

Chapter 4

A Consciousness–Based Approach to Management Education for Integrity

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ABSTRACT

Management education is seeking creative innovations that can have a real impact on integrity. In this chapter, the authors present our recent research on the relationship between integrity in the brain, as measured by the Brain Integration Scale, and measures of moral reasoning. Further, they summarize research indicating longitudinal growth in coherent brain functioning, intelligence, personality maturity, moral development, and psychological health through the Consciousness-Based approach to management education practiced at Maharishi University of Management. This research supports a potentially innovative approach to management education that does not just address education for integrity on the level of ethical theories or values, but demonstrably transforms the neurophysiology, leading to changes in moral reasoning and heightened effectiveness of performance.

INTRODUCTION: NEW THINKING IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Covey (1991) and Kouzes and Posner (2007) put integrity on the top of the list of essential characteristics for effective leadership. According to Peter Drucker (1992, p. 115), integrity is the “congruence between deeds and words, between behaviour and professed beliefs and values.” Likewise, Steven Covey wrote that integrity means, “honestly matching words and feelings with thoughts and actions, with no desire other than the good of others, without malice or desire to deceive, take advantage, manipulate or control”

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-3153-1.ch004

(1991, p. 108). As was memorably written by Shakespeare in *Hamlet*, “This above all: to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man” (enotes.com, 2001). Integrity is a consistency, integration or wholeness within the individual that manifests as trustworthy reliability in business. Writing in *Issues in Accounting Education*, Sandra Waddock observed, “Trust is central to the effective functioning of all markets. Trust is destroyed, however, when individuals and institutions act without integrity” (2005, p. 147).

Integrity is essential. Yet until recently, as observed in Bennis and O’Toole (2005), business education has been 95% about profit maximization and only 5% concerned with moral capacity. But recently, business education is asking with new urgency what creative approaches can cultivate integrity and prepare a cohort of students who will raise the ethical standards of the business world: “The collapse of giants like Enron and Arthur Andersen signaled a major turning point in the conversation about corporate ethics and integrity” (Waddock, 2005, p. 145). In response to business scandals of the last decade, AACSB has called for deeper and novel thinking about management education to produce ethical graduates. AACSB published its Ethics Education Task Force Report (Phillips, 2004) urging administrators and faculty in business education to contemplate their current approaches to ethics education and to explore methods to strengthen this vital part of the curriculum. This report called for “all of us involved in business education need to think more deeply and creatively about how to advance ethical awareness, ethical reasoning skills, and core ethical principles” (Phillips, 2004, p. 9).

In response to this call, we introduce the approach of Consciousness-Based education (CBE)[®], of which the Transcendental Meditation[®] (TM) technique is a central feature, as a scientific approach to produce integrity within the brain, personality, and behavior of the individual. This innovative approach to management education entails a deep conceptual understanding of the relationship of human consciousness to ethical performance, as well as educational practices which have been shown to foster moral development and greater integration of brain functioning.

The application of the CBE approach to management education at Maharishi University of Management (MUM) has been described in an article titled “Higher Education for Higher Consciousness” in the *Journal of Management Education* (Schmidt-Wilk, Heaton, & Steingard, 2000). Because this university emphasizes holistic personal development in its educational goals, a protocol of psychological and physiological tests is administered for program outcome assessment. Students have the opportunity to volunteer for a Brain Integration Progress Report to begin to assess the effects of their college experience on brain functioning (Maharishi University of Management, 2011). The five components of the Brain Integration Progress Report include: brain wave patterns during tasks; emotional stability levels; moral reasoning levels; practical intelligence, behavioral strategies, emotional response strategies, and categorical thinking; and self-report measures of development of consciousness.

The objectives of this chapter are:

1. To introduce an approach to management education that does not just address education for integrity on the level of ethical theories or values, but on the level of transforming the neurophysiology, leading to changes in moral reasoning and heightened effectiveness of performance.
2. To present our recent research on the relationship between integrity in the brain, as measured by the Brain Integration Scale, and measures of moral reasoning; and
3. To summarize research indicating longitudinal growth in coherent brain functioning, intelligence, personality maturity, moral development, and psychological health through the Consciousness-Based approach to management education practiced at MUM.

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