1 (2005): 109 - 113.

⁸ Reginald Shareef, "Want Better Business Theories? Maybe Karl Popper Has the Answer.," *Academy of Management Learning and Education* 6, no. 2 (2007): 272 - 280.

intentionality,⁹ Ghoshal seemed unaware of Lonergan's seminal contribution to intentionality analysis fifty years earlier in *Insight*, of Lonergan's ideas on longer cycles of progress and decline and of the difficulty of reversing wrong philosophical ideas. This unfamiliarity is not remarkable. Even amongst his own, Lonergan is little known outside of theology and philosophy, and anyone who has struggled with his difficult texts and unfamiliar concepts would not immediately see their direct relevance to the world of business and organization, especially to their leadership and governance.¹⁰

Lonergan had been, like Ghoshal, increasingly dissatisfied with deeper matters - in his case, with the status of his own classical formation to handle contemporary issues in philosophy and theology. In this dissatisfaction, he turned to examine what he was doing when he was coming to know. The results of this decades' long quest he elaborated in *Insight - a study of human understanding*. Lonergan's originality was to use the achievements of understanding and knowing in science, mathematics and the familiar experience of practical common sense, to coax his readers to discover their own interior processes of understanding and knowing as a dynamic structure.

His claims were large: "Thoroughly understand what it is to understand, and not only will you understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood but also you will possess a fixed base, an invariant pattern, opening upon all further developments of understanding".¹¹ In focussing on our own interior processes, especially that of "understanding", we are able to experience and confirm the place of insight in its three expressions: direct, reflective and practical, respectively in acts of creativity, judging and deciding. These matters are of immediate interest to leaders of business, where the processes of understanding and knowing - particularly regarding innovation and risk assessment - impact on decision-making. In essence, one's "interior processes" are the source of all value-adding, irrespective of level, whether it be board, executive, management or shop floor.

Through an examination of "interior conscious processes" – for which we all have the requisite data in our own consciousness - Lonergan builds a new way to understand epistemology, the

⁹ Ghoshal had referred to three explanatory forms used within social science – causal, functional and intentional – as discussed by Elster, in Jon Elster, *Explaining Technical Change - a Case Study in the Philosophy of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 25 - 88. Ghoshal did not define his use of the term "intentionality" but linked it directly to decision-making and choice and, by extension, to ethics. Lonergan unfolds intentionality, seeing its origin within inquiry and its term within action. Although Lonergan did not specifically use the term "intentionality" in *Insight*, he did so in *Method* to indicate the same structure.

¹⁰ I feel fortunate to have come across Lonergan's work, by chance, at a time when, as a management consultant and facilitator of organizational change and strategy, I was puzzling over management theories and their usefulness. I was troubled by the way in which many theories seemed to be uncritically taken up as 'gospel'. Lonergan gave me substance, and I began to see things more clearly. There was something exciting about the discoveries I was making, and I could find immediate practical applications for his ideas in my facilitation work in consulting and more broadly, in my present work, in the area of governance and the human good in decision-making.

¹¹ Lonergan, *Insight*, 22.

structure of knowledge, the place of common sense and theory, and the nature of things; of metaphysics and of the foundations of disciplines; and of the four fundamental empirical methods for handling change - namely, classical, statistical, genetic and dialectic. His notion of emergent probability provides a powerful way for conceiving processes of change and development, and, for leaders, of directing and driving these processes. Lonergan's intentionality analysis can substantially meet Ghoshal on all issues Ghoshal addressed and provides a way forward toward the integration Ghoshal sought. In a word, Lonergan opens a way for each person to appropriate, through an examination of our own conscious intentional processes, the normative precepts for "thinking" and, from within this horizon, to appreciate the possibilities for personal growth and the larger dynamic of world process and development. This may seem a little obscure, but a few diagrams may help illuminate, from a business perspective, what I am saying.

The dynamics of human consciousness

Lonergan starts his classic text, *Insight, a study of human understanding*, with an account of insight and the elation which accompanies its advent. Business persons can identify with this. All business people experience being puzzled over current issues, ways to move forward, handle change and so on. When puzzled and confused, we generally ask questions. When we find the right question and an answer that resolves our puzzlement, we experience great relief and satisfaction, and take appropriate action. Thus we get things done, and new puzzles and issues emerge.

This example reveals the broad dimensions of intentionality. Questions play a critical role. Insights come, reflection occurs and action is taken. To solve a puzzle, we may draw on previous experience, or talk to people, or search for new ideas. Before we take action, we may weigh things up; assess risks and possible outcomes. All these activities occur intentionally within consciousness. There is an organic unity to consciousness, as well as a dynamic development of it. Intentional conscious activity is also evident in groups and teams.

However, consciousness itself, namely one's own, is elusive if we attempt to examine it directly. To discover within one's very self the **dynamic structure** of consciousness, of which Lonergan speaks, one needs to do a 'double take,' – that is, do something, such as solve a simple puzzle, and at the same time, attend to what one is doing. Knowing, we are reminded, is not simply "taking a look" at something. Of this we are reminded continually when reading *Insight*.

Lonergan laid out four distinct levels of consciousness, or cognitive activity, each one level drawing up the lower level to serve the purposes of the higher, thus adding value to the one below. This we can experience directly. He defines "experience" as the first level. This is common to all animal life, and is what is given through our senses but is compounded with much more, such as what is given in memory, imagination and perception. We can find our own examples of these acts of retrieving from memory, perceiving, imagining, sensing and feeling. We can furthermore distinguish between the content, the act itself and the subject, or self, as rememberer, perceiver, imaginer, senser and feeler.

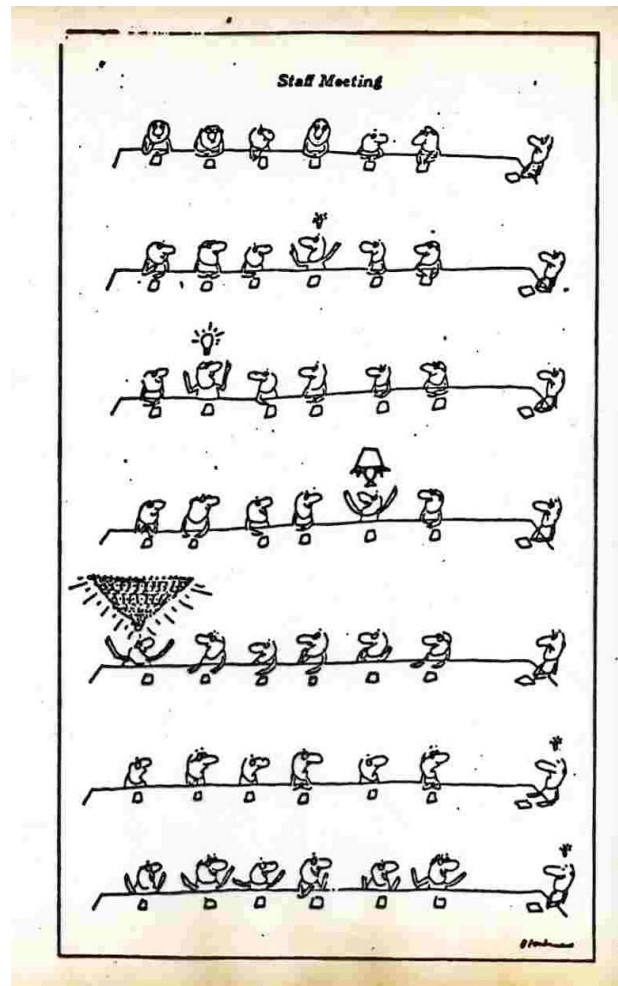
The second level is that which “makes sense” of the first when we understand the meaning of what we have experienced. It is the level of bright, new ideas. The third level adds value to the second, when we reflect on this new understanding, thoroughly assess it and affirm its truth in an act of judgement. The fourth level takes this “truth” and deliberates what to do with it – usually resulting in some decision and action.

The “staff meeting” cartoon, at right, illustrates the progress of a bright idea. The staff meet to discuss a problem. A new idea comes, represented as a light bulb, then a bigger one and a third, then finally a chandelier. Then the boss offers his, and last frame has the management team applauding it, albeit the smallest bulb of all. They skipped the third level, a very common situation in management circles, deferring, not to the demand of reason and critical discourse, but to that of power.

Value-adding occurs when we move across each of these levels which Lonergan called experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding. For understanding adds value to experience; judging adds value to understanding (and establishes knowing), and deciding to do something about it, adds value to knowing. Of central importance to Lonergan’s account is inquiry, which could be termed the central landmark of the mind’s landscape, because it drives and coordinates our activities across all the levels.

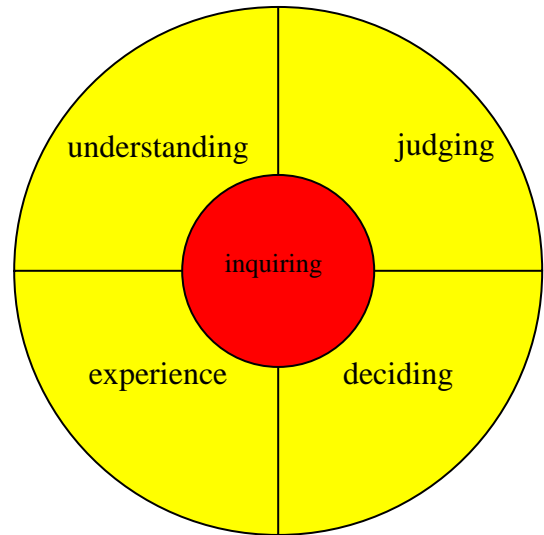
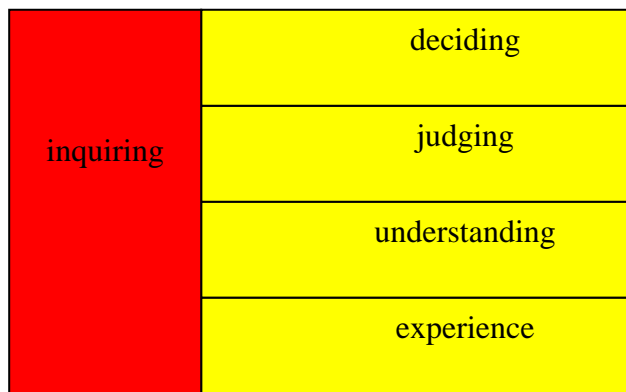
The power of inquiry gives us our capacity to ask questions. Openness, drive and persistence are its core competencies. Through questions, we navigate our own minds – and invite others to do the same with theirs - to move between levels and examine the finer interstices within them. Apart from a few well-known writers, such as Schon, Argyris, Revans and Senge, and the directions of Appreciative Inquiry, questions and inquiry are a neglected topic within management theory. Perhaps, this is because answers are more satisfying and get our attention.

An assessment of answers, however, provides a quick means by which we can discover four kinds of questions leading to them and, by consequence, the four levels. Questions **intend** an answer and hence, a certain level. On the first level, questions intend an answer which can be found by “pointing”, naming or describing (“which?”, “who?”, “when?”, “where”); on the second level, questions intend long answers or explanations (“why?”, “how?”, “what does it

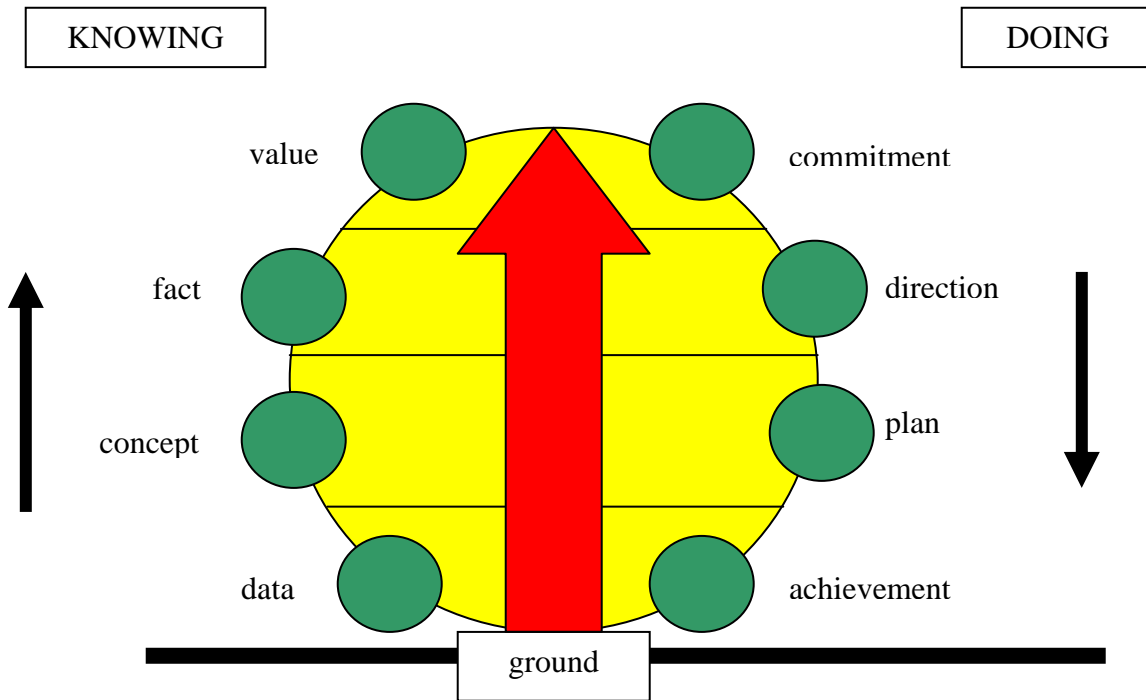


mean?”); on the third level, questions intend very short answers, such as “yes” or “no” (“is it so?”), but usually get highly qualified variations of “maybe”; and the fourth level, questions intend action (“will I?”).

The relationship between inquiry and the four value-adding stages can be represented in the following two diagrams. The first reflects an ascent, to the higher level of decision. The second represents a circular process which recurs when action creates a new situation which gives rise to new questions, insights, and so on. Both diagrams preserve the relationships between its parts. The second diagram illustrates the driving power of inquiry, likening it to torque on a wheel.



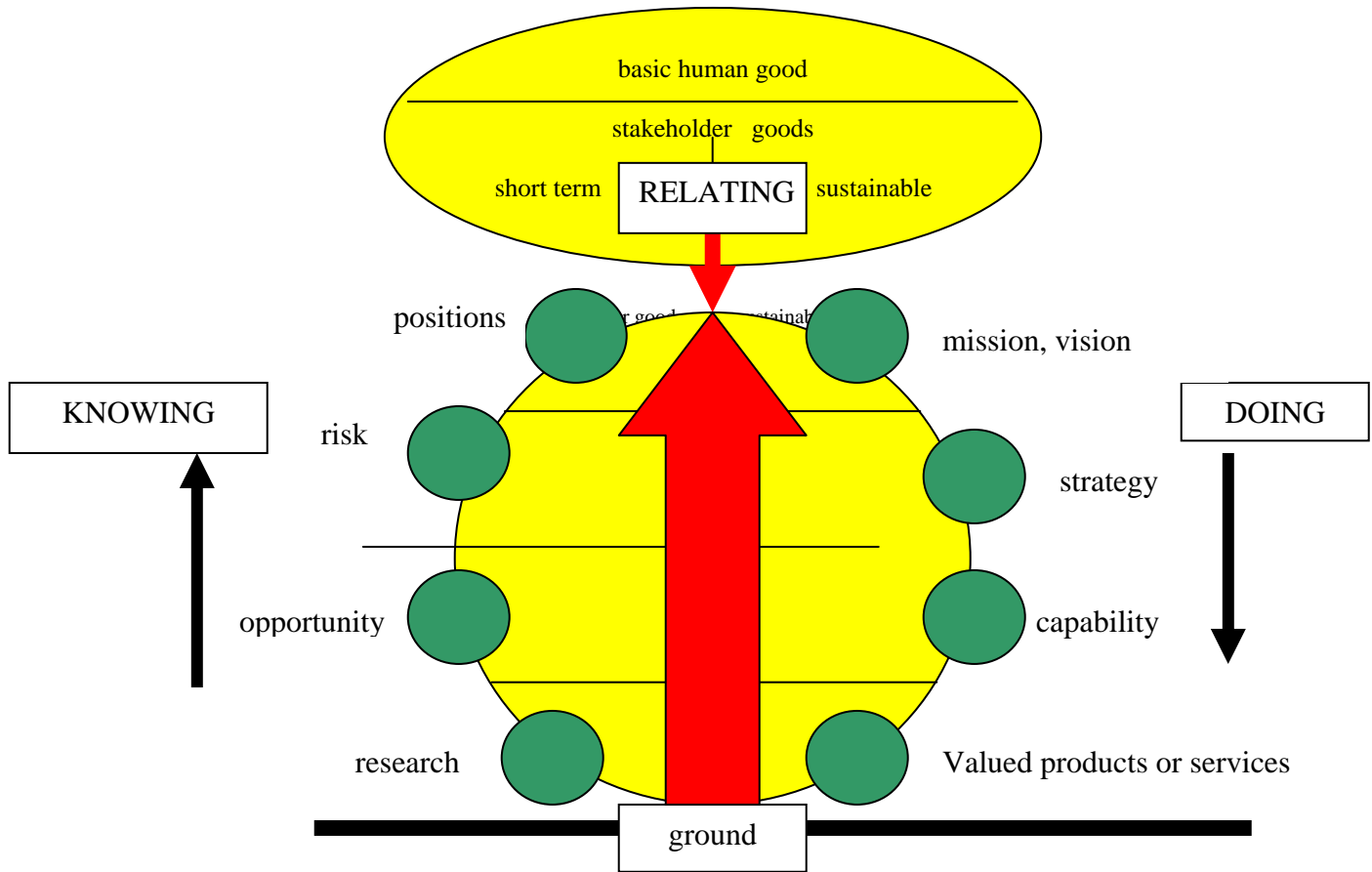
In the following diagram, we combine features of both images, namely the vertical and the rotational, with an ascent up to decision and a descent back to experience (on the ground). This movement repeats in further cycles of knowing and doing. Conscious thinking is represented within the circle. Here “value” is added when “Inquiry”, as the large central arrow, opens up each stage. The left half of the diagram represents the movement of conscious thinking in knowing, up to the moment of decision. The right half represents the movement of conscious thinking after decision, namely in the unfolding towards action, in doing. Thus the chart integrates knowing and doing (or acting), or theory and practice, or learning and making. Opening out these two halves reveal the essential components of value-adding within organizational process.



The value-adding “products” at each level are the eight small circles. They preserve and communicate the value generated within consciousness. For example, in the knowing phase, at the first level data are preserved or shared; at the second, a concept; at the third, a fact; and at the fourth, a value. For the “descent”, following decision, we could suggest appropriate terms as we make the descent over the four levels - commitment, direction, plan and achievement.

This chart can also represent a model of organization and governance when we attach familiar terms to it, as represented in the next diagram. This includes an extra dimension, namely the human good, inserted at the summit of the “ascent”, the apex point of decision. This is where one’s personal “take” on the good – how one has understood and appropriated it - will influence what one decides and does. This “field” can be expanded in some detail to illuminate the respective goods that stakeholders entrust to the organization for “safe-keeping”, in the expectation that they will be respected in all decisions made. For example, each stakeholder in an organization has and seeks short term and long term goods through which they act to fulfil their own integral development (basic human good) and which they expect to be taken into account, or

at least not overlooked, in corporate decision-making.¹² This is the summit – the place where we meet “the other”. It becomes “alive” in our actual relating to each other. Herein lies the source of real power, personal and institutional.



For each of the eight stages, the circular image is deliberately replicated. This suggests that the whole structure of conscious intentionality operates at every stage to direct its achievement. For example, in corporate research, a mission, a strategy and a capability plan are needed to do it and produce a product – namely the data gathered; there is also, in the gathering of data, a number of possibilities by which they could be gathered, each with risk and reflecting value interests. The

¹² This notion of the human good is more fully explored, together with its role in the place of trust in stakeholder relationships, in John Little, "Trust in the Mind and Heart of Corporate Governance," in *Global Perspectives on Ethics of Corporate Governance*, ed. G.J. Rossouw and Alejo Jose G. Sison (Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 49 - 65. The traditional notion of common good can be expressed in terms of the integral human good, a set of basic goods which all people seek. Finnis has explored this notion in John Finnis, *Moral Absolutes* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1991), 42 - 43.

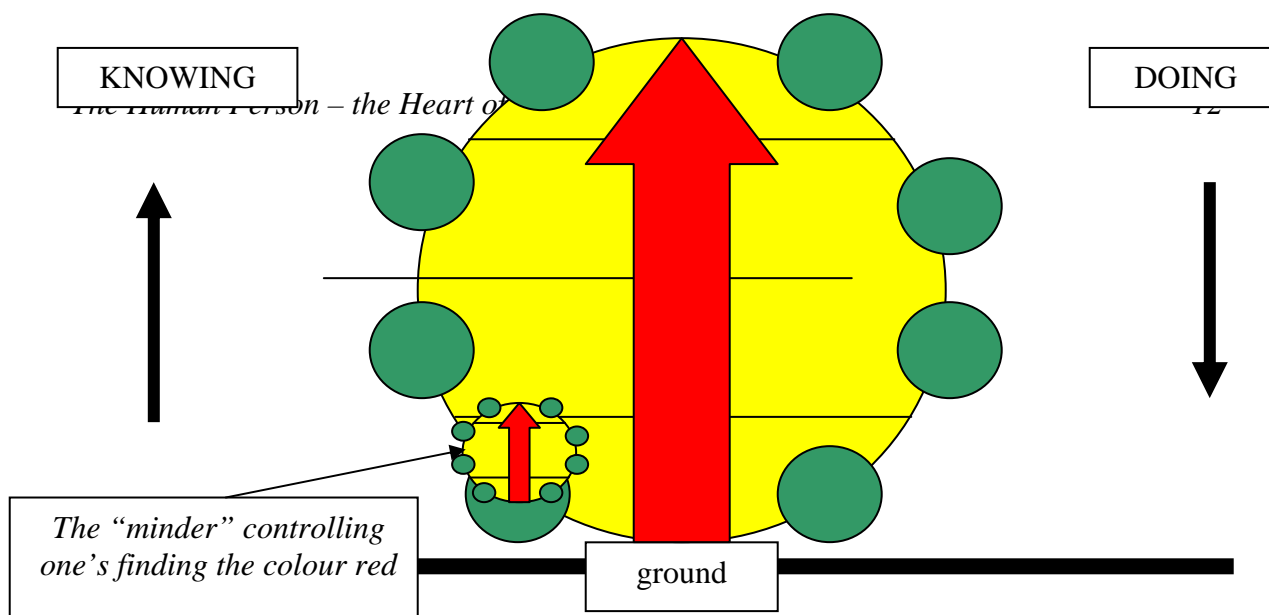
decision taken for which research direction to take comes out of an appraisal of these possibilities and risks and of a broader deliberative process linked to corporate goals.

The neglect of any part of this dynamic structure of understanding, knowing and choosing, in its ascent and its descent, precipitates bad results. If the good sought is merely short term, sustainable outcomes are unlikely. If data are not gathered, the organization is in danger of becoming irrelevant and “out of touch”. A lack of innovation dooms ongoing development, a failure to assess risk reduces confidence.

This generic structure of control is represented by the above several images to portray different facets and levels of human activity and cooperation. It is an open systems, cybernetic framework, that integrates knowing and doing. As all cybernetic systems are goal oriented, in this instance the goal is the “human good”. As knowing intends “the true and the real”, doing intends “the valuable and the good”. Knowing “ascends” to the “true and the real” and decision “descends” to make “the valuable and the good” concrete, and thereby begins to “renew the face of the earth”.¹³ The originating source of the “good” lies within human consciousness. It is made concrete collaboratively within authentic living, namely in being open, attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible.

In the above diagrams I have moved progressively outwards into larger circles of collaboration and cooperation to reach a model of organization that is people-based and process orientated. But we can move the other way, from focus on what is intended to the one who is intending, from the good to be made to the maker making, from the macro into the micro side of human consciousness, from exteriority to interiority. As the template operates at the macro level of organization, so it operates as the principle of organization within each human mind. This “template” is not added extrinsically to the human mind. This template is indeed the very operational structure of the human mind, as can be discovered, checked, verified and chosen by each person. This is represented in the following chart, with the minder operating at the first level, of data or “experience”.

¹³ Pope Benedict XVI, in Part 1 of his encyclical, *DEUS Caritas Est*, applies a similar metaphorical notion of ascent and search, an encounter and experience with the living God, and a descent in action of love.



Like a hologram or Mandelbrot image, the whole is replicated in the part. A personal experiment can demonstrate the presence of the minder to oneself, namely: find as many red objects as you can in the room, and after one minute, write down what you did.

Our finding “red” requires personal control – we can open or close our eyes, visually scan the room, even get up and walk around and so on. By examining what we doing in such an exercise, we can discern activity corresponding to all four levels – deciding to do the experiment, experiencing ourselves seeing, understanding what we are seeing, judging that some objects are red and others are not, deciding to keep doing the experiment or abandoning it, questioning whether this is red or not, or whether to look further and so on. The structure of control is the whole structure of intentionality operating organically and integrally to manage any part, in this experiment, “experience” itself.

Another example is in the asking of questions. We first of all attend to our situation and our curiosity is aroused. This wonder becomes focussed as a question arises within us. We may formulate this question, and then revise it to make its purpose clearer to ourselves. We may wait on an appropriate opportunity before we share the question with others. We may persist if others have understood our question. We may ask more questions if the answers we arrive at do not satisfy us.

The point of these two illustrations is to highlight the role of the mind in managing – directing and guiding - itself. This, the “minder” of the mind, shares the same cybernetic structure, which informs open organizational process.¹⁴ The unity of the mind demonstrates its own powers of coordination and organization – an archetype, model and template of its expression in social forms and constructs of meaning. In becoming familiar with and appropriating the structure of control, we appropriate what is already instantiated and operating within ourselves as the basis

¹⁴ Lonergan recognises this integral nature of the structure of intentionality in his introduction to the eight functional specialities - Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 121, 133-134, 349.

for personal authenticity. Daly has explored this notion in his discussion of the operation of consciousness as conscience, locating it as the minder at the fourth level, in managing decision.¹⁵

In our ordinary human living, we can observe this structure of intentional control in any conversation we have; or in any team activity of which we are part or in any larger project in which we are engaged. We can distinguish it, furthermore, as the minder of the mind. In a group task, the minder is “shared” – for a task is held in common insofar as the group becomes of one mind and the success of any conversation or team activity is the degree to which its intrinsic capacities, competencies and precepts are respected and followed. This helps form the basis of trust and cooperation, and shared spirit between people. A football match embodies this notion, with a shared minder and spirit extending from the players into the supporters as the game heats up. As we know, when conversations degenerate into fights, when cooperation turns to violence, we have lost the sense of this shared “minder”. By appropriating it, we embark on a more deliberate collaborative engagement in bringing about the full human good in the world in whatever role or situation we occupy.

Loneragan’s text enables one to acquire step by step familiarity with oneself in this way. As competencies can be developed or neglected, so can the “thinking” to which they give rise. Thus, data can be discarded or overlooked; questions brushed aside; insight resisted or understanding opposed; judgements made before all relevant questions have been asked and all data taken into account; and decisions embraced without taking into account their effect on the human good; or through fear of consequences, or sluggishness in giving it effect. Virtue and integrity are integrally linked to the dynamic structure of our set of conscious intentional operations – the minder - and develop with it. The success of an organization depends directly on the competencies and capabilities of those who comprise it. Historical process also unfolds on the same pattern. One person can make a difference to both, for good or ill.

While self-appropriation lies at the heart of Lonergan’s method, its attainment remains problematic. To appropriate or make anything one’s own, presupposes interest and desire. Self-appropriation, as a notion, does not immediately evoke understanding, or interest or desire in most business people. In my own case, my career interests had predisposed me to explore the meaning of insight, and from this I took up the challenge of reading Lonergan’s works. Self-appropriation meant nothing to me initially, but the nature of insight and the workings of my own mind did, that I could later identify as steps within a larger project. For others, a particular bent of personal interest and inquiry is required before they will engage seriously upon the work.¹⁶

¹⁵ Tom Daly, "Conscience and Responsibility in the Unity and Complexity of the Human Person," (Catholic Moral Theology Association, 2000). Lonergan, without using the term “minder”, notes the role of the fourth level, as the principle of self-control, in managing the other three - Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 120-121.

¹⁶ Mary Ann Glendon, currently the US Ambassador to the Vatican; previously President of the Pontifical Council of Social Sciences; and the Learned Hand Professor of Law, at Harvard University, attributes her intellectual development to Lonergan and the influence of philosopher, Fr Joe Flanagan SJ at Boston College. Mary Ann Glendon, "Knowledge Makes a Noisy Entrance - the Struggle for Self-Appropriation in Law," *Loneragan Workshop* 10 (1994): 119 - 144.

3. Implications for business schools

Unless this work, or project of self-appropriation, is made relevant and attractive to them, managers and business will generally pass it by.

Argyris reported great difficulty in conveying a related concept, namely his notion of double loop learning, to executives; Senge's theory of the learning organization identified "personal mastery" as one of the five disciplines, but somewhat neglected within management training and, of his five disciplines, the most challenging to develop practical learning methods.¹⁷ A more recent attempt to engender self-reflection as the source for changing the world, Theory U, by Otto Scharmer, uses practical assignments to evoke that particular model.¹⁸

In their orientation to getting data, to innovation and risk assessment, to values and decision-making, to strategy and planning, and to quality performance and effective relationships, managers have the raw materials within which they can investigate conscious intentionality and find therein the conditions for improving the quality of business "thinking" and acting.

Pedagogically, however, there are significant challenges confronting anyone who desires to mine this resource. Its gold is not yielded so easily. Furthermore, what is found is not something to 'test' by an exam; nor is it discovered by simply reading a text and reproducing a new concept. Nor is it accessed by filling out a questionnaire and reflecting on the results. Nor does it "fit" within the normal view of practical, common sense. The mind is a 'soft' area – whose workings are not usually opened up for examination in business.¹⁹

Cardinal Martini discovered the power of Lonergan's distinctions through reading. In particular, he was drawn by the way Lonergan, as a theologian, gave primacy to the experience of "falling in love with God" and also that he could find a place within Lonergan's organic systematisation of theology for conversion. Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, "Bernard Lonergan at the Service of the Church," *Theological Studies* 66 (2005): 517 - 526.

Michael Bretz, a Professor of Physics at the University of Michigan, finds Lonergan relevant for Physics, and has proposed his method as a way to revise the high school science curriculum. Michael Bretz, "Physics First: Of Insight, Pool Balls, Stasis, and the Scientist in the Crib," *Physics Today* 55, no. 2 (2002): 12.

¹⁷ This point was made in the Field Handbook, a gathering of methods developed by practitioners in Senge's ideas: Peter Senge et al., *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* (London: Nicholas Brealey, 1994), 193 - 194.

¹⁸ George Hall, "Inside the Theory of the U - Interview with Peter Senge and Otto Scharmer," *reflections.solonline.org* 8, no. 4 (2008): 6 - 11.

¹⁹ Lonergan recognises that personal factors, outside the pressing demands of business, are more likely to influence one's taking notice of one's own mind. He writes: "The concrete being of man, then, is being in process. His existing lies in developing. His unrestricted desire to know heads him ever towards a known unknown. His sensitivity matches the operator of his intellectual advance with a capacity and a need to respond to a further reality than meets the eye and to grope his way towards it. Still, this basic, indeterminately directed dynamism tends to be shouldered out of the busy day, to make its force felt in the tranquility of darkness, in the solitude of loneliness, in the shattering upheavals of personal or social disaster". Lonergan, *Insight*, 648.

In attempting to bring forward a practical and accessible introductory “text” for executives, I worked for several years with Dr Tom Daly SJ, a well known Lonergan scholar, to develop a two-day executive workshop to “fast track” them towards a certain familiarity with their own minds. This consisted mainly of experiential exercises and reflections for each level. To experience insight, the second level, of inquiring seeking understanding, we used a series of simple puzzles. These were often the most enjoyable and memorable part of our two days. We had exercises for the third and fourth levels, from which we could identify the particular competencies and skills associated with each part of the structure. The two days provided an opportunity to walk across the mind’s landscape and identify the major landmarks and their place in the structure. Ongoing practice and exercises are needed to help the whole thing come alive.

I have also used the same material and extended for a five-day program, linked it to a two-week program for executive leadership and in a full semester of an MBA program within the topic of strategic management.

Although my efforts have been somewhat constrained by resources and opportunity, I persist in the conviction that these ideas have the potential to reshape the teaching and practice of business, because they link directly to thinking clearly, to assessing rationally and to being authentic in action²⁰. Making no distinction between faculty and student, Lonergan’s method provides a robust base for learning and collaboration, for dialogue and interaction, a foundation for all that is good and that already works. Such acquired competency as this method provides will ensure that whatever is deficient will not stand, and that whatever is already sound will be strengthened.

As our executive workshops demonstrated, the mind’s structure can be revealed through exercises designed to explore the different levels. But more work is needed to make one’s own what is revealed in exercise. Some form of conversational method, dialogue or discourse is required. The dynamic of management coaching - as with any therapeutic or counselling role, tutoring, or forms of conversational teaching - illustrates the power of discourse to identify problems, raise questions, find solutions, and to change behaviour within the emergent dynamics of what is being addressed and within all the various tactics one may adopt to avoid a transforming insight. This applies whether it be in a case study, an actual work situation, or an outdoors training activity such as a high wire exercise.²¹ John Haughey’s method of facilitating

²⁰ Deborah Savage gives an account of her method of introducing Lonergan’s notion of intellectual conversion as a basic pedagogical device, in her paper for this conference, to persuade her students of the true purpose of business and to reveal the meaning of their vocation. Deborah Savage, "Affirming the Purpose of Business: The Intellectual Conversion of the Business Student," in *Business Education at Catholic Universities: the Role of Mission-Driven Business Schools* (University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN: 2008).

²¹ In a high-wire exercise, the trainer/coach will give a detailed briefing of what is required to cross a wire slung between two trees, 10 feet above the ground. Information is given to address risk factors, such as the breaking strength of the safety cable, the placement of the support team, the use of ladders and so on. The rehearsal in the mind of the person doing the crossing helps him or her prepare to perform the concrete act and to find the courage to overcome any fear they may have. The coach seeks to implant in the trainee the confidence to perform, and will accompany him mentally in the act anticipating his reactions and so on, and then debrief him sensitively after the event. The quality of this work depends on the insights and personal authenticity of the coach. With practice, the trainee overcomes fear, develops skills and acquires competencies which can be applied in more challenging

reflection among faculty on the “good one was doing” is a particular illustration of this method.²² Based on a relationship of trust and entrustment, its success hinges on the coach’s (or facilitator’s) own constructs, understandings, epistemological base, theoretical underpinnings and personal authenticity, as well as the person’s own openness and willingness to investigate what emerges.

Self-appropriation can be likened to acquiring one’s own inbuilt, skilled coach through familiarity with how the whole mind works and with the ability to recognise the contribution which any part plays within the whole. Professional, executive or managerial work is like being on a high wire of one’s own mind, finding there the courage and vision to act. One has found one’s own authority and confidence. But not only does the inner coach watch oneself, it can also watch over and direct the conversation (in its value-adding or value-seeking processes) in a relationship, a team or a group task, and in the organization as a whole.

I could equally have used the example of a skilled teacher who understands the process of placing appropriate data before his students and asking the right question to get their minds working to find the robust insights he intends them to find. What Lonergan has identified and made very explicit operates performatively, for the most part implicitly and smoothly for the better skilled and more authentic amongst us. By surveying and plotting the interior cognitive landscape, Lonergan has given us fresh terrain to occupy and to make familiar and productive.

Although an outdoors exercise can illustrate the personal relationship of coach and trainee somewhat dramatically, within business schools, there is a deeper coaching going on. As Gil Baillie, drawing on the anthropological insights of Rene Girard, reminded the Rome conference in 2006, living examples of faith conviction have a place in the world’s affairs.²³ Similarly, and in complementarity, there is mimetic power in the intellectual toughness of critical realism and the dignity of personal authenticity. Such hallmarks of self-appropriation are evident in the way a case is written and debriefed; or a course on decision-making or accounting is structured and delivered; or a practical assignment approached and discharged; or disagreement and opposing views are handled with students or among faculty; or injustice dealt with; or staff empowered; or current issues taken up and used to generate change; and so on.

In Lonergan’s notion of self-appropriation, the textbook one studies is oneself. He defines objectivity as authentic subjectivity, namely objectivity results from fully and consciously deploying the various competencies of the mind. One has understood what it is to understand; knows what it is to know; and can bring this knowledge to responsible fruition in how and what

circumstances in the work place. They have begun to think more clearly about “heights”, risks, challenges and self-management. They have begun to take on the coach’s methods as their own.

²² A background paper provided for this conference by Fr John Haughey, SJ, of the Woodstock Theological Center, “The door to a deeper beholding: the open narrative”.

²³ Gil Baillie, "Keeping Good Company - the Leavening Influence of Morally Ordered Lives" (paper presented at the The Good Company - Catholic Social Thought and Corporate Social Responsibility in Dialogue, Pontificia Universita San Tommaso (Angelicum) Roma, Italia, October 5 - 7 2006).

one chooses, in acting. Subject and object are not at opposite poles, but share the same structure of intentional consciousness. In this sense, business success lies within intentional consciousness, in the composite set of value-adding activities, which contribute to its goods and services. To neglect the person's authenticity – their full deployment of value-adding capacities of conscious intentionality - in a business curriculum, is ultimately to do a disservice to business and the community.

As our world becomes more challenged by differing beliefs and ideologies, by sectional interests, and by powerful technologies in biology and information, we need to find corresponding developments to handle our thinking, individually and collectively, to direct our exploration of our mind's creative products, including its institutions. Our Christian faith gives us our prime bearings and grounds for hope; but we still need to marshal our creative capacities, our reasonable reflection and our responsible choosing to make the difference. Mission driven business schools not only need examples of lived faith, as Gil Baillie noted, but also examples of self-appropriated authenticity. In this sense, Lonergan helps us to lay out the ground upon which this can be achieved, where an integration of human thinking and effort can be outlined and implemented.

In my view - in this I agree with Ghoshal – that reform is needed urgently, and that it resides in reclaiming a central place for human intentionality in our research, teaching and practice. In practical terms, such a project to appropriate intentionality starts with oneself. From that project comes a deeper grasp of the integral human good as the focus of organizational purpose and governance and of theoretical constructs and methods, which reflect the deepest insights into the structure of the human person.

This it seems to me is the new frontier of our human endeavours, a more measured exploration of the dimensions of interiority and relationship. It is fitting for mission driven business schools to enter the arena. Such a project has the capacity to provide a lead in Ghoshal's quest to heal the broken world of business.

A quiet revolution would follow as lights turn on across the business world to illuminate this foundational source and spring of value and of value-adding.

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