

Hopwood summary



Anthony Hopwood's article "Management Accounting Research in a Changing World" makes a compelling analysis of the future of management accounting. Hopwood discusses several issues with respect to management accounting, but stresses the fact that he is not concerned with preserving previous accomplishments; instead he is worried how this professional field will adapt in the ever-changing business world. This article specifically addresses the effect that mainstream tendencies, autonomy, and world changes have on management accounting and its research.

It is believed that current tendencies have caused a decrease in curiosity-oriented research. Hopwood explains that many business schools are focused on earning specific accreditations and do this by requiring professors to conduct research. Since they are not genuinely interested in the research, their studies are often based off of previous data and theories. Additionally, the article explains how there is a strict hierarchical structure that controls management accounting research.

Both of these factors obviously limit the freedom and future progress of research. Hopwood also argues that autonomy is another area of concern. Recently, accounting research and practice has become more distant. Within the field of medicine physicians often conduct research while simultaneously applying technical skills in a normal work environment. This improves the quality and progress of their research. Hopwood believes that without an autonomous relationship between research and practice the field of management accounting will suffer at large.

The constant changes of the world's economical and political environments are yet another factor affecting the need for management accountants.

Hopwood feels that management accounting research should recognize these changes in order to improve its overall relevance. Since management accounting practices have not changed significantly since their inception many people believe that it is irrelevant in today's business world. Hopwood helps show the actual importance of management accounting and the need to revolutionize its research.