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The Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) – A ‘Call for Action’ for German Universities

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1 Context and Motivation

It is with pleasure that I see the discussion around ‘business ethics education’ has finally arrived in Germany. While the topic has created much scholarly attention over recent years in the English-speaking community (Christensen et al. 2007; Crane/Matten 2004; Matten/Moon 2004; Nicholson/DeMoss 2009; Rasche/Escudero 2010; Swanson/Fisher 2008), the German-speaking world remained notably silent, even to the extent where one had to wonder whether this fundamental issue is of any relevance at all. Considering that the debate around educating for responsible business behaviour in the classroom has many dimensions, this article offers some initial thoughts on one possible way to institutionalize and globalize the debate by reflecting on the recently launched *Principles for Responsible Management Education* (abbreviated PRME, pronounced ‘prime’). The PRME embodies a voluntary set of principles to which business schools¹ can adhere in the interest of providing future leaders with the necessary insights and skills to reflect upon, critically analyze, and provide leadership with regard to corporate responsibility.

The objective of this chapter is not only to reflect on the principles themselves, but also to show why and how German business schools can profit from joining this global initiative to catch up with educational institutions in other parts of the world which already have, for quite some time now, devoted considerable attention and resources to the topic of responsible management education. I deem this discussion to be both necessary and

¹ I use the word ‘business school’ throughout my discussion. This, however, should not indicate that my remarks are limited to business schools. In particular, the PRME can also be adopted by entire universities or universities of applied sciences.

timely for at least two reasons. First, whereas the PRME currently have more than 328 signatories from all five continents (as of October 2010), only a handful of participating institutions are located in Germany. Hence, the PRME — although a global success story to date — have not made it onto the agenda of German business schools. Second, the PRME provide a unique opportunity to create a global network of dedicated institutions to exchange best practices and knowledge with regard to responsible management education. As business ethics (or whatever name we want to give to courses and programs aiming in this broad direction) is not yet a key concern of German business schools, the PRME provide a unique opportunity to learn from the (good and bad) experiences of other educational institutions. This, I assume, represents a distinctive opportunity for German institutions to finally catch up. I do *not* call for a simple copying of the activities of other (mainly US-based) institutions, but for a serious consideration of entering into a dialogue to critically reflect on and learn from the experiences of other schools already belonging to the global PRME network. Although the status of responsible management education in Germany has improved over the last years (at least when considering that a variety of business schools are now offering ethics-based courses), there still is a need to reflect on how to improve the institutionalization of responsible management education.

My analysis will proceed as follows: To set the context of my discussion, I will outline the demand and supply side of responsible management education, both globally and with regard to Germany. This discussion is supposed to show that there is a discrepancy between what business schools currently offer with regard to responsible management education and what students and employers demand. I will then introduce the purpose, history, and content of the PRME initiative in order to establish a common framework that everybody can refer to. My analysis proceeds with a discussion of how and why to adopt the principles. I conclude with some implications of my discussion leading to a 'Call for Action'. Although my analysis is supposed to stimulate debate among decision-makers at German business schools, I do not limit my remarks to the German context as many of my reflections relate to the international business school environment.

2 Responsible Management Education – Demand and Supply

To set the context for the following discussion, I want to start by contrasting supply and demand with regard to responsible management education. I consider this discussion to be of central importance as the PRME were partly created in response to an observed disparity between what students demand in terms of responsible management education and what educational institutions are able and willing to deliver. My reflections cover surveys regarding the status quo of responsible management education internationally, in North America, and also, to a lesser extent, Germany.

According to a recent Net Impact (2007) survey of over 2,100 North American graduate students, around 60% of all students indicated that they want to learn *more* about concepts such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), environmental sustainability, and social entrepreneurship. The same survey also finds that over 77% of all graduate students believe that CSR is a topic which needs to be integrated into the core curriculum classes of MBA programs. Shifting the perspective to business school administrators, a comprehensive survey of Deans from AACSB accredited business programs finds that 80% believe that business schools should place more emphasis on ethics education (Evans/Weiss 2008: 51). Looking at employer-demand, another recent study finds that there is intense growth in the number of CSR jobs. However, it should be noted that the demand from graduates still outpaces the supply of jobs in this area (Net Impact 2008). The message on the demand side is rather simple: both students and business school staff not only express interest in ethics education but think that this issue deserves to be integrated into the core curriculum.

Moving on to the supply side, Schwalbach and Schwerk (2009: 32) find that 60% of German business schools currently have lectures related to topics within the broader field of corporate responsibility. In line with this, Evans and Weiss' (2008) results show that around 50% of Deans from North American business schools require their students to take a course of which a substantial part is devoted to ethics, while Christensen et al. (2007) report that 84% of top MBA programs (according to the *Financial Times* global Top 50 list) require an ethics or CSR component within their curricula. These results suggest that ethics education in North America and also Germany seems to now be well established. However, Nicholson and DeMoss (2009) put this into perspective by arguing that when looking at undergraduate education, and also when taking into consideration that ethics needs to be taught in other major areas of business education (e.g., ac-

counting, finance, marketing), the picture looks less bright. Surveying department coordinators in business schools, Nicholson and DeMoss (2009) find that coordinators perceive the coverage of ethics issues to be inadequate within their own programmes.

Although business ethics education in North America, and recently also Germany, is starting to institutionalize, a real integration of such issues is still missing (i.e. an integration that reaches well beyond one stand-alone ethics course). This is also reflected by the recent survey of the Aspen Institute (2008) indicating that only 40% of graduates feel that their business education prepares them to manage value conflicts. In addition, the pure number of ethics-related courses does not say much about the quality of these courses and the general importance attached to ethical issues within the curriculum. Counting the number of business ethics courses is certainly a valuable endeavour. However, it is by no means a sufficient way of assessing whether a school has a strong agenda with regards to responsible management education. At best, such results can give some initial ideas about the status quo of responsible management education. At worst, they may be misleading as they paint far too bright a picture.

To sum up the presented results, I believe that there is a gap between what students as well as potential employers demand and what business schools on both sides of the Atlantic are able to deliver. Although there has been some progress in recent years (largely because courses on CSR and related topics have become fashionable), most schools are still far from serious about integrating responsible management issues within their core curriculum. This is also in line with Haase's (2008: 230) assessment that the "reaction to 'demand' has been rather weak so far, leading to a deficit or 'education gap'." In considering this, a reflection on how the PRME can help to change the status quo seems to be both indispensable and desirable.

3 The PRME – Purpose, History, and Content

3.1 The Purpose of the PRME

Similar to the United Nations Global Compact, the PRME are *not* a certification/verification standard to ensure that a business school has complied with certain principles. Much like the Global Compact, the PRME, at the macro-level, provide a platform where interested institutions can exchange ideas and best practices, while, at the micro-level, they are supposed to

stimulate and guide a school's development of responsible management education. The six principles work as a 'walking stick' assisting those institutions which are *willing* to promote and champion responsible management education. In this sense, the PRME need to be understood as a call for action to improve the status of responsible management education and research. Participating institutions are expected to enter into a process of continuous improvement taking the six principles as a guiding idea about where to start and what to do. To inspire and foster mutual learning among institutions the PRME require an annual reporting on progress. Reports are supposed to stimulate discussions, enable learning, disseminate ideas and allow participating institutions to set the agenda for responsible management education, both within organizations and in the wider socio-economic environment. It should also be pointed out that the PRME are *not* a membership initiative (i.e. an initiative which charges a membership fee in order to join the network).

Having said this, it is obvious that the PRME do not aim to be an instrument for *verifying* a school's commitment to responsible management education. Although accreditation bodies like AACSB, AMBA and EFMD have endorsed the principles as a continuous improvement framework for management education, they presently stop short of making the PRME a prerequisite for any accreditation. A key strength of principle-based initiatives, such as the Global Compact or the PRME, is that they allow for experimentation and innovation on the side of participants (Rasche 2009). As innovation cannot be regulated but evolves out of the commitment of participants, business schools should view the PRME as a step to finding and sharing new solutions and ideas towards responsible management education.

3.2 The (Short) History of the PRME

The PRME grew in part because business leaders, who have committed themselves to the ten principles of the Global Compact, were asking educational institutions: *What are you doing to help future business leaders to understand the challenges of responsible management?* Any serious and long-term consideration of responsible management needs to include educational institutions as important players. Educational institutions not only provide factual knowledge about responsible business practices, but also (and maybe most importantly) have the ability to encourage students' reflection about their val-

ues. Considering this role of higher educational institutions, the PRME were developed between October 2006 and July 2007 by an *international* task force of 60 Deans, University Presidents, as well as scholars committed to the idea of responsible management education. To enhance the multi-stakeholder nature and perceived legitimacy of the development process, the drafting of the principles was supported by representatives from the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the Aspen Institute's Business and Society Program, the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI), Net Impact, a student organization with more than 13,000 members, the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC), and the European Academy of Business in Society (EABIS). All of these institutions remain partners of the initiative as they are members of the steering committee which guides the PRME. Accrediting body AACSB International's board unanimously endorsed the principles as a complement to and continuous improvement framework for management education in September 2007, and has committed to promoting the PRME among its member institutions. Similarly, EFMD formally endorsed the PRME at its September 2007 meeting.

In July 2007, the outcome of this development process was presented to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the triennial *Global Compact Leaders Summit* in Geneva. During its first two years of existence, the initiative witnessed a tremendous growth in terms of participating institutions (from around 40 in July 2007 to 328 in October 2010). The enormous interest in the PRME and its underlying idea was also reflected by the high participation rate in the first and second *Global Forum for Responsible Management Education* held at UN headquarters in December 2008 and 2010, respectively.

3.3 PRME Content – What Do the Principles Stand for?

3.3.1 Introducing the Principles

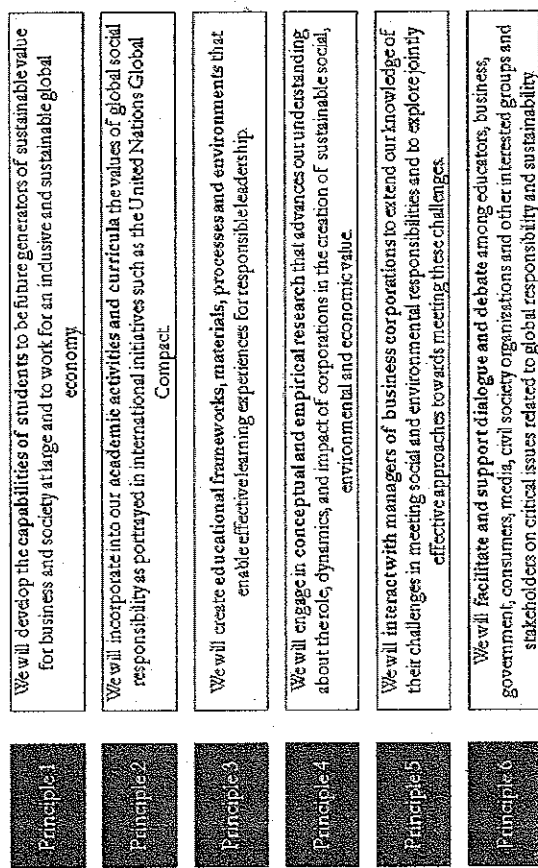
The development process brought about six key principles focused on: (1) the *purpose* of creating the capabilities of students to generate sustainable value and an inclusive, sustainable global economy; (2) *values* of responsibility as illustrated by initiatives like the UN Global Compact's ten principles around human rights, labour rights, ecological sustainability, and anti-

corruption; (3) *methods* of creating pedagogies and educational approaches that develop effective and responsible leaders; (4) *research* that advances understanding about the impacts of companies in creating sustainable social, environmental, and economic value; (5) *partnerships* that foster interactions between managers and academics to explore challenges in meeting environmental and social responsibilities; and (6) *dialogue* that facilitates debate among representatives of the multiple sectors that constitute society around key social and sustainability issues (see Figure 1).

Considering the six principles, it becomes obvious that the PRME are not exclusively about teaching and pedagogical approaches. The underlying belief is that high-quality research with regard to responsible management practices can spur the creation of responsible managers as much as the creation of sustainable partnerships between educational institutions, businesses, and civil society organizations. Institutions who sign up to the PRME are asked to take a holistic perspective on responsible management education. Considering changes in the curriculum, course content, PhD education, and pedagogical practices is at least as important as active research on responsible management issues and also partnerships and dialogue. It is no secret that teaching can profit enormously from cutting edge research as well as continuous exchange between academics and practitioners.

At first glance the six principles may look very general. However, as already mentioned, it is essential to consider that there is a certain *necessary* 'emptiness' when developing and implementing *global* principles because the contexts that business schools operate in may differ considerably (e.g., when looking at differences in legal systems and/or existing norms and values regarding education; see also Rasche 2009). Each participating institution needs to reflect upon (and thus show commitment to) what the six principles mean in practice. For example, the third principle regarding educational frameworks and learning materials can be implemented through quite different actions depending on factors such as class size and available resources (e.g., money to purchase case studies). The point is to not believe that the six principles will tell educational institutions what to do, but to acknowledge that schools need to 'fill' these six principles with contextualized meaning based on reflections and discussions.

Figure 1: The Principles for Responsible Management Education (own illustration)



3.3.2 Discussing the Principles

Each of the principles can be discussed from a variety of angles. In general, I believe that there is a content (*What* does the principle stand for?), process (*How* can the principle be implemented?), and context (*Wherein*, i.e. in which institutional context, should the principle be implemented?) dimension to each of the six principles. While a discussion of content, process, and context issues for each principle is beyond the scope of this article, I provide some initial thoughts on the questions that each principle could raise in practice. Necessarily, these remarks reflect my personal opinion and should in no way be understood as an 'official guide' to the principles.

Principle 1: "We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy." This principle is all about the purpose of the PRME itself, but also about the rationale for adopting the principles within a school. The most important issue is to make all parts of the school (e.g., students, academic staff, and support staff) aware of the principles, to gain faculty support, and to kick off an internal discussion

process to agree on what the principles could mean within the context of the institution. Support from all parts of the faculty, especially from those departments traditionally not much concerned with ethical issues (e.g., finance, accounting, marketing), is crucial to make implementation an issue that reaches well beyond the management department. Practically, the PRME can be considered when reflecting on a school's vision and mission statement. Both vision and mission statement echo the general purpose of an educational institution (for a precise discussion of the concept see Collins/Porras 1991). Visions, in particular, contain strong normative dimensions which, when taken seriously, can shape the attitude of organizational members towards stakeholders (Behnam/Rasche 2009). Embedding reflections on the PRME while discussing a school's mission and vision statement fosters mutual understanding about how the institution wants to address each of the principles and thus paves the way for further implementation.

Principle 2: "We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact." Incorporating values into academic activities and curricula raises the question: Which values do we want to communicate to our students? The second PRME principle explicitly recognizes the Global Compact as one possible, yet by no means only, reference point. As argued by Kell (2005), the Global Compact acts as a 'moral compass' for institutions that seek guidance when asking themselves what values they want to promote. The Global Compact has grouped the values it promotes into four main categories: human rights, labor issues, environmental issues, and anti-corruption. Of course, this is not an exclusive list because other important values exist which are directly or indirectly related to these four categories (e.g., the fair trade debate). Some business schools have followed a focused approach concentrating on selected values and thus building up capacity in one specific area. Portland State University (PSU), for instance, has a strong focus on environmental issues. This is not to say that PSU does not cover social issues at all, but that this university has developed a distinctive competence in one particular area. By contrast, schools like RSM Erasmus University or HEC Paris have followed a more holistic approach looking at social and environmental issues alike (Christensen et al. 2007: 356-357). Regardless of whether a school decides to follow a focused or a holistic approach, there is a need for some reflection on which values the school wants to transmit to its students.

Principle 3: "We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership." Much can be said about the way responsible management can be brought into the classroom. To focus my remarks, I only highlight two issues which have been raised in this context previously. First, there is the question of whether ethical problems should be taught in stand-alone courses and/or whether they should be systematically integrated across the curriculum. Although Christensen et al. (2007: 354) show that some of the top-ranked MBA programs worldwide are following an integrative approach towards responsible management education, I doubt that ethics is much debated in other modules, particularly when looking beyond the leading and highly-ranked schools in the field. The reason, as Swanson (2005: 249) argues, is that most "professors find it burdensome to try to integrate well-developed variants of ethics systematically across the curriculum, particularly given their understandable desire to teach, first and foremost, in their own areas of expertise" (see also Alsop 2006: 12). The PRME can help (a) to initiate a faculty-wide discourse about how to better integrate responsible management education into the curriculum and (b) to also convince others that integration is necessary and worthwhile as responsibility is something that cannot be taught exclusively through one stand-alone course. Thus, it is necessary to have a required foundational ethics course which equips students with some basic theory. In addition, corporate responsibility issues need to be integrated in other courses (e.g., marketing and finance) to foster integration across the curriculum in applying and contextualizing theories.

As a second point, implementing the PRME can also lead to the development of some innovative teaching methods. Applying new teaching techniques can help to really reap the benefits of an ethics course and make it a lasting experience for students. For instance, online learning techniques, which are rapidly gaining popularity as the available technology improves, can help to bring together students from the developing and developed world to discuss the relevance of global governance problems (e.g., global supply networks and their effects on child labor). In addition, some schools already use excursions and travel courses to fully leverage the power of experiential learning. Although there are limitations to such courses (particularly the additional costs), the pay-offs are substantial as students can experience ethical problems in real-world situations and discuss their views with affected people. For example, why not take a class into a low-security prison to discuss with convicted business criminals the consequences of

their actions? Joining the PRME can equip an institution with access to a network of schools which already have experience with these novel learning techniques.

Principle 4: "We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value." Research and teaching go hand in hand when it comes to responsible management education. While many things could be said about the content of research and its (often missing) relevance to practice, I focus on the process of setting up an adequate environment for research to prosper. Christensen et al. (2007: 352) conclude that around 65% of the top-ranked MBA schools have centers or institutes which specifically address ethical issues. These centers, while often being concerned with teaching and research, connote a certain degree of seriousness that institutions attach to the topic. Of course, I am aware that not every school can afford to set up such centers. However, I still believe that the infrastructure required to promote and support research on ethics-related topics does not necessarily have to be costly. Well-coordinated working groups can take on a similar function by fostering exchange between interested scholars. In addition, institutional support can also mean that a school rewards excellence in research on ethics-related topics and also, and maybe most importantly, creates and sustains academic positions which send a signal to early-career scholars that pursuing a PhD in the field of corporate responsibility/business ethics is both worthwhile and desirable. In the German context particularly, a strong commitment to encourage PhD students to research ethics-related topics is presently lacking.

Principle 5: "We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches towards meeting these challenges." This principle calls for setting up and sustaining partnerships between PRME adopters and the corporate world. Such partnerships can help to improve the relevance of both teaching and research. Starting with teaching, inviting practitioners to speak in the classroom is a rather widespread technique to make course content more interesting. Maten and Moon (2004: 330) report that 32% of the schools they surveyed use business speakers within ethics-related classes. I believe there are two main issues to be considered here. First, business speakers must be told not to use the classroom as an arena to uncritically promote their company's responsibility policy as this might send the wrong signals to students. Second,

business speakers must not be selected on an ad hoc basis. Their remarks need to relate to course content and must allow students to re-recognize concepts discussed in class. Although I am skeptical that studies which are carried out by teams of practitioners and researchers can overcome the proclaimed relevance gap within management research (Rasche/Behnam 2009), I think that interactions with managers can be of value in supporting research – not necessarily to enhance the direct applicability of findings, but to gain insights into the problems that corporations face when ‘managing’ their responsibility.

Principle 6: “We will facilitate and support dialogue and debate among educators, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations, and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global responsibility and sustainability.” While the fifth principle is exclusively concerned with partnerships between business schools and corporations, this principle broadens the call for dialogue and debate incorporating a wider set of stakeholders. PRME adopters can facilitate dialogue in a variety of ways, for instance by: (1) co-organizing conferences which unite different stakeholder groups (e.g., as IESE Business School co-organized the 2009 meeting of the European Academy of Business in Society) and (2) hosting events like multi-stakeholder panel discussions and/or lecture series’ (e.g., the International Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility at Nottingham Business School regularly hosts lecture series’). Underlying this principle is the belief that teaching and research can be enhanced by allowing for and actively supporting debate between various stakeholder groups. The inclusion of NGOs, unions, and government bodies into the discussion can particularly help students to explore distinct perspectives with regard to responsible management.

4 Adopting the PRME – Why and How?

4.1 Benefits of Signing Up

While the practical steps for signing up to the PRME are straightforward enough (involving a letter of support by the highest-ranking executive of an educational institution), the benefits of signing up deserve some elaboration. I am sure that there are many good reasons for joining the PRME (some of them being listed and discussed at the PRME webpage: <http://www.unprme.org>). However, I want to emphasize three benefits

which are, from my perspective, particularly important as they relate to the current economic situation and also touch upon the internal micro-political struggles that many schools have to overcome in order to promote responsible management education.

First, any institution which joins the PRME enjoys the benefits of being a recognized leader with regard to responsible management education. The recent ‘credit crunch’ has shown that an adaptation process within the global economy is inevitable. This process puts corporate responsibility ‘centre stage’ and thus creates more demand for ethics courses throughout the curriculum. According to Blaine (2009), most schools have already witnessed a steep increase in ethics-related courses which has put responsible management education in its rightful place. The PRME can support and foster this process.

Second, the PRME can act as an internal change agent when trying to advance the curriculum in favour of ethics courses. As the principles need to be signed by the highest-ranking executive of a business school, it is reasonable to expect that ‘after the signature’ there should be some top-level support for pushing ethical issues into the curriculum. Considering the many micro-political struggles within business schools (e.g., between different departments), support from a high-ranking executive (e.g., the Dean) can help to overcome ideological barriers to create interest and acceptance for ethical issues within the faculty. This is not to say that the PRME need to be exclusively implemented in a top-down mode. Rather, the backing by high-ranking decision makers should support grassroots ideas coming from different parts of the faculty.

Third, and last, joining the PRME gives access to a strong network of like-minded institutions. The 1st Global Forum for Responsible Management Education (i.e. the first time most PRME adopters met in person), which was held in New York City in December 2008, demonstrated that committed schools have a lot to share and that access to this network can give a school a competitive edge in times where the business school landscape is becoming evermore competitive. Learning and the mutual exchange of best practices regarding responsible management education are certainly not a bad idea in a time when the *New York Times* is rightfully asking ‘Is it Time to Retrain Business Schools?’ (Holland 2009). Building capacity and being a leader in terms of responsible management education is increasingly rewarded through rankings such as the Aspen Institute’s *Beyond Grey Pinstripes* list and Net Impact’s *Business as UNusual* guide. The PRME allow participating in-

stitutions to position themselves as leaders in the field of responsible management education and also to brand their programmes.

4.2 Adopting the PRME

How are institutions supposed to tackle the problem of adopting the PRME? While I think that the process of finding support for the PRME is highly contextualized and dependent on the numerous internal and external constraints and opportunities faced by each institution, there are also some general issues which can be raised in this context. Of course, the PRME can be adopted in a top-down fashion with the Dean/President, or in the German context the executive board (i.e. Hochschulleitung), signing up to the principles to then kick off an internal dialogue about what the six principles mean in the context of the institution. While this approach has the advantage of being simple and fast, it can fail to convince faculty and students that the PRME are something that the entire business school should be concerned with. At worst, adopting the PRME in such a way can lead to neglect or even resistance among faculty as the initiative is considered to be someone else's business.

A different, more bottom-up focused approach is introduced by Waddock, Rasche, Werhane and Unruh (2010), who tell the story of how *Thunderbird School of Global Management* adopted the PRME. In stark contrast to a top-down approach, Thunderbird started a broad consultative process including students, faculty, administrators, and alumni. At first, the consultative process revealed the need to come up with a 'Professional Oath of Honour'. As the development of the oath was highly interactive, the outcome was perceived to be legitimate by all involved parties and thus unanimously approved by the different governance bodies of the school (i.e. faculty, senate, president, board of trustees). Based on this experience, the school decided to become one of the first PRME adopters. As the oath had already raised awareness and made the various constituencies sensitive to responsible management education, support for the PRME was easy to obtain. This case story shows that Thunderbird's approach was driven by a discursive, bottom-up strategy towards adoption which was rooted in a broader discussion of how the school understood its task to develop members of a profession (i.e. management). Often, however, the first step is as easy as 'giving the initiative an internal face' (i.e. looking for a dedicated person responsible for pushing the process).

5 Concluding Remarks – A Call for Action

Although there has been some improvement recently, I still think that the vast majority of German business school graduates leave business schools without a clear (if any) understanding of their social and environmental responsibilities. Given that the recent economic downturn has sharpened society's awareness of the essential nature of responsible management education, German business schools can simply not afford to not show more support for the PRME any longer. It is about time to start mainstreaming responsible management education in Germany and to use the PRME as an opportunity to build capacity, both in terms of financial and non-financial resources and institutional as well as personal commitment.

I thus call on all higher-education institutions in Germany (be they universities, universities of applied sciences or stand-alone business schools) to consider the following two points:

1. To kick off an internal discussion process about the institution's position towards responsible management education and the possibility to join, implement, and advocate the *Principles for Responsible Management Education*.
2. To build and institutionalize a strong network of German PRME adopters which (a) shares best practices and also assumes responsibility for publicly advocating the principles, (b) actively lobbies for support by associations like VHB, and (c) acts as a bridge to the wider, rapidly evolving international PRME community.

Backing out of the discussion by claiming that 'ethics cannot be taught' and that 'ethics courses do not produce ethical managers' seems neither correct nor reasonable since, as far as I can tell, courses on leadership also do not by design produce great leaders and courses on marketing quite rarely produce outstanding brand managers. The bottom line is that, as with any other course within the business school curriculum, students as well as faculty need to be motivated and 'open' towards responsible management education to warrant learning success. As indicated above, most students are willing to accept business ethics as part of their education. Why then, are numerous, but by no means all, German business schools not willing to accept *their responsibility* to meet this demand? The PRME provide a window of opportunity to enter into a discussion (both within and among institutions) and to encourage reforms at the institutional level (e.g. by calling for

the active support of the German Academic Association for Business Research (VHB).

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