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The Distinctive Identity of *Journal of Management Studies*

The Editors

Just as all parents think their children are special, editors like to think that their journals are special. The editors of *JMS* are no exception. There are, of course, intrinsic reasons to seek to establish a distinctive identity for a journal. Most editors invest a huge amount of time and energy in their work, and to an extent their intrinsic satisfaction reflects their belief that they are producing an outlet that has unique value. There are, however, other important reasons. Perhaps most importantly, in the current crowded and competitive world of publishing, there is very real competition between journals to attract and publish work which will have relevance and wider impact. To do so requires being able to convince potential authors, and readers, that one's journal is different from any other potential publishing outfit.

The editors at *JMS* spend a good deal of time thinking about how best to position our journal relative to other journals in the field of general management. Recently, with one of us stepping down after a six year stint, and one of us moving from Associate to General Editor, we have been giving particular attention to the question of what is distinctive about *JMS*. This editorial is intended as a brief statement about the distinctive identity of the journal.

What we publish

All top journals seek to publish high-quality and high-impact papers. Some focus on very specific areas, while others – *JMS* included – position themselves as general management journals. Some might see this as a challenge, in the sense that a general management orientation might imply a generic flavour which undermines distinctiveness. Our way of dealing with this has been to make our breadth and inclusiveness a strength, not a weakness.

JMS has a long history of publishing a very wide range of papers – in terms of topic, theory and method – and we explicitly do not favour any particular approach. Indeed, if a paper is interesting, relevant, rigorous, well-written and makes a significant contribution to knowledge concerning management and organisation studies, regardless of the factors above and regardless of the author's country of residence, institutional affiliation, seniority or standing in the management community, it will be a contender for publication. We see this as crucially important in ensuring that we continue to publish interesting papers and that we attract papers from a genuinely diverse group of scholars, in terms of discipline, method and international spread.

We also work to ensure that we do not simply publish 'standard' empirical research papers. Beside such papers, we publish purely theoretical papers and a variety of other forms. Our Point-Counterpoint papers consist of provocative, at times even polemical, arguments and statements which are published beside responses to them. Recently, we have initiated a section for essays as a means to give authors

the freedom to write more personal accounts of issues and experiences that they consider important.

Our most recent initiative is the launch of State-of-the-Art Review articles, where we encourage scholars to submit papers that provide a comprehensive overview of a particular research field in which they have a proven track record. We expect that these articles provide a theoretically-driven review and integration of an important area of research, and open up or redirect lines of research. The development of a research agenda and/or a conceptual framework as a guide to future research is an essential part of such State-of-the-Art Review articles.

All these diverse types and styles of papers are designed to encourage an open and constructive debate and top quality scholarship in various areas of management studies.

How we interact with the *JMS* community

At the heart of everything we do, we aim to contribute to the continued development of authors, reviewers and the scholarly management studies community. In this way, we seek to make concrete our belief that an important role for a journal is capacity building. We emphasise strongly a personal, one-to-one approach in our dealings with authors. All correspondence with authors and reviewers is handled on a personal basis by the *JMS* office. This means that they can contact the office and speak with or email to a member of the team if they need to. Authors and reviewers are dealt with on a personal, individual basis.

In handling papers, there is a strong developmental ethos. Editors work closely with authors to develop papers. This takes the form of extensive, detailed developmental feedback, in the form of letters, which is aimed at giving authors every opportunity to develop their papers to the point of acceptance. We maintain very short turnaround times for initial and subsequent decisions. To ensure high-quality developmental input, and consistency, a second editor is involved in decisions when papers have gone through one of multiple rounds of revision.

Capacity building is central to our mission. We seek to involve junior scholars in the review process whenever possible. Appointment to the Editorial Board is primarily on the basis of reviewing performance, providing opportunities for reviewers to advance as they build their skills. We also conduct PDWs at our conference and around the world, as a means to build capacity.

How we see our role as editors

Our view is that being an editor is a way to give back to the scholarly community. It is a privilege to be an editor, not because it confers personal or professional benefit, but because it provides an opportunity to contribute. With this in mind, our policy is that editors cannot submit papers to the journal during their terms. Editors cannot handle papers submitted by colleagues, research collaborators, recent co-authors or

anyone with whom they have a personal relationship. Appointment to editorships is on an open and competitive basis. The journal operates on a team basis and decision making is inclusive, cooperative and consensus based. The *JMS* office is an integral part of the editorial team.

How we see the future of JMS

Our main ambition for the future is to sustain JMS' reputation as an inclusive journal that provides extensive and rich feedback to authors and applies high-standard ethical rules and procedures for both authors and editors. We want to continue promoting our journal as an outlet that is open to novel and even provocative ideas and that allows authors to apply different methodological, ontological and epistemological perspectives. At the same time, authors should realize that we are not willing to make concessions in terms of theoretical and methodological standards when conducting such research endeavours. We are convinced that applying these principles can help us in maintaining a unique position in the competitive field of management journals.

At the same time, we want invest in further increasing the visibility and impact of our journal. Recently, we initiated several efforts to realize this ambition. First, we have expanded our publishing workshops. For some years, in collaboration with the Society for the Advancement of Management Studies, we have organised workshops at universities around the world, providing junior scholars the opportunity to present their recent work and get feedback from established scholars. More recently, we have increased the scale of our workshop program, particularly by expanding it in China, North America and Europe, as well as planning future workshops in South America. Second, we have become active in using various forms of social media (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn) to increase our ability to communicate with our core stakeholders and to provide additional visibility to the papers that we publish.

We also believe that strengthening the impact of the journal implies actively investing in bridging different communities. We therefore are initiating several activities to bring together different academic domains. In 2016, for instance, we will publish a Point-Counterpoint on International Business Research in commemoration of Alan Rugman's contribution to this field. With this PCP, we want to point to our journal as a potential outlet for international business scholars who focus on managerial and organizational questions and topics.

We are also teaming up with other top-tier journals and world-class conferences to expand the impact of JMS research. For example, JMS is organizing a joint special issue workshop with *Academy of Management Perspectives* (AMP) on issues related to academic entrepreneurship. This workshop will be held in conjunction with the Technology Transfer Society Meetings at Arizona State University in November

2016. Like JMS, AMP appears on the Financial Times list of the top 45 journals in business administration.

Together, we hope that these efforts can help to sustain as well as expand the position of JMS as a journal that contributes to moving the boundaries of our knowledge on behaviour both in organizations and of organizations in their environments.

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