
Editorial

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Organisational science researchers and practitioners alike are interested in identifying factors that facilitate growth and success. The topic is at the core of several specialised areas in management such as organisation development, human resource management, production, operations management, and marketing. The factors or ingredients extracted for success, however, vary widely. In this special issue, we identify three such essential contributors for growth and success: innovation, creativity, and social entrepreneurship. They are understandably related as well.

In the first paper of this special issue, 'Innovation empathy: a framework for customer-oriented lean innovation', authors Tero Montonen, Päivi Eriksson, Ilkka Asikainen, and Hanna Lehtimäki introduce the new concept of innovation empathy. According to them, increased empathy towards customers helps innovators gain a better understanding of customer needs. Innovation empathy is most needed in the early phases of innovation processes. Their research shows that empathising (putting oneself in the role of the customer) can be developed through practice, emotional intelligence exercises, and through empathic facilitation.

A related research is the focus of the second paper. In 'Incubation as co-creation: case study of proactive technology business development' Päivi Eriksson, Juha Vilhunen and Kalevi Voutilainen share their learning from a case study on management of business incubation through the theoretical lens of *co-creation*. Using reflexive action research strategy and seeing business incubation as a process in which the incubation managers attempt to orchestrate through active collaboration with the other actors involved in the incubation process, this approach, according to the authors, provides an insider view of behaviours and attitudes of incubation managers. Their analysis shows how stakeholders can pro-actively seek to engage the incubation parties in continuous dialogue for robust business development. Eriksson, Vilhunen, and Voutilainen believe that the catalyst role of incubation managers is critical for co-creation of value for the client. The paper concludes that the construction of a joint sphere of interaction and mutual influence among the incubation parties is a critical success factor for creating and sustaining innovation.

The third paper in this special issue is a case study of Mondelēz International, formerly known as Kraft Foods. In 'World class sustainable product innovation: a case study' Raveesh Agarwal and Monica Thiel argue that intense searching of a revolutionary solution implies taking considerable risks for an start-up company, an entrepreneur, an inventor, or a partner. Knowing how to achieve sustainable innovation can create positive results. Their case study shows how differing innovative growth strategies in a fiercely competitive environment are leveraged by a diverse range of firms. They show how an established corporation such as Mondelēz International proactively seeks partnerships and alliances for solutions that create mutual value and sustainable product innovation.

Sven Seidenstricker and Christian Linder in the fourth paper take the innovation question to a high tech firm. In 'A morphological analysis-based creativity approach to identify and develop ideas for BMI: a case study of a high-tech manufacturing company', the authors explore a wide range of questions. New business creation has occasionally led to creating innovative market formations and innovation models. The contributing factors include new technological possibilities, innovative products, changes in the supply chain management, and better resource utilisation. Seidenstricker and Linder believe that promising potentials can be unlocked and implemented using business model innovations and strong entrepreneurship and creative management. Understandably, the idea development is the critical first stage in the innovation process. The authors claim that research in the field of business models has not sufficiently explored this stage. On paper, this phase has been assigned great significance, but in reality, methodological support regarding existing procedures and process models has not been adequate. The goal of their paper is to develop new methods of systematically generating business model ideas based on morphological thinking. This includes guaranteeing consistency of the ideas developed as well as structured selection. The paper demonstrated how this method could be applied within a high-tech company.

Rod Hagedorn and David Jamieson in the next paper explore sense making in a new school of professional studies. In ‘Intrapreneurial sensemaking: the case of a reenvisioned school of professional studies’, they report on the learning from a management consulting project at a small faith-based university in the western USA. A participatory sense-making approach was effectively employed to develop a re-envisioned mission for a newly-independent school of professional studies within the university. The case study is a rich narrative about the social construction of meaning in an intrapreneurial context as an enabler for re-envisioning purpose and strategic direction. The study explores the challenges faced by faith-based academic entities for providing high quality education while seeking to adhere to their core values. The case study shows that the institution was able to engage in a process of self-discovery and renewal by going back to its roots and by reimagining their overall purpose and goals.

The last paper in this special issue – ‘Creating successful business model: lessons for social entrepreneurship’ by Swati Agrawal and Ritika Gugnani, explores social entrepreneurship from various perspectives. They point out that though not a new phenomenon, social entrepreneurship has been nurturing and growing a new breed of entrepreneur developing solutions to social problems. With the help of a case study on an international company based in Europe that specialises in disease control and emergency response products, they demonstrate the modalities for creating successful business models for social entrepreneurship. The case showed how the organisation was directed by a unique humanitarian entrepreneurship business model in which humanitarian responsibility was in its core business and yet their business model was based on ‘profit for purpose’. The company makes innovative products that are more useful in developing economies and shows how social entrepreneurship can transcend international boundaries and be transformative. Agrawal and Gugnani also point out the challenges faced by such socially responsive companies for generating financially sustainable innovation and continuously evolving business model for social entrepreneurship.

Overall, the papers in this special issue shed new insights for appreciating the intricate role of innovation, creativity, and social entrepreneurship for business growth and success. We thank Editor-in-Chief Dr. Mohammed A. Dorgham for giving us this opportunity to guest edit the special issue.