

Letter from the Editor

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I was recently asked by Jeanie Forray, Editor-in-Chief of the new e-journal Organization Management Journal to participate in a session at the Eastern Academy of Management meeting entitled “Scholarly Technology in the Wild: Meet the E-Journal Editors.” The session included not only JBAM and OMJ but also included a journal entitled ephemera: critical dialogues on organization. Once we got through the technology portion of our discussion (a very brief portion at that), we spent the majority of our time talking with the audience, and each other, about the allure of e-journals and the legitimacy of the delivery system. Two themes kept rising to the top of our discussion: the quality and acceptability of work published in e-journals (will it count for tenure and promotion?) and the desire to publish more recent, controversial, and leading edge material (the quicker publishing turnaround time and the desire to go beyond the mainstream journals). This issue of JBAM we hope will epitomize both the quality and controversy discussed during that session.

Organizational commitment as a field of study can be dated back to the seminal works of Chester Barnard (1938), Henri Fayol (1949), and Amitai Etzioni (1964). We are lucky to have two articles in this edition of the journal that deals with this topic. The first article by Byung Hee Lee of California State University, Fullerton and Maqbul Jamil

Novartis Pharmaceuticals is entitled “An Empirical Study of Organizational Commitment: A Multi-Level Approach” employs hierarchical linear modeling (see Saaty, 1980; <http://www-mmd.eng.cam.ac.uk/people/ahr/dstools/choosing/ahp.htm>) to determine the relationship between satisfaction and trust at the individual-level and at the group-level, the relationships between organizational commitment and role states variables (role clarity and role conflict). Results indicate that organizational commitment was positively related to satisfaction and trust at the individual-level while at the group-level there was a positive relationship between organizational commitment and the level of trust with more cohesive groups showing having a stronger relationship.

The fourth article in this edition “Influence of Managerial Trust on Survivors' Perceptions of Job Insecurity and Organizational Commitment in a Post Restructuring and Downsizing Environment” by Isaiah O. Ugboro North Carolina A&T State University, looks at commitment in downsized public transit organizations by examining the impact of organizational restructuring and downsizing on survivors' perceptions of job insecurity, and managerial trust. The outcome of the research indicates that organizational restructuring and downsizing increase continuance organizational commitment while reducing affective organizational commitment, and increasing job insecurity. The results also show significant relationships between measures of managerial trust, perceptions of job insecurity and organizational commitment.

A second set of articles focus on the issue of learning, knowledge management and intellectual capital, a very hot topic in numerous fields including organizational change and strategic management. Robert F. Dennehy, Sandra Morgan, and Laura Winston in the second article entitled “The Emperor's Challenge: Getting People To Share What They Know” note, through a review of the literature, that providing motivational incentives, allocating and allowing time, and staffing appropriately increases information sharing. Behavioral norms that encourage

information sharing include using fair process to build trust, being open to disclosing and capitalizing on mistakes, and fostering a sense of joint ownership of work products. William Burpitt, on the other hand, utilized a multiple case based methodology in the sixth paper of this edition entitled “Organizational Learning and Knowledge Based Resources: Antecedents to New Entry” to discern that firms seeking flexibility and regular entry into new markets pursue more active and more varied learning experiences than do firms seeking efficiency and targeting a stable segment of the market.

Margaret Madden, in the fifth article, returns to the issue of learning from a provider’s perspective – more specifically distance learning for colleges and universities. After reviewing the literature on distance learning and college planning, Dr. Madden develops a conceptual planning model for distance education which includes such factors as logistical, student, and faculty support issues, program evaluation, and laboratory experiences and focuses on institutional and learner outcomes, and issues of program implementation. John E. Barbuto, Jr., Marilyn J. Bugenhagen, Jill M. Stohs, and Gina S. Matkin look at academic instruction from the traditional trenches, that is, the classroom. In the third article in this edition (“Encouraging Creativity and Intellectual Stimulation: An Exercise that Forces Students to Think Outside the Box”) participants are presented with the seemingly impossible task of integrating diverse products or services into a single business plan, forcing them to think outside the box. This exercise features lateral and innovative thinking in a highly interactive session, producing innovative and creative solutions from participants.

Our last article in the issue “Undelivered Promises From the HR Profession: A Plea to Return to a More Defensible Motivation for Embracing Diversity” by Ernest. E. Stark is an invited paper which challenges the old adage that investing in a diverse workforce will lead to a greater return on investment for the firm. This paper extends the previous literature review of Williams and O’Reilly by examining empirical studies published since 1997 but before 2002. Stark finds little evidence of the ability of gender or racial/ethnic diversity to make measurable economic contributions and suggests that HR professionals reposition the drive for workplace diversity to proceed from a motivation for social justice.

Reader comments and letters to the editor would be greatly appreciated on this article in particular as well as any other articles in JBAM. We are also looking for book, case, and video reviews. Please send all material by [e-mail](#).

References

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