



SPECIAL ISSUE – CALL FOR PAPERS – EUROPEAN MANAGEMENT REVIEW

RE-THINKING THE FIRM IN A POST-CRISIS WORLD

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The world has been hit by a multiplicity of global crises in recent years. In addition to the macro-economic recession, primed by the melt down of large parts of the financial services industry in many advanced economies, we have witnessed (at least) two more, highly inter-related, global shocks directly caused by firms' behavior. One has to do with the environmental crisis, with macro-level effects, such as climate change, and micro-level ones, such as the worsening health conditions in highly polluted areas. The other one, perhaps the root cause of the problem, relates to the "moral crisis", i.e. the loss of the sense of responsibility that comes with the exercise of the managerial function, let alone the leadership role, in business firms.

The simultaneous failure of the business firm to achieve economic, environmental and social sustainability hurts us not only as management scholars, but as teachers of the subject matter, as taxpayers, as investors, as employees and as citizens (you choose the order of relevance). It also hurts to witness the debate on the causes and the remedies of the global crisis carried out in the worldwide media, by social scientists in different fields, but especially by economists and political scientists. This hurt is not as a result of corporative ego (well, maybe a bit), but because it highlights our profession's inability to have a(ny) voice when witnessing a dramatic show of the ineffective use of knowledge which we have been responsible for developing. This is compounded by our failure to produce and effectively communicate the management knowledge that could prevent these system shocks occurring.

Therefore, we would like to call for contributions to a special issue of EMR that aims to influence the global debate on foundational questions in our field, tackled in the light of the evidence brought about by the diverse forms of crises that the world is painfully going through. Contributions should tackle one or more of the following questions:

- ✓ What does the evidence of the economic, environmental and/or moral crises tell us about the fundamental tenets of the theory of the firm? What, if anything, needs to be re-assessed, in a descriptive and/or normative perspective, about how we think of the role of the firm in the broader socio-economic context?
- ✓ What does the evidence on the way managers and their stakeholders think about the role of the firm in the broader socio-economic context tell us about the way firms should be organized, governed and managed to align their behavior to external and internal expectations?
- ✓ What do the multiple crises tell us about the fundamental tenets of strategic management theory? How does a novel understanding of the role of the firm in society influence the way we think about the decisions and factors shaping the economic, environmental and social sustainability of its activities? About the management of fundamental strategic processes such as corporate growth, downsizing, outsourcing and the strategy-making process itself?



- ✓ What organizational or business models might be proposed, whether existing in the past or at present or drawn from scratch, as potential solutions to the problem of designing the firm for economic, environmental and social sustainability?
- ✓ What do these multiple crises tell us about the role of the individual manager in a firm designed for economic, environmental and social sustainability? What traits and behaviors are required to fulfill his/her role(s) and the connected responsibilities? How can these behaviors be effectively motivated by organizational processes and systems, and how can the related individual traits be effectively developed in the context of internal or external management development programs?

Please make your submissions to the special issue through the EMR website, at <http://emr.msubmit.net/cgi-bin/main.plex> . The final date for submissions is December 18<sup>th</sup> 2009. The authors of a selected list of papers, screened after the first round of reviews, will be invited to present their work at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the European Academy of Management conference in Rome in May 2010.

For queries on the content of this call, please contact [maurizio.zollo@unibocconi.it](mailto:maurizio.zollo@unibocconi.it) . Any questions relating to submission procedures can be directed to Serena Giovannoni at [emr@palgrave.com](mailto:emr@palgrave.com), or by visiting the journal's website at <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/emr/index.html>