When Organizational Contextual Factors Shape Top and Middle Managers’ Cognitions of Effective Strategy Strategists

By

Dr Robert Wright

Date: Friday, 23 January 2009
Time: 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Venue: M802

All interested are welcome
When Organizational Contextual Factors Shape Top and Middle Managers’ Cognitions of Effective Strategy Strategists

ABSTRACT

Robert Wright

What impact do organizational contextual issues have on strategy workers when they carry out the work of driving improvements to help the business? Using theories of sensemaking and dominant logic, we collected data from top and middle managers of a listed retail business using both first- and second-order level analysis. We produced propositions centering around what managers looked for in helping them perform their job as strategists effectively based on actors’ own elicited theories-in-use. Combining these propositions into a conceptual model produced three mediating processes that allow us to generalize the usefulness of our framework to other strategy workers facing different situated contexts. Our model revealed the importance of strategizing (literally, thinking and acting strategically), developing a sense of urgency / readiness, and the need for constant reflection. The findings adds to the practice of strategy literature by investigating not just what strategist do, but how they can do better given situated contextual factors. Implications of our study are discussed.

Keywords: Strategy-as-Practice; Top and Middle Managers; Cognitions