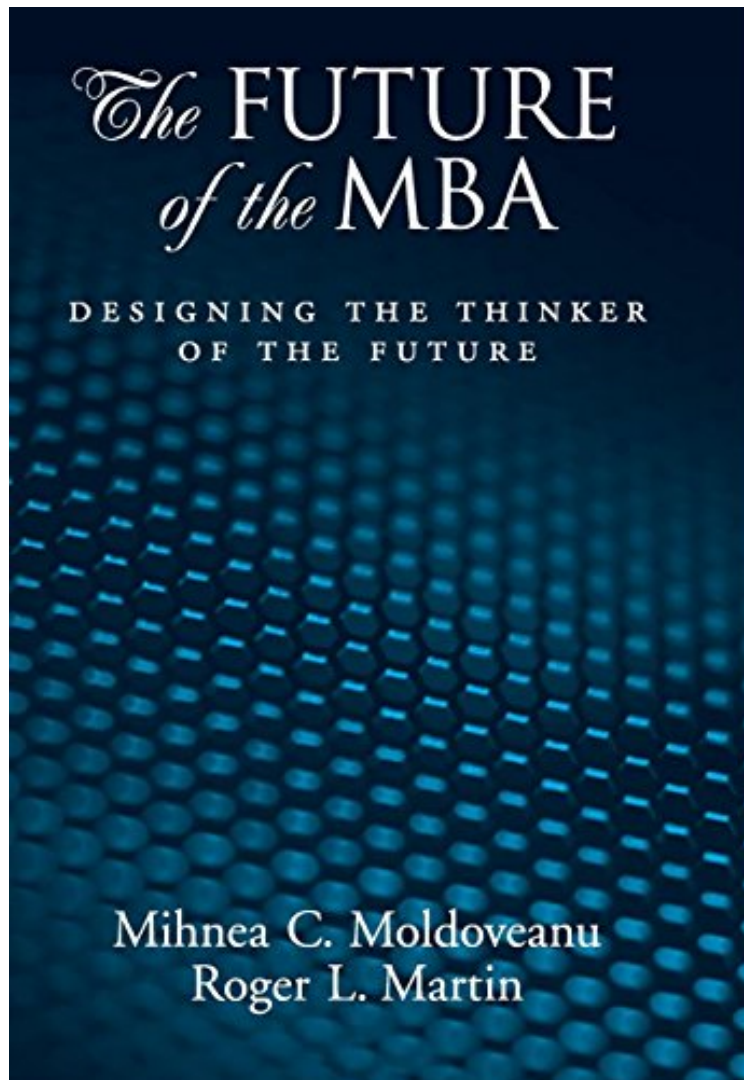


## The Future of the MBA: Designing the Thinker of the Future

*Mihnea C. Moldoveanu, Roger L. Martin*  
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**Mihnea C. Moldoveanu, Roger L. Martin : The Future of the MBA: Designing the Thinker of the Future** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Future of the MBA: Designing the Thinker of the Future:

5 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Missing a very important point...By MagymeWhile the authors do make very good points as to new concepts or means of facing problems must be taught during MBA programs, they entirely fail to speak as to the purspoe of the MBA not only from the commercial point of view but also from the point of view of society as a whole. Business exists to provide society with material needs, yet it must also be a humanistic approach otherwise the pursuit is simply empty. The authors, in the proposal of their new mental model, fail to account for a variable that takes into consideration the desirability of having the future business of the world care about people

other than themselves, or of society as a whole. Creating a mind along the lines they propose (which I believe it is an overambitious agenda that presupposes minds can be designed or are inferior to theirs, as opposed to helped achieve new heights out of their own free pursuit spirits) would perhaps in fact create very good problem solvers, but only on the material and efficiency oriented plane. Yet human beings exist in many dimensions, including arguable even the spiritual one, and to this they seem to pay no respect. Overall, when you read the book you get a feeling of the inevitability of a dark future in which only the strong survive and the weak or stupid are forever left behind to follow the great masters. Yet it should not be so. The future is open. And we can build it however we want. Why do we want to make future business leaders dark and egotistical (yet extremely mentally powerful) knights without some sort of equally powerful humanistic compass? Who are the authors to think that they are so above future thinkers undergoing the MBA programs so as to think they should design their minds so profoundly (rather than simply letting them be exposed to a set of tools from those disciplines they mention and having them grow their own minds as they best see fit)? Pity that such a good and much needed effort lacks "foraging" or "exploration" in other very important aspects of the human experience that should for sure play a part of the mental structure of the future leaders that we want to have. At least in the world in which I want to live...SMILE LOVE CREATE VALUE IN MEANINGFUL AND HUMAN WAYS (NOT JUST PRACTICAL AND EFFICIENT) That is lacking from your message pals!

0 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Author Events with Prof. Roger Martin By Rotman School Events Our Rotman School of Management has organized public author events for Prof. Roger Martin's new book, "Fixing the Game: Bubbles, Crashes and What Capitalism Can Learn From the NFL". These will take place in New York (June 7), San Francisco (June 21), London (Sep 22) and Calgary (Oct 25). Details: [...]

5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. How to prepare integrative thinkers to deliver high-value performance By Robert Morris In a recent interview of Roger Martin, I asked him about the title of this book, co-authored with Mihnea C. Moldoveanu. "We envision a world in which there will be a greater focus in business education on developing the thinking styles and capacities of MBAs rather than filling their heads with analytical tools. We see teaching them to think and act responsibly and responsively in the face of multiple, incommensurable and possibly conflicting models of oneself, the world and others. This in turn requires development of their thinking capacity along three dimensions. First is nimble-mindedness, which we see as the ability to understand apparently conflicting models, walk around them and internalize rather than reject the tensions among them. Second is big-mindedness, which we see as the ability to contain and behold the conflicting models while, in the words of F. Scott Fitzgerald, "retaining the ability to function." Third is tough-mindedness, which we see as the capacity to utilize the tension among the existing models to forge a new model. This in turn requires the rigorous testing and discarding of potential solutions rather than fixating on the first one and hoping it is sound." In this volume, Moldoveanu and Martin respond to several critiques of the MBA as a program during discussions of "The Future of the MBA" during a conference co-hosted by the co-authors at the Rotman School of Management in 2006. They assert that many of the critiques do not recognize the selection value of the MBA. For example, the failure to appreciate the value of the selection value of the MBA. That is, "its value as a selection mechanism or filter that picks out individuals with high potential for management positions based on relatively powerful predictors of performance, such as general intelligence and conscientiousness." They insist that, on the contrary, it does have "a significant, demonstrable, and robust value to prospective employers." They share their vision of the high-value decision maker of the future whom they call an "integrator," one who solves a problem through effective action what the narrow specialist can often not solve even in theory. Having shared their profile of the integrator, Moldoveanu and Martin argue that the selection metric of MBA programs be expanded and refined to include "measures of openness in combination with an executive function that allows the integrator to manage his or her affective and cognitive processes." That is, to develop what the authors refer to as an "opposable" mind that, as Martin suggests in his response to the interview question, is "nimble," "big," and "tough." Especially in today's business world, executives must be able to function effectively, under control, despite what Moldoveanu and Martin describe as "an inherent and inherently irresolvable state of practical ambiguity." The tools they require include generative reasoning capacity, assertive inquiry, and causal modeling. They then pose this rhetorical question: "Can business academia deliver a development program more likely to cultivate the high-value decision maker of the future than is currently the case?" Of course it can. Moldoveanu and Martin suggest that, "although the value of the know-what imparted by business school may be in many cases low, the value of the know-how that business school academics can provide is undervalued and can be significantly increased by recognizing and amplifying powerful trends that have emerged in the field over the past 20 years." I agree that relevant, valuable know-how can be successfully transferred through discursive interaction and mimetic imprinting; moreover, when redesigning the training experience of the MBA focused on the performative dimension of knowledge, it is highly desirable - as Moldoveanu and Martin recommend - to "bring the ontic [i.e. real-world] and ontological dimensions of training together in the same elements of a training program." While acknowledging the value of training that increases an MBA student's know-how, however, I am again reminded of what Peter Drucker asserted in 1963: "There is surely nothing quite so useless as doing with great efficiency what should not be done at all." The Maginot Line is a case in point. Guided and informed by lessons learned from World War One, the French established a line of concrete fortifications along its borders with Germany

and Italy. Had the French been engaged in World War One again, this defense would have been very effective. However, the Germans had other ideas. On May 10, 1940, their forces by-passed the defenses, either by going around them or flying over them, and the Maginot Line -- although intact -- was quickly surrounded and isolated. The French surrendered on June 22, only six weeks after the German invasion. Many decision-makers in businesses make the same mistake: however sound the given strategy may be, the tactics and resources they use to execute it are antiquated. Hence the importance of accommodating both ontic and ontological dimensions within an MBA program. As Moldoveanu and Martin correctly observe, understanding and then preparing for the future of the MBA requires a vision "that articulates the value of academic know-how to the cognitive-behavioral repertoire of the high-value decision maker." Those who share my regard for this book are urged to check out Martin's *The Opposable Mind* and Gary Hamel's *The Future of Management* as well as Phil Rosenzweig's *The Halo Effect...and the Eight Other Business Delusions That Deceive Managers*, Marshall Goldsmith's *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*, and *Judgment* co-authored by Noel Tichy and Warren Bennis.

The MBA is probably the hottest ticket among the current university graduate degree offerings--every year, more than 120,000 students enroll in MBA programs in the United States, and the estimates in Europe do not lag far behind. In addition, job prospects have never looked better for business school graduates; corporations are hiring more business school graduates every year, and compensating them more handsomely. *The Future of the MBA* provides a sorely needed detailed and systematic review of the major contemporary debates on management education. At the same time, it makes a striking new proposal that will certainly have an impact in business schools: that managers need to develop a series of qualitative tacit skills which could be appropriately developed by integrative curricula brought from different disciplines, including sociology, philosophy, and other social sciences. Moldoveanu and Martin, both involved in the greatly respected integrative business education program at the Rotman School of Management, provide a guide on how to design a reliable integrated program for management students. One of the main assets of the book is that it relies not just on speculative thinking, but on real life experience, and that it also includes case studies that will appeal to practicing managers. As an authoritative reference on MBA education, it will appeal to faculty and staff of business schools, as well as students in related fields like education and public policy.

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