

# THE WINDOW

“I don’t predict. I just look out the window and see what’s visible but not yet seen.”

— Peter F. Drucker

## Letter from Claremont

In 1973, Peter Drucker spent several days meeting with top executives from furniture designer Herman Miller to talk about their business.

They came away with some clear guidance on how to approach the years ahead—and how to convey this strategy.

“Keep it short and sweet and not too complicated,” one participant recalled Drucker advising them. “Our strongest communication is our products. They communicate.”

Thirty-seven years later, those products still speak to us—which is why we are so excited to be partnering with Herman Miller in a redesign of the Drucker Institute’s physical space.



Herman Miller was more just than a Drucker client. As much as any company, it embodies many of the core principles that Drucker espoused.

**Innovation.** Herman Miller has

long been known for its cutting-edge design, from working in the 1940s with Charles and Ray Eames to its award-winning 1994 Aeron chair.

For the Drucker Institute—which has grown from two employees to nine in just three years—Herman Miller’s ingenuity has given our old facility new life. We will soon have a full complement of work stations and conference areas, all in less than 1,000 square feet. The key: furniture

### Drucker Society Spotlight

How Drucker Societies worldwide are advancing effective management and responsible leadership.

Sometimes the best way to answer a question is with another question—or, in this case, with five questions.

#### Drucker’s Five Questions

1. What is our mission?
2. Who is our customer?
3. What does the customer value?
4. What are our results?
5. What is our plan?

That, anyway, is what a group of high school students from Auckland, New Zealand’s Mt. Roskill School did, using Peter Drucker’s “Five Most Important Questions” management tool to win a social-enterprise competition on how to combat alcohol abuse by local teens.

The students’ Five-Questions-based anti-binge-drinking proposal focused on customer and results. Through a Facebook survey, the Mt. Roskill students

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**D**rucker Apps ties Drucker’s timeless wisdom to the hottest issues of today. Right now, readers are talking about [whether our education system gives students the right tools](#) to be both thinkers and doers.

**Bloomberg  
Businessweek**

### “The Drucker Difference” on Bloomberg Businessweek

Rick Wartzman, executive director of the Drucker Institute, writes a column for *Bloomberg Businessweek* online that ties Peter Drucker’s work to today’s headlines. For a list of all of his columns, [click here](#).

Rick’s recent “Drucker Difference” columns:

- [The Rules of Alliance](#) August 27, 2010
- [Facebook’s Privacy Puzzle](#) August 13, 2010
- [BP Needed an Andon Cord](#) July 30, 2010
- [Facing the Wreckage Head-on](#) July 16, 2010

## Letter from Claremont, cont'd

with multiple uses (like file units that double as benches) and is reconfigurable.

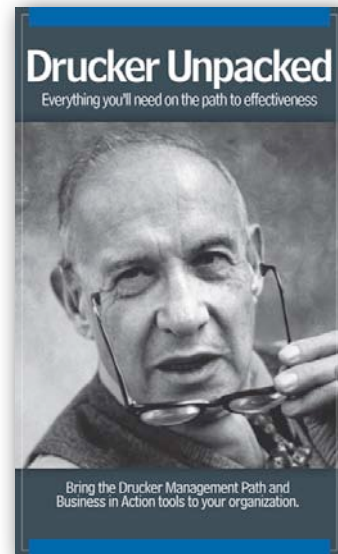
**Values.** Drucker was ahead of his time when he called himself “an old environmentalist” in 1971. But as early as the 1950s, Herman Miller had dedicated itself to environmental stewardship. About one-third of the materials used in our new desk chairs, bookshelves and file cabinets will come from post-consumer recycled content. And all of that furniture is itself nearly 100% recyclable.

**People.** Nothing mattered more to Drucker than the way a company treats its people. And judging by the folks we’re collaborating with, it’s clear that Herman Miller’s ranking by *Fortune* as one of the 100 best companies to work for is well deserved. They’ve been creative, committed and equally pleased to be writing a new chapter in the long relationship between Drucker and Herman Miller.

We’re looking forward to that—and to the new digs.



Rick Wartzman and Zach First  
Executive Director and Managing Director



Learn more about the  
Drucker Management Path at  
[www.DruckerUnpacked.com](http://www.DruckerUnpacked.com).

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

About 40 years ago, the CEO of Herman Miller, Max De Pree, called Peter Drucker to ask him to consider consulting with the company’s management team. At that point, De Pree knew Drucker only through his books and articles.

De Pree turned to the famed writer and business consultant because he felt that Herman Miller, which had just gone public, needed advice on how to handle what promised to be an extraordinary growth period. To De Pree’s surprise, Drucker already knew quite a lot about Herman Miller and happily accepted the opportunity.

Although Drucker’s consulting job with Herman Miller formally ended in the 1970s, the relationship between De Pree and Drucker continued for many years. Drucker featured an interview

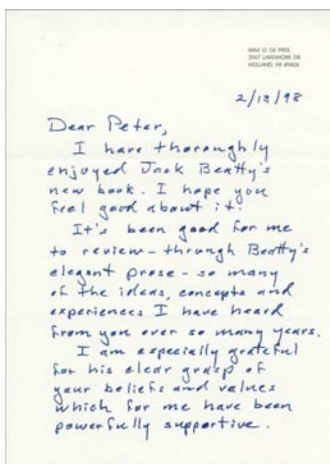
with De Pree in his book *Managing the Nonprofit Organization: Principles and Practices*. And he praised De Pree’s bestseller, *Leadership Is an Art*, saying that “this is a wonderful book; it captures Max’s spirit—and he’s a truly exceptional person.”

In the 1998 letter to Drucker shown here, De Pree returned the warm feelings. He noted that he was going to give a copy of Jack Beatty’s biography of Drucker to his children—“partly for a selfish reason.”

“Mr. Beatty,” De Pree explained, “refers to me as your friend. Of course over many years and at challenging

moments you’ve been my teacher and mentor for which I will always be indebted.

“But to be identified as your friend—there’s nothing I cherish more. And I want my children to know that.”



## Society Spotlight, cont'd

determined that their peers lacked awareness of the dangers that alcohol presents. Their plan involved an educational expo designed to raise, by more than 30%, the students’ level of “general alcohol knowledge.”

For their efforts, the Drucker-in-High-Schools student team won a cash prize as well as mentoring and support from New Zealand’s P3 Foundation in order to implement their plan.

Mercy Jumo, of the Drucker Society of New Zealand and its sponsoring organization, Save the Children, reflected that “Drucker’s Five Questions provided a step-by-step framework,” which allowed the students “not only to engage in a discussion about underage binge drinking but to propose tangible solutions that would have an impact in the community.

“In this case,” Jumo said, “the students found answers by asking questions.”