



THE UNIVERSITY OF
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Activation

The research newsletter of the
Department of Management at
the University of Melbourne

Management Research >

A New Vision for Building Closer Links with Business and Industry

Building closer links with business and industry through targeted engagement programs has become a strategic imperative for the Department of Management which, alongside the traditional activities of teaching and research, forms part of the new vision for value creation and nurturing quality stakeholder relations.

In a rapidly changing and complex world, University management researchers working in partnership with business and industry can play an important role in finding innovative and sustainable solutions to pressing issues and challenges facing Australian organizations. Effective management guided by rigorous and relevant research enables businesses and organizations to achieve their economic, social and environmental goals and become better prepared for change.

The targeted engagement program for business and industry builds on the knowledge, experience, networks and success gained to date in working with these sectors in Australia and internationally. Alongside the Australian research funding

strategy, the Department will be developing a strategy for tapping into research revenue streams in North America, Asia and the European Union. We will continue to engage Australian and multinational companies as industry partners. Researchers from the department enjoy the trust and confidence of funding bodies like the Australian Research Council by delivering important projects with industry partners.

The five specialised research groups within the Department, namely Human Resource Management, International Management, Marketing, Operations Management and Organisational Studies are ready and willing to engage in effective interaction and partnership with business and industry in order to develop solutions to business challenges that will drive sustainable economic growth.

I invite readers to consider the Department of Management as their first choice for collaborative research, postgraduate courses, quality graduates, sponsorship of Professorships and other forms of collaboration. (rzammuto@unimelb.edu.au)

**by Professor Ray Zammuto,
Head, Department of Management**

Ethics >

Understanding Approaches to Developing Ethical Employees

The Performance Improvement group from PricewaterhouseCoopers has teamed up with researchers in the Department of Management to address a central concern to firms in Australia and abroad: how does an organisation develop ethical staff and prevent illicit activity among employees? Unethical behaviour among employees both abroad and within Australia continues to be a major problem, as evidenced by a large scale Fraud Survey in 2004 reporting that 45% of respondents experienced at least one fraud in the 2 year survey period with a total loss of \$456.7 million.* Stemming the tide of corporate corruption has become a major growth industry for both management academics and consultants. Among other potential methods of dealing with unethical behaviour, ethics training programs have flourished among practitioners. For instance, the American Ethics Officer Association surveyed their membership and reported that 64% of the 150 US firms had some form of formal ethics training, and local surveys reporting that 39% of the 491 Australia/New Zealand firms provided training on fraud prevention and detection.

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Frances Feenstra and Michelle Israel of PricewaterhouseCoopers and Professor Carol Kulik and Dr Adam Barsky of the Department of Management have formed an alliance based on the shared belief that a greater understanding of organisational practices designed to encourage ethics and individual responses to such programs is central to helping organisations function at an optimal level. Employee misbehaviour is related to increased exposure to risk, litigation, and public relations nightmares, as well as reduced morale and sub-optimal employee performance. This suggests that firms must take a serious look at what they are doing to combat such behaviour, and researchers must provide some insight for firms into the nature and potential remedies of unethical behaviour at work.

The investigators have embarked on a multi-stage collaborative research project designed to broadly address two issues. First, they are examining the characteristics of ethics training programs in Australian firms, and determine the extent to which organisational and business ethics theory is applied in the training practices. Second, they are developing and testing a theoretical model linking ethics training characteristics and organisationally relevant employee outcomes. Together these projects will give a picture of the current ethics training landscape in Australia and provide insight into the potential effectiveness of initiatives to develop ethics among employees.

Collaboration between academia and industry on the topic of business ethics will be critical in the coming years to develop logical, practical, and empirically supported solutions to moral issues that effect the functioning of organisations. For more information about collaborative research opportunities please email Prof. Carol Kulik, Head of the HRM Research Group (c.kulik@unimelb.edu.au).

*Source: KPMG 2004 Fraud Survey

Advancing Corporate Public Affairs through Collaborative Management Research

The Centre for Corporate Public Affairs is a membership-based organisation comprising major corporations and organisations, many of which are trading and investing around the world.

Established in 1990, it is the only organisation of its type in the Asia Pacific region and one of only three in the world to support, advance and research corporate public affairs as a management function. It encompasses government, media and stakeholder relations, corporate social responsibility/corporate citizenship, issues management, internal communications and reputation management. In 2005, the Centre extended its professional development role through workshops in Hong Kong for local and multinational companies in the region.

'A working knowledge of public affairs should become an integral part of Management education given that corporate leaders are now realizing that externalities facing their business models are as vexing as their operational or competitive challenges' argues Doug Pinkham, President of the US-based Public Affairs Council.

Corporate public affairs >

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Geoff Allen

The Centre has been acknowledged internationally as a thought leader by business leaders, academics and professionals working in the field of corporate public affairs.

'We create platforms for mutual exchange within the profession's leadership, excellent professional development programs and information resources that allow senior public affairs practitioners, senior executives and line managers to better interpret their social, political and economic environment; contribute significantly to the way their organisation relates to its internal and external stakeholders; and strengthen the role of corporate affairs staff as part of management teams and as key advisers to senior management' says Mr. Geoff Allen, Chairman of the Centre.

The Centre responded positively to a proposal for collaboration, mentoring and assistance from a PhD Candidate based at the Department of Management. The PhD project into Corporate Public Affairs is seeking to make a practical and theoretical contribution to the rapidly growing and strategically important discipline which examines the interface between the corporation and its external non-market environment. According to Prof. Duane Windsor (Rice University, Houston, Texas) public affairs remains in search of an identity, conceptualization, effective corporate organization, best practice and social legitimacy. There is no grand theory of public affairs – no integrative or overarching framework at this stage making it an ideal management research area.

The Department of Management is widely recognized for its leadership in teaching and research into business ethics, corporate social responsibility and sustainability and has over 77 PhD students engaged in various management research projects. Given that hitherto there are no formal qualifications in Public Affairs in Australia, the Department of Management is well positioned to work with industry and develop innovative new undergraduate and postgraduate products for new markets.

The Centre is poised to work with the Department of Management to integrate public affairs considerations into overall business strategy education and help make Public Affairs a recognized profession backed by professional qualifications and values, formal accreditation, a recognized body of knowledge, a research agenda and continuous learning.



Does the career management system help retain employees?

Human Resources managers can find answers to this and other important questions by making use of the latest academic research in the field.

The above research question has been rigorously analysed by Assoc. Professor Maria Kraimer from the Department of Management at the University of Melbourne and Assoc. Professor Scott Siebert from the Melbourne Business School.

Specifically, they found that *when career opportunities are perceived to be low, the provision of career development support actually has the perverse effect of increasing employees' likelihood of leaving the organization. The*

greater the level of perceived career support, the higher the likelihood that the employee will leave. Essentially, the value of the investment the company makes in the employee is realised by the employee on the external labour market and not by the company itself. On the other hand, the opposite is true when the level of perceived career opportunities within the company is high. In this case, the greater the level of career development support, the less likely it is that the employee will leave (i.e. the more likely the employee will remain with the company).

The research by Kraimer and Siebert should help organizations think more strategically about the way they structure their career management systems and the kinds of activities they promote and encourage their employees to take part in. For more information about this research, please contact Maria Kraimer (mkraimer@unimelb.edu.au).

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Careers >

Marketing Matures

In 2005, six new members joined the Marketing Group of the Department of Management – Anish Nagpal, Ben Neville, Danielle Chmielewski, Elison Lim, Julie Napoli and Michael Beverland – thereby raising the group's size to ten. All members hold a PhD, and the Marketing Group is now in a position to conduct research across a broad range of topics, including marketing management, marketing strategy, marketing research, branding, consumer behaviour, business-to-business marketing, marketing communications, and product innovation/strategy.

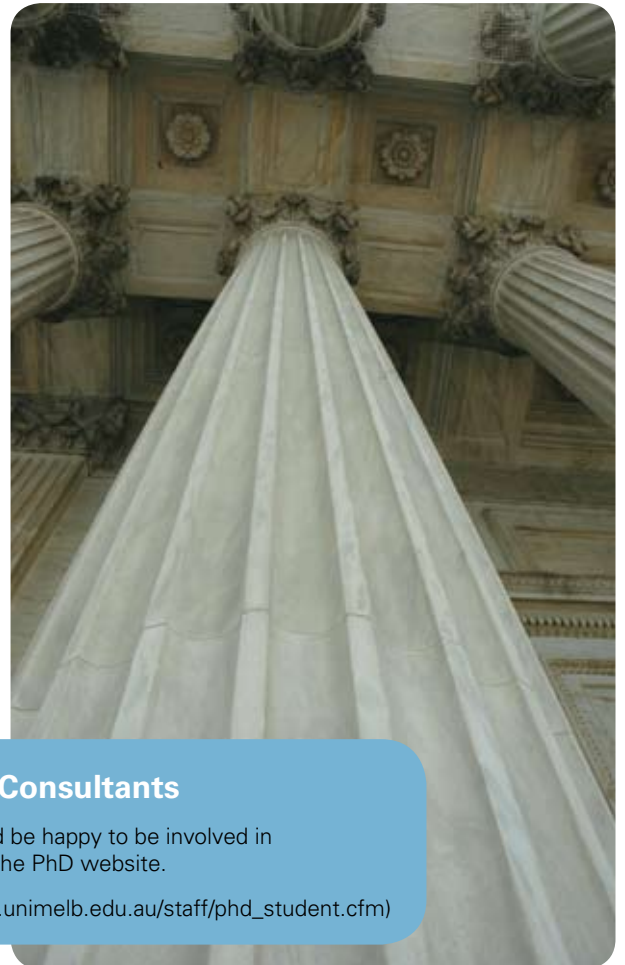
As a result, research produced by the group has been used by an increasing number of Australian companies, most recently by BP Australia and Australian Unity. The group's ability to undertake research with a number of different methodological tools has also increased. Survey research, experimental design, and qualitative research are part of the group's methodological capabilities. A number of academics contribute to radio and television shows, and collaborate with Australian businesses on nationally and internationally funded research projects. Some also provide expert evidence and make statutory declarations in legal matters and for trade mark applications.

To find the right marketing expert in the group, practitioners and companies are encouraged to contact the Head of the Group, Assoc. Prof. Bryan Lukas, on (03) 8344-1920 (blukas@unimelb.edu.au). The group's webpage is: <http://www.marketing.unimelb.edu.au/>.

PhD Students as Consultants

Many PhD students would be happy to be involved in consultancy, please visit the PhD website.

(http://www.management.unimelb.edu.au/staff/phd_student.cfm)



Getting in Touch with the Department of Management

Our website is the best way to get in touch with us. It has detailed staff profiles and contact details as well as postgraduate course and research information. www.management.unimelb.edu.au