



TO: Tim Folta, University of Connecticut  
Chair, STR Division

FROM: Division and Interest Group Relations (DIGR) Committee

Isabel Metz, Melbourne Business School, U. of Melbourne (Chair & BOG Representative at Large)

DIGR Committee Members:

Herman Aguinis, The George Washington U. School of Business (BOG President-elect)

Tammy Madsen, Santa Clara U. (BOG Representative at Large)

Ingrid Fulmer, Rutgers U. (BOG Representative at Large)

Chris Rosen, U. of Arkansas (Past Division Chair, HR)

Alison Sheridan, U. of University of New England (Past Division Chair, GDO)

James Wilson, U. Glasgow (Past Division Chair, MH)

DATE: April 18, 2021

RE: Feedback on Strategic Management (STR) Division's 5 Year Report

Congratulations! On behalf of the Academy of Management Board, I am happy to report that the Strategic Management (STR) Division has been renewed for another five years. The committee found your report to be thorough and well-constructed. We know that your leadership team worked hard over the last year to produce the report. We appreciate the time and energy your team invested.

After reviewing your report and the accompanying data, the DIGR committee members identified strengths and concerns going forward, and assessed the efforts underway to lesson any concerns, all of which are summarized below. In addition, we offer recommendations for building on the division's strengths and continuing to provide valuable services to your members. Many of these issues and actions were identified in the report, although some were identified by the DIGR committee. We hope that our feedback will enable you to leverage the division's strengths and advance our shared goal of strengthening and invigorating the Academy of Management.

Please recall that an important element of the review process is for division leaders to share the report and review results in an open letter to their membership, via the website or email. In addition, if you are interested, we would welcome the opportunity to

meet with your leadership team virtually to recognize your accomplishments, answer any questions, and discuss any concerns.

Thank you again for the effort you invested in the 5-year review. We hope the review has provided an opportunity to reflect on the state of the division, areas of strength, and opportunities to further enhance members' experiences. We value the activities and services the STR Division provides for the Academy of Management and its members. We look forward to the division's continued development.

I hope you are well and best regards.

## **2021 Review of Strategic Management (STR) Division**

### **STRENGTHS**

The overall sentiment on the Division and Interest Group Relations (DIGR) Committee is that the STR Division is a healthy community with several strengths:

#### **Strength #1 Division Size and Member Satisfaction**

- Large membership base. Growing membership (at a greater rate than the AOM average) over all years, with a decline in 2020 of -6.64%. Growth is not in academic members, but rather in executives and students.
- The membership of the Division is largely satisfied with the division and its activities. Among survey respondents, 40.03% were satisfied, 29.49% were very satisfied, and 7.9% were extremely satisfied with the division.

#### **Strength #2 Member Engagement**

- Implementation of STRonger Together initiatives in 2020. Initiatives provided a variety of opportunities for the membership to engage. Most content is available on the Division's YouTube channel. Low attendance at STRonger Together initiatives, but high levels of satisfaction reported by those who attended.
- There are more non-annual conference events and activities (bar trivia; zoom meetups to finish AOM reviews, regional cafes; writing retreats; etc.).

#### **Strength #3 Scholarship**

- Leadership reached out to AOM journals to encourage greater publication of STR Division's research and higher representation of STR members on editorial boards.
- Division has good awards program.

#### **Strength #4 Financial**

- Strong financial health and ability to gain sponsorship.

### **CHALLENGES**



A few challenges and concerns were noted by members of the DIGR Committee, all of which were also identified in STR's report. They are:

### **Challenge #1 Member Engagement & Participation**

- Low reviewer signup and low voter turnout for elections.
- Members seek more opportunities for collaboration outside of the annual meeting.
- Although increased over the period, member satisfaction can improve further regarding 'ability of interested members to become leaders in the division', 'ability to influence the division' and 'the value of Connect@AOM discussion'.
- Despite enjoying high member loyalty (77% of the respondents considered STR to be their primary division/interest group, and 41% claimed no strong allegiances with any other division; p.12), over 40% of the respondents have not yet engaged with several of the Division's activities (e.g., never 'Presented at a professional development workshop' (46%), 'Served as a chair or discussant for a scholarly session' (52%), and 'Volunteered in some capacity' (65%)).

### **Challenge #2 Strategic Plan**

- The Division clearly explained the strategic priorities from the previous five years but didn't clearly identify goals or priorities for next 5 years, referring loosely to the lists of actions and suggestions (short- and longer-term) made by members.

### **Challenge #3 Diversity & Inclusion**

- The report indicates the majority of respondents were satisfied with the diversity in the STR Division's leadership, but some categories could be improved upon (e.g., disability, ethnicity, geographic location, nationality, and race).
- Some survey respondents were dissatisfied with the division's diversity efforts. This feeling was more pronounced among non-North American, non-White and non-male respondents.
- Not clear what opportunities and services the STR Division provides to members with different interests (e.g., teaching, research, and practice). Might be helpful to assess how the Division can better meet the interests of all members, including those who are primarily interested in teaching.

Many of these concerns are mitigated by additional discussion, observations or strategic plans evident in the report, including:

### **Observation #1 Proactive Leadership**

- The member survey included an evaluation of the 2020 'STRonger Together' initiatives.
- Division sought input from respondents on how STR could improve in next 5 years. For example, Division included additional survey items regarding diversity and how the division should allocate its time between annual conference related



activities and non-conference related activities (50% of respondents recommend a 75%/25% allocation).

- STR Division is building initiatives outside the annual conference.
- Attention is being given to career paths for PhD students given the disruptions from Covid. Given diminishing academic job opportunities, STR focus on executive careers is well placed and may sustain membership in the longer term.

### **Observation #2 Diversity & Inclusion**

- The Division's efforts in fostering diversity, enhancing communication, and providing leadership participation opportunities seem to have improved respondents' ratings of the same (albeit only slightly in some cases). It is worth noting, however, that the satisfaction rate is generally lower for non-North American respondents compared to North American respondents, non-White compared to White, and male compared to female.
- Division targeted regions traditionally under-represented for members. Attention largely directed to South America –the geographical spread could be widened.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The DIGR Committee supports the strategic plan suggested by the STR Division leadership in their report. In an effort to help the STR Division we also offer these additional thoughts and recommendations for consideration:

### **Recommendation #1 Planning: Establish Priorities, a Timeline and Metrics**

- The divisional leaders reported good progress on some of its goals. They also identified some very worthwhile initiatives. We recommend the Division prioritize the list, develop a timeline for implementation, use metrics for tracking the progress on each initiative, and add ownership information (for instance, what committee or EC members are responsible for a particular initiative?). Some initiatives might be planned for 2022 or 2023.

### **Recommendation #2 Student Support, Diversity, International Engagement**

- We recommend the strategic plan includes further efforts to provide opportunities for all members to participate in leadership, in the AOM meeting activities and in influencing the Division.
- The STR Division has surplus funds that can be used to provide scholarships for doctoral students (and members of underrepresented groups/countries) to attend the AOM conference. Post-COVID 19, these funds could also be used to support in-person regional get-togethers or mini-conferences that allow members to connect outside of AOM's annual conference.
- The Division also might benefit from clarifying the structure, responsibilities and roles of EC members and managing role transitions. Each EC member might assume the leadership of one initiative or goal and be responsible for achieving the goal associated with that initiative.



### **Recommendation #3 Conference Reviewing and Journal Publication**

- The low participation in conference reviewing is an issue worth focusing on in conjunction with the efforts to widen the presence of STR scholars and scholarship in AOM journals. Scarcity of reviewers potentially affects the developmental feedback quality given to conference submissions, which are often early-stage research that will go on to journal submission. We suggest STR introduce sessions to develop more and better reviewers, both for conference and journal reviewing.

### **Recommendation #4 Health and Governance Checklist**

- STR's Health and Governance Checklist seems incomplete. For example, there are no examples/quick ideas for any of the checklist items. Further, Item 18 is marked as "needs improvement" but no further elaboration is provided.
- Item 3 of the Health and Governance Checklist is blank. We recommend the Division conforms to all official Academy policies as detailed in the Division and Interest Group Chair's Guidebook, as per Item 3.

