

## **Look Sharp to Stay Sharp: A Masterful Professor Studies Online to Advance His Skills**

Donald W. Mitchell

Dr. Cam Scholey has more letters designating his qualifications than there are in his first and last names (BA, MBA, CMA, and PhD). He likes to learn and enjoys sharing that new knowledge with clients and students.

Who has he learned the most from? It's his young daughter, Samantha, who launched him into the new and challenging role as parent. With all his academic and professional accomplishments, he is most proud of being Samantha's father. But he also points with pride to the marathon (26.2 miles) he ran in 2001 and the half Iron Man he accomplished in 2000 (a 1.25 mile swim, followed by a 60-mile bike ride, completed with a 13.1-mile run).

A self-characterized "academic consultant," Dr. Scholey is engaged in a busy consulting practice in Canada helping leaders develop strategy maps and Balanced Scorecards (ways of making organizational strategies explicit) to implement their new directions. When he's not consulting, Dr. Scholey teaches MBA students at McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario) and provides workshops for The Society of Management Accountants of Ontario and The Society of Management Accountants of Canada. A self-described "Pied Piper", he enjoys traveling throughout North America to spread the word about the benefits of strategy mapping and the Balanced Scorecard.

After earning his MBA, Dr. Scholey was eager to advance into a doctoral program. His first experience, however, was less than rewarding: Dr. Scholey's academic advisor wanted him to focus on economics while Dr. Scholey wanted to emphasize psychology (management accounting is grounded in both of these disciplines). Rather than struggle with the conflict, Dr. Scholey tabled his plans for a few years, hoping to find a place where he could study what he wanted in a PhD program.

A number of years later, while teaching at The University of Waterloo (Waterloo, Ontario), Dr. Scholey discovered Rushmore University, an online school that provides a wide variety of master's and doctoral programs. Dr. Scholey enrolled based on the promise of being able to set his own educational direction. What direction was that? He wanted to take his cutting

edge consulting and teaching work and push both to a higher level of accomplishment and effectiveness.

That's a tall order for someone who was already teaching graduate business students at one of North America's leading universities. Dr. Scholey's goal was facilitated by being able to draw on some of the world's finest practitioners and authors of advanced strategy concepts who reside on the faculty at Rushmore.

To take advantage of those resources, Dr. Scholey took his most advanced writings and consulting assignments and looked to sharpen his approaches by creating even better approaches than the published state of the art. There's no doubt that he succeeded: The quality of this work was recognized when the prestigious *Journal of Business Strategy* accepted one of his Rushmore papers for publication while Dr. Scholey was still earning his doctorate.

In addition to what he learned, Dr. Scholey was able to advance in other ways. He was so impressed by what he was learning that he revised his own teaching methods to more closely model what he was experiencing as a student from his professors. His friend and mentor at The University of Waterloo, Howard Armitage, was extremely impressed at the caliber of teaching at Rushmore.

His professional recognition grew due to his increased knowledge and expertise: In fact, coincident with his earning a Ph.D. in strategic leadership, Dr. Scholey was nominated to be a Fellow of Certified Management Accountants, the pinnacle of recognition for Canadian accountants.

His consulting career was helped by earning the degree, being published in the *Journal of Business Strategy*, and developing improved ways to help clients. Although he was a published author of a book, *A Practical Guide to the Balanced Scorecard* (CCH Canadian, 2002) before launching his PhD studies, Dr. Scholey feels that the doctoral program greatly honed his writing skills due to the extremely professional editing help he received and the feedback on drafts that his professor provided.

But becoming a PhD isn't the end by any means. Dr. Scholey is most interested in becoming a whole person. The PhD is just the next step in that

continuing process. A true Canadian boy, he has recently taken up hockey again and plays year-round.

I am sure that the number of qualification letters behind his name will grow in the future. Everyone, I'm sure, will benefit as he becomes an even more brilliant teacher, consultant, speaker, and leader who understands that you have to look sharp to stay sharp.

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Donald W. Mitchell is a professor at Rushmore University. For more information about ways to engage in fruitful lifelong learning at Rushmore to increase your effectiveness, visit

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