



## **SIG 13 - SM - Strategic Management**

With our theme **Exploring the Future of Management: Facts, Fashion and Fado**, we invite you to participate in the debate about how to explore the future of management. We look forward to receiving your submissions.

### **T13\_10 - Strategic Responsiveness and Organizational Adaptation**

#### **Proponents:**

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#### **Short description:**

Contemporary firms operate in turbulent global contexts and must engage in responsive actions that allow them to adapt business operations and persevere. This depends on an ability to sense environmental developments and respond to them in proactive, timely and purposeful ways. It may entail updated reconnaissance from dispersed operating entities interacting with forward-looking strategizing at the corporate center. However, we know too little about the underlying strategic response capabilities as effective means to adapt the organization to the changing environmental conditions. This offers a promising potential for urgently needed insights to the benefit of management scholars and practitioners alike.

#### **Long description:**

Contemporary firms operate in dynamic complex global business contexts characterized by high uncertainty and unpredictable events with potentially extreme impacts. The observable effects of these competitive conditions are displayed in corporate performance outcomes that follow negatively skewed power distributions rather than the commonly assumed Gaussian trajectories. This poses a challenge to conventional approaches to empirical management studies.

For firms to persevere in turbulent global business contexts they must be able to engage in responsive actions that allow them to adapt business operations so they provide a better fit with the changing conditions at any point in time. These environmental conditions are characterized by increasingly specialized, interacting, and coevolving business activities where the corporate response capabilities must pursue the need for requisite variety across available strategic options. The ability to develop these solutions thrives on entrepreneurial spirits and innovative behaviors facilitated by broad delegation of decision power that permit local experimentation and guided by forward-looking strategic analytics conducted at corporate headquarters.



Corporate longevity seems to depend on the ability to sense new developments in the evolving business environment as they emerge and being able to respond to them in a proactive, timely, and purposeful manner. This may entail sharing of updated experiential insights from employees and managers responsible for the execution of functional business activities as essential input to the strategic sense-making process around top management. Hence, the ability to integrate current business reconnaissance from individuals operating in the organizational periphery, including recent insights about new initiatives that seem to work well under changing conditions, into the forward-looking strategizing at headquarters can enhance corporate responses and adaptive moves.

While these propositions may seem persuasive, the reality is that we know too little about how the underlying strategic response capabilities actually work in organizations as effective means to adapt business activities to the changing demands of the environment.

There is an apparent need to theorize about these phenomena backed by empirical analytical studies to eventually model how effective dynamic response capabilities work in contemporary organizations.

It offers a potential to create new useful insights for both management scholars and practitioners that are urgently needed.

**Keywords:**

Strategic response capabilities  
Organizational adaptation  
Open strategy

**Publication Outlet:**

Emerald Studies in Global Strategic Responsiveness  
Long range Planning

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