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Editor's Introduction

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Editor's Introduction

The concept of adaptive flexibility has long been understood to be an important management characteristic and skill. It refers to the degree to which one changes learning style to respond to different learning situations in life. Adaptive flexibility helps us be self-directed. With it we experience less conflict in our lives as we change to meet the demands of work or other life situations. One of the important aspects of adaptive flexibility is that it gives us the ability to manage under conditions of ambiguity.

Ambiguity is a hard concept to teach (and not so easy to learn either!) but our article in the Teaching & Learning Section gives instructors a new tool to use for this work. "Backwoods Brewing Company: Learning to Tolerate Ambiguity" puts the student into an interesting and dynamic case where they begin to understand that business decisions are not easily quantifiable and have more variables than are easily handled by decision science.

The authors also link tolerance of ambiguity to creativity and the ability to think one's way through a problem in innovative ways. These linked skills are clearly needed at all levels of management and it is a rare case that engages students in ways that can increase their appreciation of the need for adaptive flexibility. I think OMJ readers will appreciate the focus and style of this article and find it immediately useful in our classrooms.

Steve Meisel
Co-Editor, Teaching & Learning