What is Giving Voice To Values?

Giving Voice to Values (GVV) is an innovative approach to values-driven leadership development in business education and the workplace, pioneered by Dr. Mary C. Gentile (GentileM@darden.virginia.edu). GVV is based at University of Virginia-Darden School of Business, having been launched by Aspen Institute as Incubator & Founding Partner, with Yale School of Management; then supported at Babson College 2009-16. Drawing on actual experience and scholarship, GVV fills a long-standing critical gap in the development of values-centered leaders.

GVV is not about persuading people to be more ethical. Rather GVV starts from the premise that most of us already want to act on our values, but that we also want to feel that we have a reasonable chance of doing so effectively and successfully. This pedagogy and curriculum are about raising those odds.

Rather than a focus on ethical analysis, the Giving Voice to Values (GVV) curriculum focuses on ethical implementation and asks the question: “What if I were going to act on my values? What would I say and do? How could I be most effective?”

Where can you find the book and the curriculum?

The curriculum is available at www.GivingVoiceToValues.org. (There is also a Faculty-Only URL with teaching notes and B cases, available to faculty upon request from GentileM@darden.virginia.edu). The book from Yale University Press is Giving Voice To Values: How To Speak Your Mind When You Know What’s Right, www.MaryGentile.com (available in Spanish and in Chinese, with Korean and Thai forthcoming). A series of 6 online interactive, social cohort-based customizable modules are also available: visit http://nomadic.fm/ProgDetailGivingVoiceToValues.html and contact GentileM@darden.virginia.edu for DEMO.

Who is using GVV?

GVV has now had over 870 pilots in educational and business settings on all seven continents. There is a database of over 4,000 GVV contacts, a little over half of which are educators. Pilot sites have included the U.S., Europe, Africa, India, China, Australia, Canada, Israel, United Arab Emirates, etc.

Designed for use in graduate business curriculum, the approach has also moved well beyond that. On the education side, GVV has been used in undergraduate, MBA and executive education in hundreds of business schools around the world. It has been a featured part of the United Nations Global Compact PRME (Principles for Responsible Management Education) programming and PRME has become a partner supporting GVV curriculum development on Anti-Corruption, with a recent initiative in India. Similar region-specific curriculum development initiatives have launched in China and Egypt. Increasingly GVV is also being adapted for educational purposes beyond business (medicine, nursing, engineering, law, accounting, liberal arts, education). A recent book features chapters by a dozen faculty from different disciplines (economics, accounting, negotiations, HRM, etc.) sharing how they use GVV – Educating for Values-Driven Leadership: Giving Voice To Values Across the Curriculum, www.BusinessExpertPress.com, 2013. And there are numerous titles in the Giving Voice To Values Book Collection from Business Expert Press.

Some of the many companies and organizations that have invited presentations and/or are piloting or considering piloting the approach include: Lockheed Martin with award-winning offerings (for 5 years), Unilever, Consolidated Edison, Bertelsman, General Mills, Prudential, Northrup Grumman, WalMart, General Dynamics, Chemonics, National Grid, Mayo Clinic, Kaiser Permanente, The Institute for Chartered Accountancy/Ontario, Ethics Resource Center, Ethics & Compliance Officers’ Association, National Investment Company Service Association, Net Impact, FriendFactor, etc. The World Bank and the InterAmerican Development Bank have also piloted ways to implement the GVV approach in their training programs. And other expressions of interest are continually growing.
Gentile has delivered a seven-session Webinar on GVV, developed for corporate practitioners, offered by the Ethics and Compliance Officers Association. The seminar provided both a broad overview of GVV, and also included guidance for Compliance Officers to incorporate its principles into their own corporate programs.

Currently, Gentile has partnered with Nomadic to develop a series of interactive, on-line social-cohort based modules that introduce GVV and offer opportunities for practitioner and/or student users to work in cohorts on its application. The modules are available for customization and use in companies, educational contexts and other settings. See http://nomadic.fm/ProgDetailGivingVoiceToValues.html.

Other potential applications/audiences for GVV include: elementary/secondary educators and students; the general public; parents; etc.


Selected Awards/Recognition:

Gentile and GVV received the 2013 “Humanistic Management Leadership Award” for Teaching and Education at the Academy of Management convening in Orlando, FL in August. GVV was selected as one of the Semi-Finalists for the Ashoka Innovation Award in 2013. The book from Yale University Press won the Axiom Business Book Awards 2011 Gold Medal in the Business Ethics Category. Mary Gentile has also been recognized independently for her work with GVV, and named by Trust Across America as one of the “Top 100 Thought Leaders in Trustworthy Business Behavior” over several years and received their “Lifetime Achievement Award,” as well as named to Good Business New York Leading Women for 2012 for “21st Century Leadership - Women Who Are Changing The World: 25 Dynamic Leaders Actively Creating a Better World Through Work & Business.”


Gentile Bio:

Mary C. Gentile, Ph.D. is Director of Giving Voice to Values (www.GivingVoiceToValuesTheBook.com), launched with The Aspen Institute and Yale School of Management and hosted at Babson College for 6 years, now based at UVA-Darden. This pioneering curriculum for values-driven leadership has had hundreds of pilots globally and has been featured in Financial Times, Harvard Business Review, Stanford Social Innovation Review, McKinsey Quarterly, etc. Gentile, faculty at Babson College and educational consultant, was previously at Harvard Business School. She holds a B.A. from The College of William and Mary and Ph.D. from State University of New York-Buffalo.


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“Giving Voice to Values heralds a revolution in ethics education... It’s like a self-defense class for your soul.”
Dan & Chip Heath, authors of Switch & Made to Stick

“...a wonderful guide to help us enter an era of responsibility & leadership based on values.”
Walter Isaacson, CEO of Aspen Institute

“...the most significant contribution to business ethics I’ve experienced in my professional career... destined to shape the behavior of future generations in ways that should make us all much prouder of business as an entity and management as a career.”
Leonard A. Schlesinger, President, Babson College