

**COMPETENCE-BASED STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT –  
STRATEGISCHES KOMPETENZMANAGEMENT**

**10<sup>th</sup> SKM Symposium**

**Call for Papers**

**Understanding Transformation:**

**Theoretical, methodological, and practical challenges and implications  
from a competence-based perspective**

**September 28/29, 2017**

**Freie Universität Berlin, Germany**

**with executive seminar (September, 28, afternoon)  
and pre-conference Ph.D. workshop (September, 27)**

We are living in the age of disruptions. “Digital transformation” is the latest buzzword that loudly raises awareness with regard to ongoing change processes, attributed as “fast”, “radical”, “fundamental”, or “game changing”.

The aim of the 10<sup>th</sup> SKM symposium is to further explicate the **reflection and understanding of transformation in relation to competence-based strategic management**. In this regard, in-depth discussions of various phenomena are fostered. These are, for example:

- (a) types, causes, and drivers, but also rigidities and barriers of transformation (e.g., technology and “digital transformation”, lobbying and regulation, globalization, emerging service-dominant logics, business model innovations, institutional innovations)
- (b) the role of resources and competences, but also agency, entrepreneurship, and leadership in practicing and organizing transformation, as well as framing constructs or mechanisms (e.g., dynamic capabilities, absorptive capacity, routinized action of organizational renewal, market shaping, but also uncertainty awareness and decision anomalies like hubris, or self-reinforcing effects like “path dependency” as “micro-foundations of change”)
- (c) multi-level explanations and methodological contributions
- (d) industry-specific studies of transformation (e.g., in healthcare, mobility, banking, education)
- (e) the role of regional actors, clusters, ecosystems, or institutions, and the relevance of particular projects that shape transformation

**Key Notes**



**Prof. Dr. Gerd Gigerenzer**  
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**Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Georg Schreyögg**  
(Management Department, Freie Universität Berlin)

The following topics highlight conceivable approaches to the overall term “Transformation”. It is essential to adopt a strictly **resource and competence-based lens** in order to place a successful contribution to the symposium:

**Practical and/or context-specific challenges and contributions:**

- Digital Transformation: causes, courses, and consequences
- Industry specific transformation such as:
  - smart mobility, smart living, smart energy ... and beyond
  - e- and digital health
  - industry transformation and convergence in creative industries and banking
  - “servitization” (Vandermerwe & Rada 1988) and “Industry 4.0” ...
- Causes, types and/or categories of innovation and resulting transformation, e.g., “technological, business model, product or process innovations” (Markides 2006), labeled as, e.g., “disruptive” (Christensen et al. 2015; Nagy et al. 2016); “incremental vs. radical” (Christensen 2006); “modular vs. architectural” (Henderson & Clark 1990); “competency-enhancing vs. competency-destroying” (Tushman & Anderson 1986)...
- Types of innovation and required resources, processes and autonomous units (Christensen 2003)
- Co-opetition in times of transformation (Ansari et al. 2015)
- Shaping markets (Santos & Eisenhardt 2009)
- From product- to service-dominant logics (Barrett et al. 2015; Lusch & Nambisan 2015) from a resource- and competence-based view
- Platforms and/or ecosystems: shifting competitive advantages from corporate to network level (e.g., Cecagnoli et al. 2012; Wieland et al. 2013; Mustak 2014, Tiwana 2015) and acting within evolving ecosystems (e.g., Nambisan & Baron 2013)
- Asymmetric new venture development alliances (ANVDA: Faems et al 2012) and conceivable interplays of start-ups and established firms (entrants as well as incumbents)
- Hubs: the role of ecosystems, regional clusters, accelerators, incubators & co within transformation (Vargo et al. 2015)

**Theoretical challenges and contributions:**

- The ongoing process of building theories of disruption and transformation (Christensen 2006)
- Diverse “micro-foundations of change” from a resource and competence-based view
- “Creative Destruction”: conceivable coexistences of emergence and acting agents within transformation (Abernathy & Clark 1985)
- Path dependency and other self-dynamics within transformation from a resource and competence-based view (Sydow et al. 2009; Freiling et al. 2008)
- Dynamic Capabilities (Eisenhardt & Jeffrey 2000; Helfat et al. 2007; Teece 2012) and Absorptive Capacity (Cohen & Levinthal 1990; Duchek 2013; Cooper & Molla 2016) in transformation
- Various types of dilemma, puzzles and/or traps, e.g. the “Disruptor’s Dilemma” within industries and ecosystems (Ansari et al 2015) or the “Adaptability and Rigidity Puzzle” of incumbents and entrants (Kapoor & Klueter 2015) ...

**Methodical challenges and contributions:**

- Process-orientation in co-evolutionary research designs, addressing one or more of the following attributes: multilevel, processual and/or longitudinal (Gersch et al. 2009)
- The metrics of transformation (levels of analysis, variables, proxies, scales, thresholds to quantify transformation and to operationalize attributes like “incremental”, “radical”, “disruptive”, etc.)
- From single and mixed to multiple methods: beyond case-based reasoning within inductive and deductive research designs on innovation and transformation (Christensen 2006)
- Measuring multi-level research

Since introducing and combining more and more perspectives, variables and constructs to the field of research does not prove to be helpful to clarify the above-mentioned issues; it is therefore essential to further elaborate a **consistent theoretical, as well as methodological basis**, within **fitting research designs**. **This will provide** a better understanding of transformation as well as resulting challenges for competence-based strategic management. Therefore, **each paper** should clarify its conceptual / theoretical grounding, the addressed research question(s), the relevant independent and dependent variables on named level(s) of analysis, as well as – in case of an empirical paper – the adequate design of data acquisition and analysis. Moreover, empirical analyses are appreciated in order to focus variables of **clearly strategic impact**.

The symposium will be organized in parallel tracks with focus on transformation issues. A further specification depends on focus of submitted papers and results of the review process.

### Members of the program committee



*Prof. Dr. Jörg Freiling,  
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*Prof. Dr. Jochen Koch,  
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*Prof. Dr. Martin Gersch,  
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*Prof. Dr. Birgit Renzl,  
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*Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Güttel,  
University of Linz*



*Prof. Dr. Uta Wilkens,  
Ruhr-University Bochum*

**Conference languages** are English and German. In order to accommodate international participants, continuous sessions in English are guaranteed. However, it is possible to submit contributions in German. German-speaking discussion groups will complete the conference activities.

### Submission

Please submit abstracts (max. 500 words) via email to [skm2017@wiwiss.fu-berlin.de](mailto:skm2017@wiwiss.fu-berlin.de) **by March 31, 2017 at the latest**. The submitted abstracts will be reviewed in a double-blind review process organized by the members of the program committee. Acceptance decisions will be communicated by **May 15, 2017**. Full paper submissions (max. 6000 words) are due by **August 15, 2017**.

The **executive seminar** will address different perspectives on transformation processes. In more detail, it will be reflecting on the importance of decades defining technological progress (“Digital Transformation”) as well as on the role of regions, cities and universities in strengthening the environment as nuclei and drivers of transformation (e.g., Berlin as “start-up capital” or the new Einstein Centre Digital Future (ECDF)). The seminar is organized as a plenary discussion in German.

### The pre-conference Ph.D. workshop (on September 27, 2017)

- focuses on transformation processes and competence-based strategic management
- provides an opportunity to receive individual feedback from senior researchers, who are selected with regard to their expertise in relevant topics
- provides time and space for presenting and discussing thesis in a group of peers

- features an additional social event
- number of workshop participants is limited to 10 Ph.D. candidates

To apply for the workshop, please submit a short description of your thesis project (max. 1.000 words) via email to [skm2017@wiwiss.fu-berlin.de](mailto:skm2017@wiwiss.fu-berlin.de) **by March 31, 2017**. Please indicate that you are submitting for the Ph.D. workshop.

### Publication Opportunities

For the best conference papers, we offer a fast-track review process and publishing opportunity in the Journal of Competence-based Strategic Management (JCSM) ranked in VHB-Jourqual. If you are generally interested in this publication opportunity, please indicate this when submitting the full paper. Depending on the number of adequate paper submissions, we additionally consider editing special issues in other acknowledged academic journals.

### Conference Venue

Freie Universität Berlin is located in the southwest of Berlin, in the garden district of Dahlem, which had already become a top-ranked location for research and study in the early 20th century, nick-named the “German Oxford”. The FU Berlin was formally founded on December 4, 1948 and became central in the network of various extra-university research institutions located in Dahlem. Today, the FU Berlin is a full university with almost 30.000 students in 15 schools and central institutes offering over 150 degree programs across a wide range of subjects. The university is successful in all three funding lines in the federal and state Excellence Initiative, thereby receiving additional funding for its institutional future development strategy.



Freie Universität can thus take its place as an international network university in the global competition among universities. Development and assessment of research projects takes place within various focus areas, research networks, and platforms for interdisciplinary collaborative research. The 10<sup>th</sup> SKM-Conference is supported amongst others by the Focus Area “DynAge” (<http://www.fu-berlin.de/dynage>) as well as the new “Einstein Center Digital Future (ECDF)” (<http://be-digital.berlin>).

The School of Business & Economics at FU Berlin contains five departments with a total of 34 professors (19 professors in business administration, 15 in economics). Approximately 2.100 students are currently studying at the school within two Bachelor-, four Master- and two PhD-Programs. The Department of Information Systems is the youngest department at the school and has a focus – among others – on “digital transformation”. Current research projects highlight related issues, e.g., as part of the Focus Area DynAge or in order to support the FU Berlin becoming one of the 21 “Entrepreneurial Universities” in Germany, funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Technology (<http://www-fu-berlin.de/enu>).



There are **two recommended hotels** nearby the FU Berlin:

- Hotel Seminaris (<http://www.seminaris.de/hotels/seminaris-campus-hotel-berlin.html>)
- Harnack Haus (guest house of Max Planck Society: <http://www.harnackhaus-berlin.mpg.de>).

Further information with regard to Berlin: <http://www.berlin.de>

## Literature

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