

THE ART OF WRITING ABSTRACTS

ABSTRACTS

SAMPLES

ABSTRACT 1

Laurie J. Kirsch (Katz Graduate School of Business, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260). The Management of Complex Tasks in Organizations: Controlling the Systems Development Process. *Organization Science*/Vol. 7, No. 1 (1996).

Control theory attempts to explain how one person or group in an organization can ensure that another person or group works toward and attains a set of organizational goals. Prior empirical work investigating control theory has shown that characteristics of the task and of the organizational environment predict the use of various types of control. However, this paper argues that when control theory is applied to a complex, nonroutine task such as the management of information systems development, the theory of control is incomplete. In particular, it proposes that knowledge of the task is a key determinant of type of control.

Four modes of control (behavior, outcome, clan, and self) are identified from the organizational literature: each highlights different aspects of control in organizations. Building on prior empirical work, this paper integrates the different theoretical perspectives and predicts the circumstances under which each type of control will be implemented. Survey responses from 96 participants of 32 systems development efforts suggest that the extent to which behaviors are monitored interacts with the project sponsor's level of systems development knowledge to determine the amount of behavior control; that outcome control is a function of the extent to which the behaviors are monitored and outcomes are measurable; and that self-control is dependent on the extent to which outcomes are measurable and the level of the project sponsor's knowledge about systems development activities. No relationship between clan control and the independent variables was found.

ABSTRACT 2

Vassilis M. Paradaakis, Spyros Lioukas, David Chambers (London Business School, London U.K., Athens University of Economics and Business, Athens, Greece). Strategic Decision-making Processes: The Role of Management and Context. *Strategic Management Journal*/Vol. 19 (1998).

This paper investigates the relationship between the process of strategic decision-making and management and contextual factors. First, drawing on a sample of strategic decisions, it analyzes the process through which they are taken, into seven dimensions: comprehensiveness/rationality, financial reporting, rule formalization, hierarchical decentralization, lateral communication, politicization, problem-solving dissension. Second, these process dimensions are related to (1) decision-specific characteristics, both perceived characteristics and objective typologies of strategic decisions, (2) top management characteristics, and (3) contextual factors referring to external corporate environment and internal firm characteristics. Overall, the results support the view that strategic decision processes are shaped by a multiplicity of factors, in all these

categories. But the most striking finding is that decision-specific characteristics appear to have the most important influence on the strategic decision-making process, as decisions with different decision-specific characteristics are handled through different processes. The evident dominance of decision-specific characteristics over management and contextual factors enriches the traditional 'external control' vs. 'strategic choice' debate in the area of strategic management. An interpretation of results is attempted and policy implications are derived.

ABSTRACT 3

Kathleen M. Sutcliffe, Gerry McNamara (Department of Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management, The University of Michigan Business School, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1234; Department of Management, Broad Graduate School of Management, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1122). Controlling Decision-Making Practice in Organizations. *Organization Science*/Vol. 12, No. 4 (2001).

How are decision practices fostered in organizations and how are they linked to decision outcomes? This study addresses these questions by examining one financial institution's efforts to standardize and control decision making across geographically separated organizational units. We argue that decision-maker behavior is situated and is not simply a function of individual choice. Rather, in organizational settings decision-makers are subject to a hierarchy of influences that affect the decision processes they use and their resulting decision choices. To test our ideas, we examined 900 borrower "risk rating" decisions and found general support for our hypothesis. . Decision makers were more likely to use the prescribed practice when decisions were important, when the decision target was known, and when the decision maker was located in a larger subunit. Decision makers altered their decision practices in the short term, but in the long term they appeared to partially revert to their earlier practices. Reliance on prescribed practice fostered stability in decisions, but surprisingly appeared to negatively affect future judgments. The findings indicate that organizations can change more microaspects of decision making, but these changes may be transitory. Moreover the results suggest that decision makers may become complacent when they rely on prescribed decision practices, a tendency that can have untoward consequences for the organizations in which they are embedded.

ABSTRACT 4

Byron Sharp, Anne Sharp (Marketing Science Center, University of South Australia, City West, North Terrace, Adelaide 5000, Australia). Loyalty Programs and Their Impact on Repeat-purchase Loyalty Patterns. International Journal of Research in Marketing 14 (1997) 473-486.

Loyalty programs are currently increasing in popularity around the world. This paper discusses the potential of loyalty programs to alter the normal market patterns of repeat-purchase behavior which characterize competitive repeat-purchase markets. In line with this thinking, a large scale loyalty program is evaluated in terms of its ability to change normal repeat-purchase patterns by generating 'excess loyalty' for brands in the program. Panel data were used to develop Dirichlet estimates of expected repeat-purchase loyalty statistics by brand. These estimates were compared with the observed market repeat-purchase behavior. Overall a trend towards a weak level of excess loyalty was observed, although the expected deviation was not consistently observed for all the loyalty program brands. Only two of the six loyalty program participant brands showed substantial excess loyalty deviation. However, these deviations in repeat-purchase loyalty were observed for non-members of the loyalty program as well as members and appear likely to be at least partially the result of other loyalty efforts particular to these brands.

ABSTRACT 5

Webster F.E., Jr. (1992). The Changing Role of Marketing in Corporation. Journal of Marketing 56 (4): 1-17.

The purpose of this article is to outline both the intellectual and pragmatic roots of changes that are occurring in marketing, especially marketing management, as a body of knowledge, theory, and practice and to suggest the need for a new paradigm of the marketing function within the firm. First, the origins of the marketing management framework, the generally accepted paradigm of the marketing discipline for the past three decades, are considered. Then shifting managerial practice is examined, especially the dissolution of hierarchical bureaucratic structures in favor of networks of buyer-seller relationships and strategic alliances. Within those new forms of organization, the changing role of marketing is discussed and reconceptualization of marketing as a field of study and practice is outlined.

ABSTRACT 6

Hakansson H., Snehota I. (1994). No Business is an Island: The Network Concept of Business Strategy / Marketing Perspective.

The aim of this article is to explore the contributions that could be made to the conceptual frame of reference for business strategy management by one of the research programs which focuses on the organization-environment interface, and to which a network approach has been applied. We start by examining some of the assumptions underlying the current "strategy management doctrine". The network model of the organization-environment interface is then reviewed and three central issues of the strategy management doctrine are discussed from the viewpoint of the network model:

(1) organizational boundaries, (2) determinants of organizational effectiveness, and (3) the process of managing business strategy.

The conclusion reached is that in all three changes are required in the assumptions of the business strategy model. Our arguments stem from a basic proposition about situations described by the network model: continuous interaction with other parties constituting the context with which the organization interacts endows the organization with meaning and a role. When this proposition applies, any attempt to manage the behavior allocates and structures its internal resources towards the way it relates its own activities and resources to those of the other parties constituting its context. Such a shift in focus entails a somewhat different view of the meaning of organizational effectiveness: what does it depend on and how can it be managed?

ABSTRACT 7

**Rodney E. Smith (University of Arkansas), William F. Wright (University of Waterloo).
Determinants of Customer Loyalty and Financial Performance. Journal of Management
Accounting Research 16 (2004) 183-205.**

Recent research in accounting advocates nonfictional measures of company performance, such as customer satisfaction and loyalty, as useful indicators of aspects of firm performance. But what are the drivers of customer satisfaction and loyalty? We provide an integrated causal model of company performance in the personal computer (PC) industry that simultaneously tests links between product value attributes resulting from business process performance, customer loyalty, and financial outcomes. Our results extend prior accounting research (e.g. Banker et.al. 2000; Ittner and Larcker 1998) in two directions: (1) by explaining the determinants of customer loyalty, and (2) by clarifying the relation between customer loyalty and measures of financial performance. We report that product value attributes directly and differentially impact levels of customer loyalty as well as prevailing average selling prices. Furthermore, measures of customer loyalty explain levels of relative revenue growth and profitability, and relatively high customer loyalty engenders a competitive advantage in the PC industry.

ABSTRACT 8

**Ricardo J Caballero, Kevin Cowan, Jonathan Kearns. Fear of Sudden Stops: Lessons from
Australia and Chile.**

Latin American economies are exposed to substantial external vulnerability. Domestic imbalances and terms of trade shocks are often exacerbated by sharp shifts in the net supply of external capital (sudden stops). At times, these sudden stops can be the main shock. In this paper the authors explore ways of overcoming external vulnerability, drawing lessons from a detailed comparison of the responses of Chile and Australia to recent external shocks and from Australia's historical experience. The authors argue that in order to understand sudden stops and the mechanisms to smooth them it is useful to identify and then distinguish between two inter-related dimensions of investors' confidence: country-trust and currency-trust. Lack of country-trust is the fundamental problem behind sudden stops. Lack of currency-trust in turn weakens a country's ability to deal with sudden stops and real external shocks. Steps aimed to improve these two dimensions of investors' confidence in the medium run, and policies to reduce the impact of country-trust and currency-trust weaknesses in the short run are also discussed in this paper.

CLICHES AND PHRASES FOR ABSTRACTS AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS

1. THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORK (ARTICLE, CHAPTER OF THE BOOK, PAPER, ETC.)

The author	Studies analyses considers	the nature and origins of the problems
	outlines	problem topics such as ...
	tackles	the problem of inflation
The book	contains	a factual description of...
The monograph under review	concerns	the most up-to-date information on ...
The survey	presents	a refined analysis of...
The publication	focuses on (is focused on, concentrates on)	the new trends in ...
The article	reveals points out treats	the problem of... that... the opinion ...
The present study	was made by ...	
A detailed research	has been carried out	
A similar work	is under way now	
A comprehensive research	was undertaken recently	

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main principal chief primary	aim objective purpose task	of the book of the paper of the article	is ...
The particular special	stress concern	in the work of the discussion	is put on ... is ...
The central	thesis	advanced in the publication	is ...

THE STRUCTURE OF THE WORK

The book the article the publication	is divided into ... consists of... falls into ...	several parts an introduction a conclusion emphasizing that...
In the first part (chapter, section) of the book	effort is undertaken attention is paid emphasis is given	to examine the analysis of... to functioning of... to the importance of...
In conclusion the article reads that...		

3. THEORETICAL BASIS AND METHODOLOGY

The publication	Is based on (rests on)	the supposition that...
		the concept that...
		the conclusions made by ...
		the results achieved by ...
The present	theory	was thoroughly (in detail) worked out in ...
The above mentioned		has been put forward (proposed, advanced) by ...
This well-known		has been recently improved
The theory	formulates explains treats	
The main, chief, basic, underlying, principle	method	is widely applied
The modern, proposed The applied	technique	was employed (used) has been developed has thrown light on ...
The basic idea of		consists in ...
The method, approach	provides an answer to ...	

4. ESSENTIAL ASPECTS OF THE WORK

New similar fundamental original	ideas	were advanced (were put forward) by ... analyzed (treated) in the article are ... developed by ... have been extended and illustrated by ...
The central fundamental most important	problem	is stated as follows: ...
An entirely new the key, the main	problem	is addressed is far from an exact solution at the present time since ... is worth investigating
The available the provided further detailed valuable	information	was obtained through ... concerning (regarding) the results of the analysis Should be carefully handled (with the help of...)

5. THE RESULTS OF THE WORK

Preliminary Exact Similar Final Contradictory Convincing	results	were obtained from the study of... are derived from ... arise from ... were treated according to a new approach to ... are summarized in ... should be analyzed and applied to ... <u>confirm</u> the mentioned supposition provide evidence for the improved method that demonstrate the usefulness of...
The author	comes to a conclusion (makes a conclusion, reaches a conclusion) that	
The study	reveals	some a slight a great a full a striking a certain discrepancy
In conclusion	the article summarizes principles, approaches, techniques it may be stated that... it should be noted that...	

6. THE ASSESSMENT OF THE WORK

POSITIVE ASSESSMENT

The (present) book	is a substantial comparative analysis of... is
paper	a useful backdrop to those interested in ... is
article	clearly and logically developed is
publication	well-organized
presentation	is a comprehensive view concerning the problems ... is an important contribution to a complete understanding of.

NEGATIVE ASSESSMENT

The author(s)	failed to ...
	seem(s) to fall into two errors that arise from
The paper	lacks the definition of...
The survey	is far from being comprehensive, yet...
The study	seems to be lacking in supporting examples