



# Sparking Societal Impact With Business Education

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There are moments in your life that spark an undeniable passion compelling you to act—moments of clarity where you see what’s important to you, and moments where you just wish something in the world was different. Maybe it was during a walk along the beach and you found trash among the treasure of seashells. Or maybe you live in a town that thrives on a small business economy but has fallen on hard times, leaving residents struggling to survive. No matter who you are, where you live, or what your life experience, something inside is calling you to change something in society for the better. But the question is: have you started?



Tackling challenges and creating the transformation needed to have an impact on environmental issues or blossoming economies isn’t as daunting when you surround yourself with like-minded change-makers who want to make a difference. Making connections and building collaborative and supportive relationships is a critical component to pushing change forward—because no one can do it alone. When our diverse experiences and perspectives come together for a common goal, the solution is more impactful.

## Find Your Force

Around the world, successful organizations of all types and sizes are guided by passionate leaders striving to make a difference in society. And although these leaders come from a diverse range of backgrounds, they have a strong understanding of business, either learned from direct experience or earned through a business degree, or both. Pursuing business education not only provides a deep understanding of the core principles of business, it offers you the opportunity to gain essential career-building skills like critical thinking, collaboration, problem-solving, team building, and leadership. Surrounded by your peers and experts in business, the [best business schools](#) in the world serve as ideal hubs for lifelong learning by delivering the highest-quality education and developing purpose-driven leaders with a focus on the betterment of society.



Business education is intertwined with the business of today, keeping up with constantly changing challenges and preparing you to lead in dynamic environments.

In business school, you're surrounded by people who want to catalyze change. Deans, presidents, provosts, and other educational executive leaders are creating environments that are both challenging and include experiential learning to help you build long-lasting relationships with leaders across industry and within your community. Gone are the days of business education relying on one-directional teaching methods by way of dusty books or one-sided lectures. Business education is intertwined with the business of today, keeping up with constantly changing challenges and preparing you to lead in dynamic environments.

Alongside educational leaders, faculty are conducting research into the complex "grand challenges" that don't have easy answers. They dedicate energy and expertise in working toward solutions that can change an industry, influence policy, or impact society and social well-being. Business educators also collaborate

beyond the business school, building relationships across disciplines (and degrees) to work with local, regional, and global businesses as co-creators of knowledge to change the way the world works. There's a place for you among that force for good—a place where you can [make your mark](#).

## Starting Again at Any Age and Every Stage

The best thing about new beginnings is that they happen all the time. Each day—and each decision—is a chance to have a new experience, acquire a new skill, take a step toward achieving a long-term (or newly found) goal, or even changing direction completely.

Pursuing your passion to make a change in society may be something that you can do in your current role as a student, full-time or part-time employee, leader or executive, but it may also drive you to a new role, industry, or educational experience. Regardless of where you find yourself in your career or education, there will always be new skills to acquire and an opportunity to grow and reinvent yourself. Through it all, your drive to do good can help guide your next steps.

No matter your educational background, societal impact starts with self-exploration. You owe it to yourself to define how you want to change society for the better. It's up to you to design the steps required to realize your goals.

**Spark some new ideas with these five idea-starters and begin your journey:**

# 1

Which life experiences have had the most impact on me so far?

# 2

I want to live in a world where there is no more \_\_\_\_\_.

# 3

Five years from now, I'd like to change how \_\_\_\_\_.

# 4

At the end of my career, I want people to remember my impact on \_\_\_\_\_.

# 5

What kind of education or experience do I need to support my goals?

Exploring these questions and idea-starters will help you articulate what's truly important to you, and where you want to focus your energy. Solving big societal issues doesn't have to be intimidating; start small by taking deliberate (and doable) steps toward your goals, and you'll stay focused and motivated. At each stage of your career and education, there are endless opportunities to acquire new skills. We are never done learning, whether we are just starting out in a new career, are a seasoned executive, or are looking to change careers.



## The Career and Education Connection

### Career Starters

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#### For Your Career

- Conduct informational interviews with leaders you admire to find a mentor.
- Seek companies committed to making societal impact.
- Volunteer in your community for a cause you care about to help build your network.

#### For Your Education

- Explore micro-learning opportunities, articles, videos, and online resources to discover topics of interest.
- Research undergraduate and graduate programs at schools dedicated to impacting society through their mission and vision.
- Get involved in campus organizations to gain experience and learn from the diversity of your peers.

## Experienced Leaders

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### For Your Career

- Understand, and advocate for, your organization's commitment to making positive societal impact. If there's room for improvement, explore how you can take a leadership role in creating change.
- Stay curious and learn about how other organizations are having positive societal impact. If you're unfulfilled in your current role, there may be opportunities to retool your skills and grow elsewhere.
- Build relationships with your peers and other leaders; you may just find your own "force for good" within your organization.

### For Your Education

- Boost your business knowledge through specialized master's programs, MBAs or EMBA's, certificates, or other educational opportunities. If you're considering a career change, you may need to awaken your inner student again.
- Learn more about the educational opportunities within your organization. Many companies offer leadership and professional development programs that can strengthen your skill set from within.

## Executives

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### For Your Career

- Mentor colleagues and employees. Your experience will inspire developing leaders.
- Develop operational models within your organization that encourage collaboration and participation in a societal issue important to your company's mission, vision, and values.
- Serve on committees and boards of nonprofits making an impact locally, regionally, or globally.

### For Your Education

- Explore executive education, doctoral programs, certifications, credentials, or specialty master's programs to acquire skills beyond business.
- Share your experience, expertise, and passion for business by teaching or guest-lecturing at a business school.

**Keep track of your progress.** Whether on a napkin, in a journal, or on your mobile device, take notes about your experiences as you explore your passion and continue to clarify what societal impact means to you. No matter your experiences—good, bad, or still to be determined—jot down thoughts while they are fresh in your mind so you can capture the emotional connection you’re having (or not having) to your work and get inspired. After you’ve had a chance to explore your passion in constructive and meaningful ways, revisit those five idea-starters and see if your responses are still the same. Being open and agile during this process will ensure that you find yourself in the right place, at the right time, making a meaningful difference in the world.

Companies large and small and everywhere in between need critical thinkers who can collaborate and adapt to change, while leading change themselves. Whether you want to make a difference in sustainable energy, clean water, local or global economies, or anything in between, business education can, and will, empower you to do just that. Business schools bring together change-makers from around the world, representing diverse viewpoints, approaches, experiences, and dreams.

Now it’s your turn to find your place within the force for good and make your mark.



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To explore programs and offerings by the best business schools from around the world, visit [bestbusinessschools.com](https://bestbusinessschools.com).

AACSB is a global force of educators, businesses, and students, driven to create chance through positive societal impact. To learn more, visit [aacsb.edu/societal-impact](https://aacsb.edu/societal-impact)



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