



Volume 1, Issue 1

Inaugural Issue
Summer 2010

Welcome:

This is the Inaugural Issue of the Strategic Human Capital Newsletter for the Interest Group of the Strategic Management Society.

We hope you enjoy it and find it to be relevant. Please let us know how we can improve it and better serve our shared community.

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Strategic Human Capital

Human Capital with a Fine Chianti By Russ Coff, University of Wisconsin

Benvenuto! Normally, we might begin with a light antipasto (*Crostini di fegato* perhaps?). But today we celebrate! Let's start with a nice Chianti and drink to the good fortune that has brought us together. We are here to mark the beginning of a new partnership - an alliance among former rivals who have competed over intellectual turf. *Salute!*

Disputed Turf and Cross-Clan Complementarities

Ok, so the Strategy and HR Clans have not exactly been rivals, per se. Often they have been kept apart by turf boundaries (in journals) or different hotels (at

that other conference we don't mention here...). Arguably, rivals are actually aware of each other - I'm not so sure these Clans quite fit that bill.

Still, here we have an opportunity to see how the families mesh. Each offers a rich tradition exploring the role of human capital in generating performance outcomes. At the same time, each has missed an important part of the picture. Yes, our new alliance holds much promise.

The Strategy Clan has long recognized the importance of human capital as a source of competitive advantage. But alas, much of the theory has ignored subtleties about when human capital will lead to an advantage or how and why

some firms are more successful at attracting, motivating, and retaining human capital. It brings to mind a variant of an old joke about economists - "let us assume one firm has superior human capital." Of course, strategy has a bit more than this to offer but it is so high level that we have relatively little to say about what's happening on



(Continued on page 2)

Progress in Strategic Human Capital Research: The Importance of Good Reviewing By Patrick M. Wright, Cornell University

As a graduate student back in the mid-late 1980's, my mentor, John Hollenbeck, used to drill in us how critical the gatekeeper role is to the progression of the field. Over the past few years I have, like many others, had a number of papers rejected

from top tier journals, and frequently have been disappointed in the quality of reviews. I know I'm not alone because I've had some of my colleagues send their rejection letters to me so they could check to see if their concerns were just theirs, or if these really

were poor reviews. While I certainly have a personal vested interest in improving the quality of reviewing, I write this from a greater interest in seeing the Strategic Human Capital field grow in its knowledge base. As this is the inaugural is-

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“The
complementarities
between
the clans are
unmistakable.”

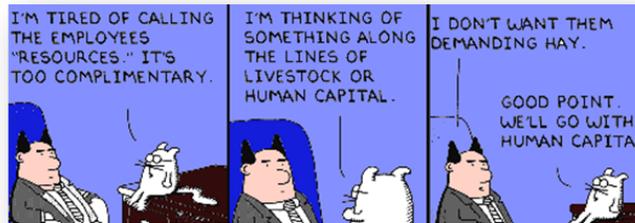


A Fine Chianti

(Continued from page 1)

the ground. There is recent interest in executions turn-over but this largely ignores the cognitive processes that drive people to disappear.

The Strategic HR Clan has also long recognized human capital as a source of performance differences and does address the problems of attracting, retaining and motivating human capi-



tal. However, at times, the Clan has focused on activities that take place within an HR department (of a firm large enough to have an HR department) in support of a strategy developed separately in the executive suite. In short, many of the most interesting strategic questions have been *bumped off* (the agenda). In addition, the focus on disseminating best practices may have underemphasized the factors that are hardest to transfer between firms and are thus most promising as sources of sustained advantage.

The complementarities between the clans are unmistakable. The prospects for the alliance abound – if we can bring the families together.

The Rome Accord

We will meet in Rome to explore the possibilities and solidify our bonds. Here, Underboss Bill Hesterly has put together a brief introductory program on Sunday to bring the families together for the first time. The three sessions will cover human capital heterogeneity, bringing the Clans together, and dividing the spoils of our

efforts (see pages 3-5).

In addition, Underboss Dave Lepak has outlined an initial treaty to bring the families together (see page #). The accord covers topics such as human capital mobility, specificity, systems for managing human capital, heterogeneity, and competitive advantage. We owe a debt of *gratitude* to the those willing to have their voices heard at this time of great uncertainty. Lepak has done an exceptional job weaving the perspectives together to promote discussion across the Clans.

This first meeting is a critical foray into the possibilities before us. We very much need to expand involvement for our next meeting in Miami. Please

do consider what you might have to offer to deepen our alliance.

Leadership: Capos and Underbosses Needed

Underbosses Lepak and Hesterly know that their time is limited. We need to bring new blood into the alliance. Of course, we seek your involvement as submitters and reviewers. However, there are also opportunities in the family's (interest group) leadership. For example, we will need a new slate of people to run for representatives at large in the election next year. Before then, we need people to broaden our participation and build the community. At a minimum, you can see that we need someone to write the newsletter with fewer corny jokes.

Seriously, if you are interested in becoming more involved, please contact me and give me a sense of what you are interested in doing. Our greatest need is for community building activities to promote dialog across the Clans.

Thanks again to everyone who submitted their work for consideration in the program. I am particularly grateful to those of you who reviewed for the conference. It is a special challenge to review papers from another Clan.

Indeed it is a time of celebration. Come join us as we move forward!

*Che la nostra partnership
crescere e prosperare,*

A Note from the Strategic Human Capital Program Chair

Hello everyone. It is great to be writing this update for our new Interest Group. I want to start off by highlighting some amazing accomplishments that this new IG has already achieved:

- We received 82 proposals for consideration for the Rome conference. To be honest, we did not really know what this number would be when we started out but the end result is tremendous – we had the sixth largest number of submissions of all the IGs. Clearly this IG domain is providing a useful outlet for many scholars to submit their work. We are obviously pleased with this volume and look to build on this in the future.
- Another great accomplishment is that the introduction of our IG has resulted in 58 new members to SMS. These are individuals that have never been members of SMS until this IG was launched. This means that we are not only helping meet the needs of those studying strategic human capital, we are helping to expand the reach of SMS to a wider array of scholars. This also reinforces our objective of creating an IG for scholars who did not have a dedicated outlet to focus on human capital. We are thrilled to meet this need and to provide a forum to exchange our scholarly work on this topic. We also encourage everyone to build ties with scholars in the other interest group domains. This is a great opportunity to broaden our views of strategic human capital with outstanding scholars in the strategy field.
- We had 31 amazing reviewers. As the submission process unfolded I was not really sure how many submissions we would receive and how many reviewers we would need. Fortunately, we are lucky to have the support of 31 great reviewers. Our reviewers turned in high quality feedback for the authors and did so in a timely manner. For those of you who reviewed, THANK YOU!

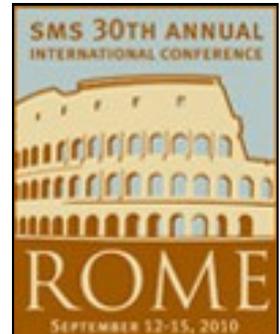
Moving on to the program for Rome, it is important to acknowledge that the conference submission process was very competitive. We received a number of outstanding submissions but, due to space constraints, we were not able to accept all the papers. In total, the final program consists of 47 proposals. We did try to build the program with a mixture of common ground session and paper sessions to ensure that we could present as much high quality research as possible as well as to organize the papers into meaningful and interesting themes.

I've included an overview of the times and sessions on the next page but you can go online and see the whole conference. If you take a few minutes to look through the program you can see that we have 11 sessions with 8 paper sessions and 3 common ground sessions. Four of these sessions are jointly run with 3 other interest groups (Entrepreneurship, Corporate Strategy and Governance, and Micro-Foundations). The sessions cover a wide range of interesting topics that should prove exciting to all of our members.

Please plan to attend the Sunday Interest Group sessions. The goal of these sessions is to have a great start to the program for Rome and I believe that Bill Hesterly has put together some great topics for the Sunday sessions that are shaping up to be very exciting. In addition, we hope everyone can make the Sunday business meeting to meet and discuss present and future trends within the IG, learn about the focus and direction of the group as well as our goals for the upcoming year.

Thanks again for helping launch this inaugural IG – the quality of the papers, the support of the reviewers, the great enrollment for the conference, and the excitement among the members are all testament to the long time viability of this IG and really reflect that we are building a great community of dedicated scholars. We look forward to seeing everyone in Rome. Have a great trip!

Dave Lepak
Rutgers University



*82 proposals
submitted*

31 reviewers

*58 new to SMS
members*

8 paper sessions

*3 common ground
sessions*



Dave Lepak



SMS
Annual Conference
ROME
September 12-15
Calendar for the
Strategic Human
Capital Track
(Track L)



2010 Conference Sessions (Track L)

SUNDAY

10:15 - 11:30

Session 295: Why Should We Have a Strategic Human Capital Interest Group?

12:45 - 14:00

Session 296: Different Perspectives on Human Capital and Heterogeneity:
A Future Agenda

16:00 - 17:15

Session 348: Interest Group Business Meeting-Strategic Human Capital

MONDAY

09:45 - 11:00

Session 151: Employee Mobility

11:15 - 12:30

Session 152: Human Capital Specificity

15:15 - 16:30

Session 159: Linking Human Capital and Competitive
Advantage

16:45 - 18:00

Session 154: Entrepreneurship and Human Capital

TUESDAY

08:00 - 09:15

Session 176: C-level Executives, Who Matters and Why

Session 285: Executive Human Capital

11:00 - 12:15

Session 157: Managing Human Capital Knowledge

Session 161: Exploring the Impact of HR Practices Human Capital

14:00 - 15:15

Session 306: Top Management Team Human Capital

17:00 - 18:15

Session 156: Human Capital and Diversity

WEDNESDAY

08:00 - 09:15

Session 160: Examining the Role of Human Capital in Competitive Advantage

Session 170: Examinations of Executive Turnover

11:00 - 12:15

Session 153: Leveraging Human Capital with HR



Sunday Interest Group Sessions in Rome

The theme of the 2010 Strategic Management Society Annual International Conference is Strategic Management at the Crossroads. The Strategic Human Capital Interest Group embodies this theme with our emphasis on synthesizing the insights from multiple disciplines. Our Sunday IG sessions will explore the crossroad of strategic human capital from various perspectives. We will kick off the inaugural year of the Strategic Human Capital Interest Group with three Sunday sessions that will feature a distinguished and diverse set of panelists. The aim of all the sessions is to provoke the scholars, practitioners, and consultants in attendance to think more deeply about the connections between human capital and strategy. In doing so, we anticipate that all three sessions will address fundamental questions in strategic management.

Why have a Strategic Human Capital Interest Group. Jay Barney (Ohio State), Pat Wright (Cornell), and Todd Zenger (Washington University-St. Louis) will be featured in one session. Jay, Pat, and Todd will discuss the fundamental connections between human capital and strategy and help us discuss the question, why should we have a Strategic Human Capital Interest Group in the Strategic Management Society.

Different Perspectives on the Effect of Human Capital on Firm Heterogeneity. A second session will examine different perspectives on human capital and firm heterogeneity. Teppo Felin (Brigham Young University), Janice Molloy (Michigan State), Frank Rothaermel (Georgia Tech), and Rafaella Sadun (Harvard) will discuss the role of human capital in firm heterogeneity from the perspectives of organization theory, human resource management, strategic management, and economics. We anticipate a conversation that will highlight both commonalities and tensions between the different perspectives.

How Does Strategic Human Capital Influence a Firm's Ability to Appropriate Rents? Strategic human capital and rent appropriation will be the focus of the third session, which will feature Russ Coff (Emory), Dave Lepak (Rutgers), and Bill Hesterly (Utah). Panelists will address the impact of human capital on appropriation. Russ will focus on appropriation from a stakeholder perspective, Bill will talk about how human capital interacts with social capital to influence appropriation, and Dave will address how a firm's human capital policies and practices affect its ability to appropriate rents.

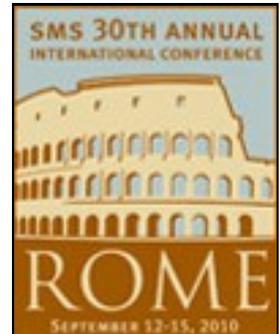


Consistent with the overall objective of the conference, we anticipate "a deep discussion on how strategic management might or should evolve to more explicitly and fully embed the diversities and developments."

I look forward to seeing you all in Rome.

Best regards,

Bill Hesterly
University of Utah



SMS
Annual Conference
SUNDAY
Interest Group
Sessions





Patrick M. Wright

“I write this from a greater interest in seeing the Strategic Human Capital field grow in its knowledge base.”



Progress in Strategic Human Capital Research: The Importance of Good Reviewing **By Patrick M. Wright, Cornell University**

(Continued from page 1)

sue of the Strategic Human Capital newsletter, I’m attempting to raise an important issue while simultaneously seeking to be provocative.

What’s a Gatekeeper’s Job?

The gatekeepers’ first priority is to see the field progress. Gatekeepers do *not* have the job of rejecting papers. I remember being taught that as a reviewer I should give the editor a reason to reject a paper, meaning not that I necessarily voted for a reject, but that provided the editor with cover if s/he decided to reject. We reject papers to ensure that bad knowledge does not enter into the system in a way that sends the field in the wrong direction. However, my fear is that a generation of reviewers has emerged who see their job as rejecting papers rather than moving the field forward. Lacking the proper perspective and a level of research sophistication (see Anne Tsui and John Hollenbeck’s article on the frighteningly meager publishing records of many editorial board members), they can rely on naïve checklists of issues that provides a

simple tool to address a very complex set of issues. Let me make a few suggestions below.

1. Lack of theory suggests a revision, not a rejection. I am holding in my hand 6 rejection letters from one of the field’s premier journals (only half of them are for papers on which I was an author). The first item noted by the editor in every one of them was about a lack of theory. However, examining the explanation of why reviewers brought this up reveals three problems. First, as Don Hambrick noted in his provocative AMR article, theory-less research can still be quite valuable, particularly if it reveals empirical relationships that require the revision or development of theory to explain. Second, what some reviewers called a lack of theory was simply the lack of the theory they wanted to see. Finally, even if there were NO theory, that can never be a fatal flaw. A fatal flaw is something that cannot be changed like a design that was completely invalid for drawing conclusions or measures that have no validity. But the logic leading to a hypothesis can always be written differently. If you

don’t like the theory or don’t think there’s enough, this is a great opportunity to develop the manuscript by providing suggestions for which theory might (better) apply and how it might be applied in a way that moves the field forward.

2. Distinguish between matters of opinion and matters of validity. Let’s face it, as academics we tend to grow pretty big egos and become emotionally invested in our way of thinking (I’ve never been sure if that is due to a self-selection or socialization process!) When papers come in that we disagree with, we need to be able to distinguish between whether we don’t like the paper because we disagree, or we don’t like the paper because it is technically wrong. For example, one of my colleagues had a paper that looked at the relationship between a measure of human capital and performance. A reviewer noted that s/he did not know why the paper was couched in the Strategic HRM literature because that literature focused on HR practices and performance (I wish I was joking about this). Clearly this person had read SHRM

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articles on HR practices and performance and came to take on the view that this is what SHRM was all about. When you are raising an issue that you think is critical, be sure that you have the ability to step out of your own narrow perspective and see if others might disagree with you. If so, be clear in your review that this is your opinion, not truth.

3. *A Good Idea, Taken To an Extreme, Becomes Bad.*

Years ago my colleagues and I published a few studies looking at the lack of reliability in single rater studies of the relationship between HR and performance. We, of course, suggested that this would imply multiple raters of HR practices be used to maximize reliability. Even today I have people ask me to quit rejecting their papers for using single raters...when I have never done so (and seldom even raise the issue). I know that multiple raters are preferable, but if that becomes the new standard for publishable research, we'll see that research stream come to a screeching halt. Yet someone out there took away the message "single-rater equals bad" and seemingly applies that checklist to studies. When certain methodological issues come

up that seem like no-brainers (e.g., percept studies, studies with unique samples, etc.) ask the legitimate question of "would it even be possible to do this study another way?" and if the answer is no, then think about whether or not, even with this flaw, it tells the field something it didn't know before.

4. *The Perfect is the Worst Enemy of the Good.*

We have all been here. We studied the relationship between two variables (e.g., Organization commitment and performance) and suggested that this relationship was through a process such as the commitment eliciting discretionary behavior. Then a reviewer asks "why didn't you measure discretionary behavior. Of course if you had measured discretionary behavior they would either complain that you had no theory of how commitment impacted discretionary behavior, or if you did have such theory, they'd ask why you didn't measure whatever variable you suggested mediated that relationship. While the "missing variable" problem is an easy one, it is not the only one. Reviewers will often ask why you didn't use a larger sample (even though your results are significant) or why you didn't use a different sample (that

might be more generalizable) or why you didn't temporarily separate your IV measure from your DV measure. In every case, they all might be good ideas, but they are ideas that would have been better suggested before you collected your data, but are not very helpful now that your data is collected and analyzed. Again, as a reviewer, you have to constantly ask yourself, even though the study would be even better if it had done X, does it still tell the field something without X?

There has never been the perfect study. All research is about trade-offs. Because of the inherent nature of this dilemma, any study can be rejected if one disagrees with the tradeoffs the research made. But if rejecting papers begins to gain priority over building the knowledge base, we may soon find very little of our research in the top journals. I don't want to imply that we should be like the MBA directors who tell the MBA students just before they fill out some MBA program evaluation form to remember, if they rate the program low, its ranking will go down, thus making their own degree less valuable. The goal is not to fill up as much journal space as possible with low quality strategic human capital research



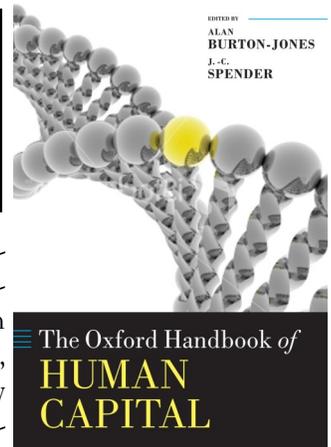
"Gatekeepers do not

have the job of

rejecting papers."

just to say the field is increasing in importance. However, I remember talking to an editor of AMJ 20 years ago when the journal was being criticized for not accepting enough micro-OB research. His response was something like "But the micro reviewers hold such unattainably high standards that they keep rejecting everything that comes in. I can't accept papers that the reviewers all reject!" I suspect that the same process may be at an early stage in strategic human capital research, and fear that it may soon begin holding the field back. ◇

Burton-Jones, A. and Spender, J.C. (Editors). *The Oxford Handbook of Human Capital* (Oxford Handbooks in Business and Management). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2011 (expected hardcover publication). ISBN-13: 978-0199532162

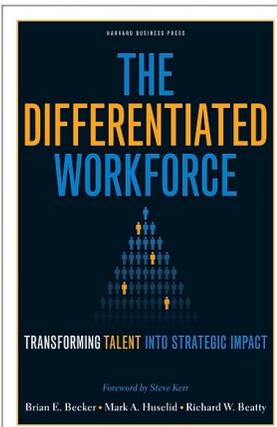


Macroeconomic research on human capital - the stock of human capabilities and knowledge - has been extensively published but to date the literature has lacked a comprehensive analysis of human capital within the organization. The Oxford Handbook of Human Capital has been designed to fill that gap, providing an authoritative, inter-disciplinary, and up to date survey of relevant concepts, research areas, and applications. Specially commissioned contributions from over 40 authors reveal the importance of human capital for contemporary organizations, exploring its conceptual underpinnings, relevance to theories of the firm, implications for organizational effectiveness, interdependencies with other resources, and role in the future economy. Unlike neoclassical macroeconomic concepts of human capital, human capital in organizations is shown to be dynamic and heterogeneous, requiring new theories and management frameworks. The systemic role of human capital is explored, revealing it as the lynchpin of social, structural and other forms of intangible and tangible capital. Connections between human capital and organizational performance are investigated from HR management, procurement, alignment, value appropriation, and accounting perspectives. Links between micro and macro perspectives are provided through analyses of inter firm human capital mobility, national and regional human capital formation regimes and industry employment relations practices. This Handbook is designed for scholars and graduate students of organization and management theory, strategy, entrepreneurship, knowledge and intellectual capital, accounting, IT, HR, IR, economic sociology and cultural studies. For policy makers and practitioners it should provide an up to date guide to the nature and role of human capital in contemporary organizations and the roles that government, industry and other extra firm institutions can play in facilitating its development.

Recently Published
Noteworthy Books
of Potential
Interest to SMS
Strategic Human
Capital Interest
Group Members

Becker, B., Huselid, M., and Beatty, D. (2009) *Differentiated Workforce: Transforming Talent into Strategic Impact*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 272 pages. 446X-HBK-ENG (HBSP Product Number)

Do you think of your company's talent as an investment to be managed like a portfolio? You should, according to authors Becker, Huselid, and Beatty, if you're interested in strategy execution. Many companies fall into the trap of spending too much time and money on low performers, while high performers aren't getting the necessary resources, development opportunities, or rewards. In *The Differentiated Workforce*, the authors expand on their previous books, *The HR Scorecard* and *The Workforce Scorecard*, and recommend that you manage your workforce like a portfolio - with disproportionate investments in the jobs that create the most wealth. You'll learn to: Rise above talent management "best practice" and instead create a differentiated workforce that can't be easily copied by competitors. Differentiate those capabilities in your company that are truly strategic. Identify your wealth-creating "A" positions. Create a new relationship between HR and line managers, and articulate the role each plays in a differentiated workforce strategy. Develop the right measures for your organization. Based on two decades of academic research and experience working with hundreds of executives, *The Differentiated Workforce* gives you the tools to translate your talent into strategic impact.



(Continued on page 12)

Strategic Characteristics of Human Beings

By Clint Chadwick, University of Kansas

It is with great excitement that we see human capital issues find a home as a separate interest group within the Strategic Management Society. In making a case for human capital's impact on firm performance with our colleagues who work with other flavors of strategy, it is important to inform our arguments with the unique combination of strategic attributes shared by the human beings who embody human capital. This allows us to draw clear distinctions between the strategic management of human capital and the management of other classes of firm assets, such as physical capital, reputational capital, organizational capital, financial assets, and technological assets.

Some of human beings' strategic characteristics include inherent uniqueness, non-depletion with use, and adaptability. Firm level human capital heterogeneity is rooted, in part, in human beings' inherent uniqueness. However, for human beings' uniqueness to be strategically valuable, it must augment firm level heterogeneity that drives economic rents. Just being different isn't sufficient; to lead to competitive advantage, human capital must strategi-

cally differentiate the firm. This is, of course, also true of all the other classes of firm assets. Human capital also tends to be improved rather than depleted when used by firms to create rents (a characteristic that human capital shares with some intangible assets such as reputational capital). Additionally, human beings tend to be more adaptable than the other classes of strategic assets, giving human capital, particularly portable human capital, a distinct advantage in its ability to be redeployed by the firm as circumstances warrant. Yet this is an advantage of degree rather than of type: Other classes of assets are adaptable, as well.

With an eye towards competitive advantage, however, I'd like to focus on two strategic attributes that are more unique to human beings, knowledge and free will. Although firm knowledge is preserved, exploited, and perpetuated in organizational routines, cultures, databases, organization of work, mental maps, and other forms of shared organizational knowledge, all new firm knowledge originates in human beings. The ability to originate new forms of knowledge is unique to human beings, though other kinds of assets such as or-

ganizational designs and social capital can certainly help the process along (e.g., Kang, Morris, & Snell, 2007). Robust arguments from a number of scholars suggest that knowledge management may be the ultimate source of sustainable competitive advantage, first, because new knowledge allows a firm to renew its current advantages and to create new advantages, and second, because firms can vary greatly in their abilities manage their human capital with respect to knowledge. Thus, greater understanding of the complex processes by which human beings generate knowledge at is a key firm competitiveness issue.

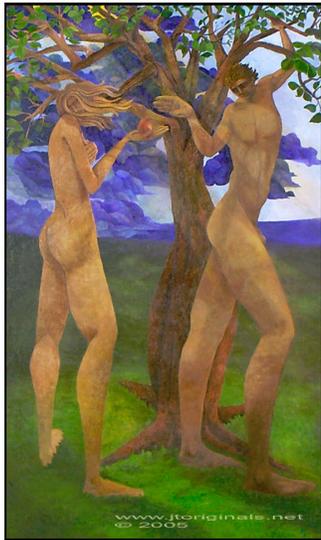
Free will affects both the kinds of strategic value that organizations derive from human beings and the consistency with which such value is obtained (Wright, Dunford, & Snell, 2001). As Wright et al. (2001) argue, free will has both cognitive and emotional components. How people think and feel about their working conditions and their relationships to their firms can profoundly influence their behavior, even when different groups of workers are subjected to what are ostensibly equivalent human resource management (HRM) practices.



Clint Chadwick

For example, depending on such contextual factors as labor-management relations and individual workers' personalities and relationships with the firm, the introduction of self-managed teams may be interpreted quite differently. To some workers, self-managed teams may be seen as desirable grants of autonomy. To other workers, self-managed teams may be no more than the work practice *du jour*, to be endured until it passes. To still other workers, self-managed teams may be seen as complicating tasks that can be better handled individually or as a management "speed up" scheme. Same practice, but three very different interpretations that greatly shape the outcomes that the practice creates for firms. This is not an issue that firms need to manage for any other class of assets. Firms don't have to

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Free Will

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worry about what their oil derricks or brand names think about their CEO's compensation package, for example.

Human beings' distinct combination of strategic characteristics gives human capital great potential to generate economic rents. For instance, since no other class of firm assets has free will, activity and coordination within organizational systems ultimately begins in human beings, making human capital a unique source of strategic leverage. On the other hand, the complexity of accommodating these characteristics makes managing a firm's human beings for competitive advantage extremely difficult. Coff has suggested, for example, that free will makes appropriating rents from

Strategic Characteristics of Human Beings, By Clint Chadwick

human capital uniquely problematic because human beings can leave the firm of their own volition (Coff 1997).

Given the complexity of human beings' strategic characteristics, ineffective HRM is likely to be relatively common and can damage a firm's efficiency as well as its ability to secure competitive advantage. Indeed, results from the initial rounds of SHRM empirical studies in the 1990s, a number of which associate fairly generalized HRM systems with firm performance across broad samples of firms, suggest that firms

vary widely in basic HRM proficiency. Hence, firm-level heterogeneity in stocks of human capital and in HRM effectiveness may be widespread and can give rise to competitive advantage. Unraveling how this relationship works, however, begins in considering human capital's unique set of strategically relevant characteristics. If we can demonstrate that the strategic management of human beings is a different game for firms than it is for other classes of strategic assets, we can strengthen the case for studying human capital of its own accord. ♦

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- Kang, S-C., S. S. Morris, S. A. Snell. 2007. Relational archetypes, organizational learning, and value creation: Extending the human resource architecture. *Acad. of Mgmt. Rev.* 32(1): 236-256.
- Wright, P. M., B. B. Dunford, S. A. Snell. 2001. Human resources and the resource based view of the firm. *J. of Mgmt.* 27 701-721.

Conference Announcements

3rd Annual People and Organizations Conference

The Wharton School, Philadelphia, PA

October 8th & 9th, 2010

CALL FOR PAPERS

Prior conferences brought attention to organization-level research on topics associated with work and employment, a tradition we continue this year. Representative papers included studies explaining workplace practices, examining organization-level outcomes or the effects of practices and structures on individuals. Last year, many papers used human capital issues to consider outcomes associated with strategy. A common theme in presentations has been a concern for the context of relationships.

We are interested in papers based on work in progress: Please do not submit studies that have been published or will appear in 2010. We also have a special interest in studies that relate to new developments in issues around work and employment. Submissions from all fields and disciplines are welcome.

If you are interested in presenting a paper, please submit an abstract of 800 words or less by **August 1st 2010**. Submit to Peter Cappelli - Cappelli@wharton.upenn.edu. The organizing committee will select papers and discussants with the goal of producing an engaging discussion

Conference organizing committee: Matthew Bidwell, The Wharton School; Diane Burton, Cornell University; Peter Cappelli, The Wharton School; Tim Gardner, Vanderbilt University; and Peter Sherer, University of Calgary

Conference Announcements

Academy of Management PDW

Do You See What I See? Bridging Disciplinary Divides in Human Capital Scholarship
Saturday, Aug 7 2010 1:00PM - 4:30PM at Le Centre Sheraton in Drummond center
 Academy of Management Annual Conference in Montreal, CA

This workshop is for those interested in the role of human capital or "people" in firm value creation. Within management, human capital is examined from a trinity of disciplinary perspectives (economics, psychology, sociology). Although not often discussed, each discipline has unique views about what human capital is, what theoretical assumptions hold, and what constitutes theoretical and methodological "excellence" for multi-level scholarship. On the one hand, these differences provide untapped opportunities to improve the rigor of human capital scholarship. On the other hand, if unacknowledged, these differences can cause miscommunication during research and publication processes.

The purpose of this PDW is to build awareness about these disciplinary differences and gain the knowledge required to navigate these divides as researchers and reviewers. The focus will be on acknowledging and potentially spanning disciplinary traditions to capture the insights that each discipline can offer. Respected scholars (Diane Burton, Cornell Univ.; Steve Kozlowski, Michigan St. Univ.; Clint Chadwick, Univ. of Kansas) will walk participants through the theoretical, methodological, and epistemological traditions of their discipline relative to human capital. Then, we will dialogue with a panel of senior scholars about the challenges of conducting multidisciplinary human capital scholarship and seeing it through to publication. This panel includes John Delery, Univ. of Arkansas; Joseph Mahoney, Univ. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Patrick Wright, Cornell Univ.; Jay Barney, Ohio St. Univ.; and Steve Kozlowski, Michigan St. Univ.

Registrations will be limited to 50 participants. There is no fee for this PDW. To register, complete this brief survey about your disciplinary background and research interests: <http://itybityurl.com/9>

Academy of Management Caucus

How Strategic Human Capital Creates Value

Tuesday, Aug 10 2010 8:00AM - 9:30AM at Le Palais Des Congres in 523B
 Academy of Management Annual Conference in Montreal, CA

In this caucus, we explore the role of human capital as a strategic factor that may create value for the firm and contribute to a firm's competitive advantage. We focus on theorizing the mechanisms by which the top management team may effectively link human capital to performance-related firm outcomes. Our objective is to advance theory on how "strategic human capital" for a diversified firm is different from traditional notions of "human capital." Our core argument is that strategic human capital is strategic because it includes intellectual and social capital as well as the human capital that creates the most value to the firm. We develop this argument as well as suggestions for future research to examine the role of strategic human capital in value creation.

Developing an argument that human capital in diversified firms is strategic is based on assumptions that members of the top management team bring highly valued relationships with them and this social capital is critical to the success of the firm. In this conceptualization, we envision at least three varieties of social capital related to top managers: social capital within divisions; social capital across divisions; and social capital outside the firm. Our intent in this caucus is to provide a forum to discuss the implications of these issues and related topics to draw some research implications for future work and suggest some empirical approaches for future research on these issues.



Conference

Announcements

- AOM PDW
- *People and Organizations Conference*
- AOM Caucus

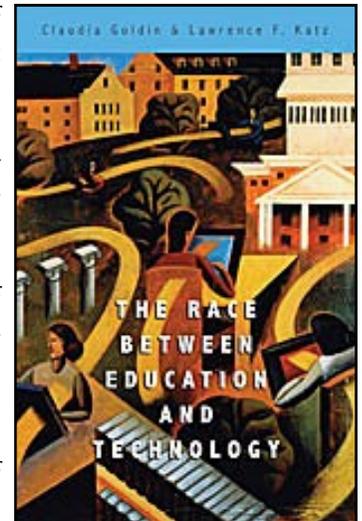
Recently Published Noteworthy Books of Potential Interest

(Continued from page 8)

Goldin, C. and Katz, L.F. (2010) *The Race Between Education and Technology*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 496 pages. (Paperback) ISBN-13: 978-0674035300

While this volume has been available in hardback since 2008, it recently has been released in paperback and is proving to be a very influential volume on general issues of educational attainment, employment structures, innovation, and other issues of interest to strategic human capital research.

This book provides a careful historical analysis of the co-evolution of educational attainment and the wage structure in the United States through the twentieth century. The authors propose that the twentieth century was not only the American Century but also the Human Capital Century. The American educational system is what made America the richest nation in the world. Its educational system had always been less elite than that of most European nations. By 1900 the U.S. had begun to educate its masses at the secondary level, not just in the primary schools that had remarkable success in the nineteenth century. The book argues that technological change, education, and inequality have been involved in a kind of race. During the first eight decades of the twentieth century, the increase of educated workers was higher than the demand for them. This had the effect of boosting income for most people and lowering inequality. However, the reverse has been true since about 1980. This educational slow-down was accompanied by rising inequality. The authors discuss the reasons for this, and what might be done to ameliorate it.



Call for Information



The Strategic Human Capital Interest Group is for you. We are seeking to create a group that will provide a forum for the exchange of ideas on the topic of strategic human capital. Please send us your ideas, comments, suggestions and feedback regarding the Interest Group to the Chairperson, Russ Coff.

Please send us news and topics you think will be of interest the readers of this newsletter (e.g., conferences, calls for papers, books, etc.).

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