



Video script: Business and education are not mutually exclusive

Sarah Elaine Eaton, Ph.D

The video is available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=puYn-wZGTls>.

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"I'm Dr. Sarah Eaton and today I'm going to talk about why business and education are not mutually exclusive in a moral sense. One of the underlying beliefs of my scholarly and professional work is that, without a doubt, it is possible to incorporate business practices, such as marketing and generating revenue, into educational administration. One of values I hold is that business management and operational practices may be incorporated into educational administration in an ethical way. That is to say that the use of business practices in an educational setting need not compromise the quality of the education. Moreover, the incorporation of marketing or revenue generation need not inhibit or detract from the students' experience or potential to learn, think critically and grow as human beings. Revenue

that is generated can then be recycled back into resources that support student learning, growth and inquiry.

Furthermore, some current educational theories lend themselves well to a business approach. One of my favorite educational leadership gurus is a fellow by the name of Sergiovanni. In an article published in 1991 in *The Urban Review*, Sergiovanni refers to educational administrators as professionals and his comments about them could just as easily refer to business people committed to ethical management practices. He says:

Professionals need to believe in what they are doing as they practice. They need to believe that professional action does more good than harm and that they are effective in solving problems and serving clients. Professional practice is characterized by close attachment and a commitment to one's course of action. Professionals rely on their own firsthand experience and on the experience of other professionals with whom they work in similar settings.

If we believe that then we can see that both a business person or an educational administrator are professionals. Both can believe in what they are doing. Both can believe that “professional action does more good than harm”. Both can solve problems effectively and serve those who are at the core of what they do. Whether we call those people clients, customers or students is not as important as remembering that what we provide for them is critical to our work as professionals.

In education, that means providing an excellent learning experience that adds to students' knowledge base, challenges the learner and provides opportunities to grow cognitively, experientially and personally. If educators believe in what they are doing, and they are committed to providing a quality learning experience to their students, then there is no reason to believe that generating revenue is a bad thing. In fact, revenue generation in education may be a good thing because it helps to ensure the sustainability of programs in times of economic distress and fiscal cutbacks, providing that the students and their learning are kept as an essential value that guides administrative practice.

So basically, when students' learning and providing a quality educational experience are kept at the core of our value system as professionals and practitioners, there's nothing wrong with educational programs making money because all they're really doing is helping to ensure program sustainability. That's part of responsible professional leadership."

Reference

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1991). Constructing and changing theories of practice: The key to preparing school administrators. *The Urban Review*, 23(1), 39-49.