

Crafting Interdisciplinary Research: Four Cornerstone Practices for Management Scholars

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ABSTRACT Interdisciplinary research is widely promoted as essential for advancing understanding of complex managerial and organizational phenomena. Yet, while often celebrated rhetorically, authors keep facing significant challenges when they seek to integrate insights from other disciplines into management scholarship. To that effect, we outline four research-informed cornerstone practices to help management scholars craft interdisciplinary research. Employing a narrative-integrative review approach, we inductively develop an *Interdisciplinarity Diffusion Framework* that maps interdisciplinary research according to the proximity of the source discipline to management (proximal–distal) and the primary mode of diffusion (theory, methods, or phenomena). Drawing on exemplary studies to illustrate our points, we show how different positions within this framework create distinct opportunities and barriers for authors. We draw on these findings, as well as on our own scholarly experience to detail four cornerstone practices, which serve as practical guidance for authors interested in advancing management theory with interdisciplinary research. Finally, we shift attention to the responsibilities of reviewers, editors, and institutions in shaping an environment where interdisciplinarity can flourish. We argue that supporting interdisciplinary research should be a rich and shared endeavour, central to the future intellectual vitality and societal relevance of management studies.

Keywords: interdisciplinarity, interdisciplinary research, management studies, theory

INTRODUCTION

How can management scholars best mobilize insights from other disciplines to advance understandings of important managerial and organizational phenomena, and in doing so craft more impactful management research? An interdisciplinary perspective is widely viewed as a mechanism to advance knowledge, regardless of discipline, and is thus in line with the mission of the *Journal of Management Studies* (JMS) to publish intellectually

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stimulating, rigorous, and socially relevant research that changes scholarly conversations (Healey et al., 2023; Wickert et al., 2021). More broadly, interdisciplinary research has the potential to play a key role in tackling complex societal and scientific problems; drawing together insights from diverse disciplines and breaking down disciplinary silos that limit vision and creativity (e.g., Bansal and Kang, 2025; Klein, 1996; Pohl and Hadorn, 2007; Reinecke et al., 2024; Repko, 2008). Further, an interdisciplinary focus can enable researchers to bring new, exciting, insightful, and nuanced insights into the purview of management studies. Consistent with this view, journal editors, institutional bodies, and universities emphasize the desirability of interdisciplinary research, for example, through special issues, targeted research grants, the creation of university centres, and programmes.

Yet, interdisciplinary research demands high levels of personal investment that can even be career-defining: exploring new areas in-depth; working with new teams; identifying high-quality publication outlets; finding a place for this within your own institution and your area of interest more broadly; and thinking long term. For example, while interdisciplinary studies are expected to have greater insights, citation analyses are inconclusive regarding the relative impact of such work. Interdisciplinary studies are often cited less frequently in the first few years after publication but often see a resurgence more than a decade later (Van Noorden, 2015). Conversely, though, business journals with a more interdisciplinary focus publish more heavily cited articles than business journals with a narrower focus (Levitt and Thelwall, 2008). Separately, when comparing a wide range of disciplines, social sciences and psychology fall in the midrange for both the prevalence of outside influences and the reach to other disciplines (Van Noorden, 2015). Trend data is also inconclusive whether research is becoming more interdisciplinary – for example, the reach of *JMS* and other leading management outlets in terms of citations to management articles in non-business disciplines has been relatively stable over time (Krammer et al., 2024).

Finally, based on our own experiences as authors, reviewers, and editors, publishing interdisciplinary management research often has a high bar, given the unique characteristics of this type of research. This may initially seem surprising, as management is considered an early-stage discipline from a Kuhnian model of science, building on work from many other disciplines. For example, many of the key theoretical perspectives in organization theory have come from disciplines as diverse as economics, sociology, psychology, biology, and engineering (Oswick et al., 2011). Regardless, it can be challenging for interdisciplinary papers to successfully navigate the review process.

While the broader benefits of interdisciplinary research have been discussed by many and continue to be celebrated rhetorically – for instance in editorials of influential business and management journals such as *Academy of Management Journal* (Reinecke et al., 2024), *Journal of Management Studies* (Zahra and Newey, 2009), *Business & Society* (De Bakker et al., 2019), *Journal of International Business Studies* (Cheng et al., 2009), and elsewhere (Krammer et al., 2024; Leahey et al., 2017; Russo et al., 2024; Siedlok and Hibbert, 2014) – comparatively little has been written to provide authors with actionable guidance on how to actually *do* interdisciplinary research from a management studies point of view, which includes thinking about interesting research topics, engaging with potential collaborators from another discipline to eventual publication. Observing the limited implementation of interdisciplinary research in management,

Bansal and Kang speculate that it may be because ‘management researchers lack a framework that can guide the decision of when interdisciplinary research is needed and how it should be conducted’ (2025, p. 16). This is where we seek to add value to the conversation. Acknowledging the widely articulated benefits, opportunities, challenges, and institutional barriers to interdisciplinary management research, the objective of our editorial is to provide practical guidance for management scholars who are interested in crafting interdisciplinary research.

Toward that end, we offer several resources. First, we develop an *Interdisciplinarity Diffusion Framework* that maps interdisciplinary research according to the proximity of the source discipline relative to management (labelled as ‘distal’ such as physics and ‘proximal’ such as sociology), and the primary mode of diffusion, specifically, whether that influence is focused on theory, methods, or a phenomenon. Drawing on exemplary studies to illustrate our points, we show how different positions within this framework create distinct opportunities and barriers for authors. Second, we outline four cornerstone practices for crafting interdisciplinary research: (1) identifying opportunities, (2) adapting, contextualizing, translating, (3) building a team and creating a common language, and (4) framing your manuscript for a management audience.^[1] The first two cornerstone practices flow directly from our framework, while the last two are based on our experience as authors, reviewers, and editors. In addition to illustrating how interdisciplinary research can shape individual studies, we also demonstrate that such efforts can cumulatively elevate and advance an entire field. Our main contribution is thus to offer an actionable source of inspiration for *how* management scholarship and its theories, methods and phenomena under study can benefit from a view to other disciplines (an ‘outside-in’ view). Yet, we believe that this will also advance the conversation about *what* management research has to offer to other disciplines (an ‘inside-out’ view), ultimately making it a mutually enriching exercise. Finally, we draw attention to the responsibilities of reviewers, editors, and institutions in shaping an environment where interdisciplinary scholarship can flourish. We argue that supporting interdisciplinary research could be a rich and shared endeavour, central to the future intellectual vitality and societal relevance of management studies.

HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH?

Before proceeding, it is important to define key concepts and terms, as there is a plethora of labels to describe research which spans multiple domains. In its simplest form, interdisciplinary research has been defined as ‘a mode of research that transgresses traditional disciplinary boundaries’ (Siedlok and Hibbert, 2014, p. 197), with the broader goal that ‘the integration or synthesis of two or more disparate disciplines, bodies of knowledge, or modes of thinking to produce meaning, explanation or product (...) is more extensive and powerful than its constituent parts’ (Siedlok and Hibbert, 2014, p. 197).

Interdisciplinarity should also be distinguished from the related notions of multi- and transdisciplinarity. While multidisciplinary involves juxtaposing ‘two or more divergent disciplines, which approach a research problem by using their own framings and methods, at a level that requires cooperation rather than integrative collaboration’,

transdisciplinarity describes ‘the development of increasing coherence, unity and simplicity of knowledge in which disciplinary boundaries become irrelevant or are radically reshaped’ (Siedlok and Hibbert, 2014, p. 198). Thus, in contrast to the above two notions, interdisciplinarity emphasizes the *integration* and *synthesis* of knowledge from different disciplines and thus helps create a more holistic view or common understanding of a complex issue or problem.

Based on these premises, at the *Journal of Management Studies*, we understand the aims and scope of interdisciplinary research in a broad sense. It can start from within our home terrain, which is typically the business and management school (or, for instance but less frequently, a social science and psychology department) and could stretch to business school departments usually less engaged in studying management and organizations such as finance, accounting, marketing, and economics. As many would have experienced, even crafting interdisciplinary research based on collaborations among scholars within the same business school is often a challenge. We frequently seem not to speak the same language. Further, aspirations and norms we hold in high regard at *JMS* – to develop novel and original insights useful for our theoretical understanding of management and organizations, and in doing so substantially challenge or redirect conversations in management studies – are not necessarily shared across disciplines.

Yet, truly interdisciplinary research may reach outside our methodological and theoretical comfort zones, drawing on narratives that are novel to management studies, and enter what are effectively ‘uncharted waters’ (Breslin and Gatrell, 2023) including both arts and humanities (Aguilera et al., 2022), as well as natural sciences like physics, biology and chemistry (Padgett and Powell, 2012) in order to bring new perspectives, ways of thinking, theoretical insights, and new methods to advance management scholarship.

AN INTERDISCIPLINARITY DIFFUSION FRAMEWORK FOR MANAGEMENT STUDIES

We propose the Interdisciplinarity Diffusion Framework as a map for locating research projects based on the source discipline’s proximity to management studies (proximal vs. distal) and the mode of diffusion (theory, method, or phenomena). The framework serves three purposes. First, the framework’s quadrants highlight concrete, discernible avenues for identifying opportunities to (and anticipate challenges in) advancing management studies with an interdisciplinary approach. Second, by locating a project within one of the quadrants, authors may gain greater clarity on the extent to which they must become knowledgeable in the source fields they draw from, either individually or as a team. Third, the exemplary articles we identify for each quadrant may serve as a template for how to adapt, contextualize and translate work from other disciplines to advance management research.

Premises of the Interdisciplinarity Diffusion Framework

In developing the Interdisciplinarity Diffusion Framework, our intention is to make visible the different ways in which interdisciplinarity is already being practiced within management and organization studies and use these insights to inform our practical guidance. To do so, we

adopted what Snyder (2019) describes as a narrative-integrative review approach. We worked iteratively across journals, disciplines, and empirical traditions (including empirical, conceptual and review articles), tracing how scholars had drawn upon theories, methods, and phenomena from other fields. This approach has meant paying close attention not only to what may have travelled across disciplinary boundaries, but also to how such ideas are translated, reworked, and re-embedded within management conversations. Our framework therefore emerged inductively from the lived practice of interdisciplinarity, grounded in existing and already published scholarship rather than abstract theoretical prescription.

At the same time, the Interdisciplinary Diffusion Framework reflects our positionality as management scholars who adopt an interdisciplinary perspective yet are closely engaged with our field, as well as by our roles as former and current Editors of *JMS*, a journal that is known for its interdisciplinary ethos, ontological and epistemological plurality, and intention to offer a space for various article types including empirical, conceptual, and literature reviews. Our everyday engagement with manuscripts, reviewer reports, and editorial deliberations facilitated us in being sensitive to recurrent patterns – for instance, when interdisciplinarity might be welcomed as refreshing, when it was treated with suspicion, and when promising papers faltered because authors struggled to bridge conceptual or methodological divides.

These everyday editorial experiences encouraged us to consider how the distance between disciplines, and the mode through which interdisciplinary research takes place, interact to shape scholarly perceptions of interdisciplinary arguments. The framework is thus intended as both descriptive and developmental: it helped us contextualize different forms of interdisciplinarity and it is intended also to help authors, reviewers, and editors to calibrate and locate the expectations of their intended audiences as fairly and thoughtfully as possible.

In shaping the framework, we were also mindful that interdisciplinary work is experienced differently by scholars working from different ontological, epistemological and methodological traditions, most prominently the different paradigmatic positions (e.g., interpretivism vs. positivism) from which qualitative vs quantitative researchers typically study phenomena. For example, for qualitative researchers, interdisciplinarity often becomes woven into the practice of fieldwork and interpretation. Working with distal theories or phenomena may require scholars to immerse themselves in unfamiliar empirical worlds, develop new ethical and relational sensibilities, or to read about and internalize complex concepts that originate elsewhere. The experience of distance may be therefore emotional and relational as well as intellectual. Our framework, we hope, can support qualitative scholars by helping them articulate why such crossings matter – for instance, by showing how distal phenomena illuminate overlooked dimensions of organizational life, or how a theoretical lens imported from another discipline can shift how we see everyday practices.

For quantitative researchers, interdisciplinarity often centres on the diffusion of theory and methods. Scholars may import constructs, measurement approaches, modelling techniques, or analytical frameworks developed elsewhere. Here the challenge lies less in immersion and more in translation: questions arise about construct validity, measurement equivalence, and whether techniques travel cleanly across disciplinary boundaries. We intend for our framework to provide a means for quantitative researchers to clarify these moves – explaining why external constructs or methods are necessary (rather than

repurposed like old wine in new bottles), how they have been adapted for management contexts, and what fresh insights they enable.

In this way, the framework is deliberately capacious. It does not privilege one paradigm over another but seeks, instead, to offer a shared and by no means exhaustive language through which different kinds of interdisciplinary engagement – qualitative and quantitative; empirical, conceptual or review; proximal and distal; theoretical, methodological, or phenomenon-led – may be recognized, valued, and thoughtfully evaluated.

Two Dimensions of Interdisciplinary Research: Proximity and Mode of Diffusion

The first dimension of our framework – *source discipline's proximity to management studies (proximal vs. distal)* – is the consideration of whether a discipline is more proximal or more distal to management studies. Rather than a binary or absolute distinction, we view this dimension as a heuristic device representing two analytical ends of a continuum, for conceptual clarity. We consider as proximal those disciplines which are more closely related to management, most prominently economics, sociology, or psychology (and to an important albeit lesser extent also disciplines such as anthropology, history, and political sciences). Proximal disciplines have long been sources of inspiration in management scholarship and thus have heavily influenced our field, evidenced for instance by a recent special issue in *JMS* edited by Smith et al. (2026) in which contributions draw on historical perspectives to examine dynamics of deglobalization. Proximal disciplines may be more familiar or have greater overlap with management but are potentially less radically innovative and less able to provide new perspectives or fresh insight; some may also still present considerable paradigmatic divergence. More distal disciplines, such as geography, strands of the humanities such as literature studies, as well as natural sciences branches such as physics and biology, have so far less frequently entered management scholarship (for a rare example, see Whiteman et al., 2013, or a recent special issue in *JMS* edited by Smith et al. (2026), drawing on historical perspectives). Arguably, from a strength of critical distance, distal disciplines might offer the potential for more original and groundbreaking insights; however, the promise of such benefits may be offset by questions of relevance or ease of adoption. In either case, whether proximal or distal, the successful development and implementation of an interdisciplinary approach for a publication within a scholarly journal requires the examination of questions interesting but yet unfamiliar to management scholars; a clear articulation of what we as management scholars can learn from a view to another discipline that we would struggle to generate by relying on domestic knowledge domains and insights alone; and to use these insights to join and expand, challenge or redirect important ongoing conversations of management scholars (Healey et al., 2023).

The second dimension of our framework – *the mode of interdisciplinary diffusion (theory, method, or phenomena)* – is the form of interdisciplinary influence. We focus on three forms of influence, which we deem to be particularly relevant to management and organization studies, specifically: *Theory*, *research methods*, and *phenomena*. On the theory

side, proximal and distal disciplines can advance management research by introducing new concepts, challenging assumptions, offering alternate explanations, and revealing boundary conditions (Healey et al., 2023). On the methods side, methodological advances from other disciplines have substantially shaped management research by providing new tools, construct operationalization, and methodological approaches. On the phenomena side, research shows that studying phenomena beyond management's traditional scope can markedly advance theory by unveiling hitherto underexamined facets of a phenomenon. Based on these two dimensions of our framework we now set out to demonstrate in greater detail how we understand the utilization of interdisciplinary research within management studies, which will, in turn, inform our practical guidance.

How *Theory* from Proximal and Distal Disciplines Can Advance Management Research

Proximal and distal disciplines – with their distinct concepts, assumptions, epistemologies, and foci – can advance management research by (i) supplying new concepts or refining how we think about our established ones; (ii) questioning and relaxing assumptions; (iii) identifying alternate explanations for the linkages between concepts; and (iv) identifying boundary conditions to our theories (Healey et al., 2023; Post et al., 2020).

Concepts. Distal and proximal disciplines are likely to study phenomena related to the questions we seek to address in management studies, but may consider distinct theoretical concepts in relation to the same phenomenon. Such concepts, if properly integrated with management theory, can help develop more complete and complex explanations for organizational phenomena. For example, studies of rhythm and temporal patterns, originating in biology, inspired and informed the concept of entrainment, ‘the adjustment or moderation of one behaviour either to synchronize or to be in rhythm with another behaviour’ (Ancona and Chong, 1992, p. 2) in management research. Integrating borrowed concepts into management research may require considerable adaptation, contextualization, and translation. For the transplanting of the concept of entrainment from biology to social science to be useful, Ancona and Chong found they had to raise the level of abstraction so that the specificities of the source discipline of biology wouldn't limit its use in management research. Further, where biology assumes that an external system captures the entrainment process, setting the rhythm, Ancona and Chong allowed for both the external system to set others' rhythm and for the recipient of the entrainment to influence the rhythm of the external system. These distinctive elements of entrainment as re-conceptualized for management studies opened many new research avenues such as around strategic action rhythms, or firms' distribution of strategic actions over time (Chen et al., 2024; Keil et al., 2023; Klarner and Raisch, 2013).

Alternatively, comparable concepts in other disciplines can help us see the need for nuance in management theories, bringing precision to our thinking. For example, Stackhouse (2025) draws from trauma research in health sciences, and behavioural and

social sciences to clarify the construct of work-related psychological trauma, showing it is substantively different from stress, and develops an integrative theoretical model of work-related psychological trauma. Stackhouse had observed that, while trauma research in management studies had tackled some severe trauma responses, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), it lacked language and models that explain sub-clinical trauma responses. Hence, much like some cultures have developed a richer vocabulary for phenomena that are especially salient in their environment, so, too, some disciplines may have developed more nuance for concepts of interest to management scholars. Drawing on these finer-grained conceptualizations may help management scholars sharpen construct definitions.

Assumptions. Research from proximal and distal disciplines can encourage us to question and maybe even relax assumptions that undergird our theories. Assumptions are foundational to any theory and paradigm (van Aken, 2004; Burrell and Morgan, 1979). Because research traditions and disciplines may hold different assumptions (e.g., about whether phenomenon are entirely subjective or objective), they ask distinctive questions and can interpret phenomena very differently (Alvesson and Deetz, 1996; Hardy and Clegg, 1997). Hence, questioning assumptions within our own field, while exploring how other disciplines approach the same phenomenon, can help identify opportunities for interdisciplinary research. A classic example of how importing assumptions from a proximal discipline can reshape and redirect theory comes from economics, where the assumption of rationality was challenged by behavioural research, which documented heuristics, biases, bounded rationality, and context-dependent preferences (Simon, 1947, 1955; Tversky and Kahneman, 1974). Relaxing the assumption of rationality (and importing psychology into strategy) has yielded many new theories, including upper echelons theory (Hambrick and Mason, 1984) and the attention-based view of the firm (Ocasio, 1997), and new disciplinary perspectives such as behavioural strategy (Gavetti, 2012; Powell et al., 2011).

Distal disciplines, too, can help question the assumptions in our theories. Visser et al. (2018) draw from dramaturgy to extend understanding of how professionals engage with the increased surveillance of their daily work. While management research mostly assumes individuals react to surveillance through compliance or resistance, Visser et al. build on works that conceive of surveillance as more consensual and explore the possibility that professionals also actively participate in it. They draw on theatrical metaphors (scripts, front- and back-stages, and external performance regulation), used in sociology, to conceptualize people's daily interactions as performances (Goffman, 1959). By applying this dramaturgical lens to qualitative interviews and observational data of healthcare professionals, Visser et al. develop an enactive perspective of surveillance, one that suggests actors actively participate in their surveillance and do so in a way that further cements their professionalism and increases their legitimacy. This work, therefore, illustrates how research from more distal disciplines can help develop management theory by allowing us to see where and when our assumptions could be relaxed.

Alternate explanations. Studying other disciplines can also help management scholars identify alternate explanations for a phenomenon of interest. In management research, for example,

knowledge is overwhelmingly conceived of as external and objective; it is captured by roles, competencies, expertise, and skills. In contrast, drawing on research in anthropology and architecture, Butler and Cunliffe (2024) theoretically frame how our bodies cause us to draw meaning and knowledge from what it feels and experiences, which they call ecological knowing. Their foray into distal disciplines allows them to identify alternate ways of understanding wisdom and skill. Their work advances management research by showing how ways of knowing can be enhanced by studying people's sensory experiences in-the-moment and embodied expertise (rather than only what they think and how they reflect on the past). This suggests that investigating how other disciplines explain a phenomenon of shared interest serves as an important cornerstone for developing interdisciplinary research.

Proximal disciplines also offer opportunities for advancing theory with alternate explanations. Shen et al. (2025), for example, extend research on information asymmetry and corporate fraud by conceptualizing city digitalization – conceived of as an infrastructure for 'automating government processes, enabling social engagement, and supporting economic growth' (p. 4) in the source literature – as a macro-governance mechanism for monitoring organization that changes firms' information environment. Shen et al.'s interdisciplinary approach advances the literature on corporate fraud, by integrating research from accounting, finance, and information systems (e.g., information technology's capabilities at deterring and detecting fraud; smart cities) into agency theory to advance a new, city-level predictor of corporate fraud, as well as two moderating mechanisms. This indicates not only that exploring knowledge of developments in adjacent fields is a crucial cornerstone for building interdisciplinary research, but also that such knowledge needs to be carefully adapted, contextualized and translated for the intended management audience.

Boundary conditions. Identifying new boundary conditions to a theory can help management scholars understand when and where a theory applies and reconcile mixed findings. Drawing from proximal and distal disciplines can be helpful to identify such boundary conditions. Sometimes, explanations from research at one level of analysis can spark ideas for understanding when and where relationships at another level may hold. For example, Post and Byron (2015) leverage the insight from teams research, that accountability pressures cause groups to more carefully and completely process information held by its members, to theorize stakeholder protections as a country-level moderator that explains mixed findings for the board gender diversity–firm profitability relationship. They argue (and meta-analytically show) that stronger shareholder protections (i.e., when shareholders can more easily sue directors for breach of fiduciary responsibility) create an accountability pressure that motivates boards to more carefully consider the perspectives of all directors in their decision-making. As this example suggests, for interdisciplinary levelling up or down to work, key ideas need to be adapted, contextualized and translated from one level to another.

In other cases, distal disciplines may have developed helpful explanations for contradictions that manifest in management research. Nair et al.'s (2022) study of the role of biological signals in CEO career outcomes is a good illustration of how identifying a research opportunity, combined with searching for comparable work in another discipline, can yield compelling interdisciplinary research. Nair and colleagues identify a tension in upper echelons research: that vocal masculinity is associated with the perception of, but not with actual, leadership quality. They then draw from recent developments

in evolutionary psychology to propose (and test) an explanation for this tension: ‘evolutionary mismatch’, which suggests that evolved biases are context dependent. By incorporating relatively recent developments in a distal discipline to resolve a tension in management research, Nair et al.’s interdisciplinary approach advances the literature on corporate governance.

In sum, while proximal and distal disciplines may greatly enrich management studies, succeeding in doing so requires authors to theoretically motivate the cross-discipline reach, potentially adapt constructs to make them useful for management theory, and effectively calibrate the amount and depth of theoretical background to convey from the external discipline.

How *Methods* from Proximal and Distal Disciplines Can Advance Management Research

Methodological advances in other disciplines have demonstrated great utility in advancing both the theory and practice of management. Broadly, these influences can be described in three categories: (i) tools, that is, analytical, computational, or data collection techniques; (ii) construct operationalization, that is, the process of translating abstract concepts into measures that capture constructs’ underlying meaning; and (iii) methodological approaches, that is, research design frameworks meant to capture complex, sometimes multilevel models of organizational phenomena. In the next paragraphs, we identify prominent examples for each category and examine challenges associated with these approaches.

Tools. Studying other disciplines can help management scholars expand their methodological toolkit. Visual methods are an influential methodological tool that originated within both distal and proximal disciplines such as anthropology and sociology, where they were developed in the early part of the twentieth century as a means of documenting and interpreting cultural and social life. During the 1930s for example, anthropologists utilized photography and filmography to explore non-verbal cues, rituals, and practices contending that only visual technologies could capture certain cultural aspects of life (Bateson and Mead, 1942). Similarly, sociologists argued that visual materials were central to sociological inquiry, assisting in illuminating topics such as social structures and inequalities (Becker, 1974; Harper, 2012). Such approaches laid the groundwork for research methods in visual sociology and visual anthropology that embrace the power of image. While such traditions developed outside of management studies, they have since been drawn into the field, particularly in the context of the interpretive turn in the social sciences, which opened management studies to more qualitative, symbolic, and culturally attuned methodologies (Alvesson and Deetz, 1996; Czarniawska, 1997). Management scholars have subsequently adapted visual methods to explore organizational identity, aesthetics, materiality, and spatial dynamics (Bell and Davison, 2013; Meyer et al., 2013, 2018; Warren, 2002), recognizing that organizations are not only discursive but also visual and sensory phenomena. Within *JMS* for example, based upon a visual ethnographic study, Jean Clarke (2011) shows how entrepreneurs use visual symbols to create their professional identities and feel in control of their business interactions. Shao et al. (2025) argue for a

more fluid and imaginative approach to visual methods as an effective approach to help understand the messiness in organizational life.

Beyond visual methods, one of the most salient tool introductions has been Shaver's (1998) paper on the role of endogeneity as a threat to the validity of research findings (see Hill et al., 2021 for recent review on how endogeneity tools have spread in management research). Many studies have empirically linked firm strategies to performance outcomes without acknowledging that the strategies themselves are a function of firm and industry characteristics. The issue of selection bias and analytic controls had been used previously by econometricians (Heckman, 1979) but was largely ignored for instance by strategy, organizational behaviour and leadership scholars (e.g., Antonakis et al., 2014). Shaver (1998) demonstrated how the application of endogeneity analysis fundamentally challenged several key findings on foreign direct investment activities. As the Shaver example illustrates, introducing methodological tools from proximal disciplines may advance scholarship by questioning accumulated knowledge and improving our ability to assess causal claims.

Tool innovations can also take the form of data collection and analyses, and software that support them, the use of which often spreads across disciplines. Content analysis of written documents for instance is a widely used qualitative method that originally gained popularity in communication sciences, being a moderately proximal discipline that had on many occasions found its way into management studies. Published material such as annual reports, transcripts of conference calls, and group conversations can provide insights into firm practices, such as Anglin et al.' (2025) content analysis on how differing role expectations surrounding entrepreneur gender and race shape the influence of social responsibility rhetoric used in crowdfunding pitches. Traditionally, content analysis was labour intensive, requiring development of coding schemes and training of individual coders. Alternately, researchers might code the frequency of certain words or phrases. Hart (2000), a communication scholar who worked in linguistics, offered a substantial advance with the software package DICTION, a tool that enabled study of 'the subtle power of word choice and verbal tone (Short and Palmer, 2008, p. 730)'. Short and Palmer helped to facilitate the use of DICTION by management researchers via a review of early work, and an empirical application. Borrowing tools to advance management studies requires adaption, contextualization and translation, as Harrison et al.' (2019) development of a large-scale linguistic measure of CEO personality illustrates: it combines textual analysis insights from linguistics with research in psychology. Altogether, these studies illustrate how working with other disciplines can expand management scholars' research toolkit.

Construct operationalization. Management scholars can also borrow from other disciplines to operationalize constructs of interest, especially those lacking reliable measurement or for which direct measurement is infeasible or impractical. The adoption of Coleman's (1988) approach for measuring the concept of social capital is a prime example of how a distal discipline can help advance research through concept operationalizations. Coleman's social capital conception views social connections as a resource (essentially a more abstract complement to both physical capital and human capital), which is inherently difficult to measure. His intent was to bridge the social structures of sociology with the rational actor view in economics. To validate the role

of social capital, Coleman employed a sample that was distinctly not management oriented: He examined high school dropouts and the subsequent effects on families and communities. Despite this being a very distal measure, it has been successfully applied in a range of management settings, including organizational advantage (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998), knowledge transfer (Inkpen and Tsang, 2005), venture performance (Lee et al., 2001), and the benefits of CEO board ties (Geletkanycz and Boyd, 2011), suggesting that management research could benefit from searching for comparable work outside of management to operationalize difficult-to-measure constructs.

Notwithstanding, scholars have continued to adapt, contextualize, and translate construct operationalizations from other disciplines in the service of advancing management theory. In upper echelons theory (Hambrick and Mason, 1984; Weng and Yang, 2024; Xia et al., 2025), which examines how characteristics of the CEO and top management team affect strategic choices, key determinants include both psychological factors and demographic and team composition variables. While the latter two can be readily observed via archival data sources, assessing the psychological states of top executives is far more elusive from a data collection perspective. This has led researchers in finance and economics to search for viable proxies. Campbell et al. (2011), for example, used the retention of certain types of stock options as a behavioural proxy for CEO hubris, which is defined as excessive overconfidence. A similar body of work focuses on a CEO's early life experiences as exogenous proxies of personality shaping strategic decision-making, based on research on personality development, neuroscience, and epigenetics. These include the experience of growing up in the Great Depression or China's Cultural Revolution. Other studies have linked childhood variables such as birth order, family characteristics, or exposure to trauma and disaster to CEO risk-taking (Bernile et al., 2017; Henderson and Hutton, 2018). And yet other studies have linked biophysical markers with strategic outcomes: finance scholars have used CEO left-handedness as a proxy for CEO creativity based on research in cognitive science (Chen et al., 2025), while Nair et al. (2022) operationalized CEO vocal masculinity based on evolutionary psychology. Taken together, these approaches showcase how distal and proximal disciplines may provide access to measurement approaches and proxies that can serve to advance management research.

Methodological approaches. Research from proximal and distal disciplines can contribute methodological approaches that can help management scholars identify new research opportunities. Multilevel modelling, for example, is a methodological approach, or framework, which has led to the identification of research opportunities by enabling theorizing and testing of relationships that span levels of analysis. Historically, management research has been characterized as either *micro* or *macro*. However, organizational phenomena exist at multiple levels – for example, individuals, dyads, teams, groups, firms, and industries – and may be interconnected at various levels. Multilevel modelling, the roots of which are in general systems theory (Von Bertalanffy, 1950), took hold in psychology and organizational behaviour (Klein and Kozlowski, 2000; Rousseau, 1985), and eventually diffused to strategy and organizational research (Anglin et al., 2025; Duran et al., 2025). We define multilevel modelling as an approach versus a tool, as it

has a number of key elements, including the language used to develop theory, construct definition and measurement, and design and analytic issues associated with empirical analysis (Mathieu and Chen, 2011). Recently, Ademi et al. (2025) illustrated the value of a multilevel perspective, exploring organizational adoption of new technologies across the levels of an individual (i.e., the CEO), firm, and industry. This study is also notable for multiple robustness tests, including different definitions of industry, as well as multiple tests for endogeneity.

A second methodological approach, which has enabled new research questions is qualitative comparative analysis (QCA). A prominent theme in organizational research is the idea of a configuration, which ‘suggests that organizations are best understood as clusters of interconnected structures and practices, rather than as modular or loosely coupled entities whose components can be understood in isolation’ (Fiss, 2007, p. 1180). While the idea of a configuration might appear to be conceptually straightforward, analysis proved to be problematic. As a result, a range of methodologies were applied, including cluster analysis, interactions, and deviations, often with limited success (Fiss, 2007). Sociologist Charles Ragin (1997, 2000) developed QCA as a bridge between qualitative and quantitative approaches. QCA is best considered to be an approach, or framework, versus a tool, as strong theory building is required as an antecedent. A core challenge of QCA is the unique requirements regarding conceptualization, data collection and analysis, and interpretation. Greckhamer et al. (2008) facilitated future use of QCA by management scholars via development of a set of process guidelines, and exemplars of best practices; and QCA has subsequently found its way into multiple insightful studies in a management context (e.g., Piazza and Augustine, 2022; Yang et al., 2024). These and other works – including network analysis (Freeman, 1977) – illustrate how searching proximal and distal fields for methodological approaches to addressing similar challenges can advance management research.

How *Phenomena* from Proximal and Distal Disciplines Can Advance Management Research

Many studies published in management journals have shown that examining phenomena that have traditionally been outside the scope of management scholarship can not only be interesting and inspiring but may also advance management theory for example by: adding new layers of understanding to our theories; introducing or legitimizing new constructs and conceptual vocabulary; reframing the domain of management studies; and generating new research agendas. Scholars have examined phenomena that are relatively proximal to our traditional interest in business firms, where the ways these phenomena affect and are affected by firms are often relatively straightforward, including volunteer work in refugee shelters to explore meaningfulness at work (Florian et al., 2019), effectiveness in interdisciplinary cardiac surgery operating teams (Edmondson, 2003), and misbehaviour in elite kitchens (Burrow et al., 2022). Others have taken a more distal route and have identified phenomena where the organizational and managerial relevance requires some (disciplined) imagination, but can then be even more illuminating once fully understood, including investigating bodily

experiences of rowing the Amazon (De Rond et al., 2019), and slipping down a rock into a subarctic current to better understand ecological sensemaking (Whiteman and Cooper, 2011). Below, we review exemplary studies and how they have made notable advances to our general understanding of management and organizations by considering both proximal and distal phenomena. Specifically, this is done via the exploration of work in other disciplines to identify hitherto underexamined contexts in which management and organization take place.

Examining phenomena from proximal disciplines. A recently emerging perspective that serves as an inspiring illustration of how phenomena relatively proximal to management scholars' home terrain can notably advance our understanding of management is that on extreme contexts, that is, places 'marked by unpredictability, high stakes, and urgency' (Hällgren et al., 2025, p. 1063). While extreme contexts – 'extreme' being understood from the vantage point of management scholarship – can arise within the traditional scope of business firms, this umbrella term has prompted many scholars to expand their point of view to dynamics happening in the periphery of conventional business firms, and in doing so have offered notable theoretical advances (e.g., De Rond and Lok, 2016; Rauch, 2025).

One recent example of a study examining extreme contexts with a view on 'what is being managed' is the work by Lübcke et al. (2025), who conducted a process study of a maritime search and rescue mission in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea where actors (i.e., rescue crew members and refugees) faced cognitive disparities (e.g., different levels of maritime expertise) and distracting emotions (e.g., fear, anxiety, and tension) yet needed to coordinate their actions to ensure a safe evacuation. Based on the insights gained from this phenomenon that represented a rather unusual setting for management research relative to the commonly analysed business contexts, and drawing on a wide range of literature from psychology and crisis management, the authors develop a model of collective sensemaking that demonstrates how actors can overcome the challenges posed by cognitive disparities and distracting emotions in extreme contexts. Ultimately, their examination of this phenomenon has helped them to add a dynamic emotive and bodily perspective to the predominantly cognitive and verbal understanding in sensemaking theory, a theoretical perspective widely used in management scholarship.

Another example is the influential study by Scherer and Palazzo (2011) on the new political role of business in a globalized world, where the authors review the literature of the then emerging notion of 'political CSR' and discuss implications for business firms, governance, and democracy. What is notable is that they embed their work in the notion of a 'postnational constellation' – the decline of nation-state authority over global affairs (see Habermas, 2001) – a phenomenon that significantly affects management and organization but is one that has traditionally been discussed in political science and has perhaps been considered too broad to have managerial relevance. Yet, Scherer and Palazzo (2011) adapt, contextualize, and translate this phenomenon to describe how changing conditions of globalization are dramatically affecting contemporary business firms and specifically the division of labour between firms and governments to address global social and ecological problems. In fact, they use literature from various relatively proximal disciplines such as political science, philosophy and economics that

have discussed the postnational constellation in order to develop a politicized concept of corporate social responsibility, and then not only offer implications *outside-in*, that is, how this new perspective informs theorizing about business firm and governance, but also *inside-out* in a sense of how the management concept of political CSR can inform research on democracy and politics.

Interestingly, the idea of a postnational constellation – and its gradual transition into what we may call a post-postnational constellation – is receiving greater attention again by management scholars in light of the rise of nationalism and authoritarian regimes around the world, and for instance ‘tech oligarchy’ in the USA (Wickert, 2021). Current developments happening in the political space have potentially dramatic consequences for business firms (let alone the broader public) and prompt paying closer attention to these phenomena and their implications for management and organizations. For example, received concepts of authoritarianism, populism, polarization, the erosion of democracy and concomitant political institutions had been employed to critically analyse the sociopolitical status quo in the USA and other predominantly Western contexts (see e.g., Adler et al., 2023; Delbridge et al., 2025; Wickert et al., 2024). Hence, reading widely and across disciplines about societal developments serves as a fruitful cornerstone practice for management scholars, for example, by widening scholars’ conceptual inventory.

As these examples illustrate, one avenue for identifying research opportunities consists of assessing emerging phenomena in distal fields against our current understanding in management studies, thereby broadening management scholars’ conceptual inventory.

Examining phenomena from distal disciplines. Exemplary for research that introduces new or underexamined phenomena hitherto relatively distal to management studies, is the publication by Lumineau and Keller (2025) titled ‘War as a Phenomenon of Inquiry in Management Studies’. In their conceptual article, Lumineau and Keller argue that war as a phenomenon deserves more focused attention in management studies. Drawing on literature that has for long investigated the phenomenon, such as political science and ‘peace’ studies, the authors show how and why war is a relevant area of inquiry for management scholars and develop a framework to guide future management research. As Lumineau and Keller argue, there is much to learn from prior analyses of war developed in other disciplines. Yet notably, they also demonstrate the managerial and organizational dimension of war, not necessarily how to conduct war more efficiently, but to better understand consequences for those affected by war, for example, organizing and ‘doing business’ in war zones, where management scholars with their established theoretical repertoire have something to contribute that might also benefit other disciplines. The study is hence a good example of research mobilizing a distal phenomenon to show not only what management scholars can learn from it (the outside-in view), but also to show how what insights management studies can offer to better understand the phenomenon itself (the inside-out view).

Another distal but very different example is a recent study on the topic of climate change *adaptation* (Benischke et al., 2025). Here, the authors argue that the phenomenon of climate change adaptation, considered an increasingly urgent complement to climate change

mitigation, is unavoidable given already deteriorating climatic conditions and therefore deserves more attention by management scholars. This is because not only is it a phenomenon that has, like war as exemplified above, multifaceted organizational and managerial dimensions, but also is one that is in desperate need of being managed effectively. This is where management scholarship can offer potentially impactful contributions to the broader debate that already takes place in proximal disciplines such as climate sciences.

In fact, while climate change as a phenomenon has in the past years entered mainstream management debates (see e.g., Bansal et al., 2025; Muzio and Wickert, 2025; Nyberg and Wright, 2022), the phenomenon of ‘planetary boundaries’ has been mobilized to inform important ongoing debates such as corporate sustainability and CSR research (Whiteman et al., 2013; Williams et al., 2025). Planetary boundaries have emerged predominantly from the natural sciences and as a phenomenon describe ‘the safe operating space’ for humanity that, if crossed, will have potentially devastating consequences for life on Earth as we know it (Rockström et al., 2009, p. 472; cited in Whiteman et al., 2013, p. 309). According to climate scientists Rockström et al. (2009, p. 474), these nine boundaries ‘represent a new approach to defining biophysical preconditions for human development’ and attempt to quantify the safe operating space for humanity, ‘outside of which the Earth system cannot continue to function in a stable, Holocene-like state’.

What Whiteman and colleagues then do is to adapt, contextualize, and translate insights about this phenomenon to management studies by asking what the implications of the planetary boundaries framework for research and practice on corporate sustainability are, and how the framework with its focus on the ecological and systemic foundations of sustainability can guide future interdisciplinary research on the role of sustainability in organizations and its management. For example, Whiteman et al. (2013) call for more systemic research that measures the impact of companies on boundary processes that are at, or possibly beyond, planetary threshold points. As of 2025, according to Kitzmann et al. (2025) in the Planetary Health Check Report, seven of nine Planetary Boundaries have been breached, suggesting further deterioration and destabilization of ecological conditions.

How A Field Progresses Via Interdisciplinary Research: An Illustration

While above we identify how individual papers draw on theory, methods and phenomena from other proximal as well as distal disciplines, the accumulation of such interdisciplinary contributions can shift and advance an entire field. To illustrate how interdisciplinary research can transform and advance a field, we showcase the evolution of corporate governance research – a widely-studied, globally-relevant concept and phenomenon, which relies on different methodological approaches – using a Kuhnian framework. In Kuhn’s (1996) paradigm model, early-stage topics/fields are characterized by limited consensus (e.g., over relevant theory, construct definition, and appropriate analytic tools), which impedes the synthesis of extant work and constrains knowledge advancement. As shown in Table I and Figure 1, governance work has advanced tremendously through the integration of theories and methods from multiple disciplines. Corporate governance’s considerable advances from exploratory to sophisticated analyses designed to test the relevance of individual theoretical perspectives under varying boundary conditions

Table I. How a field progresses via interdisciplinary research: The case of corporate governance

<i>Theory</i>	Corporate governance was influenced by work in sociology, economics, and political science. Early frameworks saw ties between boards as evidence of control or that boards did nothing at all (Bazerman and Schoorman, 1983; Koenig et al., 1979) and initial work in management often took the form of case studies and basic empirical analyses. Subsequent periods included a blend of innovations within management, and innovations from other fields: resource dependence theory (Pennings, 1980; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978), a substantial advance over earlier reciprocity models, quickly became prominent; agency theory (Fama, 1980; Fama and French, 1993) became the dominant lens in management thanks to Eisenhardt's (1989) highly influential conceptual paper; followed by stewardship theory (Donaldson, 1990; Donaldson and Davis, 1991) as largely diametric to agency; and, later, behavioural agency theory (Pepper and Gore, 2015; Wiseman and Gomez-Mejia, 1998), which integrated micro-level concepts such as motivation to the agency model. Soon, the wealth of perspectives and their competing predictions led to 'horse races' that tested the boundary conditions of the theories (see Boyd et al., 2011 for a review). More recently, scholars began to examine how national institutions shaped the effects of various governance practices (e.g., García-Meca and Sánchez-Ballesta, 2009; Solarino and Boyd, 2023)
<i>Method</i>	Methodological advances in various disciplines also prompted new questions and allowed more powerful comparisons of competing theoretical frameworks, including meta-analysis (Glass, 1976; Schmidt and Hunter, 1977), which originated in psychology, network analysis (Freeman, 1977) from sociology, and structural equation modelling from statistics. As governance studies were rife with inconsistent findings, meta-analyses became increasingly employed to reconcile divergent results (e.g., Dalton et al., 1998). Additional refinements in governance research were spurred by the diffusion of norms from other areas of management, such as more rigorous construct measurement, which led to new measures of phenomenon such as power (Pearce and Robinson, 1987), executive discretion (Hambrick and Finkelstein, 1987), and board oversight (Boyd, 1994); and archival proxies for executive personality characteristics (e.g., Chatterjee and Hambrick, 2007; Harrison et al., 2019). Additionally, while governance work in other fields tended to focus on main effects, the 'it depends' mantra of early strategy work led to a wide array of contingency approaches, including moderation, mediation, and more nuanced flavours of contingency (Venkatraman, 1989). Finally, development of new tools and resources expanded the scope of data available to governance scholars. These include computer-aided text analysis tools, such as the aforementioned tool, DICTION (Short and Palmer, 2008), and the BoardEx database, which provided an archival resource for studying non-US firms

showcases how interdisciplinary research can influence an entire field when it effectively draws on insights from theories, methods and facets of the phenomenon from outside the home terrain of management studies.

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

While interdisciplinary research has great potential for making valuable and impactful contributions, the investments it requires and challenges it presents carry substantial risk.

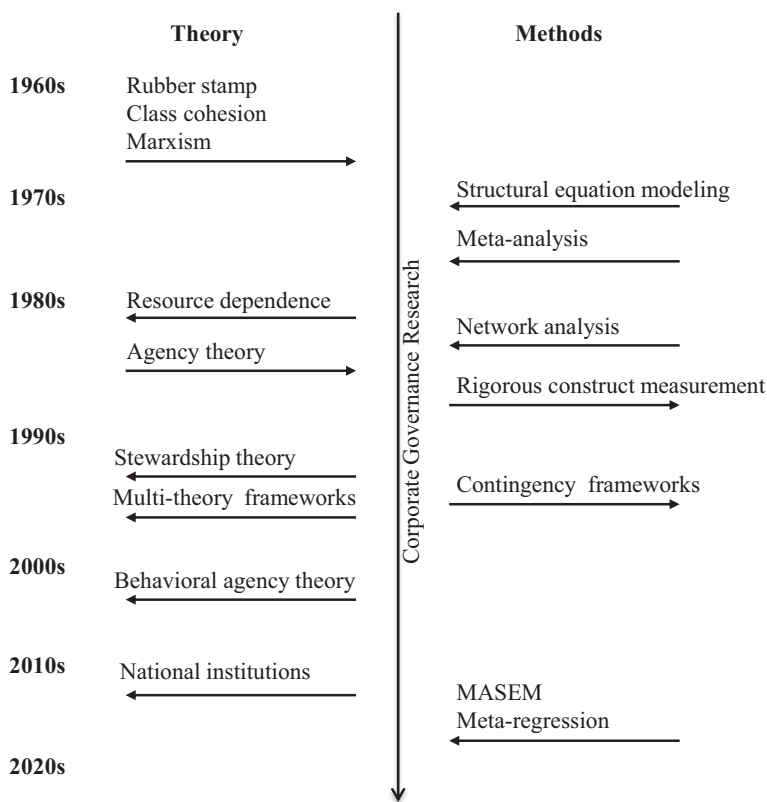


Figure 1. The evolution of corporate governance research over time, with the integration of theories from multiple disciplines, combined with an array of methodological advances. *Note:* Inward arrows depict influences from other disciplines onto management theory, while outward arrows depict management-based innovations' influence on other disciplines.

As our Interdisciplinarity Diffusion Model shows, effective and impactful research identifies opportunities from and communicates the right level of insights from other fields, proximal or distal, and often requires adapting, contextualizing, and translating work from those other disciplines. In our experience as authors, reviewers, and editors, it also requires assembling and effectively managing a research team and effectively positioning and communicating the value of the contribution for the targeted journal. Hence, our practical guidance for scholars who are interested in taking an interdisciplinary approach to advance management research outlines four cornerstone practices for crafting interdisciplinary research: (1) identify opportunities, (2) adapt, contextualize, translate, (3) build a team and create a common language, (4) frame your manuscript for a management audience.^[2] The cornerstone practices and guidelines for each are summarized in Table II and visualized in Figure 2, which we developed with the assistance of ChatGPT.

Importantly, the cornerstone practices we offer are intended to be adaptable rather than prescriptive, providing a flexible roadmap that can help scholars engage confidently and thoughtfully in interdisciplinary research. Our guidance also assumes a baseline

Table II. Cornerstone practices with practical guidelines for authors

<i>Identify opportunities</i>	• Identify a theoretical problem or puzzle that is a focal area of study elsewhere, assumptions that other disciplines may call into question, contradictions that other disciplines have resolved. • Look for empirical indicators of opportunities. Consider how outside methods could better answer management research question, or open new ones up. • Consider actors, entities, processes, from other disciplines that, if considered as managed or organized, could bring new insights to management research. • Peruse high quality recent systematic and integrative review articles for an overview of comparable work in other disciplines.
<i>Adapt, contextualize & translate</i>	• Understand where the other field overlaps and where it differs in terms of theory, methods, and settings. • Identify how the imported concepts, method, or phenomenon might need to be adapted for utilization in management research. • Explain the value-added of an imported method above and beyond what exists. • Help your reader see the connection between a new phenomenon and management research, and its potential value to advance understanding.
<i>Build a team and create a common language</i>	• Discuss alignment of team members on ontology, epistemology, and methodological adequacy. • Establish shared norms and goals for the research process, including pace and timelines. • Agree on target outlet(s) and publication strategy.
<i>Frame your manuscript for a management audience</i>	• Articulate early and very clearly the ‘so what’ for a management audience in your manuscript. • Decide how deeply into the source literature you need to anchor your work, depending on the distance to the source field and purpose of interdisciplinary approach. • Argue compellingly the need for a new methodological tool, operationalization, or methodological approach.

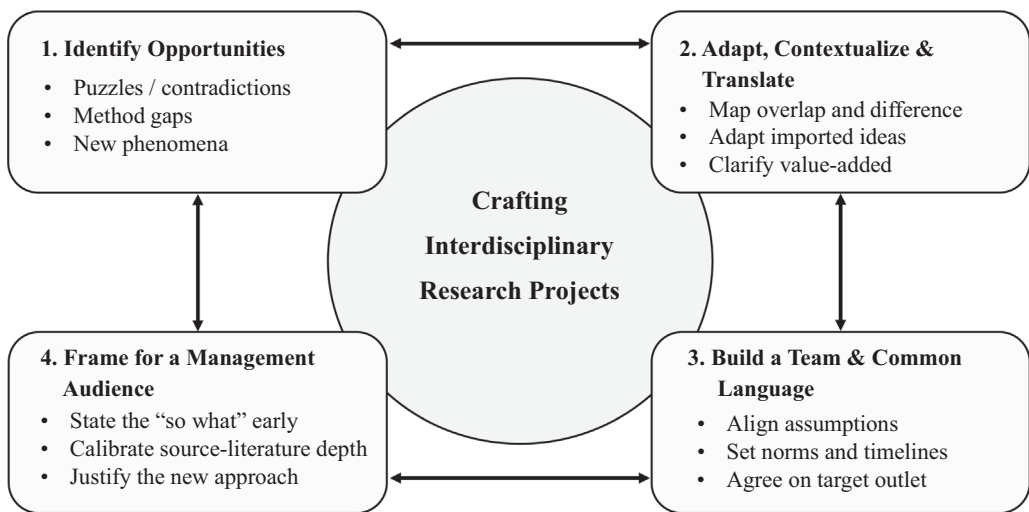


Figure 2. Four cornerstone practices for crafting interdisciplinary research

exposure to ideas on one's topic of interest, beyond those of one's home discipline. To create such conditions, be curious: read broadly about your topic of interest, talk with a diversity of people (academic or not), listen to scholars from other fields, and attend webinars or seminars at your institution.

As our cornerstones metaphor suggests, we view the four practices as foundational to interdisciplinary research, yet recognize they may not always unfold in a straightforward manner. In practice, authors may find themselves developing multiple cornerstones simultaneously before the foundation for an interdisciplinary project is complete, and progress on one cornerstone may prompt looping back and reconsider earlier decisions. For example, for one of this editorial's authors, the interdisciplinary endeavour started with the construction of a research team and a desire to work at the intersection of particular disciplines, and then moved to identifying theoretical contribution opportunities. Below, we offer examples from our personal experiences: Rather than signalling failure of the entire endeavour, this kind of movement is intrinsic to interdisciplinary work, where ideas travel, adapt, and sometimes resist easy integration. We therefore see the process as necessarily iterative – one in which scholars could move back and forth between cornerstones as their understanding deepens and the shape of their project gradually emerges.

We also acknowledge that not all cornerstones may demand equal labour. Some may be set quickly, for example if they rest on solid prior work or involve authors who have previously worked together. Others may sit on softer ground, for example when working with distal disciplines requires more adaptation and translation work. Further, interdisciplinary scholarship is likely to pose distinct – at times uneven – challenges for qualitative and quantitative researchers. Qualitative scholars may feel the weight of interdisciplinarity most strongly in the relational work of engaging with new empirical worlds and interpretive traditions, while quantitative colleagues may grapple more intensively with the technical and conceptual demands of adapting constructs, measurement approaches, and analytical techniques developed elsewhere. Both pathways require courage, reflexivity, and patience.

Cornerstone Practice 1: Identify Opportunities

A crucial cornerstone in exploring the value of an interdisciplinary approach to your research topic is to identify theoretical problems, methodological limitations, or unexplored phenomena where management occurs. Our Interdisciplinary Diffusion Framework provides a structured way of thinking about how both proximal and distal disciplines offer opportunities to advance management research. To identify promising areas for theory development with an interdisciplinary approach, ask yourself: *'When should I consider drawing from other proximal or distal disciplines to build theory?'* Starting with theory, an interdisciplinary approach may be useful in the following cases: when you identify a theoretical puzzle or problem, for which different disciplines may have already developed a deep understanding (e.g., Ancona and Chong, 1992; Stackhouse, 2025); when you think assumptions governing a management theory limit its explanatory power or breadth and see that lenses from other disciplines help to question, broaden, or relax them (e.g., Butler and Cunliffe, 2024; Visser et al., 2018);

when you identify a tension or contradiction in a body of work that has been successfully addressed in a different discipline (e.g., Nair et al., 2022; Post and Byron, 2015); or when you are familiar with (or curious) about a phenomenon, setting, or population outside of management that could enhance our theorizing (e.g., Shen et al., 2025; Visser et al., 2018).

Another approach to identifying potential opportunities for interdisciplinarity is to consider empirical characteristics of topics, including consistently small effect sizes within a body of research; variability in direction and magnitude of effect sizes; variations in theoretical frames and or research designs; and prevalence of single- versus multi-theoretic designs. These are indicators of scenarios where researchers may not be asking the right questions (e.g., problems with theory) or may be asking the right questions in the wrong way (e.g., problems with methods). For example, many researchers have studied whether business groups are beneficial or harmful vis-a-vis firm performance. Not only are the aggregate effect sizes quite small (-0.01), but the patterns of findings are variable depending on the type of performance measure being studied, and the geographic locus of studies (Boyd and Solarino, 2016). Taken together, these suggest the potential utility of new frameworks, both regarding theory and methods.

From a phenomenon perspective, start by considering phenomena that are typically regarded as external to our original realm of interest, which has traditionally been focused on efficient and effective management of *business* organizations, and the dynamics within them (Wickert et al., 2021). This would imply asking yourself: ‘What phenomena exist “out there” where “something” (e.g., an actor, an entity, a process, etc.) is being managed or organized?’ ‘Is there “a manager,” actors who are “being managed” or “organized/organizing,” and what does it mean for the broader context in which these actors and activities reside?’ Then, taking an *outside-in* view ask yourself: ‘What can we as management scholars learn from this?’ Thus, taking the essence of what management studies is about – the understanding of *management*, not necessarily of business firms – would prompt you to consider a broader range of phenomena that can begin from being rather proximal to being very distal to our own ‘comfort zone’ of business firms.

Once you have identified meaningful research opportunities from proximal and/or distal disciplines, you should further develop this cornerstone by also investigating what is known about your research in these disciplines, for example by searching for comparable work in other disciplines. It is not unusual for different disciplines to develop independently, with both overlapping and unique, rich insights. Here, we advocate becoming knowledgeable about the field(s), which you are considering as a source for addressing the topic of interest. Be curious about how other disciplines approach the topic, both theoretically and empirically. This may require assessing different frameworks, findings, methodologies, and their interpretations. Systematic and integrative reviews that synthesize and organize the knowledge from disparate disciplines can provide important new starting points for management research. For example, board committees are an increasingly prominent topic for researchers not just in management, but also in the proximal disciplines of accounting and finance. However, each body of work largely ignores what happens in other disciplines. Kolov and colleagues (2019), by synthesizing theory and methods practices from these respective areas, identified promising research opportunities based on crossing disciplinary

boundaries. A promising way to conduct an interdisciplinary literature review would, for instance, be to first take stock of existing ‘domestic’ management knowledge about a phenomenon or theory of interest to illustrate what we already know (and deriving that from a clearly-bounded sample), and then use insights from another discipline(s) to devise avenues for future research where those disciplines could inform management research.

Identifying opportunities with a view on other disciplines also informed our own research journeys and development as scholars. One of us, Caroline Gatrell, for instance has been trained across both management and sociology and for her, crossing interdisciplinary boundaries begins with identifying management questions concerning work and personal lives that cannot be answered without turning to adjacent disciplines and examining how they might shed light on. For example, feminist sociology – particularly the work of Ann Oakley (2018) – informed Caroline’s early theorisation of the ‘maternal body’ at work as socially constructed and institutionally regulated, challenging workplace assumptions that define women employees through their potential or actual maternity. To make these insights useful for management scholarship, Caroline had to adapt and contextualize these ideas within organizational debates about gender and employment practices. Similarly, drawing on Joan Acker’s (1990) critique of the ‘ideal worker’ and Michel Foucault’s (1975) analysis of disciplinary power has allowed her to translate sociological and philosophical ideas into a shared conceptual language that speaks directly to management audiences, while retaining their critical insight into how organizations regulate bodies, identities, and working lives (Peyton and Gatrell, 2013).

In summary, therefore, when it comes to opportunity identification, differences in findings relative to one’s disciplinary home suggest a strong potential for new insights that could be imported from different disciplines. Working with proximal disciplines, which likely share a common vocabulary and conceptually overlap with management, allows us to set this cornerstone relatively quickly. Working with more distal disciplines, in contrast, may require us to ‘dig deeper’ into new literatures, to set a strong foundation for this cornerstone.

Cornerstone Practice 2: Adapt, Contextualize and Translate

As a scholar seeking to borrow from other discipline, ask yourself: *‘How can I best explain to and justify for a management audience, the concept, methods, or phenomenon I am borrowing from a proximal or distal field? How do I need to adapt it for management scholarship?’* Our Interdisciplinary Diffusion Framework – and the illustrative articles we describe in it – make clear that the more distal the discipline, the less likely you will be able to transplant concepts as is. You may need to adapt definitions, as Stackhouse (2025) does when bringing drawing from research in health sciences, and behavioural and social sciences to nuance the concept of work-related psychological trauma. You may need to relax assumptions, as Ancona and Chong (1992) do when borrowing the concept of entrainment process from biology. In some cases, you may need to move to a higher (or lower) level of abstraction than theorized in the originating discipline (e.g., Ancona and Chong, 1992). In other cases, you may need to adjust the level of analysis (e.g., Post and Byron, 2015). Practically, you should aim

to spell out exactly how you have adapted or adjusted the borrowed theoretical building blocks so that they align with the management theory of interest. At other times, you will find it important to distinguish the new concept from related constructs in the field of management. Schneider et al. (2017) for instance have mobilized Luhmann's work on social systems theory that has its roots in cybernetics in order to explain responses to environmental complexity. In their paper, they zoom in on those central tenets of social systems theory that are most relevant to their research objective and explain how those broader dynamics relate to organizational processes, while sidestepping facets of the theory which are not immediately relevant to answer their research question.

The advice also holds if you are opting for more of a methodological interdisciplinary diffusion. Decision trees, process guidelines, and exemplars of certain aspects of the new method make it easier for other scholars to adopt the innovation, such as the essay by Greckhamer et al. (2008) on the use of QCA. When introducing a new measure from a different field, researchers may need to explain the benefits and disadvantages of such measures, relative to existing measures. When proposing visual artefacts as a tool for understanding strategizing and understanding, Comi and Whyte (2018) recognize the tools traditionally used in strategy (e.g., texts) and explain how visual artefacts can enhance them. As another example, Chatterjee and Hambrick (2007) backed their approach to measures CEO narcissism with insights from an organizational behaviour scholar, Eugene J Webb. They explain the value of using physical traces, non-participant observations, and other sources, including written and spoken text as a means of avoiding the introduction of biases in measurement. Further, they carefully review the literature from psychology on psychometric scales of narcissism, environmental and genetic predictors, cognitive traits and motivational needs to justify the selection of indicators that formed their narcissism scale.

One of us, Brian Boyd, holds no graduate degrees in management or business, so much of his research is based on blending tools and frameworks across disciplines. Agency theory is a key interest of his, a topic which saw limited use in management, due to 'the technical style, mathematics, and tautological reasoning' (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 57) associated with the framework. Eisenhardt's article was a critical step in adapting agency by explaining key assumptions and identifying overlap with organizational perspectives. A notable theme in her article was the role of information systems, including boards of directors as 'information systems in order to control agent opportunism' (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 64). Brian observed that economists and strategy scholars had a common trait: representing complex constructs with single indicators. Drawing on influences in communication and psychology, he provided a further level of adaptation by developing a multi-indicator factor model to better represent the latent construct of board control (Boyd, 1994); an article which went on to become one of the most highly cited papers in the agency literature (Khandelwal et al., 2023). Subsequently, working with Steve Gove and Mike Hitt, they used the same model to explain how measurement error and attenuation could resolve a heated debate over Amihud and Lev's (1981) classic agency paper on diversification. Their companion articles (Boyd et al., 2005a, 2005b) received the Robert McDonald Award for the advancement of organizational research methods from the Academy of Management Research Methods Division.

Bringing in new phenomena also requires to adapt, contextualize and translate, as it is important to explain how this new phenomenon can help us see things that are presently not visible to us in management research. When proposing a new context for studying management, it would be important to explain how it makes specific relationships, processes, or dynamics we study more salient than in conventional management contexts, as do Lumineau and Keller (2025), to bring readers to see war as a relevant context for management theorizing. If you are borrowing from more distal fields, you will likely need to spend more time on this cornerstone. Much like construction materials – whose properties may change when used in climates that diverge from their original location and, therefore, may require special treatment to ensure the durability and longevity of the constructed building – ideas, methods, and phenomena sourced from more distal fields will likely require more careful adaptation, contextualization, and translation to provide a solid foundation for advancing management conversations.

Cornerstone Practice 3: Build a Team and Create a Common Language

While interdisciplinary research presents exciting opportunities for research teams keen on advancing theory, it also presents authorship and coordination obstacles that, if left unaddressed, may derail a project. Hence, a critical cornerstone in developing an interdisciplinary research project is to attend to team composition and dynamics by considering tradeoffs between integration costs (e.g., from distance between scholars' disciplines or fields), coordination costs (e.g., from differences in ways of working together, from an oft larger team), and publication outlets (e.g., journal requirements). Below we identify three preconditions that can help you mitigate these recurring challenges for interdisciplinary research teams.

The first precondition for building an interdisciplinary research team is to discuss alignment on questions of ontology, epistemology, and methodological adequacy. One significant challenge in conducting interdisciplinary research is that of combining (or managing) differing methodologies, terminologies, and ontological understandings. Differences among and between interdisciplinary teams could result in disjointed studies that do not fully leverage the potential of interdisciplinary team working (Barry et al., 2008). Such problems may be compounded by individual preferences among team members for specific paradigms that could limit openness to alternative approaches (Repko, 2008). Further, while the creative potential of interdisciplinary research is great, it requires the building of more complex design foundations than would be required of research that develops in a 'silo'. Specifically, as a research team, you would need to decide on disciplinary boundaries before you can decide what to include and what to omit, as well as defining factors for assessing their research progress and impact (Lyall et al., 2011).

A second precondition to a functional interdisciplinary research team is to establish shared norms and goals about the research process – agreement on ways of working together and the intended objectives of the project. The diversity within interdisciplinary teams is both a strength and a challenge. Members of your team may be keen in theory to break down disciplinary silos. They may each bring to a given project particular priorities and expertise that might facilitate innovative research yet

could also, if expectations are misaligned, create friction among and between team members. Further, interdisciplinary research might require extended timelines due to the complexity of integrating a range of perspectives for the purpose of moving toward a shared language and understandings to bridge gaps (Lyall et al., 2011; Stokols et al., 2008). Building common ground on genuinely interdisciplinary teams may require substantial time and effort to reconcile foundational differences when moving forward with creative research that could be understood to adopt a ‘prospector’ approach – seeking to discover gold in new territories through innovation and the dissolving of traditional boundaries (Breslin and Gatrell, 2023). If time lags mean that outputs are delayed and/or if junior scholars feel they lack a clear disciplinary identity, this could impact career advancement among early-career researchers, as interdisciplinary scholars may struggle to be recognized as authorities in any one field (Klein, 1996; Pohl and Hadorn, 2007).^[3] Effective leadership within interdisciplinary teams is key as research leaders focus on navigating a way forward that encourages participation and keeps the goal in sight: it is likely that leaders of teams with limited interdisciplinary experience will do best if such leaders have, themselves, worked on interdisciplinary projects (Salazar et al., 2012).

Third, your interdisciplinary research team are likely to be more successful, in our experience, if you agree early on publication outlets. Traditional peer review systems within management studies may be poorly positioned to appraise interdisciplinary work, as reviewers typically have expertise in those aspects of a paper that accord with their personal area of concern. Reviewers may favour methodologies or perspectives associated with their own disciplines and this could result in higher rejection rates, discouraging researchers from pursuing innovative, boundary-spanning projects (Bromham et al., 2016; Rennie, 2003), or they may simply feel not sufficiently qualified to judge an interdisciplinary manuscript and its unfamiliar methods or theories. This is further complicated by the situation whereby management journals may consider interdisciplinary work to be outside their scope: ‘ostensibly “excellence-based” journal rankings exhibit a systematic bias in favour of mono-disciplinary research’ (Rafols et al., 2012, p. 1262). Markóczy and Deeds (2009) go so far as to suggest that interdisciplinary research could compromise the instituting of management as a legitimate academic discipline; thus it is rejected by those who seek to uphold the discipline-specific character to the field. Hence, you should strive to gain agreement on the target journal as an outlet’s aims and scope can help shape the research project (and vice-versa).

One of us, Corinne Post, having identified operations management as a discipline that could shed light on a research question of interest to her, sought a compatible colleague from that field. Not being part of that research community and conscious of coordination costs, she asked a senior colleague with whom she had previously worked to serve as an academic matchmaker, that is, to help her identify a scholar from this proximal discipline with a compatible work ethic. The senior scholar had knowledge of emerging scholars across business school disciplines, due to their PhD programme role. Once matched up, Corinne and her colleague identified several projects for which their respective expertise could be combined. They also quickly agreed to publish their joint work in operations outlets, which helped them focus their research questions, determine methodological depth, agree on additional co-authors, and establish contributions.

Cornerstone Practice 4: Frame your Manuscript for a Management Audience

Publication in *Journal of Management Studies*, as in many high-impact management journals, often requires a novel contribution or a changing of the scholarly conversation (Healey et al., 2023). Therefore, in addition to adapting, contextualizing, and translating the concepts, methods, or phenomenon borrowed from distal and proximal fields, it is equally important to sell or frame your research and its implications for a management audience in the first pages or even paragraphs of your manuscript.

Given the high bar and narrow pathways for publication in high-impact management journals and reviewer fatigue, many journal editors prefer to desk-reject manuscripts that do not present potential to advance management studies. Hence, your ability to ‘hook’ editors and reviewers in the first few paragraphs of the manuscript is critical for a paper to even make it under review (Grant and Pollock, 2011). Unfortunately, in our experience as editors, interdisciplinary research teams often fail to articulate the ‘so what’ for a management audience or even to position their work in relation to ongoing developments in management research. Similarly, many journal submissions do not provide a strong argument regarding the need for a new approach (Bergh et al., 2022).

A lack of conformity to journal style guidelines, discussion sections short of theory development or future research opportunities, a dearth of connections to relevant management conversations further conveys the impressions that authors are foreign to management studies (Patriotta, 2017). Given the liability of such foreignness, you must, as an author, not only observe conventions of the field to which you seek to contribute to (Patriotta, 2017) but also actively educate and convince reviewers of the value of the concepts, methods, or phenomena you bring in from proximal and distal disciplines. Hence, framing a paper for a management audience is a central exercise in communicating one’s research to a management journal.

When introducing new concepts, questioning assumptions, identifying boundary conditions or offering new mechanisms, you should carefully ask yourself, ‘*How much does my audience need to know about the discipline I’m drawing from?*’ The approach authors most often used in the works reviewed above, is to present relevant background on the source discipline in a dedicated section while also avoiding getting lost ‘in the weeds’ of the theories and fields they draw from. Dedicate a short and focused section of your manuscript to describe the sourced material in its original discipline (e.g., Stackhouse’s thumbnail on psychological trauma; Visser et al.’s short primer on dramaturgy constructs; Schneider et al.’s review of the central tenets of social systems theory). Do so in a way that directly and tightly serves the phenomenon under study and addresses the identified theoretical tension (e.g., Shen et al.’s explanation of city digitalization with targeted references to IT/IS, accounting, finance, and operations). If bridges already exist between management theory and the out-of-discipline theories and constructs you bring in, build on them (e.g., Nair’s references to prior work that already bridges leadership and evolutionary psychology).

The advice also holds if you are opting for more of a methodological interdisciplinary diffusion. A pitfall of this approach, noted by Bergh et al. (2022) is the value-added of a new methodological innovation. The greatest aspect of value-added is the demonstration of how a new approach has fundamentally changed our understanding of a given

management topic – for example, what conventional beliefs have been overturned, dogmas challenged, and exciting new avenues for future study have been opened.

Manuscripts that successfully source a new methodological approach from either proximal or distal disciplines argue compellingly the need for a new approach. Hence, we recommend that you take a deep dive into the methods and results sections of prior work, identify inconsistencies, errant findings, or other information that indicates a particular approach is suboptimal or has otherwise misstated the true relationship between a set of variables. Beyond motivating the need for a new approach, the execution of a new methods introduction is equally crucial. Many submissions may describe the new methodology without an empirical demonstration, while others might test a new method but fail to compare it to existing approaches. In contrast, a comparative analysis of existing and new approaches provides a much richer assessment of a tool's utility, boundary conditions, and related factors. Alternatively, consider drawing on comparisons done in other studies, an approach used by Fiss (2007) in advocating for use of the QCA framework.

Similarly, if you are a scholar reaching to other disciplines for phenomenon that can inform or expand management studies, you should first identify the managerial and organizational element of the phenomenon under study and second, demonstrate its relevance for management studies audiences, answering 'what's in it for them?' Colombo (2024), for example, develops a social-ecological systems approach to Management Education; drawing on interdisciplinary lenses and pathways to support a civic transformation and highlights how management educators could pro-actively navigate beneficial changes within the field.

One of us, Christopher Wickert, struggled with this need to frame the manuscript for a management audience in one of his research projects on which he and his co-author worked for more than a decade. The project is about the adversarial consequences of efficiency practices that prevail in contemporary organizations, and for doing so Christopher and his co-author mobilized insights from resource and environmental economics and the so-called 'rebound effect' in order to show how efficiency thinking and concomitant managerial practices can harm key ecological and social conditions because of their implications on market-level supply and demand. The manuscript was rejected by almost 10 major management journals, as Christopher and his co-author struggled quite severely to connect those ideas to ongoing management conversations, while translating broader implications emerging from resource economics to organizational settings – we simply did not manage to bring the message across and convince management scholars as our target audience that the problem we identified is also important for them. Ultimately, after so many attempts and changing the theoretical anchoring of their work multiple times, Christopher succeeded and the study was published in the *British Journal of Management* (Schaefer and Wickert, 2026).

In summary, as a more general framing suggestion, recognize that both editors and reviewers might have limited familiarity with a new approach. As such, extra effort is warranted to explain and justify the potential benefits of this innovation, including the size of the potential audience and the magnitude of new insights provided (Bergh et al., 2022).

DISCUSSION: RESPONSIBILITIES OF REVIEWERS, EDITORS, INSTITUTIONS

Throughout this editorial we have focused largely on what individual scholars might do to craft interdisciplinary management research that travels across and draws upon interdisciplinary boundaries yet speaks clearly to a management studies readership. As authors ourselves, seeking also to work across disciplines, we appreciate that writing does not take place in a vacuum. The process and practice of writing unfolds within a wider system of review processes, editorial practices, and institutional structures (Gatrell and Breslin, 2025) that can either make interdisciplinary research feel viable and valued, or could make this approach seem risky and marginal. In this final section, we discuss the responsibilities of reviewers, editors, and institutions in supporting interdisciplinary work.

In doing so, we suggest that interdisciplinarity might be treated less as an individual project but as a collective responsibility across and within the management and organization studies community. If scholars are encouraged to reach across boundaries yet experience misunderstanding regarding how such interdisciplinary research is received, the personal cost of interdisciplinarity might seem too great. Conversely, if reviewers, editors, and institutions can pro-actively accept their part in enabling such work, interdisciplinary scholarship can become both more rigorous and more sustainable over time.

Reviewers As Custodians of Boundary-Crossing Work

Reviewers occupy a powerful position in the life of an interdisciplinary manuscript. Their reports can open up possibilities or close them down; they can recognize the labour involved in learning new literatures and methods, or dismiss that labour as unconvincing. Here, we highlight several responsibilities that we see for reviewers who encounter interdisciplinary submissions.

First, we urge reviewers to remain attentive to their own disciplinary lenses. Theories, assumptions, and standards of explanation are shaped by particular scholarly traditions, and interdisciplinary manuscripts are sometimes assessed on the basis of the kinds of papers that reviewers know best. A reflexive stance therefore asks: *Am I evaluating this manuscript through the expectations of my own subfield?* and *What might I be overlooking because of that?* Such reflexivity does not require relaxing standards; rather, it recognizes that standards themselves are situated and that interdisciplinary authors often take intellectual risks when stepping beyond familiar disciplinary boundaries.

Second, we suggest prioritizing coherence and contribution over disciplinary purity: Interdisciplinary papers can become overburdened if authors are obliged in the review process to satisfy multiple audiences simultaneously. A developmental stance could focus more on whether the argument is coherent, whether imported concepts are clearly justified and adapted, and whether the manuscript advances understanding within management and organization studies.

Third, we invite reviewers to be explicit about the limits of their expertise, enabling editors to interpret reviews appropriately and, where necessary, seek complementary perspectives. Such practices help create review processes that enable, rather than constrain, the interdisciplinary conversations on which the vitality of management scholarship increasingly depends.

In this sense, reviewers may become custodians of boundary-crossing work: reviewers could help to hold open the spaces in which authors can refine and strengthen their interdisciplinary arguments, rather than narrowing that space to the dimensions of their own disciplinary comfort.

Editorial Stewardship: Creating a Home for Interdisciplinarity

Editors, in turn, carry responsibility for shaping journal cultures. Broadly, when editors appraise interdisciplinary work, they might ask themselves: *What does quality look like for this particular kind of interdisciplinarity?* A distal-phenomenon paper might require a different kind of space to establish context and to demonstrate why the phenomenon matters for management. This might extend beyond the number of words; it might require a reflexive and exploratory approach in which authors can explain the phenomenon under consideration, and it is important for editors and reviewers to be open to approaches that may be less familiar than what they are used to reading in their field. A methods-focused paper may spend more time unpacking procedures and offering comparative analyses with existing tools. Rather than treating these differences as signs that authors have lost focus, or are out of scope, reviewers and editors can work with the framework and ask: *given where this project sits, what is a fair and appropriate set of expectations?*

It will be important for editors to shift from judging interdisciplinary submissions against a monodisciplinary template, recognizing that multiple, legitimate forms of rigour exist. Such recognition is central if interdisciplinarity is to be more than rhetorical encouragement. Specifically, a journal might state that it welcomes interdisciplinarity, yet the day-to-day practices of desk rejection and decision-making could send out a different signal. There are however several practical ways in which editors can enact a more supportive stance. These include:

First, editors can select reviewer teams with complementary expertise. For interdisciplinary papers, editorial judgment about reviewer composition is crucial. Pairing a reviewer deeply embedded in the management area of concern along with someone who is familiar with the source discipline or method can balance evaluations, reduce the risk that a single disciplinary perspective dominates, and ensure that concepts, methods, or phenomena from the source field are accurately represented. Such an approach also acknowledges that no single reviewer can carry the full interpretive burden of complex interdisciplinary work.

Second, editors play an important role in protecting novelty from premature closure. Interdisciplinary research often challenges familiar assumptions, introduces new constructs or examines phenomena beyond traditional management boundaries. Unsurprisingly, reviews may therefore be cautious or divided. In such cases, editors might ask whether resistance reflects genuine quality concerns or discomfort with unfamiliar ideas. Where the latter is evident, offering authors the opportunity to revise can prevent early closure of potentially field-shifting contributions.

Third, editorial teams can clarify expectations for interdisciplinary submissions. Editorials, special issues, Aims and Scope statements, and so on may move beyond general encouragement to spell out – as we seek to do with our Interdisciplinary Diffusion Framework – what forms of interdisciplinarity the journal is keen to publish. For example,

editors might invite methodologically innovative papers that include careful comparative analyses or encourage distal-phenomenon studies that demonstrate why the phenomenon matters for management theory. Such clarity helps authors to frame their work and reduces the sense that interdisciplinary manuscripts are guessing at an invisible standard.

Fourth, journals can gradually build editorial capacity for interdisciplinary evaluation by broadening the expertise represented on editorial boards. Scholars experienced in interdisciplinary research can serve as associate editors or mentors, helping support both reviewers and authors.

In short, editorial stewardship involves balancing two commitments: maintaining the rigour that sustains journals' reputations while creating space for new forms of rigour that emerge when disciplines intersect.

Institutional Ecologies: Encouraging Interdisciplinarity in Practice

The institutional context of management scholarship can profoundly shape the feasibility of interdisciplinary careers. While universities and funders might call for grand challenge, cross-disciplinary research and collaboration, evaluation systems frequently privilege short time horizons, narrow journal lists and discipline-specific rankings. Interdisciplinary work can take longer to publish and its influence may accumulate unevenly, meaning its early citation record could appear modest even as it seeds new conversations. Promotion and review processes therefore need to widen their lenses, recognizing cross-disciplinary influence and conceptual innovation as legitimate.

Such tensions are particularly acute for interdisciplinary doctoral researchers and early-career academics, who may find their research is unappreciated if it does not sit neatly within a single discipline. Departments can mitigate these risks by signaling that interdisciplinary work is valued, offering mentoring across disciplinary boundaries, and recognizing interdisciplinary outputs in hiring, progression, and workload decisions.

Similar issues can arise within institutional funding systems if interdisciplinary proposals are evaluated through narrowly constituted panels. Aligning review criteria with the logics of interdisciplinary evaluation – and supporting initiatives such as cross-disciplinary doctoral training or visiting schemes – can help lower the institutional barriers to interdisciplinary research.

Taken together, these reflections indicate that the future of interdisciplinary management scholarship depends on more than the creativity and persistence of individual authors. Reviewers, editors, and institutions all have a stake in whether interdisciplinary research is possible, visible, and sustainable.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Interdisciplinarity is not simply about what management can borrow. It is also about what management theories, methods, and phenomena-based insights contribute to wider debates that have significant implications for society – for example, around climate adaptation, war, or health. As such, we hope that the framework and guidance offered in this editorial will assist in supporting scholars from across management communities to navigate these complexities with confidence, and that reviewers, editors, and institutions

will recognize the different forms of labour involved. When these efforts are collectively supported, interdisciplinarity becomes not simply a methodological choice, but a shared scholarly practice through which management studies can deepen its theoretical reach and enhance its engagement with the complexities of organizational life.

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NOTES

- [1] While our guidance here focuses on how interdisciplinary research may advance management studies, management research may notably also serve as a source of influence to other disciplines.
- [2] While our guidance here focuses on how interdisciplinary research may advance management studies (the ‘outside-in’ perspective), we have argued that management research may also serve as a source of influence to other disciplines (the ‘inside-out’ perspective), discussing which in full is beyond the scope of this editorial.
- [3] Such challenges underscore the need for institutions to provide clear evaluation criteria that acknowledge the value of interdisciplinary contributions (Van Noorden, 2015).

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