



# Management Fads in Higher Education: Where They Come From, What They Do, Why They Fail

*Robert Birnbaum*

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## **Management Fads in Higher Education: Where They Come From, What They Do, Why They Fail**

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"Management fads in higher education will never be the same. Birnbaum's penetrating analysis reveals in the clearest possible terms why fads die an early death."

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"Anyone in higher education leadership should read this critical and amusing book. It goes much further than the dull descriptions of management techniques for universities and colleges. It is fair, convincing, and well documented."

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When is a management innovation truly a good idea, and when is it only a fad? In this thoughtful book, Robert Birnbaum scrutinizes the rise and fall of management fads in higher education since the 1960s. He shows administrators and faculty how to move beyond the hype of new fads to make wise, informed decisions and adopt sound management policies.

Birnbaum begins by analyzing the historical development of seven major management systems in higher education. From these histories, he develops a model for understanding the life cycle of management innovations, including their creation, development, and eventual adoption or abandonment. He then explains the social and environmental factors that make institutions vulnerable to fads, plus the psychological issues that may lead academic managers to support failing fads. This comprehensive resource is for anyone who wants to understand how management innovations can be used to strengthen the educational and social purposes of higher education.

To read the first chapter of this book, Seeking the Grail: The Never-Ending Quest, click here.

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