

# WHAT IF THE RESEARCHERS OF TODAY WERE THE BUSINESS LEADERS OF TOMORROW?



The new generation of managers from research

2010

This blog <http://chercheursmanagersdedemain.blogspot.com> aims at facilitating expression and confrontation of experiences, viewpoints and visions on this topic, to help researchers and HR people anticipate and participate in that paradigmatic shift.

The following text is translated from a paper written by **Amandine Bugnicourt PhD (ADOC Talent Management) ; Catherine Chambon PharmD (Talents, Innovations & Cie), Marie-Françoise Morizur PhD (VIACREATIS)**

from the collective work of the thinking group : **TRAIT D'UNION\*** whose members are: Jean-Christophe BENAS, Mouna BEYK, Valérie BRUNEL, Amandine BUGNICOURT , Catherine CHAMBON, Isabelle CHEVRIER , Thierry MERLE, Hubert NEGRE, Marie-Françoise MORIZUR, Pierre de ROMANET, Patrice ROUER, Robert STAHL.

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*\* TRAIT D'UNION is a group of reflection and of exchange of practices whose members are researchers and coaches of teams and managers in research.*

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Our professional activity as researchers and contact with other researchers have led us to believe that this population develops unique skills in managing change, uncertainty, collective thinking, globalization and open (and collaborative) innovation. We believe that these skills are interesting and valuable in managing a knowledge-based economy.

To test this idea and deepen our thinking, we interviewed many former researchers who are now managers, and we were very struck by the convergence of their testimony.

They agreed that the skills they developed by beginning their careers in research have significantly shaped their professional identity and continue to contribute to their being an asset in their current position.



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## Among the assets they mention:

- The ability to deal with change in an unpredictable environment and live with complexity,
- The ability to focus on the operational and short-term and also the long-term and strategic,
- The ability to detect emerging trends,
- The ability to deal effectively and without inhibition with people in other countries and with different culture background,
- The ability to think "outside the box" and to drive an iterative process of innovation,
- The ability to lead, or work in, teams and the ability to promote the collective intelligence.

It appears that these vital assets are underutilized in our changing society.

The skills of researchers are of course not the only ones necessary for a management team, but the lack of such skills poses a threat all the more important now that we are moving towards an economy where innovation is the key component in creating wealth.

We are therefore convinced that the population of researchers represents a real wealth of talent and that the integration of a growing proportion of professionals trained by research in management teams will rise management to the level necessary to meet the challenges of the future.

## Our initial questions:

- What are the specific skills you use today, which were developed in the practice of research?
- What are the additional skills you had to acquire in order to be effective in a leadership position?
- What were the easy or difficult aspects in the transition from doing research to mana-