Introduction

Energizing European Management!

European Academy of Management Annual Conference 2006

The Norwegian School of Management is honored to welcome you to the 2006 annual conference of the European Academy of Management. This year’s conference title is “Energizing European Management. Empowering and revitalizing management theory and practice.”

Our focus this year involves understanding the nature, qualities, and theoretical approaches to management research in Europe. Our goal is exploring ways to use this research to empower and revitalize Europe.

The conference theme speaks to the need for reframing, revitalizing, and empowering management theory and practice in every way. Profound changes in the European landscapes for industry, politics, and the economy make this a key topic. Even more important for us as scholars and researchers, we must “energize” European management research as a significant field in relation to other research fields. We must also energize European management research in relation to European policy at the continental and national levels. This requires active promotion and positioning. Our conference theme involves four current challenges.

First, we address rebuilding European competitiveness in the international – the global – context. This requires developing energetic action oriented management models, concepts, and methods. We must shape new forms of coopetition, entrepreneurship, learning, and innovation, and we must create systems to nurture them. Europe today is involved in a dramatic restructuring process that will ultimately affect most of our business and political institutions. This transformation is Europe’s response to threats that challenge services as well as products. New waves of technology-based innovation challenge Europe, and the possibility of a competitive disadvantage to North America, Asia, and Australia requires us to respond. Europe also faces competition in management education and research.

Second, we explore new models, concepts and methods that will enable us to mobilize, reframe, and revitalize unexplored resources in firms. Some are latent. Some are dormant. Some will be new. They include new communities of practice, portfolios of innovation, public-private interplay, supply chain management, and more. There is no magic formula for European growth and there will be no quick fix. European companies have advantages that we must develop if we are to transform science and invention into successful new products and viable new companies. Our challenge is learning to do it.

Third, we must energize European management research by focusing on the unique opportunities for research within Europe, and by increasing international activity. Common issues should interest European business leaders and management researchers together. These issues involve improving European systems and societies. If European companies grow, management education and research will grow with them. To harvest the benefits of this growth, we must treat Europe as a single community in practice as well as theory. Europe requires new kinds of leadership. This leadership will not come from politicians alone. Management educators and researchers must share responsibility for improving the situation for Europe in today’s world, and we must act on our responsibilities.

Fourth and equally important is the growing need to manage energy resources in a sustainable and efficient way. We stated this when we began work on this conference at St. Andrews. In the two years since then, world events have emphasized the importance of this theme. The scientific consensus on global warming has convinced even the United States government that today’s energy patterns are
unsustainable. The emergence of China as a world economic power places increasing demands on raw materials, particularly on energy resources.

Norway has a long and rich tradition of energy production, reinforced by our recent history in oil and gas. The twin challenges of energy efficiency and sustainability are particularly important to Norway. EURAM 2006 is addressing these issues with special tracks in project management and energy issues that bring business leaders and scholars together in mutual dialogue on Europe's energy future.

Prof. Johan Olaisen, Chair

Prof. Ken Friedman, Co-chair