

---

## Rotman/UTP Publishing Launches New Imprint



THE ROTMAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT has partnered with the University of Toronto Press to create **Rotman/UTP Publishing**, a new imprint devoted to publishing actionable business information of exceptional quality.

“In recent years the Rotman School has earned a global reputation for thought leadership,” says Dean **Roger Martin**. “Our faculty’s research ranks in the top 20 worldwide, and individual areas and professors rank even higher. This new partnership with UTP will allow us to further our reputation for offering the latest in business thinking.”

On October 30, Rotman/UTP Publishing launched its inaugural title, **Bruce Little’s** *Fixing the Future: How Canada’s Usually Fractious Governments Worked Together to Rescue the Canada Pension Plan*. The book explains how the CPP was overhauled from 1993 to 1998 and shows why it stands as one of Canada’s most significant public-policy success stories. Little has worked as a

journalist and policy analyst, primarily at *The Globe and Mail* as an economics writer and columnist, and recently as Special Adviser to the Governor of the Bank of Canada.

“We are excited by this tremendous opportunity to publish leading business authors for our customers: business people, scholars, and students across North America and internationally,” says **John Yates**, president, publisher and CEO of University of Toronto Press.

The second book under the imprint was published in early December: a compilation of expert views from ten Rotman faculty titled *The Finance Crisis and Rescue: What Went Wrong? Why? What Lessons Can be Learned?* It is available for order at [rotman.utoronto.ca/financecrisis](http://rotman.utoronto.ca/financecrisis).

The imprint’s Advisory Board will oversee the publication of works that bridge research and practice. The Advisory Board includes:

Founded in 1901, the University of Toronto Press is Canada’s oldest scholarly press and one of the largest university presses in North America, releasing over 150 new scholarly, reference, and general-interest books each year, as well as maintaining a backlog of over 1500 titles in print. For more information, visit <http://www.utppublishing.com>. — BY KEN MCGUFFIN

---

## Connecting the Dots within Complex Problems

THE ROTMAN *Integrative Thinking Speaker Series* kicked off its 8th season on September 24 with **David Komlos**, whose firm has developed a process for dealing with wicked problems – problems so complex that they cannot be solved through traditional problem-solving methods.

There are basically four types of problems, says the CEO of **Syntegrity**: simple, complicated, complex and chaotic. “Simple and complicated challenges differ from complex and chaotic ones in a few ways,” he says. “When dealing with the former, you can get to the right answers by looking at the facts.” However, with complex challenges, “cause and effect are not readily observable, and it’s hard to understand what is going on because there is so much going on.” What complex challenges have in common, says Komlos, is that each is too big for one individual – or a group of well-intentioned individuals – to solve.

“The Law of Requisite Variety” is a key factor in solving such problems, he says. “This law says that ‘only variety absorbs variety’. So when we’re dealing with high variety – with complex challenges – we can only hope to address them by bringing to bear an equal amount of variety in the form of people, information, knowledge, experience, relationships and their influence.” Embracing the Law of Requisite Variety therefore



David Komlos

entails broadening the scope of people involved in solving the problem. But that’s just the first step.

“The people involved must have tools that allow them to connect the dots. If you don’t equip them to make sense of what they’re encountering, all they will do is surface even more complexity.” The tool Komlos and his team have developed to deal with complex problems is called ‘syntegration’.

“Syntegration is a social technology that allows multi-stakeholders to shift from debating to co-creating,” he says. “Together, the participants set the agenda by agreeing on the 12 most important topics that surround the problem at hand. Each individual indicates which of the topics they can best contribute to, ranking them from first to last.” People are then assigned to topics. “Each person is a member of two teams, an observer of four and a critic of two. By the end of the third round of meetings, over 95 per cent of the pertinent info on the topic has been surfaced, shared and integrated.”

Komlos’ advice to managers: “Given the types of complex problems we face today, it is increasingly important for us as leaders to look at ourselves as ‘linkers’ – not just linking the people within our firm, but beyond the artificial boundaries of the organization.” There are competitive advantages to be had by optimizing interactions with the right group of people, he says, and when this works, “the promise of collective intelligence becomes a reality.” — BY KAREN CHRISTENSEN