

Preface

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On January 13, 2014, Harvard Business School Dean Nitin Nohria gave a lecture to IESE MBA students and alumni in Barcelona on the future of management education. He started his reflection by highlighting the importance of values in business leadership and the relevance that values have both at Harvard Business School and IESE. Those shared values, he added, help explain the positive relationship that Harvard Business School and IESE have developed for five decades.

The cooperation between Harvard Business School and IESE started in April 1963 when Harvard Business School's Dean George P. Baker set up a formal Committee that would help IESE launch a two-year MBA program in September 1964. It was the first of its kind in Europe. This Committee met for the first time in October 1963 in Boston. It was made up by Harvard Professors Ralph M. Hower, Harry L. Hansen and Frank E. Folts, and IESE Professors Antonio Valero (the first Dean of IESE), Carlos Cavallé, Josep Faus and Félix Huerta.

The Committee made specific suggestions that were put into practice with the launch of the IESE MBA program in Barcelona in September 1964. The program adopted the case method – that was already used at IESE – as the main pedagogical tool, and the core courses and case materials were adapted from the Harvard curriculum.

The positive impact of this successful cooperation hinges upon the outstanding personal and professional excellence of the Harvard Business School professors who were or are Committee members and willing to help develop IESE. Later on, Harvard professors also helped IESE develop other institutions in Latin America and Asia. Harvard faculty members' unique generosity and commitment are qualities that IESE faculty always benefited and learned from. Fifty years later, IESE faculty, staff and alumni have nourished a deep sense of gratitude towards Harvard Business School and those outstanding and generous Harvard faculty members, in particular, its exceptional deans over the years: George P. Baker, Lawrence E. Fouraker, John McArthur, Kim Clark, Jay O. Light and Nitin Nohria. They were – and are – incredibly generous to share ideas with IESE faculty and help develop new educational projects throughout the world.

The development of the Harvard-IESE Committee is also the source of a deep sense of admiration for Dean Antonio Valero and the IESE faculty members who went to HBS¹ in the early 1960s, because they were so committed and magnanimous with the IESE project when the school was still very small.

This book was prepared on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the IESE MBA program that was launched in 1964 and presents a collection of very special speeches given at IESE by Harvard Business School deans: Dean George Baker's speech on the occasion of the graduation of the first class of IESE's MBA program in June 1966; Dean John McArthur's speech when he was awarded an honorary doctoral degree from the University of Navarra in January 1989; Dean Jay O. Light's speech on the occasion of IESE's 50th Anniversary in May 2008; and Dean Nitin Nohria's speech on the occasion of the Harvard Business School-IESE Committee's 50th Anniversary in January 2014. It also includes IESE Dean Antonio Valero's speech on the occasion of the graduation of the first MBA Class in June 1966;

1 Harvard Business School is referred to in both its full name and abbreviated form, HBS, interchangeably by the authors, throughout the book.

and two contributions from IESE Professors Carlos Cavallé and Pedro Nueno, two of the longest-serving members of the Harvard-IESE Committee, who provide some fresh and useful reflections of the history and nature of that collaboration.

For IESE, Harvard Business School colleagues have been and are not only shining lights that have helped IESE define its strategy and make complex decisions in the world of management education. Harvard faculty members have been the wisest colleagues and most generous friends that we could aspire to have.

I want to thank Harvard Business School Dean Nitin Nohria and Professors Carl Kester, Dick Vietor, Srikant Datar and Jack Gabarro for giving us advice on the organization of the events around the 50th Anniversary of the Harvard-IESE Committee and their support and friendship over so many years. I also want to thank IESE Professors Carlos Cavallé, Franz Heukamp, Pedro Nueno, José L. Nueno, Joan Enric Ricart and Eric Weber for their ideas on how to develop this editorial project. I am very grateful to Teresa Gener, Alberto de Olano and Javier Pampliega for their great editorial work in producing this book, and to Míriam Freixa, Teresa Planell and Anna Puigvert, for their professionalism in this and many other projects.

This collection of essays shows the importance of education with values, and of business leadership oriented to serve people and society. With the reputation of the business world in society falling to a new low, the need to base business leadership on the notions of excellence, ethics and service are more important than ever. Harvard Business School and IESE try to foster this deeper notion of companies and managers and their positive impact on society. I do hope that they become a source of inspiration for many MBA students and business leaders in the years to come who will find in these texts many ideas on how business leadership can be turned into a driver of service to people, companies and society.

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