

Yawson, Robert M.; Lewis, Vance Johnson

**Article**

## Editorial: Navigating contemporary issues in business and management

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# Editorial: Navigating contemporary issues in business and management

The field of business and management is undergoing profound transformations, driven by technological advancements, evolving societal expectations and the increasing complexity of global challenges. This perspective special issue (PSI) of the *Organization Management Journal* (OMJ), themed “Contemporary Issues in Business and Management,” brings together a diverse set of manuscripts that reflect the dynamic nature of these changes. Each contribution offers unique insights into pressing topics, ranging from leadership transitions and experiential learning to the impact of social media on workplace behavior.

This PSI is particularly timely, as it addresses critical topics that resonate with both scholars and practitioners. Today’s academic world mirrors broader societal trends – from the rise of visiting professorships in a growing gig economy to social media’s impact on knowledge worker productivity. This special issue examines how experiential learning drives societal impact and why quantitative reasoning remains essential in management education. It also explores publication processes and leadership career paths in higher education and makes a case for replication studies to strengthen field credibility. By connecting scholarly concerns with practical realities, this collection offers timely insights for both researchers and practitioners navigating education’s evolving terrain. These articles collectively underscore the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in addressing contemporary challenges.

In addition to presenting these scholarly contributions, we are thrilled to announce exciting news for authors: *OMJ* has increased its maximum article length from 5,000 to 8,000 words. This expansion allows for more comprehensive analyses and deeper engagement with complex issues. Authors are encouraged to use this extended format to enrich their submissions while adhering to guidelines for figures and tables.

We also address the 2025 academic calendar, which features two significant events for management scholars: the *Eastern Academy of Management (EAM) Conference* and the *Southwest Academy of Management (SWAM) Conference*, organizational sponsors of this journal. Both offer networking, research exposure and professional development opportunities while addressing contemporary challenges in business and education.

Finally, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the editorial team, reviewers and authors whose dedication has made this special issue possible. Their commitment to advancing knowledge in business and management is invaluable. The manuscripts featured in this special issue are:

- “From Major Revision to Accept: Strategies for Crafting Effective Reviewer Responses in Contemporary Business Research.” This peer-reviewed article provides practical advice on navigating the revise and resubmit (R&R) process, emphasizing emotional intelligence (EI) and empathy (Philip & Winton, 2025).
- “From Business School Dean to University President: Leadership Lessons from Dr Judy Olian.” This editorial review explores Dr Judy Olian’s career and offers insights into higher education leadership (Yawson, 2025).
- “Academia’s Gig Economy: Visiting Professors.” This editorial review examines the trend of visiting professorships, drawing parallels with the gig economy and discussing its implications for higher education (Lewis, 2025).



- “Endless Scrolling Through Social Media and Work Boredom: A Dynamic Spillover of Information Overload.” This peer-reviewed paper, which also won the best paper award at the 2024 Southwest Academy of Management Conference, investigates how information overload from social media affects knowledge workers’ organizational lives (Bhowmik, 2025).
- “That’s Replicable: Building Cumulative Knowledge in the Face of Fads, Obsessions, and Malpractices.” This editorial review emphasizes the importance of replication research in ensuring scientific rigor in management studies (Gupta, Mortal, & Skiadopoulou, 2025).
- “Experiential Learning for Societal Impact.” This editorial review explores how business schools can leverage experiential learning to address complex societal issues (McCrea & Mirchandani, 2025).
- “Management Education in the Age of Information Overload.” This peer-reviewed paper argues for the integration of quantitative reasoning into management education to improve decision-making effectiveness (Sweet, Appenzeller Knowles, & Waples, 2025).

### Navigating the academic review process with emotional intelligence

The peer-review process stands as both gatekeeper and refiner of academic research, although its emotional challenges often go unacknowledged. In their article “From Major Revision to Accept: Strategies for Crafting Effective Reviewer Responses in Contemporary Business Research,” Jistine Philip and Bradley Gene Winton explore this terrain by emphasizing EI as a critical success factor (Philip & Winton, 2025). They argue that researchers who recognize their own emotional reactions while simultaneously understanding reviewers’ perspectives achieve better outcomes. The process requires authors to develop awareness of the constraints facing editors and reviewers – busy scholars whose feedback may sometimes lack clarity or context. With the practice of empathy, researchers can interpret comments more constructively, viewing them as opportunities for manuscript improvement rather than personal criticism.

Strategic communication emerges as the practical application of this emotional intelligence framework. Philip and Winton offer specific tactics: directly addressing editorial concerns, carefully interpreting ambiguous feedback and diplomatically refuting demonstrably incorrect assertions (Philip & Winton, 2025). They remind authors that the ultimate goal is publication, not winning argumentative points, and advocate for selective engagement with reviewer comments. This approach requires distinguishing between essential revisions that strengthen the manuscript and peripheral suggestions that might dilute its contribution. When authors combine emotional intelligence with strategic communication, they transform the revision process from a potentially adversarial exchange into a collaborative dialogue. This perspective reframes the often-dreaded “R&R” decision as an opportunity for scholarly growth and improved research dissemination rather than a setback.

### Leadership in higher education

Effective leadership is essential for navigating the complexities of higher education. The research essay by Robert Yawson entitled “From Business School Dean to University President: Leadership Lessons from Dr Judy Olian” provides insights into the skills, experiences and mindset required for effective leadership in this context (Yawson, 2025).

Dr Judy Olian's transition from business school dean to university president offers vital insights for aspiring higher education leaders. Drawing from her experiences at UCLA Anderson School of Management and Quinnipiac University, Olian's career illuminates the core competencies required for successful institutional leadership. Her deliberate pursuit of boundary-spanning opportunities – through AACSB volunteer roles and participation in UCLA's Council of Professional Deans – provided the broad perspective needed to lead a comprehensive university. Olian emphasizes that effective university leadership requires mastering diverse challenges: managing varied academic disciplines, overseeing athletics programs and navigating complex community relationships beyond the corporate connections familiar to business school deans (Yawson, 2025).

Her leadership philosophy centers on strategic vision coupled with practical change management skills. Following her predecessor's 31-year presidency at Quinnipiac, she balanced respecting institutional traditions while driving necessary transformations. Olian stresses the importance of building high-performing teams, developing financial acumen and fostering resilience when facing criticism (Yawson, 2025). Her "no surprise management" approach prioritizes transparent communication with stakeholders, recognizing that university leadership is not a popularity contest but requires making difficult decisions with clear rationales.

For those aspiring to senior leadership positions, Olian advises actively seeking experiences that broaden perspectives beyond one's immediate expertise. Her journey demonstrates that the path from business school leadership to university presidency demands continuous learning, strategic thinking, relationship building, and – perhaps most importantly – the courage to embrace new challenges while maintaining unwavering commitment to institutional mission (Yawson, 2025).

### **The gig economy in academia**

Higher education is increasingly mirroring the broader labor market's shift toward temporary employment through the proliferation of visiting professorships. In his article "Academia's Gig Economy: Visiting Professors," Vance Johnson Lewis discusses how, like their counterparts in the gig economy – which is projected to comprise 50% of the American workforce by 2027 – visiting professors face unique challenges despite their full teaching loads and academic credentials (Lewis, 2025). Unlike traditional adjuncts who teach individual courses, visitors assume comprehensive faculty responsibilities without long-term security. This trend contradicts the fundamental nature of academia, which thrives on relationship-building and sustained institutional commitment. As visiting professor, Lewis discovered through personal experience at Oklahoma City University, these short-term appointments create profound professional dilemmas – including stalled research agendas, disrupted career trajectories and limited community integration.

The visiting professor phenomenon poses significant institutional concerns beyond individual hardships. Unlike the corporate world where gig workers might reduce costs, visiting professors undergo the same expensive recruitment processes as permanent faculty while creating additional expenses through frequent turnover. This suggests universities may be using these positions less for financial reasons than to maintain scholarly metrics without committing to permanent faculty lines – effectively circumventing tenure systems while still benefiting from doctoral-level expertise (Lewis, 2025). This practice potentially undermines organizational culture, hampers faculty motivation and contradicts the long-term strategic goals central to educational institutions. For students, the revolving door of instructors disrupts mentoring relationships and academic continuity.

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The proliferation of visiting positions may ultimately threaten the foundational principles of higher education. As Lewis notes, when faculty “arrive and nine months later they are gone,” they have minimal incentive to integrate into institutional culture or pursue long-term projects benefiting the university (Lewis, 2025). The psychological impact is equally concerning – Maslow’s hierarchy suggests that without basic security and belongingness needs met, professors cannot achieve the self-actualization essential for effective teaching and scholarship (Lewis, 2025). For those considering visiting positions, Lewis advises prioritizing permanent appointments, even at less prestigious institutions, over temporary roles with uncertain futures. Meanwhile, administrators should recognize that their revolving-door approach to faculty staffing undermines the very educational values their institutions claim to uphold (Lewis, 2025).

### **Information overload and work boredom**

In today’s hyperconnected environment, knowledge workers face an unprecedented challenge: the continuous bombardment of information through social media and digital channels creates cognitive exhaustion that follows them into the workplace. Tathagata Bhowmik’s compelling research on “Endless Scrolling Through Social Media and Work Boredom” illuminates how our digitally saturated personal lives directly impact our professional effectiveness (Bhowmik, 2025). The redundant and noisy nature of modern information – from trending videos to duplicate news stories – overwhelms our cognitive processing capacity, extracting mental resources without delivering meaningful engagement. This overstimulation does not simply disappear when we transition to work; instead, it permeates increasingly flexible boundaries between personal and professional domains.

The Meaning and Attention Components model of boredom provides a theoretical framework for understanding this phenomenon (Bhowmik, 2025). When information consumption exceeds our ability to derive meaning from it, we experience overstimulation – a cognitive state where mental resources are overwhelmed by excessive sensory and informational input. This state transforms into what researchers call “agitated boredom,” characterized by a desire for meaningful engagement coupled with an inability to find satisfaction in available activities (Bhowmik, 2025). The continual search for stimulation without fulfillment drains cognitive resources, leaving knowledge workers mentally exhausted before their workday even begins.

This exhaustion manifests at work through attentional lapses, reduced productivity and alienation from tasks. The spillover occurs through multiple mechanisms: increasingly permeable work-life boundaries (as the same devices are used across domains), finite cognitive resources (depleted by off-hours scrolling) and the continuous presence of the individual across contexts (Bhowmik, 2025). Consequently, workers struggle with complex tasks, take longer to complete assignments and experience diminished motivation – finding themselves physically present but mentally disengaged from their professional responsibilities.

Organizations can counteract these effects by prioritizing meaningful engagement rather than merely managing symptoms. Effective strategies include involving workers in defining organizational values, helping them visualize their contributions to end products and structuring work to align with personal values and beliefs. By recognizing employees as cognitive beings whose information environment extends beyond the workplace, companies can develop approaches that address the root causes of digital-induced boredom rather than merely responding to its symptoms (Bhowmik, 2025). This holistic perspective acknowledges that in today’s interconnected world, cognitive wellbeing transcends traditional work-life boundaries.

### **Preparing business students for social good**

In response to mounting global challenges such as climate change, poverty and inequality, business schools face increasing pressure to develop graduates capable of driving meaningful social change. In the paper “Experiential Learning for Societal Impact,” Elizabeth McCrea and Dilip Mirchandani propose a comprehensive framework that reimagines how business education can leverage experiential learning to achieve greater societal impact (McCrea & Mirchandani, 2025). The framework categorizes student roles along two key dimensions: the learning context (classroom vs community-based experiences) and student agency (developing future capacity vs creating immediate impact).

The analysis identifies three distinct roles students play within this experiential learning ecosystem. First, as investments in future impact, students develop foundational knowledge and skills through classroom activities like sustainability simulations and case studies, or through community engagements like intercollegiate competitions. Second, as current agents of change, students apply their developing competencies through consulting projects, problem-based learning, service learning and sustainability internships – creating real-world impact while still in school. Third, as direct beneficiaries, students from disadvantaged backgrounds gain access to transformative educational experiences that can lift them from poverty and reduce inequalities (McCrea & Mirchandani, 2025).

Despite its benefits, implementing experiential learning for societal impact presents significant challenges. Faculty must shift from “sage on the stage” to facilitator roles, managing greater uncertainty and complexity. Students may resist unfamiliar active learning approaches (McCrea & Mirchandani, 2025). Assessment becomes more nuanced when measuring both learning outcomes and societal contributions. Ensuring equitable access to these high-impact practices requires institutional commitment and resources to support underrepresented students who often face barriers to participation in activities like unpaid internships (McCrea & Mirchandani, 2025).

The framework emphasizes that effective societal impact education requires multiple complementary approaches integrated throughout the curriculum. Through these diverse experiences, students develop critical competencies including moral awareness, empathy, creativity, cultural intelligence and systems thinking – essential tools for addressing complex societal challenges. By simultaneously investing in students’ future potential while creating platforms for immediate change agency, business schools can fulfill their mission to develop graduates who not only succeed professionally but also become positive forces for societal transformation (McCrea & Mirchandani, 2025).

### **Quantitative reasoning in management education**

Today’s organizational leaders operate in environments saturated with data yet often lack the critical skills to effectively evaluate and integrate quantitative information into their decision-making processes. In their thought-provoking article “Management Education in the Age of Information Overload,” Sweet, Knowles and Waples argue that management education has emphasized quantitative skills (like financial analysis or statistics) but neglected the higher-order competency of quantitative reasoning – critical thinking when numbers are involved (Sweet et al., 2025). This gap became glaringly apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic, when leaders across sectors struggled to interpret exponential growth models and probability statistics, leading to serious decision errors with widespread consequences.

When confronted with complex quantitative information, leaders typically respond in one of two problematic ways: either dismissing data entirely in favor of intuition and experience or uncritically accepting quantitative recommendations without adequately questioning

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assumptions or methodology (Sweet et al., 2025). Both approaches undermine effective decision-making in today's data-rich environments. While business schools excel at teaching specialized mathematical skills for specific business functions, they often fail to develop the generalized ability to critically evaluate quantitative information across contexts – particularly important as leaders advance from specialized roles into positions requiring broader integration of diverse information sources (Sweet et al., 2025).

The authors advocate integrating quantitative reasoning throughout leadership development programs rather than treating it as a separate technical skill. They recommend educational approaches where students assume decision-maker roles, evaluate multiple interrelated quantitative sources, tackle problems without single correct answers and receive iterative feedback on their reasoning processes (Sweet et al., 2025). This differs fundamentally from traditional mathematics instruction focused on finding correct answers to well-defined problems. Development of leaders who can confidently ask meaningful questions about quantitative information, challenge assumptions and integrate unfamiliar data into their decision frameworks, management education can produce more effective leaders for our information-saturated world – leaders who maintain the crucial balance between analytical information and experience-based intuition.

### **The importance of replication research**

Management research faces a fundamental credibility challenge that threatens the discipline's scientific integrity. When top journals publish studies, their findings are typically accepted without verification, creating a vulnerable knowledge base where errors, biases, or even fraudulent results can persist unchallenged for decades. In "That's Replicable: Building Cumulative Knowledge in the Face of Fads, Obsessions, and Malpractices," Gupta, Mortal and Skiadopoulou address this critical issue by examining how replication research – vastly underrepresented in management literature – can serve as a bulwark against questionable research practices while strengthening theoretical foundations (Gupta et al., 2025).

The authors outline a comprehensive typology of replication approaches that researchers can use to verify and extend existing knowledge. Literal replication closely follows original methodologies to determine whether findings can be reproduced under identical conditions, establishing baseline reliability. Operational replication maintains core concepts but uses different measures or manipulations, testing the robustness of findings across methodological variations. Most ambitious is constructive replication, which examines the same theoretical relationships using substantially different methods or contexts, offering the strongest evidence for the generalizability of findings and potentially revealing boundary conditions that limit theoretical applications (Gupta et al., 2025).

Addressing the replication deficit requires coordinated action across multiple levels of the academic ecosystem. The authors propose concrete steps, from introducing conference initiatives that highlight replication work to revising journal policies to include dedicated space for replication studies. They particularly advocate for top-tier journals to commit to publishing at least one replication study per issue, directly challenging the prevailing "novelty bias" that has long marginalized verification efforts (Gupta et al., 2025). These institutional changes would begin normalizing replication as standard scientific practice rather than treating it as mundane or unoriginal work.

Beyond improving scientific rigor, embracing replication offers multiple benefits to the field. Replication studies serve as essential bridges between research and practice by confirming which findings practitioners can confidently apply. They enhance transparency by requiring researchers to be more explicit about their methodologies and analytical choices. Perhaps most importantly, replication creates accountability, ensuring that influential research

withstands scrutiny and that theoretical foundations remain solid as the field continues to develop. By institutionalizing replication practices, management research can build a more trustworthy knowledge base worthy of its scientific aspirations (Gupta et al., 2025).

### **A vibrant landscape: business academia's 2025 conference season**

Engagement with contemporary issues in business and management extends beyond academic journals, offering opportunities for live dialogue and collaboration at professional conferences. Two prominent events in 2025 – the *Eastern Academy of Management (EAM) Conference* and the *Southwest Academy of Management (SWAM) Conference*, organizational sponsors of this journal – will provide platforms for exploring cutting-edge research, sharing best practices, and fostering professional networks. EAM and SWAM conferences will offer complementary but distinct forums for academics, practitioners, and emerging scholars to engage with pressing issues facing both education and industry. Set against the backdrop of Baltimore's Inner Harbor and Tulsa's Southern Hills, these events promise to advance critical conversations around creativity, sustainability, digital transformation and the evolving relationship between theory and practice in management education. With carefully curated themes reflecting contemporary challenges, both conferences aim to foster the kind of meaningful dialogue and collaboration that drives innovation in both scholarship and pedagogy.

The Eastern Academy of Management will convene in Baltimore, MD from May 12 to 15, 2025, for its 62nd Annual Meeting under the theme "Creative Sparks: Igniting Innovation and Imagination in Scholarship and Pedagogy." This gathering recognizes creativity as a multifaceted concept with applications ranging from entrepreneurship and technological development to pedagogical innovation. The conference aims to address how educators and organizations can navigate complex challenges related to sustainability, innovation and organizational resilience. By bringing together diverse stakeholders – scholars, practitioners and policymakers – the EAM conference creates a platform for examining strategies that address global concerns such as climate change, technological disruption and workforce diversity. Beyond formal presentations, attendees will engage through workshops, panel discussions and networking opportunities designed to translate creative concepts into practical applications in both educational and organizational settings.

Meanwhile, the Southwest Academy of Management will host its 67th Annual Conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma from March 19 to 22, 2025. This event will tackle the pressing question of how management education must evolve to prepare students for increasingly data-driven business environments while addressing challenges like information overload and digital transformation. Notably, SWAM has expanded its programming for 2025 to include a dedicated track for practitioners and early scholars – creating space for adjuncts, community partners, professional association members and undergraduate or graduate students to share work ranging from white papers and case studies to internal research. This inclusive approach reflects a commitment to bridging academic theory with practical application while nurturing the next generation of management scholars and practitioners.

Both conferences offer compelling reasons for participation beyond simply presenting research. Attendees will benefit from robust networking opportunities that connect academics with industry leaders and policymakers, facilitating partnerships that can extend beyond the conference itself. Participants will gain exposure to cutting-edge research and emerging trends shaping the future of business and management, providing valuable context for their own work. Professional development workshops at both events will enhance teaching methodologies, research skills and leadership competencies applicable in diverse professional contexts. These gatherings represent more than academic exercises – they serve as vital forums where the business academy collectively wrestles with its responsibility to advance

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knowledge while preparing practitioners for complex organizational landscapes. As digital transformation, sustainability concerns and pedagogical innovation continue to reshape the field, these conferences offer essential touchpoints for staying connected to evolving conversations that will define management education and practice in the years ahead.

### Conclusion

The manuscripts in this special issue of the *OMJ* provide valuable insights into contemporary issues in business and management. From navigating the complexities of the review process to understanding the impact of information overload and the importance of experiential learning and quantitative reasoning, these works offer practical guidance for academics and practitioners alike. Addressing these challenges and embracing new approaches enable us to enhance the credibility and relevance of the field and contribute to a more informed and effective business world.

**Robert M. Yawson**

*School of Business, Quinnipiac University, Hamden, Connecticut, USA, and*

**Vance Johnson Lewis**

*Department of Business Administration,  
Northeastern State University, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, USA*

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