

INTRODUCTION

From the Editor

This journal provides a forum for the exchange of perspectives. Each issue contains two focal articles that take a position on a topic of importance to the field of industrial–organizational (I–O) psychology. These focal articles are first posted on SIOP’s Web site, and readers are invited to submit commentaries in response. A set of commentaries—some of which support and extend the focal article and others that challenge or add new perspectives to the focal article—are selected to be published with the article, along with an integrative response from the authors of the original article.

The first focal article in this issue, by Scott Tannenbaum, John Mathieu, Eduardo Salas, and Debra Cohen, is entitled “Teams Are Changing: Are Research and Practice Evolving Fast Enough?” Stimulated by the 2010 SIOP Leading Edge Consortium, this article argues that teams are increasingly dynamic in their composition, virtual in their interactions, and self-managing in their operations—all of which have implications for team research and practice. The article is followed by nine commentaries that offer examples, point out conceptual and methodological issues, and advocate for bold directions in teams research and practice. In their response, the focal article authors clarify their definition of teams, join the commentators’ calls for multilevel theory and attention to emergent processes in teams, and examine what it will take for research to inform practice in the teams arena.

The second focal article, “The Psychology of Competitive Advantage: An Adja-

cent Possibility,” was authored by Robert Ployhart. Rob invites the reader into the realm of strategic management and contends that I–O psychology needs to conduct research that goes beyond helping organizations improve internally to helping them differentiate from competitors. By expanding our perspective in this way, he argues that I–O psychology will enhance its visibility, impact, and relevance. The nine commentaries that follow the focal article do not debate whether I–O psychology should expand its focus but rather offer different views on what such an expansion should (and already does) entail. In response, Rob offers an agenda for future research and reiterates why understanding the psychology of competitive advantage is “the defining issue of our time.”

Both the articles in this issue look to the future and the ways in which we need to embrace broader and more complex perspectives. There was little debate about the importance of such growth for the relevance of our research and practice. The differences expressed were more related to how far we have to go and what will best get us there.

Deserving special thanks for their contribution to the success of this issue are the individuals who reviewed focal articles and commentary submissions: Brad Bell, Stéphane Brutus, Satoris Culbertson, Richard Hackman, Ted Hayes, John Hollenbeck, Rich Klimoski, Jeff McHenry, Susan Mohammed, Ben Rosen, Ben Schneider, and Paul Thayer.

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