

The Missing Connection Between Business and the Universities, by Ernest A. Lynton. New York: American Council on Education, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1984, 174 pages. The book is available through Collier Macmillan Canada Inc., 50 Gervais Drive, Don Mills, Ontario

This book could easily be seen as a prescriptive blueprint to settle problems that have occurred between business and the universities for a long time. One should by-pass that temptation and instead look at it as an ongoing broad-brush assessment that provides useful guidelines to policy and decision making. The basic premise of this book is based on the human capital theory. The development as well as the maintenance of highly educated and skilled human resources are of great economic importance. Therefore, competition between educators and employers over professional preparation and continuing education "turf" cannot be tolerated. New methods of collaboration and adaptation must be found for the collective good.

The Missing Connection Between Business and the Universities is composed of eight chapters. In chapters 1 and 2, the author states facts on the changing labor market; makes the point that demand for education is going up and demand for traditional education in traditional schools is going down; and describes with considerable length the educational shadow system, that is, employer-sponsored education in the U.S. Chapters 3 and 4 address the question of who should have the responsibility for employee education. The author proposes increased participation of colleges and universities in employer-sponsored instruction as "a highly effective way of reducing academic isolation and of making faculties as well as administrators more aware of and more sensitive to the practical needs and conditions of the work place". But for this to happen, he suggests that profound changes must be made in the academy's procedures, methodologies, pedagogic approaches and relationships to the non-academic world. To begin with, colleges and universities should define themselves by *what* they teach instead of *whom* they teach. They must stop viewing continuing education as a distinct activity, as frills, a peripheral activity to be tolerated and to escape the academic usual review process. They "must develop a degree of flexibility as well as a speed of response" to needs "that would constitute a sharp departure from current practices and procedures". In chapter 5, the argument is made that, in professional education, the gap between theory and practical experience is widening as expressed by businessmen, consultants, and even academics. "New subjects and new courses keep being added, few are dropped, and in the competition for time slots in the curriculum, practical experiences often lose out." Chapter 6 is a plea to re-examine the human relations component in certain curricula; to establish the importance of breadth and context; and to look at education from a longer-range perspective.

Appropriately enough, chapter 7 is entitled *An Agenda for Joint Action*. The main ideas contained in this chapter suggest that there be "inter-mixing of work, study and teaching with the active support of employers ... -and- close collaboration between faculties and their industrial colleagues, amounting to a

joint membership in an 'extended academic community'"; that there be joint use of individuals to reciprocate the flow of knowledge and adaptation of attitudes; that science and technology facilities and equipment be shared; and that Human Resource Councils be established to pool and exchange information and perspectives from various avenues on a regular basis.

Finally, chapter 8 concludes with statements that recognize that changes will not be done without hard work and without danger. It will require both involvement and detachment for the academy to strike the right equilibrium between isolation and assimilation. Universities must continue to pursue their timeless objectives to create and disseminate knowledge.

They must be sensitive to new means appropriate to new circumstances without becoming solely mechanisms for training students for their first job. Overall, an excellent book that defines the issues and offers some solutions for business and university partnerships.

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