

LINK WITH CRANFIELD TRUST STANDARDS FOR PLC AWARDS DIGNITY IN THE WORKPLACE MBA FRIENDS LAUNCH FIRM

## **EDITORIAL**

# World-class research

▶ Welcome to the summer 2008 Pioneer. Since becoming Dean, Strathclyde Business School (SBS) in April I find myself taking every opportunity to proclaim just how good a business school we are!

Perhaps it's our Scottish roots that make us inherently modest about our successes, but it's about time we took our rightful place – centre stage.

Being one of only 37 business schools worldwide to have gained triple accreditation status, coupled with our continued success in rankings and surveys, certainly sets SBS apart, locally and nationally. Bring into the equation our international research and teaching excellence, and our international presence via centres in UAE, continental Europe and SE Asia and we are a world player.

Research excellence is particularly relevant to this issue, as it is our cover feature. The Research Assessment Exercise is high on the agenda of every UK university. Whatever assessment your institution is awarded dictates your level of government funding. Research excellence is key to the reputation and the future finances of your school. I'm pleased to report that SBS is doing a great job on the research front, as you can see on page 4.

Pioneer now enjoys a wider distribution and goes out to undergraduate and postgraduate alumni, as well as our corporate colleagues. Alongside our monthly e-newsletter, and our updated web pages – www.strath.ac.uk/business – we hope to keep you fully abreast of our development, and your success stories.

Professor Susan Hart, University of Strathclyde Business School



# Hit the ground running with your MDP skills

► Organisations are seeking flexible employees who can adapt to change, are effective in operating in multidisciplinary teams, are confident in presenting and have well-developed interpersonal skills.

**NEWS** 

The Strathclyde Management Development Programme (MDP) develops these skills. It enhances employability and integrates with students' knowledge of business acquired through their academic subjects. In consultation with employers, this innovative programme focuses on business and management skills that are recognised as important for personal development – in preparation for careers in professional or management roles in the public, private or voluntary sectors.

The class is a compulsory element of the SBS undergraduate programme. It runs for three years with around 500 students each year. There are no formal lectures. The approach is active, problem-based learning and students work in interdisciplinary project teams of six. There are no formal lectures. Students engage in practical, case study activities, team exercises and project preparation in weekly two-hour group sessions.

The course is continuously assessed through group and individual written assignments and presentations, and there is no final examination. Its first year develops business knowledge and introduces students to presentation skills, ICT, project management and planning, analysing and presenting information.

Management and interpersonal abilities are developed in the second year. Students learn entrepreneurial and leadership behavioural skills and innovation and creativity approaches, as well as skills for decision-making and negotiation.



Strathclyde graduate Anthony McCormack (first right) welcomes MDP visitors to Ernst & Young

The final year develops the student's ability to critically evaluate information and their research skills, as well as an understanding of the increased significance of the role of business ethics and social responsibility in organisations.

The Strathclyde Business School MDP team works with major employers in all sectors, as well as international partnerships, such as the Edith Cowan University, Western Australia. Prizes for the best team projects have been sponsored by Deloitte for MDP1, Procter & Gamble MDP2 and Ernst & Young MDP3. The selected best teams are required to present to senior staff from the sponsors. Deloitte partner Jim Boyle said: "I continue to be amazed at the quality and confidence of delivery from students only six months into their studies."

■ Laura Edwards, a final year honours student in HRM and Marketing, takes the hot seat for our Question Time (page 6) to divulge how the Strathclyde MDP bagged her a summer internship. Visit website: www.strathmdp.com Contact MDP Manager Aileen Watson a.c.watson@strath.ac.uk

## **Economic Commentary relaunched**

► The University of Strathclyde's Fraser of Allander Institute (FAI) has relaunched its *Economic Commentary* with the support of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC).

The new partnership between PwC and University of Strathclyde's Business School provides the FAI with the support it needs to continue and develop the *Economic Commentary*, which has been seen by many as the premier source of objective analysis of the economy in Scotland.

The University of Strathclyde Business School and PwC recently launched a website (www.strath.ac.uk/ frasercommentary) that will allow people to access the *Economic Commentary*, related reports, links to Scottish economic data and archive copies.

Susan Hart, Dean of the University of Strathclyde Business School, said: "I am delighted that this partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers will enable the Fraser of Allander Institute to continue to publish the *Economic Commentary*, which has been an independent, authoritative and influential voice on the Scottish economy for more than 30 years."

Frank Blin, head of UK regions for PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, said: "The *Economic*  *Commentary* has been integral in benchmarking Scotland's economic performance over the years.

"It has often pushed the boundaries in considering our approach to the economy and questioned the established way of thinking about issues.

"PwC felt it was vital that this piece of work was maintained and we are proud to sponsor the *Economic Commentary*."

The *Economic Commentary* was relaunched at the school's Dynamic Earth event on June 3, which was attended by a cross-section of politicians and business and public sector organisations.

## NEWS

#### Cranfield Trust and SBS help Scotland's voluntary sector

► Strathclyde Business School's Professor Valerie Belton, Professor Stan Paliwoda, Melissa McCrindle and Irene Aitkenhead Taylor attended the launch event of Cranfield Trust in Scotland on March 4. HRH The Princess Royal, the trust's patron, delivered the key address.

The school has set up an agreement with Cranfield Trust – the UK's leading provider of free management consultancy support to the voluntary sector – to encourage SBS alumni (predominantly MBA graduates) to register as executive volunteers.

The trust provides annual support worth more than \$1.6 million to the voluntary sector by operating a free national service. The scheme is unique in using only MBA or postgraduate qualified alumni volunteers from leading international business schools. It currently holds a register of 650 such alumni volunteers.

All volunteers are assigned to management

projects on a skills sharing basis that enables the volunteer to utilise their key skills and professional expertise.

Historically, Cranfield Trust has dealt with voluntary organisations south of the border, largely in south-east England. However, as Scotland's voluntary sector has expanded, so has the demand for senior management and consultancy skills. Consequently, there is an immediate need for highly skilled volunteers to work on projects across Scotland.

Professor Stan Paliwoda of our Department of Marketing, a Cranfield Business School alumnus, is one of Scotland's first executive volunteers. His project involves working with Glasgow-based Emmaus, a charity offering homeless men and women a home and work in supportive communities.

SBS and Cranfield Trust held a launch event for interested Strathclyde alumni on June 24.

## **Strathclyde sets the standards for top PLCs**

► Strathclyde Business School (SBS) ensured the success of this year's Scottish PLC Awards, Scotland's leading corporate annual awards event, by setting the standards for participating companies.

Since Scottish Business Insider magazine and PriceWaterhouseCoopers launched the awards in 1998, SBS academics have played a key role in setting the criteria for each category and assessing eligible companies.

This year, to mark the event's 10th anniversary, Strathclyde has devised criteria for two new awards for Scotland's top PLCs – Contribution of the Decade and Sustainability.

Co-ordinated by SBS business information manager Christine Reid, the process is a complex exercise with eight academics interviewing key staff from around 10 companies.

Christine said: "The detailed research and analysis of all Scottish PLCs enhances the overall credibility of the



awards process. A wide range of evidence is studied each year because our role as research sponsor is to carry out a rigorous process of independent research."

At the awards dinner at the Glasgow Hilton on 24 April, SBS dean Professor Susan Hart called on Scottish business to develop its relationship with Strathclyde "to work together to increase our national investment in knowledge skills, innovation and sustainable international achievements". Stagecoach scooped the top award of Scottish plc of Year, and Aberdeen Asset Management boss Martin Gilbert took home the PLC CEO of the Year trophy.

Royal Bank of Scotland won both of the new awards. It took the Sustainability title for its commitment to community banking, renewable energy and efforts to engage employees in environmental initiatives. And it won the Outstanding Contribution of the Decade award for its breathtaking growth.

#### and...

#### **LEADING THE WAY**

The SBS Centre for Executive Education has launched four short courses: an Organisational Leadership programme; Certificate of Professional Development in Management; Certificate of Professional Development in Developing Business through Managing Customer Relationships; and Advancing Enterprise Potential and Talent.

#### THE WORLD IN 2025

Ron Bradfield, director of Strathclyde Business School UAE, took part in May's World Economic Forum on the Middle East at Sharm El Sheihk, Egypt. Earlier, he had worked with Dr Robert Bood from the Netherlands and the WEF scenario team to develop three global scenarios that set the forum's theme, Learning from the Future. A forum session focused on the consequences, challenges, opportunities and strategic options implied by the three scenarios for the world in 2025: the Sustainable World, Multipolar World and Hyperlinked World.

#### **MUTUAL BENEFIT**

The university has been in discussions with the global financial group Morgan Stanley, exploring the possibility of building a mutually beneficial relationship involving projects, dissertations and employment opportunities.

## NEW ROLE FOR CHARITIES?

Dr lan Cunningham, of the Department of Human Resource Management, hosted a research seminar in April, entitled Outsourcing to the Voluntary Sector: The Employment Implications. It brought together academics and policy-makers from across the UK to present research papers on the impact of government outsourcing on employment in the voluntary sector. FOCUS

#### **INDUSTRY ISSUES**

# Study puts our researchers in spotlight

#### THE LATEST RESEARCH TAKES OUR PRESTIGE HIGHER THAN EVER, SAYS PROFESSOR SUSAN HART, DEAN OF STRATHCLYDE BUSINESS SCHOOL

trathclyde is among the biggest business schools in the country. The strength of our reputation is further evidenced by the triple accreditation from AMBA, AACSB and EQUIS, and the most recent National Student Survey ranked SBS first in the UK in management education and fourth in business. In February, we were ranked at number 30 in the FT global rankings, as well as being in the top 15 European Business Schools and the top 10 UK schools.

Over the years, however, we have said less about our research headlines. Our recent research performance has been impressive, and is gathering momentum over a wide range of criteria. These include the level of external esteem in which our academics are held. For example, SBS academics have won 22 'best paper' awards in the past few years. Exemplifying the achievements of our research is the Group Decision and Negotiation Annual Award conferred on Colin Eden by the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS) of the USA.

The research profile of our staff is outstanding, with most senior academics producing internationally leading research in business and management in the best journals, our mid-career academics publishing extensively in top-quality journals, and a healthy cadre of young researchers quickly gaining recognition for innovative research.

SBS academics edit an impressive list of influential journals, including Journal of Marketing Management, Work, Employment and Society, IEEE Transactions on Reliability, Business History, Employee Relations and Regional Studies.

We expect to be counted among the top

## NOW LET'S TAKE IT FURTHER

Our research is widely used by students, industry and policy-makers and so we aim to live up to our reputation as 'the place of useful learning'. Now we want to build on that reputation by continuing to develop thought leadership and knowledge exchange and to be more widely recognised as being among the best in class for business education in Europe.

10 largest submissions to this year's Research Assessment Exercise. Five prestigious research centres sit within the Faculty: the Fraser of Allander Institute for Research in the Scottish Economy; the Strathclyde International Business Unit (SIBU); European Policies Research Centre (EPRC); the Strathclyde Institute for Operations Management (SIOM) and the Scottish Centre for Employment Research (SCER).

The Fraser of Allander Institute focuses on research on regional issues generally and the Scottish economy in particular, including forecasting and the analysis of short-term and medium-term movements in Scottish economic activity.

A team of academic and research staff conducts the research for the institute, which has particular strengths in regional multi-sectoral modelling and in economic forecasting.

EPRC focuses on applied research dealing with contemporary policy issues relating to European integration. The centre is funded by European institutions and government authorities to undertake pan-European analyses of policy issues by their multinational, multidisciplinary and multilingual research team.

SIOM brings together four operations management groups and 45 academic and research staff from a variety of departments throughout Strathclyde University. The group focuses mainly on high-value manufacturing,

**Research in business and** management is spread across:

- Accounting and Finance
- Management
- **Economics**
- Employment Studies
- Entrepreneurship
- Hospitality and Tourism Management
- Management Science
- Marketing

performance management, process excellence, collaboration and networking and service science. They disseminate this research through international consultancy - a network of 3,000plus companies and strategic programmes - for more than 20 companies.

SIBU's aim is to engage creatively and critically with the multidisciplinary challenges that confront individuals and organisations in an increasingly internationalised environment - whether operating at home or abroad.

Finally, SCER produces high-quality academic research for policy use in rapid-response mode. It has worked with a range of funders from the public, private, voluntary and university sectors, undertaking both short-term and longer-term

contracts that influence the Scottish and UK governments' employment policies.

The research standing of scholars across the school has attracted major international research conferences such as the European Marketing Academy, Babson Kauffman Entrepreneurship Research conference and the annual International Labour Process conference.

The school's leading academics are involved with major projects including the ESRC-funded Strathclyde Philanthropy Research, which was awarded £500,000 over a five-year period. The EPRC has been awarded a European Commission contract worth almost €1 million to study the

implementation of European regional policy. Top researchers consult with top management teams in both public and private sectors, including Lloyds TSB, PricewaterhouseCooper, Babcock Naval Services, McDonalds, Scottish and UK governments, European Commission, Scottish and Highlands and Islands Enterprises, and the NHSS.

The school's quality profile is further enhanced by the breadth and depth of the intellectual content of our research and the impact of this on both the business and policy communities.

in conjunction with the Union Marketing



In marketing, the work of Stephen Tagg

Consultancy has provided useful measures of the effectiveness of advertising campaigns aimed at increasing organ donorship, and their work earned a gold medal at the UK's annual conference of the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising.

Our research is widely used by students, industry and policy-makers and so we aim to live up to our reputation as 'the place of useful learning'.

Now we want to build on that reputation by continuing to develop thought leadership and knowledge exchange and to be more widely recognised as being among the best in class for business education in Europe.

## PEOPLE



Laura Edwards, 2008 joint honours student in Human Resource Management and Marketing, talks about Strathclyde's Management Development Programme

#### How would you describe MDP to a prospective student?

The MDP helps students to enhance their overall employability. It complements your chosen subjects and enables you to develop skills that employers look for, such as communication, teamworking, problem-solving and leadership. How would you describe MDP to

#### an employer?

It's a compulsory class for students at Strathclyde Business School. Students work in project teams throughout the year and complete a wide range of challenging projects together. As well as the benefits I've described, it enhances commercial awareness and understanding of business ethics, and ensures that students are fully prepared for graduate employment.

#### How has it contributed to your own employability?

I've developed a wide range of business, management and personal skills. For example, I've learned how to work as part of a team, developed the courage to lead and improved my confidence in making presentations. It is these skills that employers are looking for from graduates. And the MDP has demonstrated the importance of reflection during skill development.

How did MDP3 contribute to your opportunity internship and graduate employment at Ernst & Young?

I joined Ernst & Young this summer in Technology Security and Risk Services. I was able to employ the skills I'd developed during MDP throughout my internship. For example, I did a substantial research project where I had to utilise my research, communication and problem-solving skills. Ernst & Young were impressed with my abilities and offered me a place on their graduate scheme next year.

# MBA gave me the confidence to launch consultancy

▶ Before starting my MBA part-time, I worked as an IT consultant for a variety of blue chip clients, *writes Charles Vincent*. I worked on client sites across the UK, Europe, USA and Australia, specialising in the implementation of complex, integrated CRM solutions.

PROFILE

I decided to do a part-time MBA because I was finding that I was not able to be actively involved in many of the board-level discussions with my clients. I needed to have a fuller understanding of all aspects of business management in order to have the required credibility at this level. I decided that part-time would be the best route for me as it allowed me to apply what I was learning as I went along, while still having weekly contact with lecturers and other students. In order to do this I took a senior management job with one of my clients, which would mean far less travel, allowing me to attend the evening classes.

I chose Strathclyde Business School for its strong reputation and the strategic focus that the programme contained. Its triple accreditation also meant that wherever in the world I would be working the qualification would be accepted.

Also, I had spoken to a number of part-time graduates and they confirmed that the part-time route was a highly effective method of learning.

The quality of teaching in the school far surpassed any expectation. The lecturers were all clearly experts in their field, as well as being keen to teach – something that differentiated them from many academics I have experienced in the past. They encouraged us to learn both from them and the other students and were happy to discuss alternative

#### ERISKAY ASSOCIATES IS UP AND RUNNING

Charles Vincent and Mark Taylor met on the part-time MBA programme in 2004. Both were from corporate backgrounds, but shared a passion for entrepreneurship.

shared a passion for entrepreneurship. In studying the strategy modules of the MBA programme, the pair became interested in how many of the traditional tools and techniques of strategy could be adapted effectively for use with entrepreneurs. They made this the subject of their MBA project. Working with a number of entrepreneurial clients, the team

Working with a number of entrepreneurial clients, the team devised a simple and effective methodology, called Making Strategy for Entrepreneurs.

The project was substantial in scope and, after submission, the team attracted a number of new fee-paying clients who were impressed by the significant outcomes of the method.

impressed by the significant outcomes of the method. The business was formed last year and named after the 2004 MBA part-time intake, Eriskay. Its client list is rapidly expanding to include not just entrepreneurs and SMEs but also public and third-sector organisations.

Eriskay Associates, 179 Titwood Road, Glasgow G41 4BL. Tel: +44(0) 838 9940. Fax: +44(0) 838 9941 Mobile: +44 (0) 7515 580520 Web: www.eriskay-associates.co.uk Email: mark@eriskay-associates.co.uk charles@eriskay-associates.co.uk

experiences and opinions.

In my final year I specialised in the making of strategy for entrepreneurs and innovators. I did this by taking elective classes at Strathclyde University's Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship. I found this particularly valuable because it allowed me to specialise in my area of interest. I also was able to complete my project in this area.

The course has given me all the skills I was looking for and more. I now have a very broad skill set, as well as a depth of knowledge in certain areas.

Also, I have developed a strong network of colleagues and friends. This came from working in a variety of teams, which was encouraged in order to give the widest possible exposure to individuals with experiences different to one's own. Since graduation, a colleague from the MBA and I have started our own strategic and management consultancy. The course had such an influence on our business that we named it after our intake year name – Eriskay. Hence, Eriskay Associates was created and incorporated the same week as we graduated.

Charles Vincent liked the strategic

the strategic approach

GET DEFUZZED WITH OUR NINTH STROLL THROUGH THE JARGON ALPHABET

UZZYWORDS

**Alpha geek:** The most technically proficient person in a group or company. **Blamestorming:** A group process where participants analyse a failed project and look for scapegoats other than themselves.

Shoot ahead of the duck: To think ahead. You have to aim where you think the duck will be, not where it is when you pull the trigger. Zerotasking: To do nothing or have nothing to do.

## PEOPLE

A clear view of creativity

#### MAMTA SINGHAL'S DYSLEXIA DID NOT STOP HER GAINING A PRODUCT DESIGN ENGINEERING DEGREE, AN MSC IN INTEGRATED PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND SEVERAL ACADEMIC AWARDS. STRATHCLYDE'S NOMINEE FOR AMBA'S MBA STUDENT OF THE YEAR TELLS HER OWN STORY

► Some schools don't really understand dyslexia. It was a problem for me and I feel I was let down. After school, I would spend hours working with my parents so I could get up to speed. I soon realised that I enjoyed learning and have not looked back.

I was not that 'bright' at school, but when I started my B.Eng I really enjoyed all the numerical and creative work. I knew I had found a profession that I really enjoyed so worked hard at it.

In industry, being hard-working, sociable and determined counts much more than whether you have good spelling (that's why we have spell checkers!). One of the former directors at Hasbro, where I have worked, was dyslexic – which goes to prove that it's only a problem if you want to make it one.

A book changed my life. It's The Gift of Dyslexia: Why Some of the Brightest People Can't Read and How They Can Learn by Ronald D David and Eldon M Braun (Souvenir Press 1997). I would recommend it to any dyslexic person. These days there are computer

#### NETWORKING IS SO IMPORTANT

I have started a Facebook group while I have been at Strathclyde. I am a flexible learning MBA and I felt I wasn't interacting with fellow students.

One key aspect of an MBA is networking and making friends. Facebook has been an excellent way to connect with past and present students around the world. Some staff have joined, too, which is wonderful. packages that can help with spelling and phonetics. Dyslexics may have harder time with language-based subjects, but there are many other avenues available.

I have done some teaching at Strathclyde's Department of Design Manufacture and Engineering Management (DMEM) and some of the best students are dyslexics. The Strathclyde staff have been really helpful and understanding.

Dyslexics are normally very good at creative subjects, have enhanced spatial awareness and are empathetic people. They can excel in engineering, arts, sports, enterprise and teaching – all sorts of things.

When I was diagnosed, I was determined to not let it hold me back and now I truly feel it's a 'gift'. I don't do things despite my dyslexia but because of it. Students should not use dyslexia as a 'sympathy card' because industry won't be impressed. But if you put a positive spin on it, dyslexia can be seen as an advantage.

During my undergraduate days I secured a six-month placement at Polaroid's HQ in Dumbarton. When I graduated with my MSc from DMEM, I took a job at Dyson, working alongside Sir James Dyson and his team – it was brilliant.

But my dream job was to work for a toy company. When the opportunity to work for Hasbro in London came up, I jumped at the chance. I worked on games and toys. The company was amazing and I made great friends. We had a relaxed environment and worked with people all over the world.

As a product design engineer I have

a bank of product ideas I would like to exploit, but I didn't have in-depth knowledge of finance or strategy. They are the areas I have focused on. The university has one of the best accounting and finance departments in the UK, so studying finance has been key in my MBA.

I am hoping to do my final-year project on creativity in business, and the Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship may be able to help.

Career plans? I would like to work for a company that recognises creativity and appreciates someone with a fun personality and a passion for business and innovation.

> Mamta Singhal: "I never want to be in a strait-laced office"

## FOCUS

#### PROFESSOR SHARON BOLTON LOOKS AT MANAGEMENT PRACTICE AND THE ATTITUDE OF BUSINESSES TO DIGNITY AT WORK

► Many people have talked about dignity at work, though there are very few contemporary studies that directly address the issue.

Discussed in relation to management practice, the topic of human dignity tends to be disguised under headings such as organisational citizenship, job satisfaction, mutuality, management of diversity, pride in work, responsible autonomy and distributional justice.

Currently, there are some high-profile campaigns that concentrate on workplace bullying and harassment as the central facilitator of indignity at work. However, though the topic of dignity at work is inextricably linked to many important organisational and employment issues, it has an almost taken-for-granted quality when, if more clearly explicated, it could serve as a useful barometer of the effectiveness of management practices.

Dignity at work remains an elusive subject and yet there is general consensus – though originating from many different perspectives – that dignity is an essential core human characteristic. It is overwhelmingly presented as meaning people are worth something as human beings. It is widely seen as something that should be respected and not taken advantage of, and believed that maintaining human dignity is a core contributor to supportive and productive communities, in and out of work.

Therefore, it is important to recognise that dignity at work is realised through effective organisational structures and practices. But how do we define a subjective experience such as dignity? And how, as practitioners, do we know if we are designing and implementing the right policies?

We need to go back to basics and think about dignity in a multi-dimensional way.

Although only ever referred to loosely it seems that dignity at work is closely associated with management practice – its design, implementation, effect on the workforce and, ultimately, its impact on performance. So it is timely to explore the association between the implementation of various management practices and the achievement of dignity at work through the lens of best practice management.

There is protracted debate concerning the universal applicability of best practice management, and doubts concerning empirical verification of its link with performance. But there is ample evidence that a consequence of achieving at least some elements of best

## **DIMENSIONS OF DIGNITY**

Despite the difficulties of arriving at a clear definition of dignity at work, there appear to be defining features that are widely recognised as necessary contributors.

There are the objective factors of security, just reward, equality, voice and wellbeing, and there are the subjective factors inherent in an understanding of human dignity, as presented in moral and political philosophy, of autonomy, meaning and respect.

These objective and subjective factors should be thought about as dimensions of dignity. Dignity in labour via interesting and meaningful work with a degree of responsible autonomy and recognised social esteem and respect may be understood as dignity in work. Structures and practices that offer equality of opportunity, collective and individual voice, safe and healthy working conditions, secure terms of employment and just rewards lead to workers attaining dignity at work.

practice management is that organisations are seen as good corporate citizens, employers of choice and superior performers.

Best Practice Management (BPM) is often proposed as a means of valuing and respecting people in an organisation, hence offering opportunities for the creation and maintenance of dignity at work. This is precisely what many of the top-rated companies proclaim lies at the heart of their success.

Of course, BPM also has a sound business case to make. A best practice approach has been widely advocated as a means of increasing innovation and performance in UK business, and a broad consensus has emerged that investment in various practices will create a high-performance workplace.

The focus on best practice draws heavily from the resource-based view of the firm that offers an inside-out version of strategic management; quite different from the contingency view in the way it emphasises 'softer' people management practices involving learning and development, involvement and empowerment and a strong focus on people as the organisation's most important asset.

Closely associated with a move toward bundles of best practice is the focus on leadership as a defining feature of successful organisations. Strong leadership is represented as a creative force and prime motivator for change and quite different to the functional direction of management.

Leadership is seen as a prerequisite for the implementation of innovative management practices leading to best practice and increased performance.

Sharon Bolton is Professor of Organisational Analysis at the University of Strathclyde Business School. Her book, *Dimensions of Dignity at Work*, was published by Butterworth Heinemann, London 2007.