

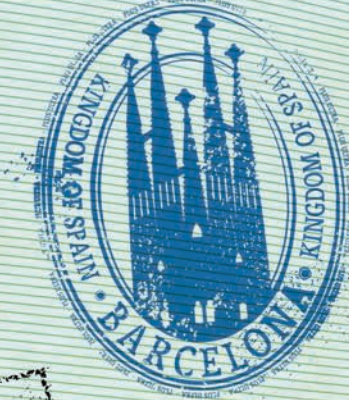
CMA magazine

THE VOICE OF MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING
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MAY/JUNE 2012

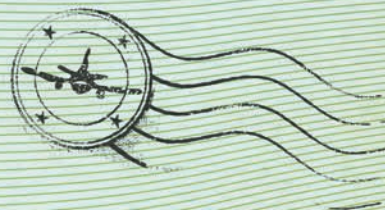
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Globe-trotting tips
University funding conundrum
Five ways to manage risk



Going global: It's more than just location

Islamic finance:
Is Canada missing out on a
trillion-dollar opportunity?

**Scenario planning in
a volatile world**

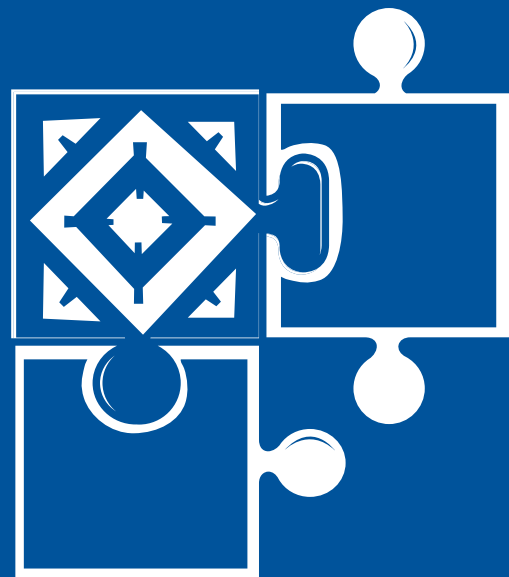




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“Going global” may well be the catchphrase — even the theme — of the year.

It’s my youngest daughter taping old European coins to a piece of cardboard. “They’re worthless,” I say. “All those countries use euros now.”

It’s the photo in the weekend paper of a lemonade stand with prices in dollars, euros and renminbi. “In the future,” reads the advertisement, “even the smallest business will be multinational.”

It’s my take-them-for-granted free Skype video calls to a friend living in Australia. Or the fact that the commander-in-chief of Finland’s telecommunications giant Nokia hails from Ontario. According to *The Globe and Mail*, Stephen Elop’s ceaseless world touring means home truly is away from home.

Or take a recent post in the *Harvard Business Review* blog. “As the world becomes increasingly global, the need for true global citizens to lead organizations in business, nonprofits, and government is far greater than in decades past,” write the authors. Gaining enhanced experience through studying and working abroad, or learning new languages, ain’t just for pleasure anymore.

Going global is more than racking up frequent flyer miles. (Marshall McLuhan, we’ve given your global village so much heft.) Far-off events such as the Japanese tsunami affect us as much as events under our own feet. They can also disrupt the supply chain and the provision of parts for our cars and iPads.

In an era of globalization, how do individuals, businesses, countries — and yes, management accountants — adapt?

Since we started planning this issue, the proposed merger of Canada’s three accounting bodies has picked up momentum (see p. 10). And who knew *The Accountant* would publish a comprehensive study on the globalization of the accounting profession entitled, surprise, “Going Global” (see p. 30)?

This issue covers a small fraction of the big globalization story. How is going global affecting you? What are you doing as the world shrinks and expands? We’d love to hear from you.

Enjoy the read!

Mara Gulens

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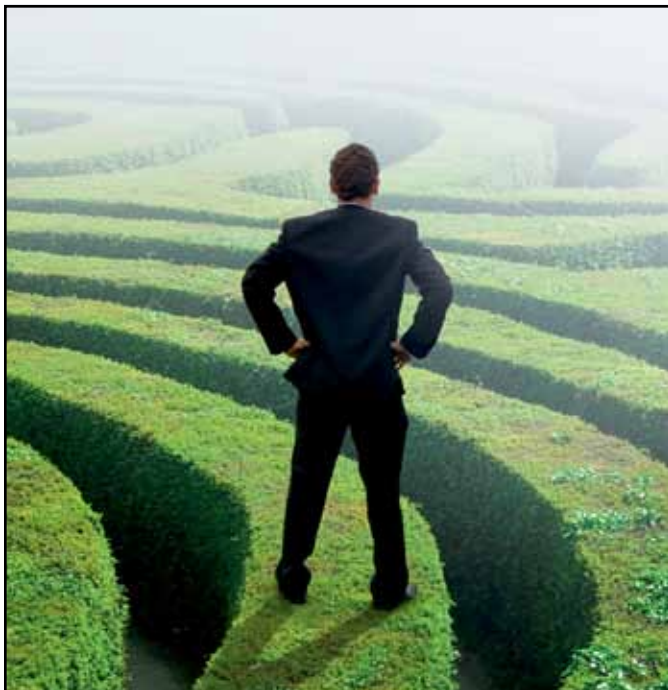
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Do you have a story to tell?

We're delighted when stories and letters inspire more stories and letters. That gets our editorial juices flowing, and is an example of the wonderful magic of members connecting with members.

On that note, we're already at work on future stories about CMAs who volunteer their accounting and other skills. Do you have a story to tell? Drop us a line.

I remember watching the episode of *Dragons' Den* featuring 3twenty Solutions. I was thoroughly impressed by their performance and delivery, and re-watched the episode later while preparing for my CMA SLP Year 1 interactive session presentations. Imagine my surprise when I read the Jan./Feb. 2012 edition of *CMA magazine* ("Conquering Dragons") and found out that Bryan McCrea is a CMA!

— Michael Chui
Calgary, Alta.



What do you think? I believe that professional development is

- a) a requirement of being a great CMA
- b) unnecessary to regulate because people will go out to learn what they need to learn
- c) a waste of time; just let me do my job
- d) a great experience and an opportunity to network
- e) great; I just wish my province offered more choices

Respond online at
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CMA welcomes letters to the editor

Email us at letters.editor@cma-canada.org
Tweet us @CMAmagazine
Join our LinkedIn group, "Certified Management Accountants of Canada"

Letters may be edited for clarity and brevity.

Jacob Stoller has relevant comments ("Recruiting with Social Media," Jan./Feb. 2012), but others should be considered. The level of the recruitment affects the use of social media. Executives, for example, are busy and don't typically use Twitter or Facebook; they prefer voice for initial contact. As executive search consultants, we often identify potential candidates through LinkedIn.

To be effective, social media need to be deployed strategically as part of a formalized communications plan. I fully concur with Mr. Stoller's thoughts on personal responsibility and what people put on the Net. That does influence hiring decisions.
— Mike Kerr, FCMA, Calgary, Alta.

With respect to Mr. Fredericks's letter in the Jan./Feb. 2012 issue, I can suggest one low-cost source of CPLD credits in the Greater Toronto Area.

I'm a self-employed CMA and currently the president of the Association of Independent Consultants. Our membership covers the gamut from accountants to web designers, and our events provide members and guests with a chance to meet fellow "free agents" and learn new skills.
— Lawrence Fox, CMA, Thornhill, Ont.

Our response: Look for stories on professional development in the Sept./Oct. issue.

Yesterday, I was putting away the last few *CMA magazines* that I had received and

realized how wonderful it would be to have the magazine available on my iPad. There may be untapped potential for the magazine to reach more individuals/advertisers, and it would be visually beautiful to read the magazine on a mobile device.

— Vishal Bhavsar, CMA candidate, Toronto, Ont.

Our response: We're working on plans to expand the digital version of the magazine. Stay tuned to this space for more details!

Online and offline: we're everywhere

According to our online poll, CMAs are just as likely to socialize around the proverbial water cooler as they are to socialize through online networks. So see you online or at one of the upcoming spring conferences (see page 13).

Which social media tool do you use most often?

- a) Facebook 31.5%
- b) LinkedIn 14.1%
- c) Twitter 6.7%
- d) I socialize face to face. 47.7%





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Work-life balance tops for employees

Almost four in 10 office workers say work-life balance is the aspect of their job most tied to satisfaction.

“Opportunities to learn and grow” was the option ticked by 20 per cent of the 210 respondents, while 16 per cent said camaraderie with co-workers was the aspect of their job most tied to satisfaction. “A good working relationship with the boss” and “ability to accomplish goals” were the options at the bottom of the job satisfaction wish list.

Respondents were asked to consider aspects of their job other than salary.

The survey was published in late January 2012 by OfficeTeam, a staffing service specializing in the placement of skilled administrative professionals. — *J.D.*



CMA NEWSMAKERS

Music and finance at the Juno Awards

Three years after trading his tie for a pair of kicks, CMA Brian Morcombe got a Juno nomination for Children’s Album of the Year.

Hailed as the Barenaked Ladies, Robert Munsch and the Wiggles all rolled into one, the former tax accountant’s band, Music with Brian, melds the musical traditions of hip hop, grunge, big band, samba and more with kid-friendly lyrics. The band begins its second cross-Canada tour in July.

Morcombe partly credits his national and international success to being a CMA. “Creating and performing is only a small part of the gig,” he says. “You have to be able to market yourself, understand pricing, costing, volume purchasing, taxation, HR, copyright law — and the list goes on. I don’t envy artists who have to navigate the business world with little-to-no business experience.”

Morcombe isn’t the only CMA with a Juno connection. Erin Kelly, CMA and executive director of the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce, chaired the 2012 Juno finance committee. — *J.D.*

TECHNOLOGY

These tablets are easy to swallow

Sending email is the most popular employment-related use of tablet computers in the workplace, said 77 per cent of respondents in an NPD In-Stat survey.

Notetaking is the second most common use of the tablet. However, when the 905 respondents were asked to select their most important uses of the tablet, they ranked email, customer relationship management and IT network intelligence higher than notetaking.

Only 22 per cent of tablet owners surveyed said their device was purchased by an employer. — *J.D.*

ON THE JOB

Get a lift

Nearly three million Canadians will experience depression in their lives. The illness affects men and women regardless of their age, education and social status.

But, according to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), employees who suffer from depression and receive treatment are more likely to be highly productive.

Dr. Carylyn Dewa, head of CAMH’s Centre for Research on Employment and Workplace Health, said past research found that depression had adverse effects on comprehension, social participation, and the ability to complete day-to-day tasks.

“People who had experienced a moderate depressive episode and received treatment were 2.5 times more likely to be highly productive compared with those who had no treatment,” she said.

In addition, people who experienced severe depression and received treatment were seven times more likely to be high-performing than those who had no treatment.

The data also showed a troubling trend: most of the study’s participants who have been diagnosed with severe depression did not receive treatment.

“If people are able to receive treatment early, disability leave — which costs companies [on average] \$18,000 per leave — maybe avoided,” Dewa said. — *A.C.*

NEW GRADS

Some experience required

Canadian companies expect newbie finance and accounting professionals to hit the ground running.

In an Accountemps survey, 78 per cent of the 210 CFOs surveyed said it was “somewhat” or “very important” for entry-level professionals to arrive with work experience that they had gained during college. Only 7 per cent of CFOs said such experience was “somewhat unimportant” or “not at all important.” — *J.D.*



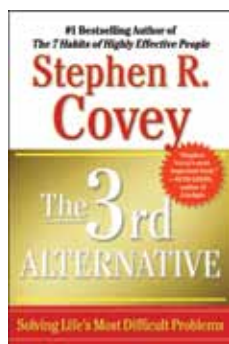
JOB SEARCH

Do this, not that

According to specialized staffing firm OfficeTeam, using fresh strategies can help professionals stand out in a large applicant pool.

DON'T	TRY THIS INSTEAD
Don't network only when looking for a job.	Use tools such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter regularly to communicate with professional contacts. Be active with industry associations and events.
Don't wait until a position is advertised to apply.	Scour local print and online publications and follow social media feeds to determine which businesses are growing. Contact organizations of interest to learn of potential job openings.
Don't limit yourself to full-time opportunities.	Consider temporary work as a source of income, a chance to network and an opportunity to build new skills. Temporary work may lead to full-time job offers.
Don't assume they're not interested.	Follow up within two weeks of submitting your resumé to reassert your interest and explain how your skills can benefit the company.
Don't speak only in general terms or give canned responses during an interview.	Be prepared to share anecdotes that showcase your skills and personality. Show how your contributions have improved the bottom line.

For more tips, visit www.officeteam.com/CareerAdvice. — C.R.



BOOK REVIEW

Beyond compromise

One way of resolving conflict is through compromise. In *The 3rd Alternative: Solving Life's Most Difficult Problems*, Stephen R. Covey recommends going beyond such mundane solutions and aiming for synergistic win-win outcomes.

Follow these four paradigms:

- 1) Be aware of yourself and your values.
- 2) Know your opponent.
- 3) Seek out your opponent to learn his or her point of view.
- 4) Find the outcome that's better than any other solution.

Seeking out another person involves developing a deep and empathic understanding of the other's point of view, not just gaining enough knowledge to pass judgment. Finding an ideal solution begins by asking about an opponent's willingness to seek a synergistic solution. A yes response to this inquiry is more likely when one has worked through the first three paradigms.

Covey recommends using a "talking stick" to get people discussing their problems rather than bickering. The talking stick is passed from person to person, and only the person with the stick is allowed to speak.

The 3rd Alternative offers a refreshing look at conflict resolution, though some reviewers have criticized the book for repeating many ideas previously expressed by Covey and others. *The 3rd Alternative* concludes with recommendations about how one can make positive contributions and attain spiritual and physical well-being.

Author: **Stephen R. Covey** Publisher: **Free Press** Reviewer: **Patrick Buckley**, CMA, PhD



VIEW FROM THE C-SUITE

Execs give feds some budget advice

Canadian executives want Ottawa to invest in job training and make it easier to hire foreign workers.

Almost five in 10 executives (47 per cent) said federal investment in training and apprenticeships should be a high budget priority, according to *The Globe and Mail's Report on Business* C-suite survey released in early March.

The only response to receive a similar degree of support (48 per cent) was attacking the federal deficit through spending cuts.

Thirty per cent said investment in programs to fast track skilled immigrants should be a high budget priority. Almost 50 per cent of the 151 executives surveyed said they were thinking about bringing workers from abroad to cope with a perceived talent crunch. — J.D.

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Setting the standard

The 2012 International Financial Reporting Standards (Red Book), published by the IFRS Foundation, is now available.

The weighty two-volume set is billed as the only official printed edition of the consolidated text of the IASB's (International Accounting Standard Board's) Jan. 1, 2012, pronouncements.

Volume 1 contains the standards and interpretations. Volume 2 includes examples, bases for conclusions and dissenting opinions.

Visit <http://shop.ifrs.org> to purchase copies. — J.D.

MERGER

Building momentum

It's been a year since Canada's accounting bodies entered into exploratory merger talks, and now CMA, CA and CGA provincial bodies are moving toward unification. Here's an update at the time of writing.

- Merger proposals based on the *Unification Framework* and the new Canadian CPA* Certification Program have been released in Manitoba, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island. Other provincial proposals are expected in the coming weeks.

Each provincial proposal outlines the regional accounting bodies' vision and proposed approach to the merger — including governance, education and regulatory processes — and identifies how the merger decision-making process will occur in each province.

- On Mar. 28, the Quebec government introduced legislation related to the unification of the accounting profession. After the legislation is enacted, Quebec's three accounting bodies will move forward to unite their organizations under the CPA designation.
- In March, CMA and CGA organizations in Alberta reported in a message to members that their respective boards had resolved to move ahead with two-party unification planning within the context of the national CPA unification discussions.
- The provincial CMA and CA organizations in Manitoba reported on the first member advisory vote held since the *Unification Framework* was released and notified members that the majority of Manitoba CAs and CMAs supports unification.
- For updates and details on the provincial proposals and Quebec's status, go to www.CPACanada.ca and click the "News" tab.

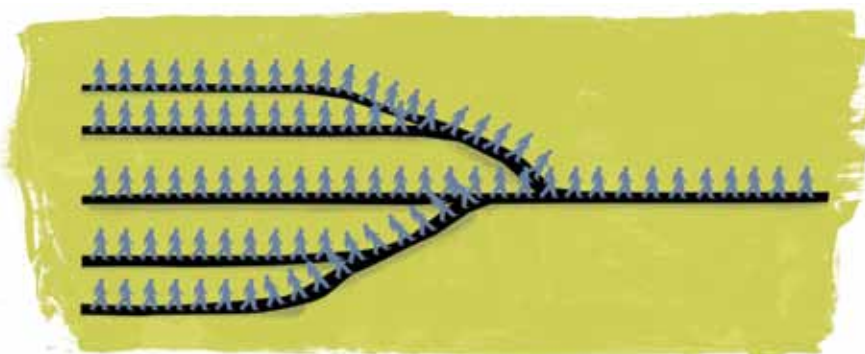
The CPA Canada website now has a certification section that includes details about the proposed CPA program and certification process, as well as a question-and-answer document for students.

- Read details at www.CPACanada.ca under the "Certification Program" tab.

The CPA Canada website is updated regularly with information from accounting bodies across the country.

- For a timeline of unification developments, go to www.CPACanada.ca and click the "Key Developments" tab. — M.G.

* Chartered Professional Accountant



BOOK REVIEW

Bridging the gap

The third edition of the *Dictionnaire de la comptabilité et de la gestion financière* is now available.

Author Louis



Ménard, FCA, and his international team spent six years harmonizing French-Canadian, French and Belgian terms as well as updating this authoritative work for accountants and the financial industry.

The dictionary contains 854 new entries. Nearly 40 per cent of the main entries were revised to reflect International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), Canadian Auditing Standards and Canadian Standards on Quality Control.

In addition, the publisher obtained permission to incorporate information from the *Dictionnaire des dérivés et autres instruments financiers* (*Dictionary of Derivatives and Other Financial Instruments*). All financial terms can now be found in one place.

The *Dictionnaire de la comptabilité et de la gestion financière* lists numerous changes in terminology. "Audit," for example, is now the same in English and French. As a result, "vérificateur" is replaced by "auditeur" and "audited financial statements" is translated as "états financiers audités."

Since the main entry for "material" is now "significatif," not "important," and the main entry for "misstatement" is now "anomalie," the term "risk of material misstatement" is now translated as "risque d'anomalies significatives."

This dictionary is a valuable addition to the library of any accountant who works in French.

Author: **Louis Ménard**
 Publisher: **Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants**
 Reviewer: **Barb McClintock**

Noteworthy is compiled by Patrick Buckley, CMA, Andrea Civichino, Jennifer Dawson, Mara Gulens, Barb McClintock and Cindy Ruocco.

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*Financial Post (Online). Dec. 6, 2011.

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Compiled by **Mara Gulens**

To reconnect with colleagues and get up to speed on advances in management accounting, consider attending one of the many spring conferences across the country. CMAs have two PD-packed months of opportunity to learn, network, share best practices and pick up some CPLD (Continuous Professional Learning and Development) credit hours.

Conference calendar: **Spring lineup**

Cross-country opportunities for learning and networking

May 8, Ottawa, Ont.

Award of Excellence for Comptrollership in the Public Sector (CMA Canada and CIPFA)

This annual awards program celebrates remarkable examples of public sector comptrollership, accountability and financial management. Keynote speakers include James Ralston, comptroller general of Canada, and Michelle d'Auray, secretary of the Treasury Board. www.comptrollershipaward.com

May 10 – 11, Edmonton, Alta.

CMA Alberta Accountability Summit (CMA Alberta)

This all-day conference offers workshops and sessions of interest. Keynote speakers include Paralympian Jeff Adams and WestJet cofounder Don Bell. www.cma-alberta.com

May 11, Toronto, Ont.

Not-for-Profit Symposium: 3C: Collaboration. Community. Change. (CMA Ontario)

Collaborate with a community of not-for-profit colleagues and thought leaders and learn the successful strategies required to run a sustainable organization. www.pdi-cma.com/nfppartner

May 25, Ottawa, Ont.

Public Sector Symposium: Shaping the Future: Managing the Public Sector in Times of Change (CMA Ontario)

Learn how to acquire funds for public sector projects, manage them to budgetary constraints and understand the importance of value for money. The opening keynote speech will feature Michael Ferguson, FCA, auditor general of Canada. www.pdi-cma.com/pub

May 27 – 29, Fredericton, N.B.

2012 Public Sector Management Workshop: Sustainability in the Public Sector: Securing the Future (FMI Canada)

This conference will look at the role of government in advancing sustainable development through communities and infrastructure, financial sustainability, society, environment, and public sector sustainability. <http://tiny.ly/1RVN>

May 29 – 30, Vancouver, B.C.

Strategic Innovation for Today's Leaders: 6th Annual CMA B.C. Leadership Conference (CMA B.C.)

Keynote speakers include David Baxter, demographer, economist and futurist; Linda Edgecombe, author and award-winning speaker; and Michelle Cederberg, author of *Energy Now!* www.cmabc-pd.com/conference

May 31 – June 1, Halifax, N.S.

Annual CMA Conference and Golf Tournament (CMA Nova Scotia, Bermuda and the Caribbean)

This year's conference features exceptional speakers including the director of creation of Cirque du Soleil. <http://tiny.ly/erSJ>

May 31 – June 3, Charlottetown, P.E.I.

2012 Annual Conference of the Canadian Academic Accounting Association (CAAA)

This forum will explore the challenges of the accounting profession in this era of globalization. <http://tiny.ly/oRCb>

June 6 – 8, St. John's, Nfld.

Financial Executives International Canada Conference: Rock Solid Success (FEI Canada)

This forum is for senior financial executives to exchange ideas and find solutions to challenges. Keynote speakers include General Rick Hillier who will talk about leadership in difficult times. <http://tiny.ly/6HI7>

June 12 – 13, Winnipeg, Man.

2012 CA and CMA Conference (CA Manitoba and CMA Manitoba)

Keynote speakers include Jim Ludlow of True North Sports and Entertainment, Margaret Redmond of the Assiniboine Park Conservancy, Doug Brown (formerly of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers) and Barry Rempel of the Winnipeg Airports Authority. www.cma-manitoba.com/conference

June 14, Regina, Sask.

Building Business Relationships to Create Possibilities (CMA Saskatchewan)

Keynote speakers include pollsters Darrell Bricker and John Wright (*Canuckology: From Dollars to Donuts*), and Lee-Anne McAlear, program director of Schulich's Centre of Excellence in Innovation Management. www.cma-saskatchewan.com

June 14 – 15, Toronto, Ont.

Spring Strategic Management Accounting Conference (CMA Ontario)

Learn insights and the technical expertise required to make informed decisions and drive improved results at your organization. <http://tiny.ly/4imi>

If you do manage to take in a conference or two, we'd love to hear about it. Tell us your most enjoyable experience, your tips for attending and your number one take-home message. Please send your thoughts to letters.editor@cma-canada.org.



The Rotman School of Management's Roger Martin challenges common beliefs about innovation

By Gabrielle Bauer

Q ■ You've been described as the champion of integrative thinking. What is it, and how does it differ from common thinking models?

A: The typical way of dealing with problems is to list several solutions and decide on the best one, as though it were wrong to select more than one. Business students are taught to analyze business problems in this way: option A yields \$2.8 million, option B yields \$3.4 million, so option B is superior. Integrative thinking is a mindset that leads you to a new option, which combines the best elements of A and B. It's a creative act.

Q: What does it take to be an innovator, and why is proof the enemy of innovation?

A: Innovation begins by listening to your customer. Innovation is user-driven: what people want to have, not just what the inventor thinks is cool. People who demand proof before being willing to try out a new idea are killing innovation. If you want to spur innovation in your organization, ban the words "prove it." Instead, evaluate the benefits and costs as best you can. If you decide to bankroll the idea, set up a framework to monitor execution. You could start by telling the innovator: "If I watch your expenditures over the next six months, how can I be confident that you're moving forward?"

Q: Is Canada innovative enough? If not, what's holding us back?

A: We're not, and that greatly hampers our productivity. We're in a deficit because protected markets have diminished consumers' ability to press for innovation. We've also created a managerial culture that fosters a wait-and-see approach. Finally, our educational system teaches people how to analyze rather than how to innovate. I'd like to see Canada become the first nation with universal education in innovation.

Q: Tell us about your book *Fixing the Game*. Can capitalism really learn from the National Football League?

A: The book argues against stock-based compensation which causes executives to fixate on the expectations market — that is, what shareholders are willing to pay for stock based on their expectations — as opposed to the real,

customer-driven market. It's like the difference between winning the Super Bowl and winning a bet on the Super Bowl.

What's interesting to me is that the NFL strictly separates the real game from the betting game. If a player is caught betting, he's banned for life. We should be doing the same in business, with incentives and bonuses reflecting real performance and market share. If companies focus on creating real value for real customers, the stock prices will take care of themselves.

Q: How do you see the globalization story unfolding?

A: Globalization is currently under attack, partly for sound reasons. For the most part people stand to gain from it, but some countries get exploited in the process. We need to reflect on the central question: how can we globalize in a way that benefits all countries?

Q: Any thoughts on Islamic finance?

A: We don't live in a homogeneous world, and a big part of the world has fundamentally different views about proper behaviour in finance. We need to get a handle on this, especially with all the financial resources housed in the Middle East. Failing to do so makes the financial machinery less efficient and effective throughout the world.

Q: What do you think about the proposed merger between Canada's three accounting bodies?

A: Accounting, standards and reporting are an important part of corporate infrastructure. I applaud the notion of unifying this infrastructure instead of keeping it fragmented. If the three bodies can get together to create common standards and reduce confusion, it's all good. ■

*Roger Martin is dean of the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto. He has written about business design, corporate social responsibility and national competitiveness. His book *Fixing the Game* (Harvard Business Review Press, 2011) has topped the Amazon bestseller list of business books in the category of policy and current events.*

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Five controls to help you manage

PART

3

Strategic execution lies in fully integrated strategy mapping

By **Norman Sheehan, CMA**

IN PART 1 OF THIS SERIES (see the January/February 2012 issue), we described how to use Kaplan and Norton's strategy maps to translate an organization's strategy into a one-page document.

IN PART 2 (see the March/April 2012 issue), we discussed how managers can use a completed strategy map to identify and assess organizational risks. Part 3, which is presented here, explores how a firm's management control system can be used to effectively manage the risks most likely to have a negative impact on profitability.

Design your system

The aim of a management control system is to reduce risk to the point where it meets a firm's risk exposure target. Robert Simons's Levers of Control is a comprehensive framework that managers can employ to enhance the execution of their firm's strategies. The five controls in Simons's framework are diagnostic, boundary, belief, internal and interactive.

1. Diagnostic controls

Diagnostic controls such as budgets, cash forecasts and balanced scorecards tell employees what they need to do to meet organizational strategy and then provide feedback to the firm's managers on how well the employees did.

This activity is referred to as "managing by numbers." Management communicates its expectations to employees by setting targets for each activity, providing resources and outlining initiatives to achieve strategies. Management also regularly monitors progress and rewards employees for success.

In action. JetBlue is an airline that manages its operations by using two key metrics: (a) Breakeven Load Factor (BELF) measures how many passengers are needed per flight to break even; (b) Cost per Available Seat Mile (CASM) measures how much it costs to fly per seat mile.

JetBlue's target is to have the lowest CASM in the industry. In the second quarter of 2009, JetBlue's CASM was 8.9 cents, Southwest's CASM was 9.8 cents and the other large airlines' CASMs were over 10 cents. Effectively using metrics to manage its operations allows JetBlue to successfully compete in the low cost segment of the airline market.

2. Boundary controls

Boundary controls — such as employee codes of conduct and standard

operating procedures — are intended to constrain employee activities. They make clear to employees which actions are unacceptable. Examples of boundary controls are rules about the use of company property, the sharing of proprietary information, conflicts of interest and payments to government officials.

In action. Fluor Corporation competes in the global construction industry where bribery is a major issue. Fluor's CEO, Alan Boeckmann, implemented an award-winning program, which includes online and face-to-face training, to reduce bribery and corruption.

To drive the training home, Fluor appointed a head of compliance. In addition, Fluor has an open-door culture for reporting potential violations of corruption policies and a zero tolerance for violators. For its efforts, Fluor has been named the World's Most Admired Engineering Company.

3. Belief controls

While diagnostic and boundary controls seek to align organizational activities with a firm's strategy by appealing to the rational side of its employees, belief controls seek to align behaviour by appealing to employees' emotional side. Belief controls act to engage employees and get them to buy into the firm's grand purpose.

Belief controls outline what the firm stands for. They serve to inspire

and motivate employees. While the company's beliefs are manifested in its corporate culture, examples of formalized belief controls include company value statements and corporate credos.

In action. Zappos is an online shoe seller. Its CEO, Tony Hsieh, consciously invested in belief controls to gain an advantage over Zappos's many Internet rivals. Zappos competes on customer service, so its belief controls reinforce the importance of delivering the best service.

Zappos created a formal value statement and communicates employee interpretations of these values in an annual publication. The firm works hard to attract and keep the right individuals. It also reinforces the importance of beliefs by basing half of each employee's merit pay on how well he or she is judged to be living Zappos's beliefs.

Hsieh's superior customer service strategy paid off. Zappos was bought by Amazon in November 2009 for \$1.2 billion.

A firm's profitability depends on its ability to identify and manage risk.

4. Internal controls

Internal controls ensure accurate record keeping, safeguard a firm's assets and enhance compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

To do this effectively, firms employ several control methods which include hiring qualified accounting staff, abiding by employment laws, following human resources best practices, creating authorization hierarchies, setting up physical safeguards, enforcing IT security policies and segregating duties.

In action. Establishing and conforming to strong internal controls help firms avoid both internal and external fraud as well as fraudulent financial reporting. Unfortunately, trusted

employees sometimes embezzle thousands of dollars from their employers. They exploit weak or non-existent controls over cash and bank reconciliations, invoice requisition and payments, inventory or payroll.

5. Interactive controls

Interactive controls monitor the validity of a firm's strategy as the external environment changes. Of the Fortune 100 firms listed in 1978, fewer than 33 were still in business in 2012.

For their interactive controls, senior managers need to continually gather information about environmental changes and debate how they might affect their firm's ability to achieve its strategy. Then senior managers must adjust the strategy.

A successful interactive control system generates debate about the key risks throughout the organization and allows the discussion to reach the ears of senior management. If a salesperson in the field hears of a rival's impending product launch, the information must get back to senior management.

If the firm's managers want to learn relevant signals from the market, they need to ensure that all their employees understand their firm's strategy map, know how to contribute their thoughts and findings, and feel that the firm's value system emphasizes and rewards information sharing.

In action. Caterpillar was caught with too much heavy machinery in inventory when the recession of 2001 – 2002 hit. Knowing its heavy equipment business was closely tied to shifts in GDP, Caterpillar executives asked their economists to find a leading indicator of sales.

As reported in the May 23, 2011, issue of *Fortune*, Caterpillar's economists reported back. "We've got good news and bad news," they said. "The good news is, we found an indicator that predicts shifts in U.S. GDP with a lead time of six to nine months. The bad news is, it's our own sales to users."

Using that metric as the central part of its interactive control system, "Cat

anticipated the U.S. recession coming in the third quarter of 2007." Although Caterpillar acknowledges that it miscalculated the depth of the recession, the firm's executives used the information to trim operations and reduce inventory so that Caterpillar came out of the recession in a better position than its rivals.

A firm's profitability depends on its ability to identify and manage risk. The design and application of a management control system must flow from an assessment of the risks assumed in the strategy. Managers need to improve their strategic execution by fully integrating strategy mapping with control, compliance and risk management. The primary advantage of a risk-based strategy is that it allows managers, in real time, to steer the firm toward the good things described in its strategy and away from any bad things. ■

Norman Sheehan, PhD, CGA, CMA, is an associate professor in the Department of Accounting at the University of Saskatchewan's Edwards School of Business. This article has been adapted from a brief published by AICPA's Business, Industry and Government Team.

This article is the third in a series of three. Each part outlines one of the following three risk-based strategy execution steps:

Part 1 uses Kaplan and Norton's strategy-mapping technique to describe a company's strategy on one page.

Part 2 outlines how to use a company's strategy map to identify and assess key organizational risks.

Part 3 applies Simons's Levers of Control, a comprehensive management control framework that managers can use to implement their company's strategies, to manage key risks, and to discuss the continual monitoring of risks and risk mitigation tactics.

Not just for techies anymore

Web analytics goes mainstream

Making sense of web data

By **Jacob Stoller**

IN THE JANUARY 2012 ISSUE OF THE Web Analytics Association (WAA) newsletter, chairman and founder Jim Sterne issued a web analytics pledge — with the word “web” struck out. “I pledge to tell people I am in marketing analytics, digital analytics, even business analytics rather than say I am in web analytics,” wrote Sterne.

The comment reflects the idea that the Certified Web Analyst designation, which the WAA introduced in 2010, is fundamentally about business, instead of technological, skills.

Interestingly, these analysts perform functions that parallel the work of CMA analysts in many respects. This news may surprise people who view web analysts as techies solely concerned with site rankings, page views, bounce rates and other web-specific parameters.

Like CMAs, certified web analysts are trained to use available data to find answers to business questions. To pass the certification exam, they must demonstrate a mix of analytic, business and communication skills. Before candidates write the exam, the association recommends that they have three years of experience with web analytics. And the exam includes case study questions which, according to one expert, can't be answered without the benefit of experience. Sound familiar?

“Web analytics is not a technology, but a process for [making] better-informed decisions,” says June Li, managing director of Toronto-based

ClickInsight Corporation and co-chair of WAA's certification board. “The asking of the question is more important than the tool.”

New tools

Web analytics could be described as a specialization within business analytics that focuses on business activity on the web. Much of the raw data comes from clickstreams, the sequences of site visitor actions represented by clicks on the links and buttons of a site. Specialized tools help analysts determine which pages are being visited, how long visitors remain on a page, which menu choices are selected or where visitors go when they leave the site.

Translating this information into relevant KPIs is the job of the web analyst. A sequence of clicks might tell the analyst that an order processing page is too awkward or too slow, that a site is providing insufficient information about a product or that an upcoming product launch is unlikely to fly in overseas markets.

This process does not just indicate what's selling and who's buying. Customers increasingly use the web to book service appointments, check the status of their bank account or insurance policy, or find out if an item is in stock before heading to the shopping mall. In many industries, web analytics can tell decision makers a lot about how well and how efficiently their organization is serving customers.

The web should be treated the same as the rest of the business.



There are, of course, many tools to choose from. Li suggests, however, that beginners start with the popular Google Analytics. It's free and easy to use, and it provides a surprising range of features.

"The majority of people will actually get 80 per cent of the benefit or more starting with that," says Li. Once they've gained some experience answering business questions, organizations can upgrade to fee-based tools if they've encountered any limitations with Google Analytics.

Ask the right questions

While many practitioners of web analytics still use a technical vocabulary, their work should be governed by the same basic principles of analysis used for offline aspects of the business.

"The web has become normalized, so it should be treated the same as the rest of the business," says Jacques Warren, CEO of Montreal-based WAO Marketing. "If we analyze business success or business logic in some areas of the business, why wouldn't we apply the same mindset to what we do online?"

There are, however, a few caveats. "Be careful with tools," says Warren. "They can influence how you see reality." For example, there can be an over-emphasis on easily captured metrics such as conversion rate, the percentage of online visitors who become buyers. A dramatic increase in the conversion rate might look impressive in a report, Warren observes,

but this trend could actually be bad news if it reflects a large influx of unprofitable customers.

The capture of data also has to be set up in advance, so it may not be possible to create a new query based on past history. "Information is not there for the taking," says Li. "You have to design measurements into whatever you want to measure."

Fast forward

While web analytics tools lack the power of traditional business intelligence software for analyzing past history, they're widely useful for understanding the future.

Web analysts can use the immediate and detailed feedback that the tools capture to help an organization measure market receptivity to a new product, fine-tune a marketing message, test a new delivery process or evaluate a new warranty policy. In other words, web analytics is great for creating a learning environment that allows organizations to continuously improve and mitigate their risks.

Web analysts, however, are not experts in enterprise risk mitigation, strategy formulation, performance measurement and other knowledge areas that help connect data with the larger business picture. This is where CMAs come in.

"Business analysts have a tremendous contribution to make to web analytics," says Warren. "[They can]

help those people really understand the business challenges and how they should look at the overall picture." ■

Jacob Stoller is a Toronto-based writer and researcher. See www.jacobstoller.com.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Tools are available to serve a wide range of business needs. Here's a small sample:

- **Google Analytics** (www.google.com/analytics) is popular, easy to use and free. It provides basic functionality for most users.
- **Clicktale** (www.clicktale.com) records clicks, mouse movements and scrolling action. It provides comprehensive analysis of site visits.
- **Adobe Omniture** (www.omniture.com) has integration features that allow content to be synchronized with analytics, minimizing preparation work for measurement.
- **SAS Web Analytics** (www.sas.com/solutions/webanalytics) offers compatibility with existing SAS analytics tools.
- **Compete.com** (www.compete.com) provides analysis of other organizations' websites.

GLOBE-TROTTING CMAs

TIPS ON MANAGING GLOBAL TRAVEL

By Jaclyn Law

Many CMAs are applying their skills and knowledge outside Canada. In fact, CMAs are working in practically every part of the world, including remote corners of our own country.

We asked CMAs who are often on the road for their travel advice. From surviving blizzards and missing baggage to hanging out with the locals, these frequent fliers have been there, done that *and* had their passports stamped.



NAME
JOY THOMAS
JOB TITLE
President and CEO, CMA Canada



HOW OFTEN DO YOU TRAVEL FOR WORK?

Every other week. Recently I've visited Berlin, Geneva, Sydney, Kuala Lumpur and the U.K. I'm a Super Elite flyer with Air Canada.

ANY TIPS FOR DEALING WITH JET LAG?

No matter what time I get in, I unpack and fight the feeling of wanting to lie down. That's the worst thing to do. Swimming or walking helps rework my internal clock.

ANY PACKING TIPS?

Find shoes that go with many outfits. Shoes take lots of space. And I wear a lot of black and wrinkle-free.

WHAT CULTURAL DIFFERENCES ARE YOU MINDFUL OF?

In North America, we value a healthy amount of personal space; in other countries, it's much less. You have to be aware of the cultural nuance and go with it. Also, etiquette around eating and gift giving. Some countries are very formal in gift giving; it's good to know and pack gifts. The third thing is the gender issue. In many countries, women are subordinate to men. I struggle with that, but try to live by my values and let others live by theirs — at least when I'm travelling — and try to be open minded.



NAME
AJAH M. PANGARKAR
JOB TITLE
CEO, Performance Strategist
CentralKnowledge Inc.



HOW OFTEN DO YOU TRAVEL FOR WORK?

Every week or two, for a couple of days. Mostly North America.

ANY PACKING TIPS?

Checking in is a hassle, so I do a carry-on roller bag. If the trip's a day or two, I'll wear decent casual wear and bring a suit. If it's longer, I'll bring two suits and extra shirts and ties to change the look.

WHAT'S THE TOP CMA ASSET FOR WORKING ABROAD?

CMAs understand the business decision-making process. That's translatable in any company. I've been to India, and as different as our cultures are, decision making for a lot of major companies is identical.

WHAT'S YOUR BEST TRAVEL SURVIVAL TIP?

Make sure you're comfortable in all facets. Dress comfortably. Stay somewhere you can get a decent night's sleep. You're not saving money if you're not productive.





NAME

DAVID BRAND

JOB TITLE

Manager, Internal Audit
The North West Company



WHERE DO YOU TRAVEL FOR WORK?

All over. Canadian cities, Tokyo, Guam, the Caribbean. I visit our Northern Canada stores — Moosonee, Attawapiskat and other communities — sometimes in single-engine planes. I sit up front with the pilot. I was in Cordova, Alaska, in January when it got 14 feet of snow. Our hotel was snowed in, and I jumped out the second-storey window and shovelled us out.

ANY TIPS FOR DEALING WITH JET LAG?

Watch what you eat. Avoid heavy, greasy foods. Go for a walk or run. You can really wreck your health by eating poorly or just sitting around the hotel room watching the TV and not moving.

WHAT'S YOUR BEST SURVIVAL TIP?

Understand visa requirements. I prepare a B1 visa and get the CEO or VP to sign it, in case customs agents want something in writing.

MUST-HAVE ON THE PLANE?

Get yourself those Skullcandy earbuds. They drown out the crying babies.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE THING ABOUT BUSINESS TRAVEL?

New places and cultures. I like meeting Inuit; they're so warm and friendly. I have red hair which they don't see much up there, and they all ask, "Are you a Viking?" It's a lot of fun.



NAME

TAMMY TOWILL

JOB TITLE

Principal, TD Taylor and Associates
Faculty, School of Business
at Capilano University
Faculty, School of Tourism and Outdoor
Recreation at Capilano University



HOW OFTEN DO YOU TRAVEL FOR WORK?

Until recently, I visited the U.S. several times a year. This year, I'm teaching in France.

ANY TIPS ON PACKING?

I'm a huge believer in never checking luggage. On my first trip to the U.S. for work, I went to a meeting in Cincinnati. I took the red-eye from Vancouver ... and my bag didn't arrive. I didn't even have a hairbrush. My client's first impression was of me in jeans and the sweatshirt I'd slept in.

HOW DO YOU PREPARE FOR CULTURAL DIFFERENCES?

Know basic phrases such as "please" and "thank you" in the local language. It's amazing how receptive people are when you make the effort.

WHAT'S THE TOP CMA ASSET FOR BUSINESS TRAVEL?

The Strategic Leadership Program forces candidates out of their comfort zone. You work with people you don't know and figure out scenarios you're not familiar with. That's like business travel: you don't know what to expect, but you deal with whatever comes up.



NAME

CASSANDRA SIEMENS

JOB TITLE

International Accountant
Manitoba Hydro International Ltd.



WHERE DO YOU TRAVEL FOR WORK?

I've been to Nigeria four times, and Tanzania.

HOW HAS CMA TRAINING HELPED YOU WORK ABROAD?

It's helped me be ready for any situation, think on my feet and make impromptu presentations. It's second nature to put one together in no time.

WHAT'S YOUR BEST SURVIVAL TIP?

Be versatile, and try to act as if you belong and are supposed to be there. That kind of attitude has gotten me through a variety of situations successfully.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE THING ABOUT BUSINESS TRAVEL?

Seeing the world and experiencing other countries and situations that sometimes seem unreal. Seeing firsthand how our projects are changing the lives of others — overhauling a power plant in the middle of the jungle and meeting a family that has power in their home for the first time — and understanding how lucky we are as Canadians.





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Trading futures

In an unpredictable world, it's all about visualizing different situations



How scenario planning can help you navigate a volatile world

By **Graham F. Scott**

The date is Tuesday, Oct. 9, 2007.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average has just closed the day at 14,164 points, its highest peak ever. Oil costs \$80 a barrel. Canada's unemployment rate is 5.8 per cent, the lowest in more than three decades. Kanye West's "Stronger" tops the Billboard 100 pop charts. All in all, the mood is jubilant.

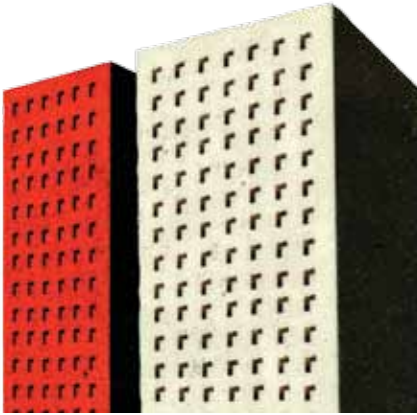
Would most managers have accurately predicted the state of the economy just one year later?

On Oct. 9, 2008, the Dow had slumped 40 per cent to 8,523 points. Oil soared past \$140 a barrel over the summer. Bear Stearns and Merrill Lynch had been sold for scrap, and Lehman Brothers was executing the largest bankruptcy in history. Over the previous year, more than 2.8 million Americans had lost their jobs. Billboard's number one hit was Pink's angry who-cares anthem "So What."

"The key issue today is the world around us," says David Axson, an executive director with Accenture and author of a new three-part series on scenario planning. "Volatility, uncertainty, unpredictability. All organizations are wrestling with an unpredictable future."

CMAs already seem well aware of this challenging environment: a recent poll of CMAs showed that 62 per cent expect volatility to increase for the next several years.

Axson's prescription? Scenario planning. He recently gave a webinar through CMA Canada's Research Foundation, available at www.ManagementAccounting.org, that explains how CMAs can use scenario planning techniques to help them make better, more informed decisions and react faster to changing situations.



Don't try to predict the future: plan for different futures.

What is scenario planning?

Scenario planning is a process for outlining potential strategies to suit possible circumstances.

“Our traditional way of planning a budget was to sit down for two to three months near the end of the current fiscal year and plan out exactly what we expected to happen for the following 12 months,” says Axson. “Well, unfortunately, our crystal ball isn’t that good.”

The answer, he says, is not to build on one set of assumptions. Instead, by envisioning a handful of possible scenarios, companies can test-drive different strategies and choose the best.

“Say you’re an oil company,” Axson says. “You need to understand how your business will allocate resources differently if oil is at \$140 a barrel or \$100 a barrel or \$60 a barrel. That’s really what we’re talking about here: visualizing how your organization will behave differently under different situations.”

Axson’s system is a six-step process for defining different scenarios and then drawing up multiple response plans as the situation changes (see sidebar). Scenario planning is flexible enough to use for simple binary decisions (e.g., enter or do not enter the Chinese market), a spectrum of possibilities (e.g., unemployment goes up, stays the same or goes down) or a larger matrix of possibilities (e.g., both consumer sentiment and government regulation affect potential investment in renewable energy).

Don’t try to predict the future is the message: plan for different futures.

Come together

“The good thing about scenario planning is it can be a very inclusive tool for bringing a senior management team together,” says Axson. “It can be a very effective team-building exercise to have people in the room discussing future views of how the business and the market will change.”

But it can’t just be a spitballing exercise. For scenario planning to meet its potential for your business, Axson says there are a few practical things to do.

First, sit down and rewrite budgets to suit your different scenarios. How would investment priorities change?

Second, identify specific metrics that you need to monitor (e.g., GDP growth, customer satisfaction) and actually monitor them. That’s the only way you’ll know exactly which scenario you’re dealing with.

“You really need to think about how we can translate what can seem a little bit conceptual into very practical tools, actions and metrics that can allow you to drive change and influence behaviour day to day,” Axson says.

Risky business

Planning for the worst as well as the best scenarios isn’t just a good way of mitigating risk; it’s a good way to protect against boardroom complacency too. Or, as Axson reframes it, the erroneous belief that the future will be just like the past.

“Who should have created the iPod?” he asks. “It shouldn’t have been Apple; it should have been Sony. The Walkman was the iPod before the iPod existed, but Sony missed that change.”

So asking whether your major product will be made obsolete may seem crazy today but inevitable in hindsight. (Just ask Kodak.)

“Scenarios can be good and bad, and risk mitigation is about earlier identification and being able to change course,” Axson says. If you’ve already spent time envisioning an inhospitable business



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Scenario planning: 6 steps

David Axson's method of scenario planning is a six-step process. The complete step-by-step Management Accounting Guideline (MAG) is available at www.ManagementAccounting.org.

1. Define objectives and scope.

Choose something specific such as an upcoming strategic decision or a project budget.

2. List your business drivers.

What factors will you use to identify the scenario that is playing out? List internal drivers such as order volume, manufacturing quality or head count, and external drivers such as GDP growth, government regulation or exchange rates.

3. Collect and analyze the data.

"Really look for relationships in the data," says Axson. For example, ask how consumer spending correlates with order volume. You want to know which lever affects which output.

4. Build some scenarios.

Here's a basic example: the economy expands, contracts or coasts. Using what you learned in step 3, ask what factors are likely to affect your decisions and how they could change. Four or five scenarios are probably enough.

5. Plan for each case.

Let's say each scenario comes true in turn. How will your decisions be different? For instance, let's say you're thinking about building a new manufacturing plant. What will you do if interest rates fall, stay the same or rise?

6. Monitor and update.

In step 2, you determined which factors you'd keep an eye on. Update your plan as they change. Which scenario appears to be most accurate? What strategy does your answer suggest?

environment and your responses to it, "you're going to be in a position to react with speed and confidence with your mitigating strategies," he says.

Making the case

There's never been a better time to sell colleagues on scenario planning. "You've basically got a three-year case study in how scenario planning can be of value within your organization," Axson says.

"Two thousand and eight was a terrible predictor of what happened in 2009. Two thousand and nine was a terrible predictor of what happened in 2010. There's never been a better time to make the argument that a single view of the future, based upon

the past, is no longer the right vehicle for making smart management decisions."

A good place to start is with your recent corporate history: How could scenario planning have changed a recent decision? Could it have shortened response time? Could it have improved performance? Showing, not telling, is the key.

"It's easy to get esoteric quickly," cautions Axson. "Practical application of the tool is where you get credibility."

Questions, not answers

Ultimately, of course, scenario planning won't show you the future. It's a tool like any other and, when integrated into the regular practice of

a management team, it can point the way to better decisions and strategies.

Scenario planning's real power is often not in providing answers, but in forcing managers to ask better questions.

"Anything we can do to encourage management to think about the operational environment in which they're going to be making decisions, servicing customers and selling products is to our advantage in terms of helping them make better, faster decisions more confidently," says Axson. That's a future worth dreaming of. ■

Graham F. Scott is a Toronto-based freelance writer and editor. See www.gfscott.com.



GOING GLOBAL



What's your global business game plan?

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SCORE POINTS IN INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE

Tips and expertise from successful players

By Sharon Aschaiek



Business is increasingly becoming a global game, and Canadian companies have an opportunity to become key players.

Fewer barriers to international trade; advances in information, communication and transportation technologies; and growing consumer demand from BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) countries: circumstances are increasingly favourable for doing business worldwide.

But along with the extra rewards of international business come risks which make the expertise of CMAs more essential than ever. If you're currently helping your company penetrate foreign markets, consider these factors to maximize your payoff and minimize financial risks.

Start small, think niche

Over the last few years, Prismaflex, the Ontario division of a print and digital signage company based in France, has ramped up its business activities in the United States with a specialized green business strategy. The company offers a unique, environmentally beneficial alternative to paper signs. It's made out of recycled water bottles, very lightweight, cheaper to transport and more affordable for customers.

Vice-president Stéfane Comeau, CMA, chose to steer his company toward very specific U.S. customers: eco-friendly businesses operating in the retail epicentre of New York City.

"There's no point in us competing more broadly in the U.S. because the market would kill us

price-wise. It made sense to focus on companies with a sustainability mandate because they would be most receptive to our product," Comeau says.

Know your market, trust local experts

When Derek Zapp, CMA, director of financial planning and analysis at Kruger Products Limited, helped his company expand into Mexico a couple of years ago, he understood there would be costs associated with adapting to local business regulations, tax laws and import duties. The company, which manufactures tissue and paper towel brands such as Cashmere, Scotties and Sponge, used the services of third-party professionals in Mexico who help foreign companies set up shop.

One on-the-ground expert Kruger hired ensures the company's products stay on the shelves at its partner retail stores. Unlike in Canada, Mexican retailers expect producers to stock their allocated shelf space.

"This was a key factor to our successful business in Mexico," says Zapp. "If you don't protect and stock your designated shelf space, one of your competitors will gladly take it."

Don't be an island

While CMAs are skilled at strategic business planning and have current knowledge in accounting practices, tax laws and business regulations, applying those competencies in a global context may require extra learning and support, says

Maximize your payoff and minimize financial risks.

Jeff Sholdice, CMA, vice-president and chief financial officer of Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME), which represents thousands of Canadian businesses operating worldwide.

“A CMA who’s relatively inexperienced in global business should find someone who has had experience moving into new markets to be a mentor who can share their knowledge and expertise,” Sholdice says. Prismaflex’s Comeau agrees. “Have some strategic partners and ask their opinion,” he says. “A good lawyer, a good shipping partner, a customs broker, an installer, a bank manager — even someone who’s done it before you — will be glad to offer advice.”

As well, says Sholdice, CMAs should be up to speed on resources — particularly government and association programs and funding options — for internationally focused companies. One program CME runs is SMART, which provides funding to small- and medium-sized manufacturers in Ontario seeking to become globally competitive. Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada also operates funding initiatives through its Global Commerce Support Program.

It’s the economy, stupid

While NAFTA makes doing business in the United States easier, differences between the two country’s economies ultimately affect business in good and bad ways.

Zapp constantly weighs the recent economic downturn in the United States and the strengthening Canadian dollar. “When we started selling our products in the U.S. in 2001, the Canadian dollar was at about 62 cents to the U.S. dollar. Now that it’s at parity, it’s changed the dynamics of our financial model. If we see a trend going the wrong way, we have to look it and say, how can we make this work?” Zapp says.

Prismaflex has also felt some of the pressure of the U.S.’s economic woes, particularly when “Buy American” rhetoric has been high. But at the same time, Comeau says the rise in value of Canadian currency has made it more affordable for the company to buy some of its raw materials from the United States.

Expect the unexpected

Comeau says that, from time to time, the element of surprise has affected Prismaflex’s business in the United States. In one case, he says, the lack of a proper permit to install a sign for an NYC client took the company four months and considerable financial and people resources to resolve. At other times, Prismaflex’s product shipments have been held up at the Canada – U.S. border by unanticipated delays. Comeau says delays have been happening more often since 9/11, and they result in extra reprinting costs for the company as it tries to replace clients’ orders.

Kruger once shipped some products to Mexico on a wood pallet instead of in the corrugated box it typically uses. Unbeknownst to the company, the pallet should have been fumigated beforehand to comply with laws that aim to prevent the transfer of unwanted insects between countries. The result was a delay at the Mexican border that caused a late shipment as the company scrambled to find a local fumigator.

“You can plan for 90 per cent to 95 per cent of what to expect in a new market, and most of the time things go according to plan,” Zapp says. “But every once in a while, something unique comes up that catches you off guard, and you just have to roll with it.” ■

Sharon Aschaiek is a Toronto-based freelance writer. See www.cocoamedia.ca.

GLOBAL PREPARATION CHECKLIST

1. What’s your niche? In which corner of a foreign market could you carve out success?
2. Who in your network has experience in the market you’re targeting? How can you tap into their knowledge?
3. Which external resources can you use to support your expansion? What kind of expertise will you need to access?
4. How well do you understand global economic trends? How will you adapt your strategy to market shifts and currency fluctuations?
5. What’s your Plan B? If the unexpected arises, how effectively will you be able to change course?



Let them work

HELPING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS HELP THE ECONOMY

Wake up, Canada. Changing demographics mean future labour gaps

By **Bharat Aggarwal, CMA**



Issues of globalization are just as relevant when Canada goes out into the world as when the world comes to Canada. What can help international students gain a stronger foothold in Canada and increase their chances of entering the job market? An accounting professor proposes a solution.

Government funding cuts have caused a financial crisis at Canadian universities. Since 1980, most Canadian universities have had progressively fewer financial resources per full-time student. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) estimates a decline from \$21,000 per full-time student enrolled in 1980 to just \$15,000 in 2007.

There's evidence to suggest universities have responded to these funding cuts by increasing the enrolment of international students. According to Statistics Canada, the number of international students in Canadian universities has more than doubled since 1992 (from 36,822 to 87,798 in 2008) despite strong competition for students from the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom. Average tuition fees for foreign undergraduate students are three times higher than average tuition fees for their domestic equivalents.

According to Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, international students contributed more than \$6.5 billion to the Canadian economy in 2008, creating 83,000 jobs and more than \$291 million in government revenue.

While this news is good for the economy — and for Canadian universities — this policy has unintended consequences. Faced with potential barriers in securing employment, only a small proportion of international students intend to stay here.

Their intention does not bode well for the future. Changing demographics could cause

future labour shortages and affect productivity. A 2011 AUCC report on trends in higher education suggests that Canada's low birth rate and aging population will lead to a shortage of skilled labour and to empty chairs in classrooms.

This policy of filling university budget gaps by increasing international student enrolment is problematic if some of those funds are not reinvested in student development. Universities need to do more to provide international students with the competencies required by Canadian employers so the students can remain here and actively contribute to the nation's prosperity.

Decoding the problem

Research shows that a lack of career counselling, insufficient proficiency in the English language, lack of opportunity to gain Canadian experience and limited social networks are some of the barriers to employment faced by international students.

How can universities help improve the appeal of international students to employers? The answer lies in providing international students with more opportunities to improve their language skills and increase their social networks.

That view is backed by Professor J. Paul Grayson, who found that the linguistic capital of foreign ESL (English as a second language) students at Toronto's York University did not improve even after four years of study. Grayson's findings, published in a 2008 issue of *Canadian Review of Sociology*, also revealed that only 11 per cent of domestic students had friends who were international students. It seems only a few domestic students benefit from direct association with international students.

I believe universities need more faculty support to encourage more meaningful interaction

It seems only a few domestic students benefit from direct association with international students.

between domestic and international students. Teachers can accomplish this goal by carefully selecting classroom teams with representation from various nationalities and discussing problems in an international context so everyone has something to contribute.

Encouraging cross-cultural teams to work together to solve complex issues provides benefits for both international and domestic students. There are three examples.

Confidence in abilities. Treating international students as subject matter experts will encourage communication that's meaningful for all students, and international students will develop self-confidence.

Improved language skills. The presence of domestic students within cross-cultural teams will ensure all communication is in English and will help international students develop their language skills. Cross-cultural groups also provide international students with more opportunities to build social networks with domestic students.

Cultural awareness. Domestic students will benefit from interactions with international students by learning about other ways to approach problems. International students will have the opportunity to develop the necessary cultural awareness for working in the Canadian labour market.

The net result? International students will gain improved language and social skills and an increased appeal to employers. Domestic students will increase their comfort when interacting with international students and gain a greater global perspective which is much needed in Canada's increasingly multi-ethnic environment. ■

Bharat Aggarwal, MBA, CMA, is CMA Canada's manager of professional programs. Aggarwal has held senior accounting and finance positions in several large organizations. He has also taught accounting courses at community colleges in Ontario.

GOING GLOBAL: WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE PROFESSION

Businesses expanding into other countries, CMAs travelling the world for work, opportunities opening up for newcomers to Canada: they're all part of the globalization of the accounting profession.

According to *The Accountant*, "Globalisation of the accounting profession has accelerated in the past two years as institutes expand abroad and accountants become increasingly mobile."

The Accountant's comprehensive survey of 44 professional bodies around the world looks at trends and challenges — including globalization, regulation, training and global mergers — and features some eye-opening charts and maps on professional accounting bodies and membership.

"Going Global" — the journal's 2012 international accounting survey, dated Mar. 23 — can be found at www.CPACanada.ca under the "News" tab. — *Mara Gulens*



THINK, ACT AND LEAD GLOBALLY

Changing trade relationships, new technologies and advancing international economies all contribute to our increasingly complex and integrated global business environment.

Being Global: How to Think, Act, and Lead in a Transformed World (Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), by Thunderbird School of Global Management executives Ángel Cabrera and Gregory Unruh, discusses the skills needed to manage a business outside your country's borders.

Informative, concise and full of relevant examples from the business world, the book focuses on cultivating a global business mindset. — *Sharon Aschaiek*



The trillion-dollar pie

INTEREST IN NO-INTEREST ISLAMIC FINANCE IS GROWING

Is Canada missing an opportunity to tap this sizeable market?

By Naheed Mustafa



The Islamic financial sector is growing exponentially, and there's a growing sense that Canadians are well placed to have a piece of a nearly trillion-dollar global pie.

Centred in the Muslim world — Malaysia is the hub — the Islamic financial sector has major dollars pumped into it from oil-rich Gulf nations. According to a 2012 report from the Toronto Financial Services Alliance's Islamic Finance Working Group (IFWG), the assets of the top 500 Islamic banks expanded by 33 per cent in the last two years to \$1.1 trillion. The report also points out that if Canada wants to take advantage of the opportunities — including Goldman Sachs's \$2 billion Islamic bond program — Canada should make changes to its system to properly address taxation of Islamic financial products.

"I think this is a really, really exciting opportunity for Canada," says Jeffrey Graham, a Toronto-based lawyer with Borden Ladner Gervais. Graham is also co-chair of the IFWG, a public-private partnership hoping to position Toronto as North America's Islamic finance centre. The group is looking at possible amendments to federal and provincial tax regimes to "level the playing field." While Islamic finance is still in its infancy here, Graham says we have an open and innovative financial sector which could make the necessary accommodations without sacrificing strong regulation.

Several Western countries including France, the United Kingdom and Australia have adjusted their regulatory frameworks to accommodate participation in this sector. France is now home to two masters' programs in Islamic finance offered through the University of Paris, and CIMA (the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants) in Britain has launched an advanced diploma in Islamic finance. Toronto's Centennial College

offers a CIMA-affiliated certificate in Islamic finance and investment while the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management has a three-day Islamic finance program.

Addressing regulatory issues

So what is it about this emerging and growing sector that makes it different from conventional Western practices? Simply put, Islamic finance allows both individuals and companies to invest and carry out transactions in accordance with the Islamic faith. These transactions must follow a set of principles that are derived from the Islamic legal code (sharia) that, if followed, make an investment halal, or permissible.

But to tap into the market potential of Islamic finance, Graham says certain regulatory issues need addressing. He points out that, for example, certain transactions — such as a joint venture involving newly constructed residential property — would have "considerably more" GST issues to manage than conventional transactions would. The IFWG says possible amendments to the Financial Administration Act, the Public Lands Act and the Land Transfer Act would help level the playing field so Islamic financial transactions could remain competitive.

Allowing the Islamic finance model a spot in the Canadian marketplace could allow Canada to attract foreign — and domestic — investors who have billions of dollars, but who are only interested in sharia-compliant opportunities. Moreover, Islamic finance is open to all individuals regardless of faith, so the potential market is much larger than just the Canadian Muslim population. In fact, in the United States and United Kingdom, ethical investors make up a sizeable portion of the client base.

Islamic finance in Canada

It's difficult to find reliable numbers for the value of the Canadian Islamic finance sector mostly because transactions take place outside formal financial structures and are not tracked. While there are smaller players in the Islamic mortgage and insurance sectors, they represent a fraction of ongoing business.

In addition, none of the major banks currently offer Islamic banking products and Canada's current regulatory environment make providing such offers difficult. The Bank Act limits a bank's ability to be a partner, but in the Islamic model the bank is always a partner and shares in the profit and loss.

Nauman Farooqi, an associate professor in the commerce department at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick, has studied Islamic finance and looked at its various manifestations in Canada. He says the main difference between conventional Western finance and Islamic finance is that the Islamic model guarantees no return. To gain, one must risk.

"If a bank is going to give me a loan, it couldn't care less if my business survives. But if it was an injection of money, then [the bankers] would have to think about whether they were willing to take on the risk to get the return," he says. "They would make sure I'm a good investment."

Such investments would also eschew excessive risk which is also prohibited under sharia. If a business fails, all partners, including the bank, lose. If the business thrives, everyone benefits. Sharia-compliant transactions are appealing "because they present a win-win for all involved."

Farooqi says the average Muslim-Canadian user of Islamic finance is involved in simple transactions, such as purchasing a car or home. Case in point: a friend of Farooqi's wanted to buy a house but didn't want to pay interest. He entered into an

agreement with the seller, who was not Muslim, to pay a markup on the total cost of the home. Payments were spread out over several years. "They hired a couple of lawyers who drew up the contract and they sorted it out," he says.

But there are other opportunities as well.

A good example of a sharia-compliant model that's already well known in the West is the venture in which investors inject capital but also own a portion of the venture. If the venture fails, the investor loses; if the venture succeeds, the investor profits.

"The venture capital industry is sharia-compliant because it's based on a risk-sharing model," says Farooqi. "We don't call it Islamic finance, but essentially it is."

Massive mind shift

Jim Fischer is an associate professor at the Bissett School of Business at Mount Royal University in Calgary. He spent several years in the United Arab Emirates teaching business and says Islamic finance models, while not hard to adapt to a Canadian environment, require a certain attitudinal shift.

"For conventional companies to adapt to Islamic practice, they'd have to wrap their minds around it. They'd be nervous," says Fischer.

But he says it's important to look past the initial discomfort because the underlying principles fit in very nicely with prevailing Western — liberal, free market, capitalist — ideas. "It treats the entrepreneur fairly instead of giving someone a guaranteed profit despite the outcome. If you look at classical liberal economic thinking, that's very consistent with those types of values."

Putting attitudes aside, Fischer says practice would not necessarily be an issue. For accounting, for example, there's no real difference between how conventional companies manage their books and

CANADA'S MOST COMMON SHARIA-COMPLIANT TRANSACTIONS

Ijarah means lease, rent or wage. Typically, one party makes available a service or an asset to another party for a fixed period and price, both of which are to be negotiated at the outset.

Mudarabah is a profit-sharing partnership, but only one partner invests the money while the other partner manages. Profits are shared according to a pre-negotiated ratio, but loss is only incurred by the investor.

Murabahah is like a rent-to-own agreement. The sale of an asset will include a profit margin

PRINCIPLES OF ISLAMIC FINANCE

- The charging or paying of interest is prohibited.
- There can be no guaranteed profit in a financial venture. Any profit or loss must be shared by all partners in the venture.

- Transactions must be backed by assets: money in and of itself has no value.
- Investments can be made only in products and practices that are not prohibited by Islamic teachings. Investing in pornography, gambling, alcohol, pork products or weapons is banned.
- Because excessive uncertainty and speculation are like gambling, they are prohibited.

how sharia-compliant businesses manage theirs.

“Bookkeeping is bookkeeping,” Farooqi says. “As far as pure accounting systems are concerned, you wouldn’t have any issues.”

But one area that could prove challenging for Canadians is the complexity of technical rulings. The Islamic financial system is based on legal rulings by qualified scholars of sharia who are in the business of giving religious and legal sanction and determining whether a particular transaction is in keeping with religious dos and don’ts.

While the specifications for older products are fairly stable, there’s always a process of scholarly rigour applied to innovations or new financial products. Canadians working in finance would ultimately have to wait on clerics to decide if a particular product — one that might be generating some excitement in the financial world — is permissible.

Islamic finance also might help with financial regulation in general. Governments around the world are already working on tightening up regulations. The Financial Stability Board, chaired by Mark Carney, the governor of the Bank of Canada, was created in 2009 just after the G20 London Summit. The risk-sharing, conservative principles in Islamic finance might be a welcome addition to the Canadian landscape.

Indeed, some of these principles, if enshrined in Western practices, might have helped stave off the global financial crisis, says Farooqi. “If you look at some of the literature over the last couple of years, there’s been some discussion that if the banking system were closer to a sharia-compliant system, we wouldn’t have seen the kind of financial ruin we’ve seen.” ■

.....
Naheed Mustafa is a Toronto-based freelance writer and broadcaster who has reported on Islamic finance in Canada for several media outlets.

MISSION POSSIBLE

3 PROBLEMS, 3 SOLUTIONS

How a group of volunteers led the way on Islamic investing in Canada

By **Pervez Nasim**, CMA,
as told to **Naheed Mustafa**

We started in 1982 when Muslims — many of whom had come to Canada as students — were choosing to stay in Canada and establish themselves. We were faced with three important challenges: some of us had savings, but didn’t know what to do with them because we didn’t want to earn interest; we needed homes, but didn’t want to use interest to purchase; and some of us had good incomes, but weren’t taking advantage of RRSPs because they were interest-based investments.

In 1982, I got my CMA and wondered what I could do as an accountant to benefit the broader community. A few of us put our heads together and established an Islamic housing co-operative. This co-op provided Muslims with a place to put their savings and a way to purchase homes. To deal with the RRSP issue, we established the al-Amin RRSP in 1985. At the time, I was with the Ministry of Finance, and on weekends I looked after this commitment as a volunteer. Twenty-eight years later, I’m still volunteering.

When we started, the group was tiny. Seventeen people joined the co-op and each put in \$1,000. We could only buy two or three houses a year. Now we have more than 4,000 members, including U.S. investors, and buy two or three houses per month across the country.

The idea is to work as a community and help others. Then others will help you.

that is agreed upon by both parties and must be stated at the outset. The total cost can then be broken down into chunks to be paid over time. The seller cannot charge extra (i.e., interest) in the event of a late payment, but can hold on to ownership of the asset until deferred payment is made.

Musharakah is a joint venture. Two or more partners provide funds, and profits are shared between the partners according to how much each invested. If there is a loss, then each partner loses according to how much he/she invested. Active partners get a greater share of profit than silent partners do.



From international to global thinking

IT'S ALL IN THE MIND

Becoming a global business requires more than a change in location

By Lorraine Wiseman, CMA



It's interesting to sit in boardrooms around the world and listen to leaders speak about their global footprint. They speak in terms of low-cost manufacturing, double-digit GDP and the opportunity to significantly affect profitability.

While all these things may be possible, the first question that needs to be answered is whether a corporation wants to be multinational — with businesses around the world that may not be integrated into a single corporate culture — or globalized — with businesses around the world that feature one corporate culture.

Being a global business sends a single message to the customer or stakeholder around the world: we understand our business, we understand our market, and we can serve your needs wherever we are in the world with the same quality, service and commitment you have come to trust.

For multinational corporations, global footprints can be created by having a head office and geographically positioned satellites: a Canadian head office, say, with subsidiary operations in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific. But often the only thing multinational businesses truly have in common is their headquarters. The Swiss location is still Swiss and operates as a Swiss business. The corporate name provides the brand recognition and confirms the international presence, but the employees remain committed to the local culture.

What makes a global business truly globalized is the people. It's then that shared vision, explained by author Peter Senge in *The Fifth Discipline*, is taken to the next level to create a global mindset.

When one walks into an authentic Apple store in Shanghai, the language is Chinese, the people are Chinese, but the culture is Apple — or rather global Apple.

Businesses should consider three main points when executing a globalization strategy.

- 1. Understand the local culture.** How well does your business understand the local culture? Can the local culture be aligned with the business's global culture?
- 2. Respect diversity.** How can your business respect diversity and still achieve a global mindset?
- 3. Know if your goal is international or global.** Determine whether your business's strategy is globalization or building a multinational business.

Understand the local culture

Many businesses jump straight into moving plants from high- to low-cost countries or launch joint ventures in markets such as China, India or Russia. The opportunities created by these economies are tremendous, and the need to act quickly to gain traction and reap benefits creates enormous pressure.

Corporations study demographics, local taxes, market opportunity, supply chain availability and skilled labour availability. But along with these important elements, corporations need to understand the local culture. A cultural worksheet can ensure companies ask the right questions to assess their readiness for globalization (see sidebar, p. 35).

Respect diversity

As Stephen Covey said in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, it's important to seek first to understand and then to be understood. Mindsets reflect how people think, and individual viewpoints influence the behaviours or actions of companies and how they operate in a global environment.

A global mindset incorporates thinking about geographic and ethnic differences, norms, practices, traditions and behaviours. It's a convergence of preferences and expectations of consumers worldwide. It's the same way of thinking about the business regardless of location, but it retains the possibility of using different means to achieve the same desired result.

A corporate culture with a shared vision that aligns with the local workforce and its culture understands before being understood, and embraces the local way of thinking. Companies like Apple with a globally recognized product make it local through language, but the product and corporate culture are aligned with the global shared vision.

International or global?

Not every business needs to be global. There's a place for international business that has the same owner, the same name and the same policies but not necessarily the same culture.

But businesses that choose to have an international presence can still benefit from a cultural worksheet. In the investment decision-making process, it provides an understanding about whether the practices in that culture are acceptable to the owners and whether they're willing to operate within that culture. For example, the fact that child labour is acceptable in the local culture but not aligned with a corporate responsibility policy could be discovered ahead of making an investment decision and would be relevant to both global and international businesses.

Maintaining the local culture can also be of significant benefit to international business. It negates the need for integration and globalization but can support the business's objective of having a presence in the world market and maximizing the benefit of the local culture without the need for assimilation.

CULTURAL WORKSHEET

Answer the following questions to help your business mitigate risk and prepare for globalization success.

1. What is the local culture? Describe it in terms of behaviour, including social or private, formal or informal. What language is used? Is the culture materialistic or non-materialistic? What are the religious beliefs and practices?
2. What is the local culture's approach to business and organizational design? Is it hierarchical, informal, collaborative or communal?
3. What are the local culture's views and practices with respect to gender and ethnic diversity in the workplace?
4. Is there anything in your answers to the questions above that conflicts with your company's corporate culture?

YOUR VISION

Once a business understands the local culture, the business must develop an educational strategy that aligns corporate vision with local culture.

1. Develop a vision that leaders and employees can embrace and that remains true to personal value systems.
2. Your vision must go beyond financial results and be about the greater purpose. To create one culture, your vision must offer a positive impact on people worldwide.
3. Think globally and act locally by celebrating local culture and sharing your celebrations around the world through communication networks.

Once companies understand the cultural differences and continue with globalization as a strategy, they must ensure the global mindset becomes part of the corporate culture. It must be deep within all levels of the organization.

Success happens through people and with people. Understanding the global mindset, and recognizing the importance of leading and managing diversity both globally and locally, equips businesses with the tool for success in a world that continues to get smaller. Coca-Cola is Coke everywhere. Give the world another Coke by creating a global mindset. ■

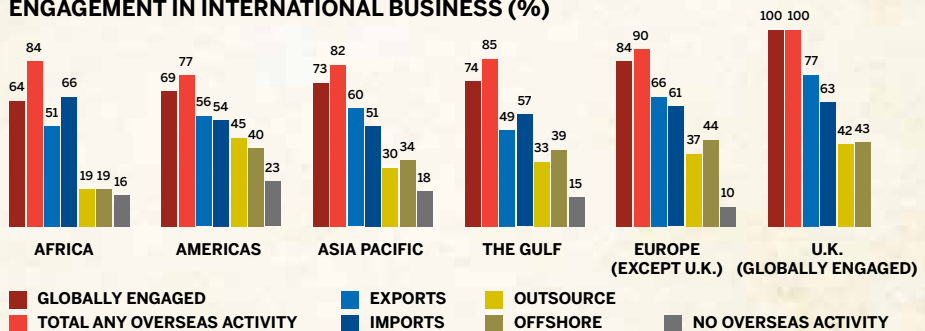
Lorraine Wiseman, CMA, MBA, is a global executive who has led businesses in Canada, England, Sweden, the Czech Republic and Switzerland through major change and global footprint implementation. Wiseman holds board positions in three countries and is a doctoral candidate in leadership and change management.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON BUSINESS

	POSITIVE IMPACT %	NO OVERALL IMPACT %	NEGATIVE IMPACT %
AFRICA	65	21	14
AMERICAS	66	26	8
ASIA PACIFIC	70	19	11
THE GULF	64	26	10
EUROPE (EXCEPT U.K.)	66	21	13
U.K. (GLOBALLY ENGAGED)	64	25	11

Businesses worldwide are feeling optimistic about globalization. Two-thirds (66 per cent) say they expect it to have a positive impact on their operations over the next five years.

ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS (%)



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Globally engaged businesses are expanding their international operations in several ways: exporting, importing, outsourcing and offshoring. Companies based in Europe are the most likely to be globally engaged.

Note: The information comes from the *Global Enterprise Survey Report 2011*, a survey of 1,649 accountants working at businesses with operations around the world. Respondents were interviewed by phone between June 7 and Sept. 6, 2011. The survey was performed by Kudos Research for the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) and can be found at www.icaew.com/SMEResearch. ■



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CMA graduates of eCornell have scored their overall learning experience 4 out of 5. Here is what one member had to say:

I found the discussions, collaboration and participation to be excellent. I appreciate learning from the examples brought forth from our diverse group. It was very helpful how the instructor prompted dialogue in the discussion forum as well as providing positive feedback to the assignments. The Executive Leadership program was a positive rewarding experience and I am so glad I had the opportunity to take it.

Brenda Yackle, CMA
Corporate Controller
United Safety Ltd., Alberta
Executive Leadership Certificate Graduate



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Mitigating risk on the road to gold

Stay on top of operational legal issues

Due diligence can oftentimes stop the trip short

By Joe Milstone

ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A company that could do no wrong. It had a proprietary product/technology, significant entry barriers to its industry, revenue and profitability numbers that were off the charts, and seemingly endless global expansion opportunities.

Then came the day the company had been waiting for: the day an offer arrived to purchase the business for almost \$100 million. The pot of gold at the end of the rainbow had appeared after years of development, tireless effort, the danger of almost missing payroll and all the fun that goes with entrepreneurship.

But due diligence turned the dream into a nightmare. (Funny how unforeseen problems surface when there's a pot of gold to divvy up.) All of a sudden, there were unaccounted-for shareholders who had been "promised" equity, product developers who had long since left the company who claimed they maintained personal ownership in all or part of the secret sauce, consultants who said they were really employees and therefore entitled to termination rights, new perks and benefits, and business "partners" who demanded a pound of flesh to assign their agreements to the new entity as a condition of closing the deal.

Experienced buyers detest "hair." And with much hair there, the deal fell apart. The scapegoat? The director of finance, who had been charged with

dealing with these areas since the early years of the company and who had acted as the mastermind behind the project management of the transaction.

Finance: Keeper of everything

In many organizations, the leader of the finance function becomes the keeper of all things "general and administrative," including HR, insurance, governance and legal. Due to today's headcount freezes and budget slashing, finance often also ends up with frontline duties. As long as the house of cards does not tumble, this delegation of responsibility is often just fine by the owners and/or CEO.

The danger with this model is that it's inherently defensive and reactive if and when problems arise. It also ignores the potential for bottom-line accretion that can be realized by seeking experienced and innovative counsel on contract and commercial matters.

The following examples describe common trap doors that you don't want to discover just as your big financing or acquisition finally rolls in.

THE PROBLEM: Loose promises of bonuses, options, equity and the like with no documentation and no objective criteria for achievement. The fun part is that you likely did not make these deals; the owner and others probably discussed them in a barroom.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Always press to get the full story and all pertinent

information from the doer of the deal. Look for signs of someone having glossed over something to avoid ruffling feathers, and insist on getting clarity up front and in writing. If there are conditions or stipulations, they need to be spelled out. Always keep asking “what if...”

THE PROBLEM: Improper papering of employment and consulting agreements, or mixing up one with the other. Either problem can lead to not only legal but also unintended tax liabilities.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Avoid using a one-size-fits-all template grabbed from the Internet or your former employer. Understand the differences between employees and consultants, and make sure applicable provisions for each are properly included. Update your agreements regularly, and understand

recent legal changes in areas such as IP (intellectual property) ownership, terminations and non-competition.

THE PROBLEM: Simplified commercial contracts that are the equivalent of “price and quantity” purchase orders. Are you positive you have all the rights you need on the supply side to give what you’ve promised on the sales side? What are the refund rights, support obligations and warranties? How is liability disclaimed and/or capped and – again – do the supply and selling sides match up? Are the contracts freely assignable in the wake of corporate change?

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Treat your commercial agreements with the time and understanding they require. Branch-off issues beyond basic “purchase order” terms are actually not legal issues; they’re business issues that

often go unidentified and unaddressed. Using a checklist derived from more fulsome contracts can be a good way to start covering missed holes and contractual opportunities.

Companies that neglect to deal with operational legal issues face two negative eventualities. If they fail, they’ll be unlikely to have to deal with many of the potential repercussions. But if they succeed, the owners will have to spend a lot of time, money and aggravation fighting their way through these matters in the hope that they don’t find out that they’ve been working for other people all along. ■

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Joe Milstone is co-founder of *Cognition LLP*, an innovative legal services organization that provides in-house and corporate counsel services to businesses.



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Balancing act

Rob Dargewitz, CMA, finds success on his own terms

By **Jaclyn Law**

“RETIRED CAPTAIN” ISN’T A TERM YOU’D EXPECT

to find in a CMA’s background, but the Canadian Army is just one part of Rob Dargewitz’s rich and varied career path. Add “entrepreneur” and “educator,” and you have a good picture of his achievements.

After graduating from the Royal Military College of Canada in 1992 with an economics and commerce degree, Dargewitz held various financial roles at the Department of National Defence. He earned his MBA in night school before retiring from service in 1997. After that, he held demanding, high-profile positions at Shell Canada, most recently head of corporate finance, mergers and acquisitions.

While at Shell, Dargewitz became a CMA: “I thought adding a professional designation would open doors for me, and it did. I wanted the complete package; the CMA gives you a more well-rounded perception. I liked the integrated management aspect.”

In 2010, Dargewitz’s mother passed away, and he found himself at personal and professional crossroads. “I took a break, did some travelling and came back in a good mindset,” he says. “I decided to take the skills I’d learned and start my own company.”

With his friend Dan Forigo, Dargewitz launched Fairmont Financial, a financial advisory and consulting company that helps businesses grow.

He’s also giving back to his professional community. A moderator in the CMA Professional Strategic Leadership Program since 2001, Dargewitz recently designed the CMA Alberta Oil and Gas Certificate Program, which he also teaches. “Working with students is fun, and it keeps me sharp on what’s going on in the industry.” ■

Jaclyn Law is a Toronto-based freelance writer.

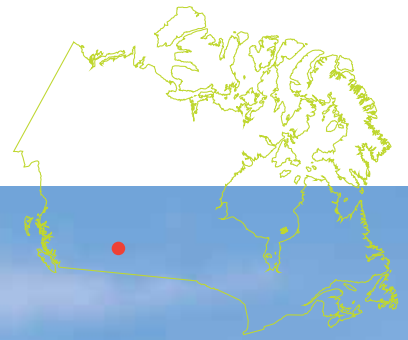
Employer: Fairmont Financial

Role: Co-founder and Managing Director

Most valuable piece of business advice:

“We were all given a gift called life. It would be a shame to return it unopened.”

Website: www.fairmontfinancialcorp.com



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AD
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