



ISM SEMINAR

Autumn Term 2014-15

Speaker: Professor Paula Jarzabkowski, Cass Business School

Title: Between Deliberate and Emergent: the role of practical coping in strategy making

Date: Wednesday 19 November 2014

Venue: M2, WBS Teaching Centre

Time: 11.00

Abstract: This paper elaborates the concept of 'practical coping' as it occurs within strategy work to incorporate both dwelling modes and deliberate modes of strategizing during strategic decision making processes. We analyse practical coping within strategic episodes in the context of a reinsurance company in Bermuda. We trace the negotiation of a retrocession cover for this reinsurance company from the initial meetings to set up the deal until the final signing of the deal. With this empirical analysis of practical coping in a strategy decision making process we aim at contributing to a better understanding of strategy making as a result of both non-deliberate (emergent) and deliberate actions. We use the notion of practical coping to explore the origins of strategy emergence and to extend the study of strategically relevant processes and activities beyond a focus on top managers or other actors and processes specifically labelled strategic.

Biography: Paula Jarzabkowski is a Professor of Strategic Management at Cass Business School, City University London and, from 2012-2015, holds an EU Marie Curie Fellowship. Paula's research focuses on strategy-as-practice in complex and pluralistic contexts, such as regulated infrastructure firms, third sector organizations and financial services, particularly insurance and reinsurance. She focuses primarily on qualitative and ethnographic research methods as a means of studying business problems. In this endeavour, she has been fortunate in winning a series of prestigious fellowships that have enabled her to conduct detailed ethnographic studies in different industries. For example, from 2009-2012, she held the inaugural Insurance Intellectual Capital Initiative (IICI) fellowship, under which she conducted a 3-year audio and video ethnography of the global reinsurance market, which extended her skills from organisational to industry-level ethnography. She 'enjoys' the challenge of publishing such work in leading journals. Her work has appeared in a number of such journals including *Academy of Management Journal*, *Organization Science*, *Strategic Management Journal*, *Journal of Management Studies* and *Organization Studies* and in 2005, she published the first book on strategy-as-practice, *Strategy as Practice: An Activity-Based Approach* (Sage). In addition, Paula believes strongly in ensuring that her research is relevant to business, as demonstrated by her award of the 2013 ESRC Outstanding Impact on Business prize

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This seminar has been organised by the iSM Group.