

## CALL FOR PAPERS – SPECIAL ISSUE OF *JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT*

### **This is an Eventful Era: Exploring Event-oriented Approaches to Organizational Research**

#### **Special Issue Editors**

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#### **Description**

We live in an era shaped by and defined through significant events, which break entities (e.g., individuals, teams, organizations, and environments) out of their routines and conventions (Morgeson, Mitchell, & Liu, 2015). Events can create change, produce uncertainty, and require adaptation. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic has substantially changed people's experiences in the workplace and at home and the Black Lives Matter movement (following a number of tragic deaths) has reignited a variety of organizational diversity and inclusion initiatives. As Pillemer emphasizes, "in every life, the ongoing stream of mundane daily occurrences is punctuated by distinctive, circumscribed, highly emotional and influential episodes" (2001: 123). In the management literature, there is a growing acknowledgement of the importance of events in shaping individual and collective behavior, ranging from such things as career shocks (Seibert, Kraimer, Holtom, & Pierotti, 2013), stigma disclosure events (Johnson, Joshi, & Hogan, 2020), interruptive events in teams (Zellmer-Bruhn, 2003), CEO succession (Graffin, Boivie, & Carpenter, 2013), firm reputational events (Paruchuri, Pollock, & Kumar, 2019.), mega-events and natural disasters (Tilcsik & Marquis, 2013), regional political conflicts and wars (Dai, Eden, & Beamish, 2013), and technological discontinuities (Tushman & Anderson, 1986). Various theoretical perspectives have been developed to explain how events come to impact individual, team, and firm outcomes (e.g., Anderson & Tushman, 1990; Connelly, Certo, Ireland, & Reutzel, 2011; Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). More recently, Event System Theory (EST) identified the three characteristics that enable events to be impactful: the extent to which events are novel, disruptive, and critical (reflecting event strength; Morgeson et al., 2015). EST also depicts how events cultivate changes depending on space and time and unveils the interplay among event strength and the spatial and temporal processes through

which events come to elicit changes at different organizational levels. An increasing number of empirical studies have provided support for EST's propositions (e.g., Chen, Liu, Tang, & Hogan, 2021; Lin, Shao, Li, Guo, & Zhan, 2021; Liu, Chen, & Li, 2021).

Despite this emerging body of event-oriented research, the field of management has, however, been dominated by what can be termed feature-oriented research in which the focus is on the relatively salient and stable features of individuals, groups, organizations, and environments. But what if we had a science devoted to studying events, or these punctuating episodes in context, which are dynamic and discrete, rather than studying the relatively static features of entities? We believe that an understanding of events as causes of behavior, especially changes in behavior, combined with features and subsequent events is a more accurate reflection of entities' functioning and development. As Weiss and Rupp (2011) remind us, one's experience of work combines dynamic episodes (i.e., events) and stable individual, collective, and environmental features. In addition, such an event-oriented perspective may offer new theoretical and empirical insights in established areas as well as pointing to new areas of study. We anticipate that events can emerge at different levels including individuals, teams, organizations, associations, societies, countries, and regions.

The aim of this special issue is to solicit and encourage event-oriented organizational research, which can occur at any organizational level. We also welcome studies applying multidisciplinary theoretical lenses and innovative research methods (e.g., big data analytics, artificial intelligence) to study events. Preference will be given to empirical research, but we will also consider exemplary theoretical and methodological research. This special issue will help highlight the diverse event-oriented organizational studies that are being conducted as well as motivate scholars to develop novel theories and research methods for enhancing our understanding of the impact of events on individuals, teams, and organizations.

### **Possible Topics for Submission**

We are open to qualitative or quantitative event-oriented research conducted at any level of analysis, including the individual, team, organizational, and environmental level, as well as research that crosses these levels. Regardless of the level, however, it is essential that research be explicitly event-oriented and substantively incorporate events into theorizing and methodology. In addition, it would be best if the specific events studied generalize to broader organizational issues rather than be simple illustrations of a specific type of event. For example, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has spawned considerable research focusing on how the pandemic has changed organizational life. Although the pandemic is certainly an important and influential event, research focusing on the pandemic would need to explore the broader impact of this kind of event rather than just exploring the effects of the pandemic itself. For example, how should employees, teams, and organizations cope with the changes wrought by COVID-19 or even identify unique strategic opportunities resulting from the pandemic to gain competitive advantage?

There are many possible ways to conduct event-oriented organizational research, some of which are highlighted below. Yet, the ideas shown below are suggestions only. We are open to event-oriented organizational research that generates important empirical, theoretical, and practical implications.

***Integrative theory-building approach:*** How might entities' features (e.g., personality attributes and environmental characteristics) and experienced events interplay to trigger changes in behavior and features, and subsequent events associated with entities at different levels? An integrative theory-building approach that investigates the ways entities' features and experienced events jointly impact employees may more clearly depict the functioning of events and make meaningful contributions to the management literature.

***Quantifying events:*** What cues or factors regarding the nature of events make events impactful? Research models treating events in a dichotomous manner (i.e., events occurring or not occurring) or as a research context (i.e., not directly modelling events) may have limited explanatory power and result in an incomplete understanding of the extent to which events are salient and elicit changes. Studies that directly and clearly delve into the nature of events will provide more insight into the varied levels of influence of different events.

***System perspective:*** The organizational literature is yet to thoroughly examine the contextual influence of time and space and “this unnatural, acontextual bounding of time and space foregoes the considerable advantage of studying whole events and processes” (Johns, 2006: 390). Importantly, events differ from entity features because they are “bounded in space and time (i.e., discrete) such that they have an identifiable temporal beginning and end and evolve in a specific setting (Morgeson et al., 2015: 520). Hence, EST emphasizes the notion that the event system is composed of three interplaying components: (1) event strength (the degree to which an event is novel, disruptive, and critical), (2) event space (spatial cues of events), and (3) event time (temporal cues of events) (Morgeson et al., 2015). Accordingly, researchers can adopt a system perspective to examine the ways spatial (e.g., origin, direction, dispersion, and proximity) and temporal (e.g., duration, pace, peak, phase, rhythm, timing, and urgency) factors alter the functioning of events. In addition, longitudinal and multilevel studies are encouraged to track how events originating at different entity levels may evolve over time in diverse crowds, communities, or ecosystems (e.g., the ebbs and flows in event strength) to generate important outcomes.

***Underlying mechanisms:*** To address the question of why events may change employees, teams, or organizations, scholars will need to uncover the underlying mechanisms for the relationships between events and outcomes. Clearly, different aspects of events may lead to outcomes through distinct mechanisms (e.g., cognitive, affective, behavioral, or motivational) at different organizational levels. Identifying and testing these mechanisms may engender unique insights into the event effectuation process.

## Timeline

August 1, 2021	Call for special issue released.
May 1, 2022 (11:59 p.m. EDT)	Deadline for submission of manuscripts. Manuscripts should be submitted online at <a href="http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jom">http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jom</a> (be sure to select Special Issue as the submission type).
September 1, 2022	First round of editorial decisions (with reviews).
February 1, 2023	Resubmission deadline.
June 1, 2023	Second round of editorial decisions.
September 1, 2023	Final resubmission.
December 1, 2023	Final decision.

Note: These are general guidelines; each submission may involve different timing and a different number of revisions before a decision is made

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