Editor's letter

This issue of *Strategy & Leadership* features an unusually diverse array of topics:

- Disruptive decoupling, a radical business model.
- Executive teams' undiscussable behaviors and how to address them.
- The quest for genuine agile management.
- Defensive financial strategies to temper the risk of disruptive technologies and financial upheavals.
- Warnings for emerging market companies contemplating globalization.
- Risks and benefits of CEOs communicating via Twitter.

Here's a brief introduction to the articles and the authors in Volume 48, Number 1. One noteworthy commonality – they all take a subversive approach to Business As Usual.

In his masterclass **"Decoupling: customer-centric perspectives on disruption and competitive advantage,"** Dublin City University professor emeritus Brian Leavy explains how the formidable strategy of disruptive decoupling is transforming diverse industries. He highlights the insights of Harvard marketing expert Thales Teixeira author of *Unlocking the Customer Value Chain: How Decoupling Drives Consumer Disruption.* Professor Teixeira warns that "Disruptors often posed a threat by breaking the links between some of the stages of the Customer Value Chain and then 'stealing' one or a few stages for themselves to fulfill."

In John Sterling's interview with IMD Professors Ginka Toegel and Jean-Louis Barsoux **"How leadership teams can face and fix their 'undiscussable' dysfunctions,"** they identify four categories of "undiscussables," toxic team and leadership behaviors that subvert the performance of leadership teams. In their experience, "With dysfunctional teams in organizations the root causes are always 'undiscussables' of some kind – unexpressed thoughts and feelings that, if addressed effectively, could help the team work more productively."

Many of the most valuable firms in the world today, like Amazon and Microsoft have adapted their own versions of Agile management, a convergence of an operational concept and a strategic mindset embodying three core elements: an obsession with customer value, empowered self-organizing teams and an interacting network of teams. But in his article **"The quest for genuine business agility,"** Stephen Denning recounts how "The shadow of Agile management done too hastily or badly has fostered widespread cynicism."

"Disruptive technologies, 'Black Swans' and corporate innovation strategy" by Joseph Calandro, Jr. and Vivek Paharia cautions that "The need for a genuinely innovative approach to monitor potential disruption and set the stage for initiatives to achieve market-making innovations is clear .... To benefit from an information advantage, executives must selectively – that is, strategically – make small investments that could either payoff dynamically or economically mitigate the risk of extreme losses over time."

IMD researchers Bala Chakravarthy, P.C. Abraham and Michael Sorell warn that "Globalization is not the magic bullet that improves the financial performance of an emerging market company." Their article, **"Should leading emerging market companies chase globalization?"** shows that "No matter how satisfying it may be to achieve the status of a global challenger, globalization for its own sake should not be the goal." Emerging market leaders that stay local perform better.

Professors Russell Craig and Joel Amernic offer a guide to the **"Benefits and pitfalls of a CEO's personal Twitter messaging."** They conclude that "A CEO's use of a social media platform such as Twitter can be a strategically important element of a broader communications policy." But their caveat is, "For even the most talented communicators, taking the public stage via Twitter means that they must constantly weigh the opportunity to instantly broadcast a positive message at a critical inflection point against the risk that their tweet may be misinterpreted by some in their audience."

Good reading!

Robert M. Randall

Editor