

CALL—OSWC-XV

February 5-8, 2009

Pushing Research Frontiers In Organization Science Research on Organizational Capabilities that Inform Adaptation and Performance

We are very pleased to announce the **Fifteenth Anniversary Organization Science Winter Conference (OSWC-XV)**. **OSWC-XV** is sponsored by *Organization Science* in order to stimulate theory and understanding about organizations through experimentation and boundary-crossing conversation. It combines the leading-edge ideas of strategy and organization scholars, executives, entrepreneurs, and interested non-business scholars, in a community-enhancing setting. The time and place are **February 3-8, 2009** at the newly renovated Sheraton Steamboat Hotel and Conference Center, Steamboat Springs Colorado.

The goal of the 2009 OSWC is to open the black box of organization capabilities in the broadest sense as they relate to organizational adaptation and performance. The focus is on firm organizational capabilities, structures, processes and strategies that account for firms emergent adaptation to environmental dynamics.

The widely reported heterogeneity in performance within industries or sectors suggests that firms vary greatly in their ability to appropriate value. What organizational capabilities relate to managing complementarities within firms or across firms? Complementarities across firms influence profits through market power while those within firms create profits through differences in efficiency sustained by a lack of imitability. The empirical literature on performance is still very preliminary especially when organizational capabilities such as organizational learning, absorptive capacity, flexibility, and resilience are to be linked to measures of adaptation, growth and survival in turbulent environments or in times of paradigm shifts. Taking a firm and a capabilities perspective OSWC 2009 will explore how firms learn, develop new capabilities, discard obsolete capabilities, as well as change or influence their environment. For OSWC 2009 the key is to recognize several contexts such as the reality that organizations co-evolve with their socio, political and economic environments; that organizations reflect different management internationalities,

and institutional constraints and that in times of radical change most incumbents are selected out. But some incumbents are able to adapt successfully and “reinvent themselves”.

For OSWC-XV we wish to focus on the idea that organizational capabilities are real but underexplored. That organizations vary by how they adapt, change and develop new capabilities. That managerial intentionality matters beyond luck. That some configurations of organizational capabilities are superior to others on some dimensions (e.g. resilience) but that equifinality in performance can be a common occurrence. That the managing of organizational capabilities for innovation, change, adaptation etc. is of critical importance to practitioners, and therefore we wish to explore the underlying organization science of organizational capabilities within coevolutionary dynamics. Consequently, the CALL for participation in OSWC-XV centers on the following question:

How to open up the black box of organizational capabilities as they relate to organizational adaptation over time within co-evolutionary dynamics? We wish to advance the field of Organization Science and contribute to improving managerial practice.

In the tradition of OSWC, we invite proposals for plenary panels and interactive poster papers on the theme of the conference. As has been the case in the past much of the plenary program is implemented from suggestions received from scholars wishing to participate in OSWC. The 2008 OSWC program included three (out of 5) plenary panels that were created from especially salient submitted papers. Most authors will be invited to join another highly acclaimed OSWC tradition—the open-ended evening-long (7–10pm) **Interactive Poster Sessions** accompanied with delectable finger food, wine, soft drinks and deserts. Historically, **50% of the OSWC attendee roster is reserved for participants new to the conference. In recent years 60% or more of the participants were first time participants in OSWC.**

We welcome nominations of a distinguished researcher or practitioner especially known for applying or advancing the ideas underlying organizational capabilities. This person will be the featured guest at another OSWC tradition, the **Fireside Chat** on Saturday evening.

Individuals having substantive questions are invited to contact the program co-chairs for OSWC-XV:

Professor Arie Y. Lewin (ayl3@duke.edu) and Professor Richard Burton (rmb2@mail.duke.edu) both at Duke University Fuqua School of Business and Doctor Koen Heimeriks (KHeimeriks@rsm.nl) at Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University.

If you are interested in attending **OSWC-XV** but not as participant on the program please submit a statement expressing your interest in participating, mentioning one or two of your interests in major controversies. Please also suggest significant practitioners who you may be able to bring as well. The application deadline for panel proposals, individual papers or posters or individual applications to attend is **October 20, 2008**. *However, as in the past the co-conveners, will issue invitations on a rolling basis as proposals come in.*

Invitations to attend will be extended by the co-conveners of **OSWC-XV**, Arie Y. Lewin, Richard Burton and Koen Heimeriks. Panel proposals, posters and statement of interest in participation should be submitted by email to Arie Y. Lewin c/o Stefanie McAdoo smcadoo@duke.edu