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The Misplaced Academic Values

By Kadence Buchanan

Based on endless discussions upon the usefulness of University degrees, it seems obvious that

undergraduate and especially graduate students around the globe constantly wonder what the outcome of their efforts will be. Since perceptions and goals differ, so does the interpretation of the word outcome, especially when the complex issue of knowledge and academic performance is evaluated. Inside the realm of a University's environment, the outcome for most students is the actual value of their academic performance, the product of their intellectual exchange. Monetary or spiritual, the discussed value is usually interpreted as a product ready to be consumed by the private or public sector after the completion of the academic effort by the subject. But, is this interpretation a misconception, or the only outcome of contemporary Universities? Are students misusing the term or have they misplaced some of the values that used to govern the intellectual world?

In fact, making more money and reaching a desired social status are the main reasons that drive prospective students to pursue a degree. Future gains are considered to be the basic motivation that urges people to strive for superior academic performance. Moreover, the fierce competitive environment of every discipline forces the individual to identify new ways of excelling and increasing his/her bargaining power before facing an interested employer. This capitalistic notion of today's reality has forced institutions to recognize the power of monetary gains and has made the academic world a microcosm of this obvious shift in values. Under this social transformation and having to deal with these strong socioeconomic forces, Universities are challenged to survive as intellectual entities. In this altered environment, the academic changes that many scholars have identified have transformed modern Universities into corporate agents.

Moreover, the meaning of excellence has been altered. Nowadays, it is considered a synonym with quality of studies and is used as a basic marketing tool. Through this generic term, prospective students can be attracted and applications collected. A change has occurred to the initial intention of an application. Students do not enter an institution in order to acquire the intellectual pleasure of a degree, to elevate their knowledge, and increase their critical understanding regarding the world, but rather to acquire the intangible asset of a University's name as later this intangible asset will be translated in totally tangible outcomes. The most promising institution is the one which is most attractive to companies who wish to employ its alumni, since corporate managers have shifted their

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focus from what is taught inside a classroom to the physical location of that classroom. Thus, students who compete for the same corporate position tend to value differently the outcome of their studies. By evaluating their institutions' after-graduate appeal, as well as the rating scores issued by academic journals, students tend to consider their degree as a commodity rather than a reward for their intellectual struggle.

But the fact still remains that students enter a classroom ready to discuss, listen and share their beliefs. Depending on whether the existing academic environment promotes this intellectual exchange, students will shape their characters and value systems. There is no misconception of the role Universities play today. As different values penetrate an academic institution, its stakeholders integrate academic and social roles. These global citizens can give birth to the altered University's role, by accepting or rejecting the proposed changes during their time.

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Take the Personal Out of the Workplace: Leave Your Troubles at the Door!

By Joanne Victoria

Bringing your emotional baggage into the work place is inappropriate for all the reasons you may imagine. Yet employees, managers and business owners do it all the time.

The question is, how do you handle it? How do you look at your manager and think, "No one is going to tell me what to do!" What if a client, peer or prospect gets you on a Bad Day?

How do you take the personal out of the workplace?

It requires discrimination and distinction. If you are having communication problems at work, look at how you view your manager, boss or employee. Does he or she represent a parent, mate or partner? Are your frustrations about what is and is not working in your life manifested on the job? Learn to leave your troubles at the door. Decide that what you do in the workplace is your contribution - to yourself, your peers and the community. This is your opportunity to commit to what you are best at doing and

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get paid for it.

Examine your values. Values are how you live your life, about what is important to you. Choose values that help make you what you truly are. Your personal values and professional values can be the same.

Warning! Many businesses like to say they are like a family. Be cautious if you are enticed by this. Employees, managers and business owners may manifest characteristics found in your personal family.

Why is this important?

What can happen is, you may take on the role that you do in your own family. If you are passive at home and come to work as a manager, what does that look like? Confusing at best. When a passive person has to function in a different role on the job, they may revert and act like the aggressive parent. Potential can best be realized under a thoughtful and caring leader. Attempt to facilitate, to make it easy for everyone to achieve their best.

As a manager or business owner, you have to know what your values are; what the values of your company are, as well as the values of the people you manage. The basic rules of respect and acceptance apply. The Golden Rule is: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you", not: "Do it to them before they do it to you".

People who bring emotional baggage into the workplace can be temperamental, grasping and neglectful. Even more frustrating is that they act out all their pent-up, misplaced emotions on the job without consideration for others. Employees and co-workers react to this, work efforts and results go by the wayside, and profit and productivity go down.

Leave your unexpressed feelings at the door. Take a break if you become frustrated. Know that you are at work to provide results.

Heal yourself first, determine your values, then you will be a better employee, manager or business owner.

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Joanne Victoria – over 25 years experience as mentor, coach, consultant, Author and Speaker. Working with executives, professionals and small business owners who want to achieve more.

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Your Life – Your Values
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Real Estate Investment for Beginners
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