

Digital	 Which MBA?	Fecha 09/02/2022
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Business Education
Which MBA?

Business schools

What business schools must do to produce change-makers

Advantere School of Management aims to revolutionise business education by making "revolutionaries" of students



How do you best educate managers and leaders in the Fourth Industrial Revolution? The speed of change is outpacing human adaptability. Today it is not enough to learn by solving or analysing problems that organisations have. Repeating past solutions is useful when managing risks, but insufficient when the challenge is to create new solutions and deal with uncertainty.

And uncertainty is the name of the game. The ability of managers to create new solutions to challenges that did not previously exist is the new normal. For that they must lead. One of the main responsibilities of leadership is to face uncertainty, and understand how to create solutions in the face of it. As the academic and author Henry Mintzberg said, “managers should lead and leaders should manage”, two sides of the same coin.

Risk management is necessary, but it consists of trying to make sure nothing goes wrong, avoiding mistakes in a context of predictability and statistical probabilities. This is the way in which future managers are traditionally educated at business schools, to apply rules, models and récipés - to repeat and re-create successful practices. However, uncertainty means facing the unknown and we are confronted with radical change and opportunities that go beyond probabilities and drive innovation and entrepreneurship. Virgin, Tesla, Apple, Google and countless more organisations that are transforming the world today do so precisely by acting outside the rules, going beyond what is conventionally taught in business schools. Creating, and not repeating.

Now more than ever, it is necessary to educate managers for being “re-solutionaries”, capable of facing uncertainty and creating unexpected solutions to challenges that no one anticipated. Advantere School of Management was founded with this perspective and with the purpose of educating ‘change-makers’ through what we call “resolutionary learning”.

The approach is based on four pillars. The first is learning by doing, as the education specialist Tony Wagner insists, “the world doesn’t care about what you know. What the world cares about is what you do with what you know”; the second is learning by living, because multiculturalism, diversity management, interdisciplinarity are only acquired through vital experience; the third is learning by designing, developing the ability to ideate and execute new solutions in environments of change and uncertainty. The fourth is going beyond oneself, creating meaning and purpose in one’s own life and in others, committed to a more sustainable world, being a person for others as is any true leader.

Commitment to society, sustainability, diversity and social justice is not simply a requirement to fulfill academically. At Advantere this is what students practice as agents of change. “Resolutionaries” will be highly competent technologically, but above all much more human,

empathetic and committed to a much fairer and more sustainable world. They are able to lead their professional and personal life without marked paths, because as the poet Antonio Machado expressed, “the path is made by walking”. They are ready to reinvent themselves professionally as many times as necessary, alternating different roles in life as executives, entrepreneurs, philanthropists, social activists, and so on.

Walking together with us in this journey are three prominent and prestigious Jesuit universities - Pontifical Comillas University, Deusto University and Georgetown University – advising Advantere’s academic development. Their guidance draws from their experience and recognized academic excellence, and a commitment to the transformation in management education.

The debate about the future of management education currently focuses more on how to ensure the survival of the business model of business schools, rather than how to address the real challenges of the 21st century and beyond. Business education, bringing with it the connection between practice and the real world management challenges of corporations in the development of modern 20th century industries, has become an industry by itself. It has created its own rules, and it has become attached to well established practices and status quo.

At Advantere School of Management, this kind of innovation is embodied throughout the organisation. For example, there are no academic departments to act as divisions, but professors from different areas of knowledge and specialisation who work collaboratively on projects with our students, program activities, and knowledge development. Researchers and non-teaching staff also work collaboratively. In an educational institution, everyone has an impact on the development of students.

The conversation today should be on the “education” side, not on the “business” side of business education. Otherwise it will be disrupted

sooner rather than later. A former general of the Society of Jesus, Father Pedro Arrupe used to say, “it scares me that we can give yesterday’s answers to today’s problems”. That is why for genuine transformation and change you have to sometimes start with a blank piece of paper, drawing what it should be, not what it has to be.

Guillermo Cisneros, Managing Director of Advantere School of Management

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