



Exercising Discretion under Risk and Uncertainty:

Redundancy, Sensemaking & Accountability as Adaptive Processes

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Abstract

I posit that coordination challenges stem from integrating distributed cognition as the causes of uncertainty and risk in organizations, and observe that redundancy, sensemaking, and accountability can operate, jointly and independently, as adaptive processes in coping with uncertainty and risk. By using innovative methods, both quantitative and qualitative, to study these coping adaptive processes, I made theoretical contributions on counterfactual thinking by introducing uncertainty and risk as its antecedents, by identifying conditions of its spontaneous generations and impacts in judgments, and by analyzing its relationship to prefactuals in making judgments. Furthermore, I investigate how redundancy, sensemaking, and accountability operate as adaptive processes to cope with risk and uncertainty and build a new theory of discretion, which is a glaring knowledge gap in the field of organizational

behavior.

Biography

Dr. Frank Yu received his B.A. in Psychology from Swarthmore College, and completed his Ph.D. recently at the Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley. He studied with Karlene Roberts, the mother of High Reliability Organizations, as Karl Weick calls her, and with Kenneth Gergen, the father of social constructionism in social psychology. He owes much of his intellectual development to their influence, but he also insists on forging his own research identity. In particular, he is in the process of developing a theory of discretionary decision-making under risk and uncertainty, which benefits from his research in high-risk industries, where risk acceptability is a socially constructed norm. He also connects theories of discretion with theories of accountability with the help of Philip Tetlock, who offers a more political angle into organizational dynamics. He sees himself specializing in business ethics research in high risk and high uncertainty environments, and contributing to enhancing corporate social responsibility.

~~~~~ **All Are Welcome** ~~~~~