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**STUDYING THE ONGOING CHANGE AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL: WHO AM I
(BECOMING) AS A MANAGEMENT EDUCATOR AND RESEARCHER?**

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Studying the ongoing change at the individual level: Who am I (becoming) as a management educator and researcher?

Individual academics, business schools and universities, and institutions associated with the field of management learning and education are facing a transforming world as countries grapple with, and begin to recover from, the COVID-19 pandemic. At the individual level, important questions are opening up for faculty about *'who am I now as an academic and what might I become?'* At the organizational level, academic departments, business schools and universities must attend to fundamental questions about *'how might we better organize the business of the business school in a transforming world?'* Finally, at the institutional level of the field of management education, accreditation bodies and professional membership associations and their journals are asking *'where should the field go from here and what role might new and existing institutions play as the field evolves?'* In a series of 'From the Editors' pieces published across our three-year term, our editorial team plan to engage with these important questions and explore the individual-level, organizational-level and institutional-level implications of our transforming world for management learning and education.

Our focus in this first editorial is on the individual level of academic role and identity, by which we mean *what we do* and *who we are* as management academics. Our intent is to prompt critical questioning and reflection on how our roles and identities as management educators and researchers are being interrupted, disrupted, (re)produced, and changed in positive and negative ways by our transforming world. Rather than offering definitive paths that individual academics might chart, we suggest a few possible roads among many potentialities that an academic might wander as each of us explores – more and less consciously, alone and together – how we might reimagine and enact our scholarly self. Thus, we see this editorial as contributing to a generative conversation about how we might support

each other in our journeys (hopefully) towards academic identities that feel meaningful and authentic in a changing world for management learning and education. We will first focus on exploring our roles as educators and researchers, and will conclude with a more integrative call for reflection on our academic identities.

Our roles as educators

The pandemic has disrupted where and how we teach our students, with face-to-face teaching in physical classrooms on university campuses being replaced with online delivery of courses and curricula in virtual classrooms. These disruptions have interrupted the enactment of our traditional roles as management educators. Two archetypal roles have historically been most prevalent, described by King (1993) as the ‘sage on the stage’ and the ‘guide on the side’ (see also Adler & van Doren (1940/2014)). A management educator who enacts their role as a ‘sage on the stage’ imparts knowledge through lectures and Socratic methods (Foster & Carboni, 2009). In contrast, a management educator who enacts their role as a ‘guide on the side’ facilitates student learning through interactive and experiential activities with other students (Sarason & Banbury, 2004). The pandemic has made enacting both archetypes more challenging and potentially less satisfying for individual academics. Pre-recorded learning materials that allow students to engage at their own pace and convenience, for example, have (1) taken away the live audience of learners and immediacy of feedback that tends to energise the ‘sage on the stage’, and (2) constrained the real-time opportunities for personal interactions and co-creation that tend to enrich and give meaning to the teaching and learning experiences of the ‘guide on the side’.

The online delivery of courses, which is likely to become a more widespread mode of teaching post-pandemic, has also opened up the potential for an expanded educator role as a maker of connections. In virtual classrooms, opportunities for serendipitous connections between students are limited; yet networking is an important aspect of education, which

supports peer learning and has long-term consequences for graduates' careers. The role of 'matchmaker' can be enacted on a scale from a structured large-scale intervention, where students have more opportunities to work in diverse groups, to a more tailored intervention, where specific students are selected as mentors for weaker students in class or where students with similar interests are encouraged to work together on a project. 'Matchmaking' within a classroom can feel like an intrusion into students' private space but can also strengthen psychological contract between learners and instructors, because the prerequisite of successful matchmaking is getting to know students really well.

Technology-enabled teaching has other implications that individuals must navigate in the search for relevant, meaningful and student-focused ways to enact their roles as management educators in the transforming world. For example, in this new reality, how should individual faculty accommodate for digital literacy? Are digital skills joining knowledge of our subject area and pedagogical expertise as core to a broader role for management educators as facilitators of learning anywhere, anytime and in any mode? Or are new support roles required in the form of specialised computer technicians and digital learning designers so that we might explore a narrower yet deeper role for ourselves as experts in management education practice and research? What about the encroachment of administration work and the potential for "academic gerrymandering" (Lund Dean, 2018) – constant renegotiation of boundaries around administrative and service roles – to play out as student-facing roles become more onerous and stressful? All of these questions are particularly pertinent in the light of increased work from anywhere arrangements for faculty, which can involve multiple technical setups for one person.

In a related vein, the shift from the traditional in-person lecture as live theatre to the recorded lecture as a more cinematic experience implicates the artistic expression of our roles as educators. Do the 'sage on the stage' and 'guide on the side' archetypes need to cede the

lecture floor to a new archetype of ‘showrunner’ who oversees the creative vision of an educational experience? As the recorded lecture brings students closer to a cinematic experience, are faculty becoming the show runners who write, act, and direct their educational ‘movies’, ‘television shows’ and ‘stories on social media’? Some faculty might embrace the opportunity to creatively redefine their role by following this path in the transforming world, while others may struggle. Questions of production value and pace of the ‘plot’ became crucial, with the student audience having shorter attention spans and a low cost of disengaging (they do not even need to exit the cinema!). Individual educators might reflect on their personal preferences and boundaries, especially as the shift might potentially favour extroverts and marginalize introverts, and how this shapes their definition of success as an educator.

Finally, the recovery from the pandemic itself, as a crisis event for the world, invites us to reflect critically on our roles as management educators in preparing our students to engage with and contribute to the transforming world. Greenberg and co-authors (2007) propose that Greek mythology offers several paths to (re)craft meaningful educator roles during and after crisis events. Like the Greek goddess Athena, an individual professor might anchor their educator role in wisdom and knowledge and encourage students’ cognitive learning of discipline-specific concepts that could be applied to make wise decisions as business practitioners when navigating the changing post-pandemic world. Alternatively, a professor might ground their role in enlightenment, following the Greek titan Prometheus, and nurture students’ personal growth and development as whole people, empowered learners, ethical leaders, and global citizens for the benefit of the planet and our societies. Lastly, as the pandemic and its effects continue to evolve, some professors might be inspired by the Greek god Asclepius and reimagine their role as emotional healers, providing students with emotional and psychological support so they might “enter the learning process from a

safe, emotionally secure place” (p.448). We encourage individual faculty to reflect on these and other evolving possibilities for re-imagining our roles as management educators as we interact with our students, each other and the transforming world of teaching and learning post-pandemic.

Our roles as researchers

For individual academics, the pandemic has also disrupted and interrupted our roles as management researchers, leading to the intensification of work and refocusing of scholars’ attention on activities other than research. In the immediacy of the pandemic response, enacting our roles as researchers was deprioritised relative to our roles as educators as the urgency of tasks related to teaching and administration increased and research work appeared deferrable. Yet, in the long term, research performance is usually more consequential for academic careers. Losing momentum in research projects can be particularly detrimental for early career researchers (ECRs) due to the path dependent nature of academic careers (Ryazanova & McNamara, 2016). What might be the implications at the individual level as we move from a state of short-term disruption in our researcher role to, potentially, recrafting our roles as researchers in a transforming world?

A fruitful starting point for individual academics to think about this question is to reflect on their motivations and priorities for conducting research. Academics, for example, who primarily view their researcher role as the means to a career end might be especially sensitive to how the pandemic’s stoppage of international travel stalled opportunities for short-term mobility, such as sabbaticals and research visits, and for long term career management through hiring freezes at universities worldwide. As international travel opens up again and as universities look to recruit new staff, how might researchers recover from the negative impact of this temporary loss of mobility and access to new human and social capital (Bäker, Breuninger, & Pull, 2021) through strategically creating new opportunities for

career progression and advancement that benefit themselves and their institutions in the transforming world?

For individual academics who conceive of their role as a management researcher as akin to a ‘scholar’s quest’ (March, 2011) that address important societal questions, the pandemic might bring both positive and negative changes. The pandemic might inspire a more meaningful and potentially impactful scholar’s quest by shining light on emerging, escalating, and new societal issues and global grand challenges. For scholar researchers with a quiet workplace at home, lower obligation to be present on campus might also mean deeper immersion in research projects and writing because of fewer interruptions. For others, especially scholars pursuing interdisciplinary research, working from home might negatively affect creativity and productivity through less moments for informal interactions within the walls of our institutions and might make it more difficult to sense-check our research ideas by communicating them to our colleagues. Reflecting on our idiosyncratic idea generation and idea refinement practices could be helpful in shaping our response to the changing environment.

For individuals who view their researcher role through the lens of membership within a scientific community, the move towards virtual communication, including online conferences, could become particularly disruptive to our ways of being a researcher. As the pandemic lingered on, it started to normalize online conferences, which were initially considered an emergency solution. This solution has its substantial benefits, most importantly – a reduction of carbon footprint. Conference travel can also have negative impact on work-life balance and individuals’ health. Online conferences are more affordable for doctoral students and academics from institutions with low research funding, and can help researchers make more efficient use of research funding. However, they still preclude an important element of serendipity (Campos, Leon, & McQuillin, 2018) that comes with meeting people

face to face at the conferences and can make networking more difficult due to the lack of informal activities. As the world transforms post-pandemic, how might individual researchers enact their role as members of a scientific community by staying connected and enjoying the camaraderie of peers without paying too high a price for it?

Living out an academic identity

The disruptions, interruptions, and potential changes to how the roles of management educators and researchers might be enacted in the transforming world raise a fundamental question for each of us as individuals. How might I integrate my educator and researcher roles into an academic identity that feels coherent, meaningful, and authentic for the self and is important and relevant for society? Regardless of our career stage and institutional affiliation, these questions anchor individual health and wellbeing, inform professional advancement and career trajectory, and most importantly, improve the value that academics bring to our recovering world through our teaching, research and service activities.

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