

# Editor's letter

**T**he five articles in this issue all aim to provide practical how-to advice to strategic practitioners:

- **Richard Rumelt: A “challenge-led” approach to creating effective strategy**

In his latest book, *The Crux: How Leaders Become Strategists*, veteran strategy expert, Richard Rumelt's ideas on how to create effective strategy have crystallized into a methodology he calls the “challenged-based” approach. In his interview with Brian Leavy, Dublin City University Professor Emeritus, he explains that, “The challenge-based approach starts with the recognition that creating strategy is, in most cases, a special form of problem-solving. . . . The skilled designer-strategist recognizes the crux of a challenge as something evoking a sense of blockage or constraint defying easy solution.”

- **Overcoming the preparedness paradox: five initiatives to ready businesses for an uncertain future disruption**

The preparedness paradox develops after an organization receives a credible warning of a looming disruptive problem but refuses to prepare for it, given that the timing and consequences are uncertain. George S. Day, Wharton's Geoffrey T. Boisi Emeritus Professor and veteran management consultant Roger Dennis, warn, “Instead of mobilizing an organization to prepare for threats, inaction often prevails when leaders filter warning signals through eyes clouded by cataracts of self-deception, myopia and inertia.”

- **How to design an organization to enable the implementation of the company's sustainability agenda**

Herman Vantrappen, Managing Director of Akordeon, and Michael Wagemans, Head of Sustainability at KPMG in Belgium, offer a framework to help managers make design choices for their company's sustainability organization. The framework helps practitioners decide, for example, “Should Sustainability be a distinct and integrated function, or combined with another function, or split into subfunctions, or absorbed into the general management of the businesses?”

- **Into the eXperience-verse: the strategic frontier of cloud business innovation and value co-creation**

Venkat Ramaswamy, Professor, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, and Krishnan Narayanan, Cofounder and President of Itihaasa Research and Digital now proclaim that, “As industry clouds now accelerate strategic business innovation of interactive experience ecosystems, a whole new dimension of value-innovation and value-creation is being created – the ‘eXperience-verse’ . . . . Unlike the previous four Industrial Revolutions driven by technology, this new era requires an ‘experience-first’ frame of reference of value creation by every enterprise.”

- **Rethinking business transformation: how multiple technologies interact with intelligent workflows to produce exponential value**

IBM Institute for Business Value researchers Jacob Dencik, Economic Research Leader, and Anthony Marshall, Senior Research Director of Thought Leadership, found that “Interactions between several new digital technologies and between these technologies and other organizational capabilities enable and drive the business value needed for successful transformation.” They advise that

“Organizations should first identify the high value workflows and focus on what it takes to transform them.”

Good reading!

Robert M. Randall

Editor

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