



# LESSONS



# FROM THE FRONTLINE



# OF BUSINESS

**ALEXANDRA SKINNER SPEAKS TO JACK WELCH MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE'S DEAN OF CURRICULUM, MARY CARR.**

**Q. To what extent do you work with local, national and international businesses, and how much do they influence your curriculum?**

Our curriculum is heavily influenced by what is happening in the marketplace today. We use subject matter experts from all areas of business to augment our teachings as we apply relevant and proven Jack Welch principles to it. We integrate case studies featuring global companies such as Medtronic and FedEx. Every student receives a subscription to the *Wall Street Journal*, which allows us to create real-time discussions centering on today's issues. Finally, our faculty has led at global organisations such as Procter & Gamble, and they bring a diverse perspective to the classroom.

Many of the issues we cover are internationally-focused. For example, value-based healthcare is a global concept, so we recently interviewed Toby Cosgrove, president and chief executive officer of the Cleveland Clinic, an organisation that embraced lower healthcare costs and improved quality and outcomes for patients. Through Cosgrove's insights, students will

study both the integrated healthcare business model and the commitment to service at the Cleveland Clinic, gaining both technical and leadership training.

In addition to our curriculum offerings, we host a Leadership Live education series. International business experts are invited to lecture on current topics from winning in China to building your brand in the digital age to leadership. Our speakers are from leading companies such as LinkedIn and PenFed, as well as start-ups.

**Q. How involved is Jack Welch in the development and review of your curriculum?**

Jack is passionate about the curriculum at Jack Welch Management Institute and is extremely involved in its development. Frequently featured as an Expert of Practice (EOP), he brings valuable insights from the companies and business leaders he consults with around the world to JWMI students. In this way, Jack helps us bridge the gap between what companies want in the workplace and the education students receive. His feedback, along with that of our other EOPs, ensures that we deliver courses that are rigorous but also relevant.

As the Dean of Curriculum, Jack relies on me to be both an expert in the science of accreditation as well as the architect who ensures our learning outcomes align with our assessments. Jack's influence ensures that those assessments are real and practical. We don't just talk about an executive presence in the classroom - our students have to practice



it via video presentations. We don't just talk about measuring performance - our students must prepare a talent scorecard. In that way, Jack's vision and continued involvement in the curriculum ensure that students are learning and applying every day.

In addition, Jack's video lectures are in every course, and students have the opportunity to interact with him each term. He meets with students multiple times per quarter, sharing his insights on current business topics and coaching them on career development.

**Q. What are the key traits potential Jack Welch Management Institute MBA students need to possess?**

Whether they are first-time managers or experienced executives, all our students share one common desire - they want to be better leaders and advance in their careers.

JWMI students need to be dedicated to investing in themselves to reap the benefits of this programme. As working adults with busy lives, students need to commit each week to learn and apply the material. They need to have the desire to advance and the willingness to take, at times, tough feedback that is geared towards transforming them into better leaders.

**Q. Your students are exposed to industry titans such as Jeff Immelt, Gary Vaynerchuk, and Warren Buffett. What impact do these leaders have on the JWMI experience?**

Through our EOP programme, our students have the opportunity to learn both leadership practices and technical skills across all business disciplines from today's top CEOs and executives. Our EOPs provide video keynotes, guest lectures and other exclusive content highlighting their leadership journeys. Through exposure to these executives, our students are gaining real-world insights directly from the leaders of industries that they are studying and

working in. They take these lessons directly back to their workplace and apply them to their career development.

Over the past year alone we've welcomed the CEOs of Under Armour, AOL, Cleveland Clinic, Medtronic and most recently, Warren Buffett of Berkshire Hathaway, to our EOP programme. We currently have over three dozen executives sharing over 300 stories and lessons within our curriculum. For example, through Warren Buffett, our students learn the practical and tested financial principles leaders need to manage a business. And through Warren's candid storytelling, they gain soft skills such as the importance of communication as a leader.

Exposure to today's top executives allows students to compare and contrast the various styles of leadership. For example, while Jack and Warren may seem very different in their approaches, they share many of the same principles when it comes to managing people. Students will see leaders who are introverts, extroverts and some who are hands-on and others who trust but verify. All of this helps them to grow and develop their own style of leadership.

**Q. Which skills do you expect your MBA graduates to leave the programme with?**

A manager's development typically takes years, and it is hard to accelerate, largely because their focus can be relatively narrow. JWMI exposes managers to a much wider range of experiences and actionable and effective management approaches in a very short period. Our graduates leave JWMI with a strong academic grounding and confidence in fundamental areas such as economics, finance, and operations. They learn how to build marketing plans and evaluate mergers and acquisitions. They learn concrete operating strategies such as Six Sigma. And they learn advanced communications skills often reserved for the C-suite to improve their executive presence.

More importantly, our students live and breathe Jack's principles of leadership development and people management. They become experts in his business canon - how to hire the right people, how to build great teams, how to practice differentiation, and how to communicate with candour. They learn the tough stuff often overlooked in traditional business education such as leading change, aligning teams, and managing conflict. Students leave JWMI with a true understanding of how to win in business and in life.

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**BIOGRAPHY**

Mary Carr is Dean of Curriculum at Jack Welch Management Institute.