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Dean's Corner: The Role of Business Schools in Educating and Promoting Eco-Friendliness



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Over the last decade, with the increasing danger of global warming, there has been a paradigm shift in the business environment from making profit bluntly to making profit responsibly. This entails a conscious effort on one's part for companies to responsibly use the scarce resources of the earth and on the other hand, from business schools to educate and promote the equitable use of such resources. As a leading business school in Taiwan and Asia, the College of Commerce at National Chengchi University (CNCCU) actively teaches and encourages students to adopt environmentally friendly behaviors during their period of study.

At CNCCU, there are courses geared towards educating students on the importance of the environment for sustainable growth. Such courses as Leadership, Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility (LECSR), Ethics, Confucianism and Leadership, and Sustainable Development, are specially designed to develop students become responsible leaders. B-schools should see the inextricable link between management education and a sustainable environment—one cannot succeed without the other. Therefore, it is imperative that B-school students, especially MBA students, be taught how to best utilize the resources of the earth so that by the time they take the responsibility of leadership, they are already aware of the need to protect the environment. This will also help leaders and managers understand and balance short-term versus long-term profitability.

In April of this year, the IMBA program at CNCCU participated in the International Earth Day celebrations on campus. The main focus of the activity was to highlight the importance of preserving the resources of the planet Earth. This was part of a series of activities that CNCCU is involved in raising awareness for

students, faculty, and staff and by extension to corporations about the proper use of the earth's resources. As part of the event and in solidarity with ecologists from the Hsintien Chungkuang Community College, an ecological tour was conducted around the campus to educate the students, faculty, and staff regarding:

- The importance of preserving trees and other vegetation cover to maintain the natural food chain
- The interdependence of the ecosystem and how its free flow leads to the continuous chemical cycle of living organisms
- The need for stability of the ecosystem which, when obstructed can lead to many natural disasters like hurricanes, earthquakes, and other environmental disruptions
- The delicate balance of the ecosystem which when agitated by human activities—such as the expansion in residences, factories, and extractions can lead to serious threats to the society and the world in which we live

In today's turbulent business environment, success hinges not only on the strategies—cost leadership and/or differentiation—a business adopts, but also a deliberate effort to sustainably and equitably use the limited resources of the earth. B-schools surely have an indispensable role to play in saving the environment. Business schools hence should promote the concept of "think global and act local" and encourage students to be good guardians of the earth's limited and precious resources. As the world is plagued with wars, crisis, overpopulation and the threat of global warming, business schools must join the bandwagon to promote eco-friendliness and conserve the world's invaluable resources for future generations to come.