In June of 2009 I had the opportunity to conduct research in Mongolia via Elizabethtown College’s Faculty International Studies Seminar. My area of research is the economics of science. Economists in this field focus on how scientific and technological innovations can be encouraged and translated into economic growth. Mongolia, the most sparsely populated country in the world, was closely aligned with the Soviet Union throughout the 1950s up until 1991. Over the past two decades, Mongolia has embarked on the rocky transition to a democracy and market-based economy. Although inflation has diminished and food shortages have been alleviated, Mongolia remains an underdeveloped country with nearly half the population living on $2 a day or less. Despite this lack of economic development, 97% of the population are literate (a consequence of the country’s socialist past) and the country’s higher education system is expanding. Mongolia has largely built up its economy around its vast mineral and agricultural sectors. Dramatic economic growth in China, Russia, and the United States has placed a strong demand on Mongolia’s holdings of copper, coal, tin, and gold. Mongolia also possesses large holdings of the rare earth metals that are needed for hybrid cars and other green technologies. This strong demand for minerals has translated into economic growth in Mongolia.

Over the past several years however there...
has been a recognition of the fact that economic growth fueled by mineral wealth is unsustainable. Consequently, the Mongolian Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science has embarked on a plan to expand the country’s academic infrastructure and encourage the commercialization of research. This plan for transforming the Mongolian economy into a knowledge-based economy is reiterated in the UNESCO Science and Technology Master Plan on Mongolia. This plan emphasizes an improvement in the education of researchers, instilling within the halls of academia a spirit of competitive innovation, a promotion of research results to industry, and a strengthening of intellectual property protection policies.

**Deficiencies in the academic infrastructure**

What troubled me about these plans to expand the academic infrastructure in Mongolia is that the emphasis placed on applied research (knowledge that can be applied immediately and transformed into improved efficiency and economic growth) is coming at the expense of investments in basic research (research that has no commercial value but serves as the building blocks to applied research). My research in Mongolia was shaped by a belief that applied research relies on basic research and that investments need to be made in basic research as well. My research in Mongolia was focused on one deficiency in the academic infrastructure – the lack of use of electronic journals and databases by scholars. The failure of researchers to consult electronic databases and journals means that the research created is more likely of lower quality in that it makes little to no reference to the conversations engaged in by the scholarly communities around the world.

Over the past two decades the distribution of scholarly literature has been transformed in nearly every discipline from a paper-based to an electronic medium. Not all electronically distributed information is the same. Perhaps the least expensive means of accessing scholarship electronically is through internet-based open access journals, working paper databases, and author-posted manuscripts.

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**Editor’s Note**

Everywhere we go we seem to be bombarded by discussions and images that encourage us to reduce our carbon footprint and otherwise act in an environmentally responsible way. In “Building a Knowledge-Based Economy in Mongolia,” I discuss the efforts in Mongolia, a supplier of many of the raw materials used in ‘green’ technologies, to shift the economy away from mining and towards innovations that encourage economic growth. In “Thinking Green or Scheming Green,” Joseph Swartz explores the enforcement of claims made by companies that advertise their production of ‘green’ goods and services. Finally, Joe Molony does a Reading Rainbow service for us by sharing his thoughts and summarizing the ever-popular book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*.

As always, appreciation is extended again to Brian Rossell for layout and design.

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Despite the fact that this scholarship can be accessed at little to no cost, there is no quality-control mechanism present. Publisher-provided scholarly journal databases have a quality-control mechanism, but are incredibly expensive to access. At the turn of the twenty-first century, a digital divide had emerged with scholars in the developed world enjoying access to high-quality scholarship and scholars in the developing world receiving no such access. Only recently have publishers and non-governmental organizations begun to provide free or low-cost access to their databases for scholars in developing countries like Mongolia.

What I and my co-authors found in Mongolia is that providing access to publisher-provided scholarly journals and databases is not a ‘if you provide it, they will use it’ exercise. Scholars in Mongolia report very little reliance on electronic methods of accessing the scholarship. Usage data I collected from the library at the publicly-financed Mongolian Academy of Sciences library shows relatively little use of electronic resources when compared to the library at the American Center for Mongolian Studies where many western scholars in Mongolia congregate. The only other libraries in Mongolia where usage of electronic resources rivals that of the American Center for Mongolian Studies was at the privately-financed higher education institutions (the Institute of Finance and Economics and the Academy of Management). The usage statistics I collected at academic libraries in Mongolia reveal that scholars and libraries are jointly resistant or unwilling to utilize, finance, or facilitate the usage of electronic journals and databases.

**Outdated research**

For scholars in Mongolia, who were themselves primarily trained in Mongolia and participate in a largely domestic scholarly community, the electronic medium is deemed unnecessary. Scholars in Mongolia are overwhelmingly located in the capital city (Ulaanbaatar) and largely know one another. With scholars largely familiar with one another, the need for the peer review system of quality control is unnecessary. With faculty promotion standards that promote research but do not dictate the quality of the publication, scholars find little need to contribute to journals that are peer reviewed, internationally distributed, or indexed via electronic databases. Scholars in Mongolia certainly face no incentive to contribute to the research collections that appear in electronic databases. They similarly face no incentive to cite the peer reviewed research that could be accessed via electronic databases. Mongolian scholars, who in many fields publish in journals published by their employer, face no incentive to publish research that is properly situated within the wider intellectual discussion on their research topic. Consequently, scholars cite either a portion of the dated, but easily available, peer reviewed research or cite easily available, but questionable quality, research from an electronic medium.

Returning back to the 2007-2010 UNESCO report, the Prime Minister of Mongolia remarked that the motivation of the report was to enhance the scientific and technological capacity of the country, promote collaborations between industry and the academy, promote the growth of high technology-based industries, and establish the foundation for a knowledge-based economy. The report however portrays the government in a rather limited sense. In the report the government is seen as securing intellectual property rights and encouraging applications to research.

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A BOOK REPORT:
The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, by Stephen R. Covey

You’re probably saying to yourself that someday you should really read that book. To which I would reply that you should. As for myself, I’ve read it many times and have actually taken Covey’s advice by teaching it. It’s included in my First Year Seminar at Elizabethtown College and I’ve presented it in numerous talks to groups and associations. But until you get around to doing it, a brief summary will suffice for now. Realize, however, that this in no way can be a substitute for reading the book itself. This is just the icing on the cake and the whole cake must be eaten in order to fully appreciate the impact of these principles.

We all know what a habit is, namely, something we do repeatedly and automatically. Covey talks about habits of behavior and how individuals respond to certain situations. Take, for instance, a situation where someone is tailgating you. What is your immediate reaction? Your reaction would likely be anger and annoyance. But, is that the right reaction to that situation? Is it the case that you got in the habit of reacting that way without really thinking about it? And now the big question, if you think a totally unemotional response would be more effective, can you break that habit? Or, is it so ingrained in you that you don’t want to? Covey argues that we can and should change those habits that prevent us from accomplishing our life goals. This is what he calls Being Proactive (Habit 1). We do this by separating the stimulus from the response.

When something happens, instead of automatically reacting in the usual way, take a moment to assess whether you correctly understand what has occurred and then decide what the appropriate response should be. For me, this is the most important point Covey makes. Because, unless you believe you have the power to change your behavior, you won’t be able to incorporate his other principles into an effective lifestyle.

Notice now how he speaks of effective people as opposed to successful people. Effective people do the right things. This is obviously necessary to succeed. However it must be coupled with being efficient – doing the right things well! But how do we know what the right things are? Habit 2 says to Begin With the End in Mind. Determine first what it is we want to accomplish and base all your actions on achieving that goal. For example, a management goal usually involves establishing a supportive relationship with their employees. With that in mind, one would take the time to consider if their behavior in response to employee concerns would have that result or not.

Once having identified your goals, you must now implement them. This means staying focused and committed and not allowing distractions to cause you to stray from them. As Habit 3 states Do First Things First. Do the things that are needed to accomplish your goals first before doing anything else. People often struggle with this habit because they are in the habit of procrastinating and letting distractions and other time wasters pull them away from the important things that must be done. By planning ahead, you can schedule when these things are to be done, do them, and avoid the stress of...
time crunches and avoidance. Remember, you have the power to change your habits!

So far we have talked about what we must do within ourselves to be effective. The next three habits deal with how we can be more effective in our relationship with others. Habit 4 states Think Win/Win. This simply means to deal fairly with others. That sounds reasonable enough. However some people feel that we live in a highly competitive world and to approach others in this way would lead them to think you are weak and can easily be taken advantage of. Not so, not so. You will hold your position just as strongly as they do. The only difference here is that you will not take advantage of them either. Consider this, how long do you think you can stay in business if you repeatedly overcharged your customers or if you allowed your suppliers to repeatedly overcharge you?

One of the more common causes of bad relationships is misunderstanding. We don’t often take the time to truly listen to the other side. Habit 5 asks us to Seek First to Understand Rather Than to be Understood. Our interpretation of what we are seeing or hearing determines how we will respond. So it’s important to once again take the time to listen carefully and get it right the first time rather than jumping in prematurely with all of the biases and preconceived notions that color our understanding and only make matters worse.

As we all know, we are social beings. Therefore, we need the cooperation of others to succeed in life. This is habit 6 which is Synergize. It’s a great word that captures the multiple effect of cooperative effort that can far exceed the incremental effect of adding just one more. Working together with others who not only bring one more but one more, with different talents and strengths that complement and enhance our capabilities resulting in so much more than each of us would have produced working separately.

Ok, you should be pretty exhausted by now. So it’s time to Sharpen the Saw – Habit 7. We need to stop and rest, taking time to stay in shape physically through exercise and good nutrition. Again, a great challenge for most of us. But remember, we only get one body and it has to last us a lifetime. In addition to our bodies we must also sharpen our minds. Sometimes people feel that they know all they need to know and stop reading and learning. Unfortunately if we don’t use it, we will lose it. Think of it as mental exercise. Another area to exercise is our spirituality. This can mean different things to different people. In this context Covey suggests getting in touch with our inner selves perhaps through meditation. Essentially, identifying and establishing the substance and true meaning of our lives. This should serve as the moral compass that gives direction to our lives. Since all that we have achieved was dependent on a properly functioning society, we should share our success by giving something in return. Yes through charitable contributions but perhaps more importantly through a service to your community. Few things are more rewarding than extending a helping hand to those in need.

So, there you have it. A tidy little summary of the 7 habits that Covey suggests you put into practice. Habits that effective (and I suspect, happy) people live by.

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trade practices under Section 5 of the FTC Act. In 1992 the FTC issued the Environmental Guides (16 C.F.R. § 260.1 et seq.), often referred to as the Green Guides, to explain how the Commission would apply Section 5 of the FTC Act to environmentally related claims. The Green Guides apply to any environmental claim, in all forms of marketing, whether express or implied. Similar to other rules and guidelines proffered by the FTC, the Green Guides are periodically reviewed, through the regulatory review program, to ensure they are current. In November 2007, the FTC announced it was reviewing the Green Guides. This review was to occur one year earlier than originally planned because of the proliferation of green claims. In order to review and update the Green Guides, the FTC held three public workshops to address particularly problematic issues, such as the marketing of carbon offsets and renewable energy certificates, green packaging claims, and claims relating to green textiles, building products, and buildings.

Today, consumers are more concerned with buying green than ever before. As such, businesses realize that environmental advertising can provide a competitive advantage, and because of this the volume of green advertising has increased dramatically. As a result, many corporations are beginning to market themselves as “green” or “environmentally sustainable.” However, not all corporations have actually become “green” and as a result the number of greenwashing claims, or claims that a company is not actually being “green,” have also increased. Green claims, if false or unsubstantiated, affect both consumers and competitors. First, when consumers purchase a product, or even stock in a company, they are being deceived about the true impact that they, and the company, are having on the environment. Furthermore, corporations making false and deceptive statements are gaining an unfair advantage over their competition and are reaching new markets and consumers without actually reducing their environmental impact.

The effects caused by false and deceptive claims of environmental sustainability are not just occurring at the retail level, but are also affecting investors. Often individuals will invest in companies they are familiar with, or that embody certain values. Conversely, others will invest in a company based on its performance. In any case, companies that falsely claim to be environmentally sustainable mislead investors. First, socially conscious investors are not likely to invest in a company unless they know it is committed to socially or environmentally responsible policies. By claiming to be sustainable, companies can attract more investors, increase demand for their stock, and increase the stock’s price. Also, by claiming to be environmentally sustainable, a company can increase sales by reaching “green” consumers. In doing so, a company’s revenue rises, making it seem more attractive and increasing the demand for its stock. Therefore, if the corporation is not truly engaged in “green” initiatives, or its initiatives do not have the actual impact it claims, the company is in essence supplying false information to the market. Thus, under the language of SEC Rule 10b-5, corporations, which are prohibited from supplying
false information to investors, could be seen as committing securities fraud.

While the FTC should be applauded for its proactive efforts to protect consumers, it still needs to address claims made by companies that they are “green” or “environmentally sustainable.” While some may see the regulation of claims of environmental sustainability as being excessive or outside the scope of the Green Guides, that is simply not true. In fact, by covering corporate claims of environmental sustainability the FTC would simply be extending the coverage of the Green Guides to an overlooked aspect of marketing that has the potential to significantly affect consumers and investors. In fact, the FTC could actually remedy this problem quite easily by requiring companies that claim to be “green” or “environmentally sustainable” have their claims certified by independent third party organizations. In fact, there are a number of private certification programs available that are industry-specific as well as a number of general environmental certification programs. Moreover, independent certification would benefit companies because they would then gain an additional advertising route to reach sought-after “green” consumers. Finally, independent certification would also ensure that companies making “green” claims are actually engaging in practices and activities that positively affect the environment.

Early in this article the question was of whether the FTC should regulate corporate claims of environmental sustainability was posed. Clearly, the answer to this question, at least in this author’s opinion, is yes! By regulating corporate claims of environmental sustainability and requiring the independent certification of such claims the FTC can ensure that companies are being truthful and are taking legitimate steps to reduce their environmental impact. These results would significantly benefit consumers and restore consumer confidence in “green” marketing claims, which is exactly what the FTC Act, and the Green Guides are intended to do.

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Very little attention is given to basic research or the reforms needs for the scholarly communication process in Mongolia.

Reforms needed

One of these needed reforms is a process infused with the rigorous of editorial and peer review where articles must be contextualized in the wider discussion of the research topic. The contextualization is necessary for the production of high-quality research – research that is the added-value element in the collaboration between the academy and industry. Economic growth generated by academic research will be lackluster unless the scholarly communication process is improved in Mongolia. Improvement in quality, in many disciplines, can only occur once the electronic medium of scholarly communication is adopted and utilized. Thus, while it may appear to some that an investment in the communication of basic research is misdirected, this is not the case when one considers how important high-quality and timely scholarship is in the production of both basic and applied research. The government in Mongolia needs to encourage the adoption of electronic scholarly communication practices with as much intensity as they encourage scholars to embrace the application of research to industrial problems.

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Thinking Green or Scheming Green: Should There Be Legal Consequences for Those Who Make “Green” Claims?

With the recent proliferation of companies that claim to sell “green” goods and services, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has realized that consumers need to be protected from deceptive or fraudulent claims. While the FTC has begun reviewing the green claims surrounding individual products, it has not yet reviewed claims that a business itself is “green.” While corporate claims of environmental sustainability may seem relatively innocuous, they actually can have a significant effect on how, where, or from whom a consumer purchases a product. Moreover, corporate claims of environmental sustainability also influence a company’s stock price which can, in turn, affect investors and the stock market. This begs the question of whether the FTC, which is charged with protecting consumers, should regulate corporate claims of environmental sustainability.

The FTC is given the power to protect consumers from deceptive and unfair

Joseph J. Schwartz

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