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Introduction to the Teaching & Learning Section

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Our editorial objectives for the Teaching & Learning Section are to publish qualitative and conceptual articles that expand our understanding of how people learn about management and organizations. We encourage debate and discussion about innovation in our field as well as dialog about the themes and basic assumptions of management education.

Our two articles in this issue are exemplars of that mission. The area of corporate social responsibility is examined historically in the fascinating instance of IBM's sales of calculating machines to the Nazi death bureaucracy of World War II. The case helps students learn about ethical decision making in a time of global chaos, breakdown in moral order, and conflicting agendas of profit and ethics. If this context sounds familiar and full of lessons for current ethical business practice, then you will find this case to be of considerable interest. In "IBM and Germany 1922–1941," authors Donald McCormick and James Spee share the story of how the case came to be written, the linkage between the case and course objectives, and the challenges of teaching the case to skeptical students. A well-written teaching note offers suggestions for debriefing and a link to a powerful supporting video about the case.

The second of these two articles has a very different topic but is not unrelated. "An Assurance of Learning Success Model: Toward Closing the Feedback Loop" by Bonita Betters-Reed, Mindell Nitkin, and Susan Sampson, all of Simmons College, describes the process of creating and implementing a transformational program within a business school. Many *OMJ* readers are familiar with the AACSB mandates on assurance of learning and so are also aware of the frequently occurring gap between assessment and program improvement. In this instance, the authors share the step-wise process of program design and integration into the day-to-day work of an institution. The authors also set this effort in the context of a transformational change process. Using the language of a strategic model of organizational transformation they show how process can change not only the product but also the basic operational beliefs. In this case, organizational assumptions are subject to change, and the need to unlearn previous beliefs is as necessary to organizational success as learning the new procedures.

Both case studies are linked by the idea that organizations are transformed by the thinking that drives decisions. In the first case, a company's ethics are challenged by business decisions and the

judgment of history. The learning objective of the case is to develop the critical thinking skills to know the difference between behavior that might be legal but is not ethical. In the second, a traditional academic enterprise decides not just to meet the minimum expectations of accreditation but to take the opportunity to create a new way of thinking about how we assess outcomes. In both cases, readers of *OMJ* will find significant opportunity for new knowledge of organizational learning.