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Andersen billed Enron for \$25 million for consulting services and \$27 million for the audit in their final year of trading. Of course, consulting does not fall into any neat categories of professional work. Many have characterized the activity as knowledge work or immaterial labor, whereby "symbolic analysts" manipulate signs, symbols, and images. Lacking an obvious "right answer," knowledge work is inherently ambiguous. Consequently, Mats Alvesson has suggested that technical expertise – whilst important – is becoming increasingly secondary to image and rhetoric intensity, which help persuade a client of the efficacy of a knowledge worker's proposed course of action. In short, it is not so much a case of being an expert as *appearing* to be an expert. Entrepreneurial professions do not typically possess the institutional pillar of a strong professional body and it will be interesting to see how such groups develop. In time will they emulate the traditional liberal professions, or do they represent a new form of professional organization centered on brand, image, and reputation?

It is a fascinating time for analysts of the professions, especially those with a management focus. Managerialism, commercialization, and privatization have radically changed the context in which professions operate. Professions are likely to remain important means of institutionalizing expertise, although how professions organize and what it is to be a professional are likely to be fruitful areas for research.

SEE ALSO: Labor Process; Management Consultants; Professions

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professors

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Professors are people with academic appointments at institutions of higher education. Compared to just a half-century ago, higher education is differentiated on many counts, including the professorial role. While definitions delimit boundaries, they are sometimes ambiguously drawn. Professors in the American context typically hold advanced terminal degrees in the specialty in which they hold rank as assistant, associate, or full professor, those ranks composing an ascent in an institutional career. Yet vast numbers of people with academic appointments occupy roles, often without advanced terminal