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Values-Driven Leadership Development: Where We Have Been and Where We Could Go

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This essay revisits the premises upon which business ethics education has been based and then “flips” them, in an effort to help transform management education’s approach to values-driven leadership development. Previous assumptions about what we teach, who we teach, and how we teach ethics are described, and a summary of how the Giving Voice to Values (GVV) pedagogy/curriculum flips these assumptions is provided. A brief review of the impact to date of this experiment is included, along with reflection on some of the new opportunities and challenges GVV has begun to face as a result of the rapid take-up of this approach around the globe. *Organization Management Journal*, 9: 188–196, 2012. doi: 10.1080/15416518.2012.708854

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Having worked in the fields of management education and values-driven leadership development for more than two decades, I often tell the story of how I came to a “crisis of faith” a few years ago. In my 10 years at Harvard Business School and my subsequent work in curriculum development, I had the good fortune to observe and work with some of the most talented educators in the fields of business ethics and leadership. Nevertheless, I was discouraged. Notwithstanding the best of intentions and the most rigorous thinking on the part of many skillful faculty, I wondered whether much of what we tried to do in this arena was at best incomplete, and at worst, an example of simply “checking the ethics box” for marketing and accreditation purposes.

Facing these doubts, I engaged in an experiment. I revisited many of the premises or assumptions upon which much of the business ethics education I had seen was based—and I flipped them. Out of this exercise, a new approach to values-driven leadership development—Giving Voice to Values

(GVV)¹—was created. In this essay, I describe those same premises and assumptions and describe how GVV flips them. I give a brief review of the impact, so far, of this experiment. And I then describe some of the new opportunities and new challenges GVV has begun to face since the book describing this pedagogy came out in 2010 and as a result of the rapid take-up of this approach around the globe. I do all this in an effort to move this work one more step down the path toward transforming management education’s approach to values-driven leadership, which was (and still is) the perhaps audacious objective of this initiative.

I won’t go into a description of the limitations of values-driven leadership development in business schools to date, except to say that there is a long and strong history of many authors who have and continue to write these accounts. Rakesh Khurana’s 2007 book, *From Higher Aims to Hired Hands: The Social Transformation of American Business Schools and the Unfulfilled Promise of Management as a Profession*, represents one of the most comprehensive of these accounts. More importantly, I note that Khurana positions this discussion not as a debate about business ethics alone, but rather as a discussion of the fundamental purpose of business and nature of the businessperson’s career. He locates that discussion within the institutional context—economic and academic and political—that both drives and limits the direction that business education has taken. In other words, the purpose of business and business careers that is reflected explicitly and implicitly within business schools has been constructed via many drivers, and to alter this vision of business purpose—radically or even incrementally—is not a matter of just adding another course or a new orientation program for incoming MBA students. Rather, it is a matter of shifting the way we all—business educators and business practitioners and the wider society they serve—conceive of what is *possible* with regard to values-driven business leadership.

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¹The Aspen Institute was incubator and, along with Yale School of Management, founding partner for Giving Voice to Values, which is now housed and supported at Babson College. See www.GivingVoiceToValues.org and www.MaryGentile.com.

Similarly, I won't rehash the long-lived debates over whether or not business schools should attempt to teach about values and ethics (Piper, Gentile, & Daloz Parks, 1993; Ghoshal, 2005)—and about whether or not they can avoid doing so, even if they try. Even as I write, these debates are still occurring in the faculty curriculum meetings of business schools all over the world. I have been part of or witnessed these conversations in many institutions over the years. For example, what (or whose) values would we teach in a globalized and diverse business context? Is it even possible to teach values? Aren't they formed much earlier in the homes and communities and churches? And even if we knew which values to teach, would anyone select business faculty as the proper instructors in this topic? After all, they are trained in disciplines like economics, the social sciences, quantitative analytics, and so on—certainly not philosophy, which is often seen to be the domain of ethics courses.

And of course, each of these important questions elicits an equally important set of frequently heard responses, one of the most compelling being that we cannot avoid “teaching values”—that every course we offer is already based upon a set of assumptions about what is important and valued and about the rules or “ethics” by which one might pursue those important things, all of these assumptions more powerfully communicated by the very fact that they so often go unstated (Piper et al., 1993).

Thanks in part to the Global Financial Crisis and media, like the 2010 Charles Ferguson film *Inside Job*, this conversation about values-driven business and business education has also surfaced in discussions about research. Just this year in its annual meeting, the influential American Economics Association debated (without a decision) whether there should be an explicit code of behavior for their members (Siegler, 2011).

This essay, however, starts from the assumption that most of us are familiar with and perhaps have even participated in these discussions about the proper role of values and ethics in business education and research. Instead of asking the questions once again about “*whether* values can, have been, or should be included in management education or scholarship,” this essay—much like the curricular approach it describes—asks and attempts to answer the questions, “*What if* business education were going to prepare managers for values-driven leadership? What would they do? What would it look like? And what would be its reception and impact, in business education for faculty, administration, students, and in business as the employment market for business school graduates?”

FLIPPING THE ASSUMPTIONS: WHAT WE TEACH

The key assumptions about business ethics that GVV flips are our attempts to answer the three fundamental questions about *what* we are teaching, *who* we are teaching, and *how* we are teaching.

First let's turn to the topic of *what* to teach. Typically, when business educators attempt to integrate ethics and values education into the curriculum, they tend to focus on two topics: (a) building *awareness* of the kinds of ethical issues that managers are likely to encounter, and (b) introducing models of ethical *analysis* to aid in decision making about what the “right” thing to do may be when ethical issues arise.

There are good reasons why the focus has been in these two areas. When it comes to *awareness*, we would argue that students need to see examples of just how ethical infractions emerge, present themselves, and grow, so that they will recognize these infractions when they surface and understand the potential consequences of looking the other way or succumbing to pressures to participate in illegal and/or unethical practices.

This is, of course, a valid educational objective, particularly when students are increasingly operating in a more global context where laws, norms, and pressures may be quite different from those to which they are accustomed. In addition, technological advances make the concepts of privacy and even of property rights more fluid than we may have previously assumed, and our confidence in information security and intellectual property protections is less sure than many would like to presume. Consider the recording industry's forced evolution with the advent of Internet music downloading; consider WikiLeaks and LulzSec and Anonymous and the questions these groups raise about appropriate and inappropriate corporate (and state) secrecy; consider online journalism and the questions it raises about writers' rights to the work they produce. For all these reasons, raising students' awareness of how ethical challenges might present themselves is important.

Similarly, a focus on *analysis* is also critical, particularly when it comes to values and ethics. These kinds of challenges are often complex, and individuals may easily fall prey to sloppy thinking and to the twin dangers of self-oriented overconfidence and of relativism: that is, assuming that just because I believe it's right, everyone will or should agree, on the one hand, or believing that context is all and that there are no fixed and common values at all, on the other. The introduction of models of ethical reasoning (typically consequentialist and duty-based) provides students with tools for becoming self-aware about their own patterns of thinking and disciplining them so as to avoid some of the typical analytic traps (<http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/decision/framework.html>).

In addition to these good reasons for a focus on *awareness* and *analysis*, there are other drivers and limitations as well. Perhaps the greatest limitation to a focus on *awareness* is that although these subtle or “new” or stealth questions of ethics do exist, the types of issues that tend to receive the most public attention in the media, in the halls of justice, and in the halls of the legislators tend to be the types of issues where there was actual illegality and downright fraud involved. That is, the issues that have contributed most to the undermining of public trust in business practices often tend to be situations where awareness was not the problem; when managers are shredding documents,

it is fairly safe to assume that they know there is something to hide. These problems really had more to do with individuals who either did not care about the ethics, or with individuals who did, in fact, care and were aware of the issue but who felt they had no recourse to address it. This kind of problem requires something other than *awareness* building to address it.

One of the practical limitations to a focus on *analysis* has to do with the fact that the ethical reasoning models that are shared here will, by design, very often lead to contradictory responses to any particular ethical conflict. That is, a utilitarian analysis is designed to allow us to see the sometimes overlooked costs of a strict adherence to duty-based reasoning, while similarly a deontological approach will illuminate the sometimes shocking costs of unquestioning utilitarianism, often referred to as the “tyranny of the majority.” In addition, while attention to these models of ethical reasoning may well lead to a more rigorous thinking process, they certainly do not prepare students to enact their decisions once made.

Although these limitations do not cancel out the benefits and even necessity of attention to *awareness* and *analysis*, they do point to a still existing need or gap: that is, a focus on *how* to enact our values, or what I would call *action*, as discussed in the following. But there are some other reasons why we tend to focus our business ethics education efforts in these two areas of *awareness* and *analysis* that bear unpacking.

As faculty we are often uncomfortable with presuming to espouse that we know what the right or ethical answer is in a particular situation; even if we have strong beliefs about these things, we are often uncomfortable or even philosophically opposed to “imposing” our own values on our students. And although I have yet to meet a business faculty member who does not want to educate responsible business persons, we often wonder if it is reasonable to suggest that they behave according to certain codes of ethics, given the realities of the market; perhaps the market has an “ethic” of its own that is beyond any individual’s moral compass.

These concerns—some of them based in a sort of personal anxiety and others based in strong, intellectual and/or emotional conviction—reinforce the push to focus on *awareness* and *analysis*, as such endeavors can seem to skirt the issue of prescriptive ethics. They don’t pretend to instruct students on what is right but rather on how to recognize that a question exists and to help them recognize ways to think about it rigorously. And as such, these two approaches also are attempts to respond to the assessment of learning question, an issue that has become increasingly pressing as a result of accreditation requirements. Rather than being asked to evaluate the ethics of a student, or even of a student’s responses to test questions, the focus on *awareness* and *analysis* allows faculty to explain that grades will be based on the student’s depth of insight, the rigor of their analysis, the clarity of their expression, and so on. The problem here, of course, is that faculty members are then sometimes faced with an extremely effective analysis that argues for a seemingly morally egregious position.

The GVV pedagogy and curriculum offers a response to the limitations just described, by taking the next step. That is, once students are aware of an ethical issue and even though they may be capable of rigorously analyzing it, GVV focuses them upon *action* and asks a new question. We flip the question “What is the right thing to do?” and ask instead, “Once we know what we think is right, how do we get it done?”

In this way, GVV can focus on those issues of outright fraud and illegality that the more rarified focus on awareness building may take for granted. GVV can use the tools of analysis (consequentialist and duty-based thinking) to understand what’s at stake for all parties involved, and to develop the most effective and responsive action plan for addressing the issue at hand, without becoming stymied by the fundamental divergence between these ways of reasoning. And in a sort of pedagogical sleight of hand (fully acknowledged, by the way), GVV can relieve faculty from the role of espousing a particular “right answer” while still—and very importantly—allowing them to stand in a position of espousing the importance of responsible and ethical business dealings. That is, as we describe more fully later in the discussion of “*how* we teach,” GVV starts from a presumed “right answer” to certain ubiquitous values conflicts and invites students to craft scripts and action plans for implementing this “answer” that have the best chance of being persuasive and successful.

In this way, faculty members are also relieved from teaching a subject for which they have not been trained. The resolutions of Accounting GVV scenarios draw upon the language and tools of accounting, rather than the language and tools of philosophy; an effective argument to a boss or a colleague or a client will be framed in business terms, not in an appeal to John Rawls or Aristotle (even though the insights of Aristotle or Rawls may be reflected in it). And the grading problem is resolved because faculty will be assessing the clarity, depth of analysis and research, and feasibility of an action plan and script, rather than of an ethical position.

Finally and perhaps most profoundly, this focus on *action* addresses the concern that some faculty may have about the appropriateness of applying a moral lens to the market. By focusing on situations that reflect the explicit laws and regulations and/or the implicit assumptions for the smooth functioning of a “perfectly competitive” market, the grounds of debate have shifted from the questioning of the underpinnings of market efficiency to a discussion of how to achieve this objective within the Adam Smith- and Milton Friedman-approved constraints of law and socially accepted ethics.

FLIPPING THE ASSUMPTIONS: WHO WE TEACH

In the preceding paragraphs we flipped the assumptions about what we teach in ethics from a focus on ethical decision making and finding the answer to the question of “What is right?,” to a focus on ethical implementation and finding the

answer to the question of “How do we get the right thing done?” Now let’s turn to our assumptions about *who* we are teaching.

In my experience working with faculty over the past 20-plus years, one of the sometimes stated and sometimes unstated assumptions is that when it comes to ethics and values, business school students are a tough audience. Their “meter is running,” so to speak, and they are an action-oriented group whose members are not drawn to the idea of “thou shalt not.” They want to build things—careers, enterprises, markets—and are not likely to appreciate a lot of attention to topics that seem to be all about constraints on action, especially when often they do not see those constraints operating effectively in the so-called real world of business.

This assumption about the nature and orientation of business students can cause us as faculty to feel as if talking about ethics is a no-win proposition. We are concerned that students will see us, at best, as unrealistic and detached from how things really get done: that is, as “ivory tower academics.” At worst, we fear students will see us as hypocritical, preaching ethics while we wink and look the other way in other classes where we teach tools for and provide case examples of a more unfettered approach to profit maximization.

The other problem with this assumption about who we are teaching is that it leads us to focus on the toughest portion of our audience. We envision the most skeptical (even cynical) student and assume we need to somehow persuade that student that acting ethically is necessary, important, and perhaps even in his or her own best economic interests—a stance that is sometimes difficult to prove despite numerous studies designed to test this so-called “business case” for ethics and corporate responsibility (Margolis & Walsh, 2001). That is, we all know of cases where individuals as well as businesses have survived and even thrived, despite or even because of unethical practices, at least in the short run. But this does not mean that there are not other individuals and businesses that have survived and even thrived, while operating in an ethical manner, at least most of the time (Vogel, 2002).

The point here is that the relative success or failure of individuals and firms is overdetermined, on the one hand. That is, there are many factors that contribute to it; an incredibly ethical business person may still fail due to a lack of ability or just bad luck—and vice versa. On the other hand, the timeline for success or failure is infinite. That is, the high-flyer this year may be gone by the next: Enron’s brief moment of glory, of course, springs to mind. Finally, if we had another hand, we would acknowledge that no individual or firm is entirely ethical or entirely unethical, all of the time.

Perhaps most importantly, the problem with the traditional ways we answer the questions about to whom we are teaching ethics is that we are in persuading (if not preaching) mode. This places us so far out on the offensive that we paradoxically often feel on the defensive!

Once again, GVV flips the answer to this question about who we are teaching. Instead of visualizing the “toughest nut

to crack,” so to speak, we envision the student body as a bell curve.² At one tail of the curve, let’s assume we have those who self-identify as “opportunists” (those who will claim that they typically pursue their own perceived material self-interest, regardless of values). At the other tail of the curve, we have those who self-identify as “idealists” (those who attempt to adhere to their values, regardless of the impact on their material self-interest). We operate on the premise that the majority (and I place myself in this group) will fall under the bell, and we identify those as “pragmatists” (those who would like to adhere to their values, as long as it doesn’t put them at a systematic disadvantage). Notice that this does not mean that a pragmatist requires the certainty that he or she would always succeed, but rather that pragmatists can believe they have a shot at being effective.

Now once we envision the student body in this way, the GVV approach would suggest that we don’t presume that we have the power to change the opportunists, and that we are less concerned with the idealists, except we would like them to develop their competence and clarity of analysis. Instead, we want to focus upon the pragmatists. These are folks to whom we can say that GVV’s focus upon *action* will provide the skills, tools, insights, and, importantly, the practice (“rehearsal”) to better prepare them for effectiveness and *success in their effort to be who they already want to be, at their best*. In other words, GVV does not take a persuasive or a preaching stance, but an enabling one. The intent is to work with the best impulses in the students, rather than to work against their worst.

FLIPPING THE ASSUMPTIONS: HOW WE TEACH

The preceding description of how GVV flips our assumptions about what we teach and who we teach creates a requirement for yet another flip in our response to the question about *how* we teach business ethics and values-driven leadership. There are at least eight ways GVV re-frames the answer to this question. These eight points are summarized in Table 1.

A different question: Most fundamentally, as described earlier, GVV asks and invites students to answer a new question. Instead of a focus on “what is the right thing to do in a particular situation?,” GVV asks, “Once we know what we think is right, how can we get it done?” This flip means we tend to focus on a different set of problems, too.

A different problem focus: Often faculty and business practitioners will opine: “It’s not really the so-called ‘black-and-white’ questions (cases of outright fraud and/or other illegality) that cause the problems for ethical business practice; it’s the ‘gray’ issues where it’s just not clear what the right thing to do may be.” This presumption is part of the justification for the focus on *analysis* described earlier,

²This conception and the terms are borrowed and adapted, although applied for a different context and purpose, from Dees and Crampton (1991).

and it has generated endless case studies portraying seemingly unresolvable decisions about competing stakeholder interests where reasonable and intelligent people of good will can legitimately disagree. It is this type of case that can lead students to experience what one Harvard professor described as “ethics fatigue,” the exhausted sense that ethics is all about a bunch of situations where no one can ever be right so why bother?

GVV’s focus on the question of “how to get the right thing done” means that we can move away for a moment from these gray issues that challenge our decision making and instead focus on a set of problems that most (not all) of those same intelligent people of good will are likely to agree about. We take those somewhat more clear-cut issues—the ones dismissed as black-and-white and therefore too easy—and we address the uncomfortable truth that these very issues often prove daunting to otherwise intelligent and capable and even ethically minded managers. They may know what is right but they don’t see a way to get it done in an unforgiving and unwelcoming corporate and/or market climate.

This is precisely where GVV focuses, and it seems a much more consistent fit with the tools and the orientation of a

business school. Rather than adopting a stance where we ask students to *forego* action because it is unethical, we adopt a stance where we ask students to generate implementation plans and analyses and arguments in order to *take actions* that are ethical. It is about “can do” rather than “thou shalt not.” We invite students to show that they are smart and politically savvy not by adopting the cynical stance (i.e., “Ethics is all well and good, Mary, but in the real world you can’t do that”), but rather by coming up with creative and viable arguments and strategies for doing the very (“ethical”) thing they assumed was not feasible.

The “thought experiment”: In line with GVV’s effort to move away from persuasion and preaching, we frame the entire pedagogy and curriculum as an explicit thought experiment. We flip the educational presumption of conveying “facts” toward the goal of asking “what if” something new were true (e.g., “what if you wanted to refuse to pay a bribe? how would you get that done?”) We explain to students that this approach is based upon a set of starting assumptions about people and behavior; we name these assumptions in an exercise aptly called “Starting Assumptions for Giving Voice to Values” and we invite them to reflect on these assumptions (things like “most of us want to act in accordance with our values”); to agree or disagree; to think about modifications. But at the end of

TABLE 1
Comparison of traditional and Giving Voice to Values approaches to ethics education

Reframing questions	Traditional approach	GVV approach
Different question	What is the right thing to do in a particular situation?	Once we know what we think is right, how can we get it done?
Different problem focus	It’s the “gray” issues where it’s just not clear what the right thing to do may be.	It’s the so-called “black and white” issues where we know what we think is right but don’t know how to get it done.
The “thought experiment”	Persuasion and preaching (thou shalt not)	Asking “what if” you wanted to act on your values; issuing an invitation to create an effective ethical action plan
The importance of rehearsal	Intellectual exercise of analysis only (learn to act)	Voicing those scripts and action plans, out loud, in front of peers (act to learn)
Different type of case study	Long description focusing on senior manager or CEO; conclude with question of what is the right thing to do	Briefer with protagonist at all levels; conclude with question of how to get the right thing done
Prescribing and implementation	Focus on analysis for decision making	Focus on scripting a workable alternative
Different use of research	Knowledge of heuristics and biases (for example) to help you recognize them and hopefully avoid them	Knowledge of heuristics and biases (for example) enables you to name them and appeal to them, in order to help people view the “ethical” position as more feasible and attractive
Role play flip	Argue for an “ethical” position in the face of resistance from another—the “adversarial role play”	Work as a team, to create the most feasible, credible script and action plan (peer coaching exercise)—the “collaborative peer-coaching role play”

the exercise, students are asked to participate in the explicitly named thought experiment that is GVV and to act, for the sake of the curriculum, *as if* these assumptions were true.

The premise behind this approach is that the starting assumptions of GVV can be true or untrue, depending on whether we choose to make them so. But if we asked students to accept that these assumptions were unequivocally accurate, always and for all, we would lose our audience before we started. The idea here is that our reality is something we create by making certain courses of action feasible, but we won't make them feasible if we can't imagine a reality where they could already exist. GVV is not a dogma or an ideology or even a body of knowledge; it is an invitation.

The importance of rehearsal: One of the central premises of GVV is the idea that rehearsal is important. Recent scholarship and research in fields like social psychology and cognitive neuroscience suggest the importance of practice as way of changing thinking patterns and subsequent behavior defaults (Haidt, 2005; Damasio, 2003; Bazerman and Tenbrunsel, 2011). For this reason, GVV is based not only upon the intellectual exercise of researching, analyzing, and crafting responses to the question of how to get the right thing done (as described in a later section on "scripting"); GVV is also based upon the behavioral or experiential exercise of literally voicing those scripts and action plans, out loud, in front of their peers who stand in as proxy for the managers and customers with whom they will need to have those conversations in their business careers. In this way, GVV flips the presumption that, through business education, we "learn to act" toward the idea that we "act to learn."

A different type of case study: Unlike the traditional case study, which is typically longish (15 pages or so), which often features a chief executive officer (CEO) or other senior executive, and which ends with a protagonist who is facing a decision-making challenge (what should he or she do?), the GVV case is usually briefer (sometimes just a few paragraphs or a few pages); features protagonists at all levels and especially individuals at an earlier point in their careers; and most importantly ends when the protagonist knows what he or she thinks is right but is wondering how he or she can get it done.

In other words, GVV cases present a challenge of implementation rather than of decision-making. As Carolyn Woo, former Dean of the Notre Dame Mendoza School of Business, put it, the GVV cases are "post-decision-making." The case examples are told from the point of view of the protagonists who are struggling with how to accomplish their objective: for example, what to say; to whom; when and in what context; with what kinds of preparation/research; alone or after building a coalition; and so on.

The cases are also distinctive in that, as often as possible, they are based upon experiences of individuals who have, in fact, found a way to voice and act on their values. They are not presented as "heroes or heroines." In fact, sometimes their approaches can certainly be improved upon. However, they

illustrate doable real-world behaviors by men and women with whom readers can identify. In this way, students who read and discuss a number of GVV cases begin to gather a repertoire of different approaches, strategies, and inspiration that they can add to their own personal toolkits.

Sometimes, of course, a GVV case features someone who did not necessarily find an effective way to enact their values. In such cases, the teaching task is to "rescript" and redesign their action plan, such that they might have had a better chance of success.

There is a template of questions for approaching the cases that involves articulating the position the protagonist holds; assessing what is at stake for each affected party to the decision; anticipating the types of "reasons and rationalizations" or arguments that the protagonist is likely to encounter; and generating responses and an action plan for implementing their decision.

An emphasis upon prescribing and implementation: GVV cases invite students to go beyond the usual emphasis upon analysis for decision making and literally prescribe a values-driven position. After articulating the position of the case protagonist and anticipating the "push back" the protagonist is likely to encounter, the GVV materials identify the most common categories of these objections and suggest tactics for crafting responses to them (Gentile, 2010b). Acknowledging that it can be extremely difficult to make a strong argument against the "prevailing winds" in an organizational setting when we feel in the minority or when we don't have the time to come up with a workable alternative or when we don't want to take the chance of presenting a half-baked response, GVV provides students with the opportunity, during the "scripting exercise," to be in the majority, with plenty of time to come up with a fully baked and tested response to some of the most common challenges they can face in the workplace. Unlike the usual case discussion where the majority of time is spent in analysis to find a decision with a final nod to "and then create an action plan to get it done," the GVV case discussion flips this recipe such that the majority of time is spent upon implementation planning.

A different use of research: A staple in organizational behavior and "power and influence" courses these days is the inclusion of the latest research findings on decision-making biases and heuristics. We show students all the ways that they "know what isn't so," to borrow Thomas Gilovich's (1999) phrase. The idea here is that if they know that people are prone to discount the future, for example, or to succumb to the overoptimism bias, they will somehow be proof against it. But we know from research that exposure to such information does indeed make us more aware of biases in the thinking of others, but not so much in ourselves (Bazerman, Loewenstein, & Moore, 2002).

So GVV flips the use of this important research. If we know that we are susceptible to social consensus bias, for example, then let's consciously name and use that predisposition; let's show the individuals we are trying to persuade that there can be an alternate referent group than the one they assumed, a group that supports our position. Or if we know that individuals tend

to privilege the near term over the long term, then let's frame our position in ways that can feel more immediate and create incentives that kick in sooner. In other words, if we know our behavioral and thinking biases, let's try to build arguments and action plans that work with them, rather than against them, all the while naming the phenomenon.³

The role play flip: Finally, when people first learn about the scripting and action planning exercises at the heart of GVV they often refer to them as "role-playing" exercises. However, they are fundamentally different. The traditional role play is typically an adversarial role play, at least as it is often applied in discussions of ethics and values. That is, the student role players will be asked to argue for an "ethical" position in the face of resistance from another student (or sometimes the professor) who assumes the role of the boss pressuring for results at all costs or the customer demanding a kickback, for example.

Although there is much learning that can be gleaned from this sort of exercise, there are several problems. For one thing, we are requesting some students to practice (or "rehearse") the less ethical position. But perhaps more salient to this discussion, the adversarial role play is somewhat like asking a new tennis player to go directly to tournament play before learning to serve. The player will most assuredly lose, but what's more, he or she will likely be discouraged from playing again.

GVV therefore flips the traditional role play into a peer coaching exercise. The students are asked to work as a team, to create the most feasible, credible script and action plan for accomplishing the case protagonist's values-driven objectives. And then when they present their "solution" to the larger class, the entire group is invited to serve as peer coaches to acknowledge the most effective parts of the plan; to point out the weaknesses; and to work together to improve the overall approach. (The GVV Curriculum includes a document, "Guidelines for Peer Coaching," that offers suggestions for this type of discussion, available at <http://www3.babson.edu/babson2ndgen/GVV/Curriculum.cfm>.)

RESPONSES TO GVV

The response to Giving Voice to Values has been very positive and its spread has been more rapid than we had dared dream. The curriculum is available online for free, so we are unable to offer an accurate accounting of how many users there are around the globe. We only are able to tally those faculty and schools and organizations that approach us with comments and questions, as opposed to those who simply read, download, and use it. However, even with the limitations of our data, we know GVV has been piloted in well over 250 schools and organizations on six continents, from top-tier schools like MIT and INSEAD and HBS to small local institutions; in

the United States, Canada, Africa, Europe, Australia, India, South America, and the Middle East. (See <http://www3.babson.edu/babson2ndgen/GVV/Pilot-Sites.cfm> for a partial list of pilot sites and for faculty comments.)

Sometimes it is used by a single professor who wants to try out in his or her class; sometimes it is adapted as an orientation or mid-semester experience for an entire cohort of students (as it has been at MIT); sometimes the dean invites us in to help work with faculty to think about a cross-curricular application of the approach (as at Simmons University School of Management in Boston); sometimes it is integrated into non-ethics classes in areas like accounting, corporate governance and leadership, organizational behavior, career management, negotiations, supply-chain management, and so on; sometimes it is the basis for an entire course, required (as at the University of Western Australia) or elective (as at Notre Dame); and so on. GVV was conceived of as a potential solution to the challenge of how to integrate conversations about values-driven management into the non-ethics courses, and it is gratifying to see that it is being used in this way, as well as being integrated into the ethics courses themselves in many cases.

Although originally developed for use at the MBA level, it is increasingly also being used in executive and undergraduate settings, and we have received requests for information about possible adaptation for schools of engineering, medicine, and law, not to mention liberal arts programs. In addition, there are regular expressions of interest from corporations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), as well as the public sector.

It is interesting to reflect a bit on just why GVV has received the positive response it has thus far, and to consider what this tells us about the future of education for business ethics and values-driven leadership. At this point in the essay, let me shift to the first-person singular voice, as I want to speak frankly and directly about my own aspirations for GVV.

I believe that Giving Voice to Values appeals to many faculty precisely because, as one of the starting assumptions of GVV states, most of us want to act on our values. We want to contribute to the development of responsible and capable future business managers and leaders. And we want to believe that business can be run both effectively and ethically. But we are also acutely aware of the more mixed experience and very real pressures in the world of business and beyond. GVV offers us a way not only to invite ethical business stewardship from our students but to better prepare them for that practice, without pretending the world is other than it is. I believe that GVV provides educators with the opportunity to consider how their knowledge and insight can help to build a better, more ethical and values-driven marketplace without requiring them to pretend that this is the way business is always conducted or even the only way it can be financially rewarding. GVV allows us to be both intellectually honest and ethically optimistic—a rare pairing. GVV allows us to use the most current research about how we think and behave—the ways that we can fool ourselves into thinking

³Just as we name GVV explicitly as a "thought experiment" and as we make our "starting assumptions" explicit, so too we name our conscious use of decision-making biases and heuristics. GVV is a pedagogy that is based on a sort of "informed consent," if you will.

we are better and smarter, both more ethical and more rational than we actually are—in the service of our best aspirations, rather than as simply a cautionary and defeating warning.

At a perhaps more mundane, but nevertheless very powerful level, the flexibility and modular design of GVV allow any individual faculty member to experiment with it without having to entirely revamp his or her syllabus and without having to work through institutional curricular review committees to get it past the tyranny of the majority. In fact, the approach to GVV is at heart so simple—that is, simply asking the question “how to get the right thing done”—that any faculty member can simply add a discussion pasture onto the discussion of a traditional and much beloved case that nevertheless has a values question embedded in it. In this way, faculty members can continue to use their existing materials and respect the challenge of a crowded syllabus, but finally be able to truly consider that ethical question that was lurking in a case (sometimes raised by some brave student soul) but that they never were sure how to handle.

I have been somewhat surprised at the increasing interest in GVV from companies, since I developed it to address a set of challenges that I knew deeply but also very specifically as business-school concerns (i.e., the questions referenced in this essay’s introduction about whether, what, where, and how we can teach about ethics and values). As I talk to the corporate representatives of this interest, however, I see that they are just as limited by an emphasis upon ethical decision making, as opposed to ethical implementation, in their own corporate training. The initial interest seems to be to work with GVV to develop a set of training scenarios that focus on how to enact ethical choices when one’s colleagues, one’s customers, one’s manager may be pushing in another direction. Perhaps the company that has gone the furthest with this thus far is Lockheed Martin, where the entire ethics and compliance training program over the past few years has been focused around a set of GVV-style video scenarios, which have been receiving very positive responses and which have even won an industry award.

THE FUTURE FOR GIVING VOICE TO VALUES AND BUSINESS ETHICS MORE GENERALLY

Although I am pleased to see that the flexible and modular approach designed into GVV has facilitated its adoption in more venues, more rapidly, than I had anticipated, I am also beginning to think about what’s needed to take this initiative to the next level in order to be truly transformative. I have a few thoughts on that, which I share here as this essay concludes.

Integration: The long-lived debate about whether ethics should be embedded across the business curriculum or delivered in a stand-alone course is settled, as far as I am concerned. The ideal solution, given faculty staffing, is to do both.

However, we all know the arguments for and against each position: Integration is code for “do nothing”; stand-alone courses send the signal that ethics is separate and only has to

be considered when it’s being graded; faculty are not prepared to integrate ethics into non-ethics courses; (some) ethics faculty are not equipped to make the course applied enough to influence students; and so on. And of course, there are the “other” reasons for and against integration versus stand-alone courses that have to do with a crowded curriculum; pressures to shorten the “core” for economic and competitive reasons; the challenges of grading and reporting grades on ethics; and so on.

GVV was developed, in part, as a response to this challenge. It is designed to be useful and to appeal to faculty in the non-ethics business disciplines, for all the reasons explained in the preceding pages (its action orientation; its reliance upon the language and tools of the business functions rather than those of philosophy; its simplicity and flexibility of use). So the next step is to build out the GVV curriculum with more materials that are relevant to the different disciplines. There already exist materials tailored for use in corporate governance, accounting, economics, organizational behavior, international management, diversity management, career management, leadership, negotiations, supply-chain management, communications, marketing, and so on. But a number of faculty-led GVV Networks have recently been launched to encourage the development of more tailored materials (e.g., the GVV/Accounting and Finance Network was just launched).⁴

Research: As discussed earlier, the GVV curriculum is firmly based upon a set of research findings that emphasize the power of rehearsal and voicing intent, as well as an innovative use of the growing body of insights about decision-making biases. For this reason, as well as the anecdotal reports I receive and my own 20-plus years of experience with business education, I am quite confident in the power of the approach. Nevertheless, there is a growing interest and appetite for more targeted research to explore how this type of training can be most effective and to assess its impacts.

This research opens as many questions as it answers, but I believe it is absolutely essential for the future of GVV and for business ethics education in general. We need to know how to impact students for the better. I would offer a few cautions, however. Traditional pre/post measures are already being used to assess students’ expressed willingness and readiness to act on their values, and these have been encouraging as far as they go. The challenge of actually measuring whether GVV, or any ethics education, changes behavior is more tricky. So often this type of research becomes an exercise in what I call “entrapment” research: that is, give the subject an opportunity

⁴For more information about how to participate in the GVV Faculty Networks or to discuss the launch of a new network, contact mgentile3@babson.edu. In addition to the discipline networks, there is a GVV/India Faculty Network that is promoting the development of GVV cases set in Indian businesses and context, and new launches include a GVV/Sustainability Network, a GVV/Social Entrepreneurship Network, a GVV/HRM Network, a GVV/Public Sector Network, and so on.

to transgress and see whether those who have been exposed to the ethics education are less likely to do so.

First of all, if you really believe in the power of “rehearsal,” this type of research is troubling. But beyond that, there is so much “noise” in the design of such studies—context, source of the “temptation,” depth of exposure to the educational experience being assessed, and so on—that the findings may be more misleading than helpful. We need some serious consideration of how to design these studies in such a way that they are not just “publishable,” but may actually push us further forward in our understanding of how to encourage values-driven leadership. At the very recent First Global Faculty Conference on *Giving Voice to Values* at Babson College, almost 80 faculty members from around the world came together to discuss the idea of GVV, its applications in teaching, and, importantly, the role that existing and future research can play in its development. I believe that this is an area that will be very important going forward, and through future GVV events and publishing, we hope to encourage collaboration and breakthroughs in this area.

Beyond “education”: Partly as a result of the corporate interest in GVV and the way it has manifested itself (i.e., in requests for new approaches to corporate training), I have begun to think about the need for a more creative and transformative approach to the wider objective of developing the muscle and the skills and the tools and the predilection and the commitment to acting on our highest values in the workplace. Just as GVV goes beyond talking in the classroom about what is right, to actually generating scripts and action plans to get the right thing done, so too the next phase of GVV—out in the world of business—needs to go beyond scripting and action planning in training classes to actually peer coaching on the job.

For this reason, I believe the next platform for GVV—and ethics education in general—will be developing peer networks, of students while in school and of managers once graduated, who will be trained in the GVV methods and approach of scripting and action-planning and peer coaching, and who will be committed to transmit those abilities to their colleagues, not merely via traditional training, but also as on-the-ground, real-time advisors on how to enact values. Unlike the typical “ethics hotline” or even the human resources (HR) advisor, this type of guidance comes from a peer and in the flow of the day-to-day act of managing. Based on one of the seven pillars of GVV, this approach is all about the “normalization” of our responses to values conflicts. (For a full discussion of the seven pillars of GVV, see Mary C. Gentile’s *Giving Voice to Values: How to Speak Your Mind When You Know What’s Right* [2010a] and “Ways of Thinking About Values Conflicts in the Workplace” available for free download at <http://www3.babson.edu/babson2ndgen/GVV/Curriculum.cfm>.)

All of these “new” directions for the work of GVV in particular and the attention to ethics and values education in general are currently in discussion and development in a variety of insti-

tutions (educational as well as corporate) and by a variety of faculty members around the world. They represent an agenda for further work that might seem daunting if it were not for the recent experience of GVV’s rapid expansion. The key to this work lies in the continued commitment of time and intellect and the willingness to experiment with the application of GVV in teaching and research by scholars across discipline and geography. The future is exciting and, to borrow from the *Giving Voice to Values* pedagogy, the real question before us is, “*What if we as business educators were going to enable future leaders to act ethically and responsibly? How would we get that done?*”

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