



## Managers Not MBAs: A Hard Look at the Soft Practice of Managing and Management Development

By Henry Mintzberg

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Thirty years ago, Mintzberg's bestseller "The Nature of Managerial Work" sought to dispel the myths of the disconnected, overly analytical manager by observing a week in the lives of five chief executives. In a sense, "Managers Not MBAs" is the sequel, delving as it does into current practice and the need for developing much better managers. The book examines what is wrong with both management education and management itself, and how both could be changed. Mintzberg explores the concept of management as a practice blending craft (experience) with art (insight) and some science (analysis). Conventional education in this realm, he says, encourages a "calculating" approach by overemphasizing the science, and a "heroic" approach by overstressing the art. Mintzberg argues instead for training balanced, dedicated managers who practice an "engaging" style, believing that their purpose is to leave behind stronger organizations, not just higher share prices.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Two decades ago, Mintzberg, a professor at McGill University who was then teaching MBAs at MIT, discovered a profound "disconnect between the practice of management... and what went on in classrooms." Since that time, he has dedicated himself to the problems of management and management education, both of which he believes are "deeply troubled," and the latter of which has become the wrong that he, with help from colleagues around the world, must right. Using words like "arrogance," "mindless" and "exploitation," Mintzberg outlines just what is wrong with MBAs (the people and the degrees) and why the degree he's developed is rooted in the real world and, as such, is far more relevant and valuable to students, companies and the business world at large. Strong economies are based on good management, not on good business schools, Mintzberg believes, and because the top companies employ the top MBAs and the top MBAs (not to mention the mediocre and bottom-level degree-holders) are, or so he says, the products of an out-of-touch and unrealistic graduate program, then the effects of this miseducation can be felt far beyond the classroom walls. Mintzberg's argument is clearly researched and set forth in a progressively logical and even convincing way. Managers and manager wannabes will be intrigued and can certainly learn a thing or two as long as they, as Mintzberg himself urges in his teachings, consider the source of the education. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From [Booklist](#)

"Conventional MBA programs train the wrong people in the wrong ways with the wrong consequences," states this academic and author, who here examines and proposes drastic change in our traditional form of management education. He believes MBA programs are schools of business that pretend to develop managers, and he addresses such issues as what can be done to develop managers in a serious educational process, offering a critique of MBA programs and an analysis of the practice of management itself. Mintzberg's recommendations include program changes, as well as his observations on faculty tenure, prima donnas, and entrenched thinking. He believes MBA programs have failed to develop better managers who should be improving their organizations and thereby creating a better society. This book offers an important perspective for the global MBA community, which serves its students, business, and society in general. Although some may disagree with the author's views, at the very least his insight should foster discussion and lead to action, as appropriate. *Mary Whaley*  
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Review

"Managers Not MBAs adds an extra spark to the debate." The Guardian, February 2005 "Managers Not MBAs throws a stone into the often complacent world of management education. It should be required reading for anyone who has the qualification, who wants one, or just wanders what all the fuss is about." The Economist "Managers not MBAs goes beyond polemic. The book is also a rousing manifesto for the thoroughgoing reform of management education and how we think about it." Michael Skapinker, Management Editor, Financial Times "This book offers profound thoughts on management education and development. It should be recommended reading for MBA students and faculties. It will excite and exasperate readers, but it will never bore them." Management Today "In this provocative work [Mintzberg] challenges the very basics of business education." Business Week "... a powerful statement and a terrific read. Mintzberg is a fine writer with a caustic turn of phrase and to make his case he draws on inside knowledge, both as a member of the academy ... and a distinguished strategy researcher in his own right." The Observer "Henry Mintzberg is that rare thing, a humane business school academic. For three decades he

has been debunking some of the most corrosive myths about management, and doing so in a style that is both sophisticated and uplifting. This important book fundamentally challenges many of today's orthodoxies about how businesses should be run. He might just be able to save us all from ourselves." Accounting & Business Magazine "In *Managers Not MBAs*, Mintzberg offers a new definition of management as a blend of craft (experience), art (insight), and science (analysis). An education that overemphasizes science encourages a style of managing the author calls "calculating," or if the graduates believe themselves to be artists, the related style "heroic." According to the book, neither heroes nor technocrats in positions of influence are useful - what's really needed are balanced, dedicated people who practice a style that can be called "engaging." Such people believe their purpose is to leave behind stronger organizations, not just higher share prices. *Managers Not MBAs* explains in detail how to cultivate such managers, and how they can transform the business world and, ultimately, society." Institute of Management Studies, Book of the Month, June "When it comes to management, Mintzberg's opinion matters: for thirty years he has been one of the foremost, and certainly one of the most radical, thinkers and writers on the subject." People Management, August 2004 "One of the world's most respected management gurus finally squares up to demolish one of the most sacred cows of business education ... This book should make a lasting contribution to the evolution of management education." Director, June 2004

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