

Integrated teaching curriculums that provide a cross-functional perspective must be developed.

The linkage of POM with other functional areas of a firm should be the cornerstone of any redesign that takes place. As an example, a study of many facets of POM such as inventory management, production planning and control, and logistics planning cannot be accomplished without understanding the role played by information systems and newly developed communication technologies. Similarly, organizational behavior knowledge must be integrated into work design issues. Several other examples of a similar nature abound. Such a redesign should incorporate feedback from potential employers of our graduates. Moving in the direction of integrated curriculum would hopefully make it easier to communicate the results of our own evolving research work to students in the classroom, and perhaps in many cases also influence the related research agenda in turn.

Appropriate reward systems must be established for published research.

Risky projects should have higher proportionate returns. Journal editors, reviewers, and senior scholars in the field may have the most influence on what kind of research they would like to see published in the field. A shift towards greater relevance in published research is already taking place. This trend needs to be further encouraged and accelerated. We must train our doctoral students to do more relevant research projects (whether field-based or modeling-based), examine alternate methodologies that can facilitate such enquiries, and finally reorient the publication acceptance criteria in this direction. A careful balancing act will have to be performed between relevance and rigor of published research for the time being; hopefully, the field will evolve to the point where both can be achieved simultaneously to a large extent. The pedagogical material will also evolve accordingly, though with some time lag.

The preceding discussion has only looked at a microcosm of initiatives that must be taken to move the field forward. In this context, we must recognize that the overall structure within which universities operate largely dictates how rapidly these changes can take place. Unlike the corporate world, we are more lethargic in our response to changing trends. It will be impossible to convince scholars to move in a particular direction if the incentive systems encourage them to do otherwise. The fallacy of expecting behavior A while rewarding behavior B has been well-established (Kerr, 1975). We must avoid such a trap, since ignoring the need for change and not moving towards greater relevance in our academic efforts will inevitably lead to failure in the long run. The promise of what can be achieved by reexamining our research and teaching priorities and agendas is great, but so are the challenges that lie in-between.

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