

Developing Sustainable Leaders: New perspectives in Top Executive Power and Strategic Leadership

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Presentation

Over the last few years, a veritable revolution has been taking place at the apex of companies where power has been changing hands from top executives to boards. At the same time, top executives have been criticized by other stakeholders following several major scandals questioning the role, power, and morality of top executives. As a result of this double reconsideration, today the power and legitimacy of Top Management Teams (TMTs) have become fragile and uncertain: the rise in executive turnover and forced dismissals are forerunners of this new balance of power which is setting up a new regime of corporate governance. However, if executive power is especially constrained by this new regime, and if top executives tend to be no longer legitimate, this could have consequences on governance that it would be wise not to underestimate. In addition, such dramatic changes occur at a time when the role of top executives will be crucial to adapt and manage firms in the current crisis. Leadership may be even more instrumental in this time of uncertainty and changes but, at the same time, it probably has never been so undermined. This dramatic change has profound implications for theories, practices and questions addressed in Management research. This is why we propose to put the future of top executive power on the corporate governance agenda.

Hence, the objectives of this track will be to study how top executives can maintain or develop their leadership in order to decide and implement strategic actions considering the aforementioned changes. These issues are not typically addressed in other tracks about Corporate Governance, Strategic leadership or Legitimacy. This track would fill this gap.

The title of this track may be interpreted theoretically – we wish to discuss the future of top management teams through the discussion of concepts such as executive leadership, power or legitimacy – or practically – we wish to identify practices of TMTs, especially those that are positive, ethical, sustainable and productive for both organizations and society.

Expected contributions would be from a variety of research fields that question the leadership of TMTs. Even if strategic management and organizational behavior are the main fields concerned, we are also interested by contributions from Law or finance since they can contribute in bringing behavioral, managerial and positive perspectives to the understanding of the “human side of corporate governance”, these currently being three underexploited dimensions of this topic.

Contributions can be both theoretical (discussion, articulation of concepts of legitimacy, leadership, power and managerial authority); epistemological (discussion of behavioral approaches to the field of governance; of positive approach to strategic leadership);

methodological (integration of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, practice-based methodologies.); and practical (case studies, action research-report on TMTs would be most welcome).

As an indication, the following are examples of subjects on which we would be happy to have an exchange:

The nature of top executive power

- The nature of top executive power
- The basis of top executive legitimacy
- The roles and the relationships at the top
- New perspectives and contributions to Strategic leadership

The impact of corporate governance on top executive power

- Corporate governance reform and the becoming of top executives' power
- Critical approaches or theories of current corporate governance practices
- Behavioral approaches or theories of corporate governance practices.

Positive practices of top management teams

- Positive behaviors and practices at the top
- Collaborative approaches and practices in corporate governance
- Positive and ethical approaches to strategic leadership

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Convenors

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