

GYULA VASTAG

Editorial: 'Walking the line'

In his first big hit, Johnny Cash sang about his love for Vivian, his first wife—a love that made him walk the line between the many temptations he faced on the tour and staying faithful to her. In management research, we also try to walk an otherwise imaginary line. If we substitute knowledge (as our object of desire) for Vivian, academic rigour for (methodological) temptations, and practical relevance for faithfulness, we are exactly where Johnny Cash was in 1956.

Like medicine, engineering, and others, the field of management is an applied discipline—the replicable knowledge acquired through well-documented steps conforming to up-to-date professional standards is supposed to have practical relevance. However, over the years, we—as a profession—have seemed to 'drift' away from seeking practical relevance in a field for which we claim competency. More and more, as we went through stages of professional development, we have retreated back into our academic ivory tower, burying ourselves in statistical and mathematical wizardry, often mistaking the means for the ends.

Among other things, *Pannon Management Review* wants to walk this line by providing a platform for research-based articles with practical relevance—offering actionable managerial advice. Over the years, several journal editors have expressed concern that there is a growing emphasis on publishing conformist articles—that fit the mainstream paradigm and do everything right, but, overall, do not move the field of management forward, either theoretically or empirically. *Pannon Management Review* is willing to take on this 'risky' challenge and publish the so-called 'interesting' articles that do not necessarily fit the traditional academic mould, but have the potential to enhance our knowledge and understanding. Furthermore, *Pannon Management Review* wants to offer publication opportunities—and a supporting, nurturing editorial environment—to young scholars, particularly to young scholars for whom English is not their first language. The journal also aims to publish portraits of companies and individuals whose performance is illustrative of management achievement.

Most fittingly, the name of the journal incorporates the name of its hosting University of Pannonia—and is also a reference to the wider region (Pannonia, in Roman times) surrounding Veszprém, the city where its hosting Faculty of Business and Economics is located. *Pannon Management Review* is the only English language management journal published in Hungary, and one of only a few

in Central and Eastern Europe. The publication of the journal was made possible under the New Széchenyi Plan by a grant from the National Development Agency of Hungary, with European Union support. In the months and years to come, the journal will seek to emulate the precedent set by the highly reputable *Acta Oeconomica*, the only English language economics journal in Hungary. *Acta Oeconomica* is led by the Faculty of Business and Economics colleagues Péter Mihályi (Editor) and Ádám Török (Chair of the Editorial Board), who also chairs the *Pannon Management Review* Management Committee.

This first issue of *Pannon Management Review* has attracted five outstanding articles written by five outstanding authors—three established scholars of international fame and two recent graduates of the University of Pannonia. Authors and articles alike reflect an extensive variety of interests, backgrounds, and levels of experience and expertise. At a first glance, each of these articles appeals to its own audience. At a second glance, all these articles cover issues of general management interest for both scholars and practitioners.

In ‘Working Smarter, Not Harder: Reflections on the Management of Business Schools and the Role of Business Schools in Innovation’, **Roderick Martin** has drawn on documentary evidence as well as on his own experience as a professor of international standing and director of British business and management schools. In addition to its direct relevance for managing universities in general and business schools in particular, Roderick’s analysis has prescriptive implications for the management of professional ‘knowledge workers’, outside as well as inside universities. Underlying his article is the view that the value of advice rests on the awareness of initial analysis—if you are going in the wrong direction, using the techniques correctly will not get you where you want to go. A version of Roderick’s article was initially presented at the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Pannonia on 5 December 2011.

In ‘“To Be, or Not to Be, That Is the Question”: Understanding Decision Making through Literary Models’, **Krishna S. Dhir**, Immediate Past President of the Decision Sciences Institute (DSI), describes the relevance of selected works by Robert Frost and Ernest Hemingway for models of decision making. Krishna shows how the cited literary works cover, and in some ways go beyond, the elements and models of decision making processes presented in the academic literature.

In ‘The Value of Time (and the Value of Waste): Time-based Supply Chain Design’, **Joseph D. Blackburn**, a pioneer of time-based competition, takes us on a short journey—covering no less than over twenty years of his research, nonetheless—to illustrate the limitations of time-based competition. To this end, Joe introduces us to the marginal value of time (MVT), a metric fundamental to time-based supply chain design. His article offers excellent actionable advice to

managers on selecting the right supply chain strategy—in different settings, with different MVTs. A version of Joe's article was initially presented at the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Pannonia on 11 October 2010.

In this first issue, the *Pannon Management Review* Young Scholars' Platform introduces **Anikó Csepregi** and **Nóra Kiss**, both former students of the Faculty of Economics, University of Pannonia. Anikó, now a 'full-grown' academic, successfully defended her PhD thesis last year and Nóra was awarded her MSc earlier this year.

In 'Lost in Knowledge Sharing: Possible Lessons and Implications for Middle Managers and Their Organisations', **Anikó Csepregi** studies knowledge sharing among middle managers in medium- and large-size enterprises in Hungary. She focuses on the maturity of knowledge sharing between middle managers and subordinates as well as among middle managers. In so doing, Anikó explores the influence individual characteristics such as age, length of service, and functional area have on availability and usefulness of knowledge, the two defining dimensions of maturity of knowledge sharing. Based on extensive data collection and analysis, her article concludes by suggesting possible lessons for middle managers with low levels of maturity of knowledge sharing and by discussing the implications these may have for their organisations.

In 'Crisis?! What Crisis?! Conversations with the Management of Herend Porcelain Manufactory Ltd', **Nóra Kiss** portrays a company that is very close to the Faculty of Business and Economics, both geographically and emotionally. Nóra delves into the company's past, through documentary evidence, and sheds light onto the company's present achievements and future challenges, through unparalleled access to senior management. Her article shows how the company's recent history is an example of successful corporate transformation in challenging market conditions, whilst maintaining traditional, 'heritage' values.

The launch of *Pannon Management Review* fits clearly within the framework of the principles underlying the New Széchenyi Plan. Like István Széchenyi himself, the journal links theoretical comprehension with practical endeavour. It also draws its inspiration from both national and international perspectives, as István Széchenyi himself did. As the product of a major non-metropolitan university, *Pannon Management Review* epitomises the role of regional development in national and international affairs. In short, the journal aims to develop national intellectual resources in practically relevant directions through the publication of research by experienced scholars, younger researchers, and managers.

As any other project of such nature and magnitude, *Pannon Management Review* has had its own fair share of ups and downs. This editorial would therefore not be complete without thanking the people who have augmented the 'ups' and

lessened the ‘downs’—and who have contributed to making it all happen. From the outer front cover of the journal to its outer back cover, these people are too many to count, too many to mention individually. However, for constant support throughout this project, I should like to thank Lajos Szabó and Zoltán Gaál. For informed advice at various stages of this project, I should like to thank Roderick Martin. And for picking up the proverbial pieces, I should particularly like to thank Anamaria M. Cristescu-Martin.

Gyula Vastag is Professor with the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Pannonia in Veszprém, Hungary. He served as Managing Director of the Corvinus School of Management at his *alma mater*, Corvinus University, and as Professor and Area Coordinator of Operations and Supply Chain Management at the Central European University (CEU) Business School, both in Budapest, Hungary. In the US, Gyula spent almost two decades on the faculties of Kelley School of Business (Indiana University), Eli Broad Graduate School of Management (Michigan State University), and Kenan-Flagler Business School (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). In addition, he was Professor and Dean of Supply Chain Management Programmes at the University of Stuttgart (2000–2001), where he has been a visiting professor ever since. He also held a visiting professorship (part time) with the University of Groningen in the Netherlands.



Gyula earned his PhD and Doctor of Sciences degrees at (the predecessor of) Corvinus University and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences respectively, and finished his habilitation at Corvinus University.

His areas of interest include global operations and supply chain management, service operations management, and environmental management strategies. A successful and popular instructor, Gyula has developed and taught a wide variety of conventional and unconventional courses and educational programmes, both in business schools and for corporations—such as for the Kelley Direct Online MBA Program (Indiana University) and the action-learning programme for the executives of the largest bank in Central and Eastern Europe.

Gyula co-authored two books, wrote eight business cases, and contributed chapters to 15 books. He published over thirty peer-reviewed journal articles, in the US and Europe, and numerous papers in conference proceedings. The h-index of his publications in Harzing’s *Publish or Perish* (based on over 1,000 citations) is 15 (as of 14 October 2012). His work on the competitiveness of metropolitan areas

has generated interest outside academic circles, and his cases on Sonoco's take-back policy were selected by CaseNet® as two of the six e-link cases for the seventh edition of Meiners, Ringleb, and Edwards' widely used *Legal Environment of Business*.

Gyula has cooperated and consulted with a large number of organisations, including the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa), the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota, the Global TransPark Authority of North Carolina, the US Federal Aviation Administration, and the North Carolina State University, in the US; the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis, in Austria; ESSEC-Mannheim Business School, in Germany; Knorr-Bremse Hungary and the OTP Bank, in Hungary; and the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) and the University of St. Gallen, in Switzerland.

Gyula is Founding Member of the Executive Board of the European Decision Sciences Institute (EDSI) and the European Regionally Elected Vice-President (2010–2014) of DSI, where he is also Member of the Development Committee for Excellence in the Decision Sciences and Chair of the Member Services Committee (2011–2012). He is Founding Member of the Global Manufacturing Research Group, where he also served as Associate Director. In addition, Gyula served on the Executive Committee of the International Society for Inventory Research in 1998 and 2006, and he is currently Member of its Auditing Committee.

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