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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

How Leaders and Institutions Adapt to Disruption

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Dear Colleagues,

This issue of the Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management brings together a diverse set of contributions that examine how organizations respond to change, uncertainty, and evolving human needs. Across research articles, editorial reflection, and a book review, the pieces in this issue converge on a shared concern: how leaders and institutions adapt to disruption while balancing performance, resilience, and human wellbeing. Whether considering workforce mobility, climate-related risk, employee motivation, leadership in hybrid work environments, or the implications of artificial intelligence, the contributions collectively illuminate the complex interplay between organizational systems and human behavior.

Articles Appearing in this Issue

Jason Rekus Ross examines the emerging phenomenon of organizational rehiring through the lens of boomerang employees. By integrating the Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover with job embeddedness theory, the article advances a theoretical framework for understanding why some former employees are more likely to return than others. The analysis highlights how organizational efforts to maintain relational ties, reinforce person-organization fit, and reduce perceived sacrifice can significantly enhance rehiring success. The study offers both theoretical insight and practical guidance for organizations navigating increasingly dynamic labor markets.

Udey Chaudhry and Arthur Jue address the growing challenge of climate-related financial risk and its implications for institutional resilience. Drawing on literature, behavioral theory, case analysis, and survey data from credit union executives and board members, the study reveals that many financial institutions remain reactive rather than strategic in their approach to climate risk. The authors demonstrate how physical, technological, regulatory, and geopolitical disruptions increasingly shape financial stability, arguing that long-term, behaviorally informed risk management is essential for sustainable organizational resilience.

Ezekiel Carlos Dominguez explores how gamification influences motivation to participate in corporate wellness programs across generations. Through a phenomenological study, the research identifies how rewards, personal development, competition, and program design affect sustained engagement. Particularly compelling is the finding that no single motivational strategy works universally; instead, effective wellness initiatives must balance intrinsic and extrinsic motivators while accounting for generational differences. The article offers actionable insights for organizations seeking to design wellness programs that foster long-term participation.

Niall Hegarty, Gerald Cusack, and Carmine Gibaldi investigate how leadership styles vary across remote, hybrid, and in-person work arrangements among high-performing employees. Using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, the authors identify meaningful differences in leader-employee relationships based on work setting. Notably, fully remote employees reported stronger connections with supervisors than fully in-person employees, challenging assumptions about physical proximity and relational quality. The findings contribute to ongoing discussions about leadership effectiveness in increasingly flexible work environments.

Stephen Penn, Deepeka Gurunathan, and Vaishnavi Govind Bhamare examine the use of artificial intelligence in product testing in a small card game company. Their exploratory case study demonstrates how AI augmentation can help organizations manage scaling challenges while reshaping how designers and testers interpret and trust data. The authors introduce a Validation–Interpretation–Internalization framework that explains the cognitive process through which users incorporate AI-generated insights into decision-making. The study provides a practical framework for small firms seeking thoughtful and phased AI adoption.

Madhury Ray, Luis G. Vargas, Amos N. Guiora, Marcel C. Minutolo, and Danielle N. Poole contribute an editorial that reframes school safety as a public health imperative rather than solely a criminal justice or policy issue. By emphasizing the broader effects of school violence on children, families, and communities, the editorial argues for community-centered approaches to evaluating school safety initiatives. The authors challenge conventional assessment frameworks and call for more holistic evaluation

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methods that better reflect the interconnected nature of safety, wellbeing, and public health.

Karen Markel's review of How to Live a Meaningful Life by Bill Burnett and Dave Evans considers how design thinking can help individuals cultivate purpose, joy, and flow in everyday life. The review highlights the book's practical approach to meaning-making through wonder, coherence, community, and engagement with daily experience. In doing so, it reinforces a theme that resonates across this issue: meaningful outcomes often emerge not from grand transformations alone, but from deliberate reflection and intentional action in everyday contexts.

Issue Conclusion

The publication of this issue reflects a collaborative effort. I extend my sincere gratitude to the authors for their valuable contributions, to reviewers for their careful and constructive evaluations, and to the editorial team for their continued commitment to maintaining the quality and integrity of the journal. Their collective work ensures that each issue advances both scholarly understanding and practical insight.



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