
Editorial: Global crisis and the business school – provocations

Michael Haynes

University of Wolverhampton Business School,
University of Wolverhampton,
Wolverhampton, WV1 1SB, UK
E-mail: M.J.Haynes2@wlv.ac.uk

At the time of writing (October 2009), no one is clear where the global economy is going. Even if the optimists are proved correct, the years 2008–2009 have seen capitalism's biggest crisis since the 1930s and it has struck in the heartlands of the global system. The failures of the dot.com boom and bankruptcies, like those of Enron and WorldCom, now appear as warning signs of bigger things to come. Whereas these signs could be shaken off it is harder to dismiss the significance of the financial crisis which carried away part of the world's financial architecture in the autumn of 2008 and the scale of state action that was needed to prevent an even greater crisis in the 'real' economy.

Given that the last decades have seen a massive increase in the scale and role of business schools, it seems only wise to encourage some reflection on the role that they might or might not have played in encouraging or reflecting the misjudgements on that an unsustainable boom was built.

But academic publishing is notoriously slow and its conventions do not always allow for the sharpness of debate out of which a real change might come. Such debate is all the more necessary given that the agonising that has appeared in the daily and weekly press can come to seem to have an ephemeral character. With this in mind, the editors of the *International Journal of Management Concepts and Philosophy* decided to invite a series of short provocations and reflections on the role of business schools and the crisis. One of our number wrote such a provocation which was then sent to prospective authors who were asked to either respond or develop their own such provocation. Most chose the latter. We believe that the resulting short papers, from a varied group of contributors, reflect a wider concern that must be given voice. Each piece stands in its own right. With the exception of the first piece which all prospective authors were sent, they have been written independently. Together, however, we offer them to readers as a challenge to not merely think more deeply, but encourage new practices in the way that business is studied and taught.