

## PERCEIVED CAUSES AND SOLUTIONS OF THE TRANSLATION PROBLEM IN MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

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The impact that management research has (or doesn't have) on private and public sector managerial practice is a topic of ongoing debate within the Academy of Management (AOM). In recent journal special issues and editors' forums (Bailey, 2002; Rynes, Bartunek, & Daft, 2001; Rynes & Shapiro, 2005; Shapiro & Rynes, 2005) and conference themes ("Creating Actionable Knowledge" in 2004, "Knowledge, Action and the Public Concern" in 2006), and in the "Statement of Strategic Direction," the AOM and its members have encouraged relevant and responsible research that makes a valuable contribution to society and its institutions.

Yet, from our own informal discussions with management scholars and practitioners and from attendance at AOM forums on this topic, we know that many AOM members don't perceive a problematic gap between management research and practice. In addition, we know that those who do perceive a research-practice gap offer competing reasons for the gap, and thus different proposals for what the AOM and its members should do, if anything, to close it. As Van de Ven and Johnson (2006) argued, many frame this gap as a *knowledge transfer* problem that may be solved by more effective translation of management research into publications, frameworks, and tools that managers can use in their work. However, others frame the gap as a *knowledge production* problem that may be solved by more collaborative joint research efforts between management scholars and practicing managers.

We refer to these two types of problems—these two gaps—as "lost *in* translation" and "lost *before* translation," respectively. We believe that understanding the perceived causes and potential solu-

tions for both of these problems is important if academics and practitioners are to successfully bridge whatever gaps may exist. After all, translating findings in ways that are understandable to broader audiences will be more appreciated when these findings relate to phenomena that *matter* to the message receivers.

Rynes et al., in their April 2001 *Academy of Management Journal* special research forum (SRF), "Across the Great Divide: Knowledge Creation and Transfer between Practitioners and Academics," raised important issues, as have others, such as Beyer and Trice (1982) and Lawler and his associates (1985). All these authors have suggested ways to do research that is useful for theory and practice. Yet we know of no recent systematic effort to understand beliefs regarding the extent and nature of the management research–management practice gap and how to narrow it. Moreover, none of the five papers in Rynes et al.'s (2001) relatively recent SRF addressed the "gap-related" beliefs of *AOM members specifically* and what they would like to do about the perceived gap.

If there is in fact a meaningful gap between management research and practice, it can only be closed if individual AOM members change their knowledge transfer and/or knowledge production processes. Yet members will only change these processes if proposed solutions fit their perceptions of the problem. For example, if the majority of AOM members believe that there is a *knowledge transfer* problem in which management research is *lost in translation*, then proposed solutions might focus on changes to editorial policies at top journals, the development of new practitioner-oriented journals, and more formal recognition and rewards for publications with a substantial impact on practice. On the other hand, if the majority of AOM members believe that there is a *knowledge production* problem, so that any chance for impact on practice is *lost before translation*, then proposed solutions

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might focus on ways to foster more researcher-practitioner collaboration as research programs are developed and carried out.

As a means to better understand AOM member beliefs regarding the research-practice gap and what should be done about it, we conducted an online survey of AOM members between December 2006 and February 2007. To obtain survey participation, we e-mailed requests to eight listserv managers of AOM divisions—namely, Business Policy & Strategy (BPS), Conflict Management (CM), Human Resources (HR), International Management (IM), Management Education & Development (MED), Organizational Behavior (OB), Public & Nonprofit (PNP), and Social Issues in Management (SIM). Our selection of these divisions was guided by our desire to obtain the involvement of practitioners as well as academics, and by the divisional representation reported by audience members at a symposium regarding this FTE's topic at the 2006 AOM meeting in Atlanta. We asked our contacts to place the survey URL in a listserv posting that explained the purpose of the survey and invited listserv members to participate. To enhance global participation, we also sent an e-mail invitation to the Academy of International Business (AIB) listserv. To obtain the participation of additional practicing managers and consultants who might not be AOM members, we also sent e-mail invitations to members of the Practice of Strategy interest group in the Strategic Management Society, as well as to knowledge leaders at some of the largest management consulting firms. Finally, we made informal appeals to a variety of friends, colleagues, and department members at various colleges and universities to respond to the survey.

As a result of these various efforts, a total of 548 people completed the survey. Given our canvassing approach, it is not possible to identify with certainty the number of people who received the survey announcement and, as such, the response rate. However, in view of the number of members belonging to the targeted listservs, we estimate that the response rate was between 8 and 10 percent.

When asked to choose a professional label with which they most closely identified, the vast majority of our sample members ( $N = 438$ ) said they were "academics." An additional 39 identified themselves as "business people"; 40 identified themselves as "consultants"; and 31 people left this question blank. Nonacademics are somewhat overrepresented in our sample relative to the entire AOM membership, accounting for 15.2 percent of our respondents but only 8.5 percent of the AOM's current membership. Table 1 shows a more specific breakdown of this sample's demographic profile.

In the remainder of this "From the Editors" (FTE), we describe the pattern of findings that emerged from the survey. More specifically, we first note whether the respondents perceived the "translation problem" to be singular or twofold in nature. Secondly, we note what our respondents tended to identify as the cause of the translation problem(s). Third, we note the solutions that respondents identified. Importantly, we also note whether these results differed among the various groups represented in our sample (i.e., the demographic differences shown in Table 1). We conclude by discussing the implications of our findings for academics and practitioners who are concerned about lessening the chance that the important work of management scholars will be characterized as *difficult to locate and understand (lost in translation)* and/or *irrelevant or unimportant (lost before translation)*. Such characterizations threaten to hurt the legitimacy of management scholars and even that of business schools (e.g., Pfeffer & Fong, 2002) and other educational institutions (e.g., industrial/organizational psychology programs, industrial labor and relations programs) that draw upon management research. We thus hope this FTE reinforces the important message that Rynes and her coauthors and the others we've cited above have sent regarding the potential value to management scholars and management practitioners alike of increasing their collaborative efforts to both produce and transfer knowledge across the "great divide."

### Is There One Translation Problem—or Two?

In the survey's first section, respondents were asked the extent to which they believed collaboration between practitioners and academics *in the formulation of research questions* was insufficient. Specifically, they read the following statement:

Managers sometimes say that the day-to-day challenges they face are unrelated to the questions studied in management research. Some have suggested that this occurs because management scholars often choose their research topics without being aware of the needs and problems of practicing managers.

Following this, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement (via a five-point scale anchored by 1, "strongly disagree," and 5, "strongly agree") with the following statements: "Academic researchers do not study questions of importance to managers"; "Academics' selection of research questions is adequately informed and influenced by business practitioners" (reverse-scored); "Academics currently select research topics that are relevant

**TABLE 1**  
**Sample Demographics**

Variable	Total Sample	Academics	Businesspersons	Consultants
<b>Categorical data</b>				
Job type				
Academics	84.80			
Businesspersons	7.50			
Consultants	7.70			
Academic rank				
Tenured professor		48.10		
Untenured, tenure-track		33.40		
Untenured, non-tenure-track		18.50		
Academic field				
Strategy		35.60		
HR		12.90		
OB		22.40		
OT		5.40		
Other		23.70		
Business title				
Nonexecutive board member			9.50	
CEO, CFO, or other chief			28.60	
Other senior officer			17.50	
Other management			33.30	
Other staff			11.10	
Business function				
General management			31.70	
Strategy			22.20	
HR			22.20	
Other			23.90	
Consultant title				
Senior partner				54.70
Other partner				13.30
Other management				14.70
Other staff				17.30
Consultant area				
General management				12.60
Strategy				31.00
HR				31.00
Other				25.40
Gender				
Women	35.90	36.00	33.30	38.50
Degree obtained				
Bachelor's degree or less	0.08	0.30	0.00	5.20
Masters	12.40	8.60	35.90	25.60
Ph.D.	86.80	91.10	64.10	69.20
Region				
North America	67.90	69.50	64.10	53.80
South America	2.80	2.10	7.70	5.10
Europe	16.90	16.40	17.90	23.10
Middle East	1.20	1.20	0.00	0.00
Africa	0.60	0.50	0.00	2.60
Asia	6.00	5.50	10.30	5.10
Australia/New Zealand	4.80	4.80	0.00	10.30
<b>Interval data</b>				
Age	45.41	45.42	45.14	47.26
Academic experience in years	12.19	13.06	6.88	7.57
Business experience in years	8.82	7.52	17.31	12.68
Consulting experience in years	6.60	6.22	4.40	11.62
Total number of academic publications	16.29	18.03	8.76	3.28
Total number of top-tier academic publications	4.44	4.98	0.97	0.48
Total number of practitioner publications	5.51	5.03	8.89	8.29
Total number of top-tier practitioner publications	1.10	1.10	0.32	1.96
<i>n</i> <sup>a</sup>	548	438	39	40

<sup>a</sup> Thirty-one respondents did not specify job type.

to practitioners" (reverse-scored); "Enough consultants with access to practicing managers' issues inform academics' selection of research questions" (reverse-scored); and "'Bridging' academics and practitioners in ways that influence the choice of research topics is *not* necessary" (reverse-scored). Additionally, in order to assess the degree of concern that respondents felt about the problem described at the survey's start, respondents answered the question, "How concerned are you personally about researchers not studying questions of much importance to practicing managers?" (1, "not at all concerned," to 5, "very concerned").

In a subsequent section of the survey, respondents were asked the extent to which they believed there was insufficient collaboration between academics and practitioners when it comes to *communicating research findings*. More specifically, respondents read the following statement:

Even when academics study questions that are useful to practitioners, managers say that it is difficult for them to find, comprehend, and/or act on articles in scholarly management journals. Therefore, many important research findings that could be helpful to managers go unutilized. In this part of the survey, we would like to find out the extent to which you believe this is a problem and, if so, solicit ideas from you on how to make academic research more accessible and useful to practicing managers.

Following this, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement (via the same five-point "strongly disagree"/"strongly agree" scale) with the following statements: "I believe that many important research findings that could be helpful to managers go unutilized"; "Enough business practitioners are already accessing the latest research results and putting them into practice" (reverse-scored); "Important research results are *eventually* effectively translated into practice" (reverse-scored); "Consultants are effective at translating research findings into practice" (reverse-scored); and "Improving how research findings are translated for practicing managers is *not* necessary" (reverse-scored). Additionally, respondents indicated how concerned they personally felt (via the five-point "not at all concerned"/"very concerned" scale) about "the gaps between research findings and practitioner implications."

We designed the online survey so that respondents could *not* return to earlier sections of the section they had already completed. As a result, once respondents began answering questions regarding the lost in translation problem, they could not change their answers to questions regarding the lost before translation problem.

An examination of the descriptive statistics and an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of the items in these two survey sections revealed that respondents are, indeed, concerned about both the lost in translation and lost before translation problems and that they view these problems as separate and distinct. Acceptable reliability coefficients for the scales assessing these two translation-problems (.77 and .71, respectively) were also obtained. These translation problems' distinction from each other can be seen in the factor analysis results in Table 2. Note that 11 of the 12 questionnaire items intended to assess each of these translation problems load on (only) the appropriate factor; however, there was one cross-loading of the lost in translation item, "How concerned are you personally about the gaps between research findings and practitioner implications?" We decided to retain this item in the lost in translation problem scale because of its theoretical relevance to this particular problem and the stronger reliability coefficient we obtained for this problem by retaining rather than removing the item.

Table 3, which breaks down the perceptions of translation problems by demographic groups, shows that the mean level of concern about each of these translation problems is approximately the same, although the concern for the lost in translation issue is slightly higher (3.65 versus 3.98)—a finding that might be expected, given that there are far more academic than business or consultant respondents in our sample. This finding of slightly more concern for the lost in translation issue also supports an observation made by Van de Ven and Johnson: "The gap between theory and practice is typically formulated as a knowledge transfer problem" (2006: 803); we would add our own anecdotal evidence, having observed this emphasis whenever academics and practitioners speak about "the translation problem." However, our findings suggest that it is overly simplistic to assume that knowledge transfer is the only concern regarding translation that academics and practitioners have. Column 1 of Table 3 (regarding concern about "lost before translation") supports this view. The results show that there was significantly more concern for this problem among respondents who were: (1) male rather than female; (2) older rather than younger; (3) academics in strategy versus other discipline areas, with fewer rather than more academic publications, especially top-tier ones, and with higher teaching loads; and (4) businesspeople and consultants with more rather than fewer years of experience. Moreover, our finding that both academics and practitioners tended to view the two types of translation problems probed by our survey as dis-

**TABLE 2**  
**Factor Analysis Results: Items for the Lost before and Lost in Translation Problems<sup>a</sup>**

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2
Eigenvalue	<b>3.57</b>	2.06
Cumulative percentage of variance	<b>0.30</b>	0.47
1. Lost before: Academics currently select research topics that are relevant to practitioners. (reverse-scored)	<b>.76</b>	-.08
2. Lost before: Academic researchers do not study questions of importance to managers.	<b>.76</b>	-.05
3. Lost before: How concerned are you personally about researchers not studying questions of much importance to practicing managers?	<b>.72</b>	.21
4. Lost before: Academics' selection of research questions is adequately informed and influenced by business practitioners. (reverse-scored)	<b>.63</b>	.01
5. Lost in: How concerned are you personally about the gaps between research findings and practitioner implications?	<b>.58</b>	<b>.49</b>
6. Lost before: Enough consultants with access to practicing managers' issues inform academics' selection of research questions. (reverse-scored)	<b>.54</b>	.01
7. Lost before: "Bridging" academics and practitioners in ways that influence the choice of research topics is not necessary. (reverse-scored)	<b>.54</b>	.33
8. Lost in: Enough business practitioners are already accessing the latest research results and putting them into practice. (reverse-scored)	.11	<b>.76</b>
9. Lost in: Important research results are eventually effectively translated into practice (reverse-scored).	.18	<b>.69</b>
10. Lost in: I believe that many important research findings that could be helpful to managers go unutilized.	-.18	<b>.68</b>
11. Lost in: Improving how research findings are translated for practicing managers is not necessary. (reverse-scored)	.21	<b>.58</b>
12. Lost in: Consultants are effective at translating research findings into practice. (reverse-scored)	-.06	<b>.51</b>

<sup>a</sup> The extraction method was principal components; the rotation method was varimax.

tinct from each other also reinforces Rynes et al.'s (2001) call for management scholars and practitioners to narrow the gaps of *both* knowledge creation and knowledge transfer.

Importantly, the above-noted demographic differences associated with more rather than less concern about knowledge production (lost before translation) were *not* necessarily repeated for knowledge transfer (lost in translation). As can be seen in Table 3's column 2, concern about the former tended to be significantly greater among respondents who were female rather than male; among academics without rather than with tenure, with fewer years of academic experience as well as fewer publications; and among those with more business experience. This pattern of findings suggests that different interventions may be needed to remedy each of these translation problems.

We recognize that the absolute mean differences in responses between demographic groups are not large in many cases; nevertheless, these statistically significant results do suggest that those whom we might label our most "successful" academics (i.e., those with the most years of academic experience, lighter teaching loads, and more publications—especially in top-tier journals—are less concerned with the management research–management practice gap than other respondents are, especially those with more extensive business and consulting

experience. To further explore the underlying drivers of these results, we ran an ANOVA with tenure (yes/no) as the predictor variable and the concerns relating to the two types of translation problems as dependent variables. We found that at least for the lost in translation problem, those with tenure were less concerned than those without (means = 3.89 versus 4.06, respectively;  $F_{1, 421} = 6.85, p < .01$ ).

One possible interpretation of this pattern of results is that the tenured, most experienced, and most prolific academic researchers in our sample have enjoyed productive careers focused on publishing in top-tier journals that they find to be personally and professionally rewarding. Possibly, these academics perceive their work as having an impact on practice (since it is academia's "best stuff," evidenced by its surviving rigorous publishing standards or other types of selection procedures, such as the awarding of grants or other competitive distinctions). Alternatively, it is possible that the tenured, most experienced, and most prolific academic researchers in our sample tend to be less concerned about practice since it may be sufficiently gratifying for their work to be highly regarded by other academics. Another possible interpretation is that the most successful academics in our sample have greater job security, which, in turn, may create less need to reassess the extent to which their research could potentially matter more to wider audiences. In summary, it makes sense that the

**TABLE 3**  
**Relationships between Demographic Characteristics and Perceptions of Translation Problems<sup>a</sup>**

Demographic Characteristic	Problem 1: Lost before Translation	Problem 2: Lost in Translation
<i>Overall mean</i>	3.65	3.98
<i>Categorical data</i>		
Job type		
Academics	3.64	3.96
Businesspersons	3.70	4.16
Consultants	3.74	3.90
	$F_{2, 512} = 0.39$	$F_{2, 509} = 1.99$
Academic rank		
Tenured professor	3.60	3.89 <sub>x</sub>
Untenured, tenure-track	3.64	4.05 <sub>y</sub>
Untenured, non-tenure-track	3.73	4.05 <sub>y</sub>
	$F_{2, 423} = 0.78$	$F_{2, 420} = 3.42^*$
Academic field		
Strategy	3.80 <sub>x</sub>	3.89
HR	3.65 <sub>x, y</sub>	3.99
OB	3.50 <sub>y</sub>	4.00
OT	3.36 <sub>y</sub>	3.99
Other	3.63 <sub>x, y</sub>	4.03
	$F_{4, 457} = 3.81^{**}$	$F_{4, 454} = 0.88$
Academic teaching load		
Two courses per year	3.67 <sub>x, y</sub>	3.93
Three courses per year	3.46 <sub>x</sub>	3.92
Four courses or more per year	3.74 <sub>y</sub>	4.03
	$F_{2, 418} = 4.81^{**}$	$F_{2, 416} = 1.37$
Business title		
Nonexecutive board member	3.91	3.83
CEO, CFO, or other chief	3.64	4.27
Other senior officer	3.62	4.09
Other management	3.66	4.15
Other staff	3.80	4.19
	$F_{4, 58} = 0.27$	$F_{4, 58} = 0.98$
Business function		
General management	3.55	4.06
Strategy	3.79	4.05
HR	3.87	4.23
Other	3.81	4.14
	$F_{3, 59} = 0.79$	$F_{3, 59} = 0.41$
Consultant title		
Senior partner	3.80	4.11
Other partner	3.71	3.70
Other management	3.68	3.92
Other staff	3.73	4.19
	$F_{3, 71} = 0.13$	$F_{3, 71} = 2.47$
Consultant area		
General management	3.81	4.10
Strategy	3.86	4.02
HR	3.81	4.16
Other	3.63	3.93
	$F_{3, 83} = 0.61$	$F_{3, 83} = 0.83$
Gender		
Women	3.58	4.07
Men	3.72	3.93
	$F_{1, 511} = 4.32^*$	$F_{1, 508} = 5.52^*$

**TABLE 3**  
**(Continued)**

Demographic Characteristic	Problem 1: Lost before Translation	Problem 2: Lost in Translation
Degree obtained		
Bachelor's degree or less	4.08	4.05
Masters	3.77	3.97
Ph.D.	3.64	3.97
	$F_{2, 511} = 1.58$	$F_{2, 507} = 0.03$
Region <sup>b</sup>		
North America	3.63	3.99
South America	3.75	4.05
Europe	3.71	3.94
Middle East	3.61	3.46
Africa	3.44	3.61
Asia	3.65	3.92
Australia/New Zealand	3.72	4.10
	$F_{6, 495} = 0.26$	$F_{6, 494} = 1.00$
<i>Interval data</i>		
Age	$r = .11^*$	$r = -.02$
Academic experience in years	$r = -.02$	$r = -.10^*$
Business experience in years	$r = .18^{***}$	$r = .14^*$
Consulting experience in years	$r = .12^*$	$r = .00$
Number of academic publications	$r = -.13^*$	$r = -.09^*$
Number of top-tier academic publications	$r = -.15^*$	$r = -.12^*$
Number of practitioner publications	$r = .06$	$r = -.02$
Number of top-tier practitioner publications	$r = .10$	$r = -.05$

<sup>a</sup> Mean differences are shown for categorical data. Different subscripts indicate significant differences (within each column's demographic categories). Correlations with each factor are shown for interval data.

<sup>b</sup> Because of insufficient respondents in certain regions, no individual *t*-test differences could be calculated.

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

more rather than less prolific academics in our sample would feel less concerned about the gaps between research and practice, if indeed they have enjoyed more positive career outcomes, as described here.

On the other hand, survey respondents with more business experience (and, for the lost in translation problem, also those with more consulting experience) are more likely to have faced the complex, multidisciplinary business issues that are likely to benefit most from access to the best management theory and rigorous empirical research. As a result, they might be more likely to have sought out research to guide their business decisions, and thus might be the most likely to be concerned when such research either doesn't address their business issues or is not translated clearly into implications for practice. Alternatively, because they are also often further removed from academic settings (i.e., it has been more years since their last degree) they may be more prone to summarily dismiss research as "too academic" for practical application. Further research is necessary to test these and other potential interpretations of our results. In any case,

though, the fact that the group that many would call the most successful academics is less concerned about both types of gaps is crucial to crafting potential solutions to these problems, since such academics are often the leaders of universities, departments, and professional associations.

### **Are the Causes of the Two Translation Problems the Same or Different?**

Our survey also asked respondents to indicate (via a five-point scale anchored by 1, "not at all," and 5, "extremely much") how strongly they believed that various factors contributed to either the lost in translation or lost before translation problem. The factors that we listed were derived from the substance of postings collected from the Web forum created on the AOM Web site following Rynes and Shapiro's (2005) FTE on public policy and the public interest, as well as from insights derived from Rynes et al.'s (2001) special research forum in *AMJ*. The potential contributing factors to the research-practice gap referred to: university

promotion and tenure (P&T) systems, practitioners' incentive systems for collaborating with academics on research and writing, Ph.D. program training methods, curricular and pedagogical constraints in MBA and corporate training programs, the availability of time and funding for academic-practitioner collaborations, the different ways that practitioners and academics tend to frame business issues, academics' and practitioners' levels of interest in collaborating more with each other, and the number of practitioner-oriented journal outlets.

We conducted an exploratory factor analysis to determine the *causes* attributed to the two translation problems probed in our survey and found the causes in each case were largely the same. With regard to the substantive content of these factors, we found the following: (1) factor 1 was associated exclusively with issues regarding *universities' promotion and tenure systems and doctoral student training* that encourages publishing in only top-tier academic journals; (2) factor 2 was associated exclusively with issues regarding *academics' and practitioners' resource constraints*, such as teaching-related constraints and the lack of time and funding for academic-practitioner collaborations; and (3) factor 3 was associated exclusively with issues regarding *practitioners' and consultants' incentive-related constraints* for obtaining and understanding academic research. The alpha coefficients for reliability for each of these factors were .93, .89, and .81, respectively, and, in each case, the reliability weakened if any of the factor's items were dropped. Appendix A gives the complete items, scale reliabilities, and factor groupings for the causes of the two translation problems.

Although we did not find differences in the causes attributed to these two translation problems, we did find that the perceived causes were influenced by people's demographic characteristics. More specifically, as can be seen in Table 4, which presents results of an analysis of the relationships between demographic characteristics and the perceptions of the causes of the translation problems, those who attributed knowledge creation and knowledge transfer problems to the university P&T systems, as well as doctoral program training norms, tended more often to be untenured academics with fewer publications (especially top-tier) and tended to have more years of business or consulting experience.

Our findings thus far suggest that tenured faculty who publish more in top-tier journals are both less concerned about these translation problems in general and, to the extent they perceive such problems, less likely to blame them on university promotion and tenure systems and doctoral training methods. The fact that frequency of publications (and *not*

years of academic experience) was influential in determining the extent to which P&T systems were identified as an important cause of knowledge transfer problems suggests that academics with more publishing success are less likely to criticize the systems that reward them for it. In contrast, those who have the most experience in business and consulting—and thus the most exposure to private sector human resource systems—are likely to be the most skeptical of universities' unique P&T systems and thus conclude that they provide disincentives for conducting and publishing practitioner-oriented research.

A second cause of the translation problem identified in our survey findings pertains to *academics' and practitioners' resource constraints*, including insufficient time and funding shortfalls that make collaborations between academics and practitioners difficult. As can be seen in column 2 of Table 4, women placed somewhat more influence on this factor than did men.

A third cause of the translation problems identified in our survey findings pertains to the incentives and constraints faced by *practitioners*. As can be seen in Table 4, beliefs in the importance of this factor were stronger for women and for both academics and practitioners in areas other than strategy or general management.

A pattern seems to be present in the latter sets of findings: females and people (academics as well as practitioners) who identify themselves with the human resource (HR) area are more likely than males and non-HR individuals to identify resource constraints as reasons for translation problems. One possible interpretation is that the women in our sample have experienced greater difficulty obtaining the time and resources needed to collaborate effectively with practitioners. This greater difficulty could possibly be due to females having less access than their male counterparts to networking activities that might connect them to practitioners (Belliveau, 2005; Lin, 1999). Since it takes resources (minimally, time and money) to engage in networking, the typically greater resource constraints on HR (relative to other) business functions may also explain why the HR representatives in our sample tended to see limited resources as causing translation problems. The HR function was more populated by women than men in our sample (something possibly true in general); this distribution may also help to explain why females were more likely than males to identify resource constraints as factors contributing to the research-practice gap. In summary, the patterns reported above suggest that practitioners as well as academics face constraints in the form of limited resources

**TABLE 4**  
**Relationships between Demographic Characteristics and Perceptions of Translation Problem Causes<sup>a</sup>**

Demographic Characteristic	Cause No. 1: University Promotion and Tenure Guidelines and Ph.D. Program Training	Cause No. 2: Lack of Academics' and Practitioners' Resources and Time and Educational Institution Pedagogical Norms	Cause No. 3: Practitioners' and Consultants' Incentive-Related Constraints
<i>Overall mean</i>	3.72	3.14	3.62
<i>Categorical data</i>			
Job type			
Academics	3.67	3.10	3.63
Businesspersons	3.92	3.25	3.61
Consultants	3.93	3.18	3.40
	$F_{2, 513} = 2.91$	$F_{2, 513} = 0.82$	$F_{2, 437} = 1.35$
Academic rank			
Tenured professor	3.59 <sub>x</sub>	3.12	3.66
Untenured, tenure-track	3.74 <sub>x, y</sub>	3.07	3.65
Untenured, non-tenure-track	3.91 <sub>y</sub>	3.18	3.52
	$F_{2, 424} = 3.78^*$	$F_{2, 424} = 0.59$	$F_{2, 358} = 0.85$
Academic field			
Strategy	3.79	3.02	3.46 <sub>x</sub>
HR	3.58	3.17	3.74 <sub>x, y</sub>
OB	3.66	3.25	3.85 <sub>y</sub>
OT	3.46	3.03	3.86 <sub>x, y</sub>
Other	3.72	3.12	3.54 <sub>x, y</sub>
	$F_{4, 458} = 1.25$	$F_{4, 458} = 1.78$	$F_{4, 388} = 4.23^{**}$
Academic teaching load			
2 courses per year	3.76	3.14	3.54
3 courses per year	3.57	3.04	3.73
4 courses or more per year	3.74	3.10	3.61
	$F_{2, 419} = 1.50$	$F_{2, 419} = 0.44$	$F_{2, 355} = 1.39$
Business title			
Nonexecutive board member	3.50	2.92	3.38
CEO, CFO, or other chief	3.86	3.19	3.58
Other senior officer	3.96	3.22	3.64
Other management	3.89	3.43	3.79
Other staff	3.86	2.95	3.52
	$F_{4, 58} = 0.41$	$F_{4, 58} = 0.93$	$F_{4, 51} = 0.42$
Business function			
General management	3.95	3.24	3.55 <sub>x, y</sub>
Strategy	3.68	3.06	3.45 <sub>x</sub>
HR	4.20	3.65	4.21 <sub>y</sub>
Other	3.49	3.25	3.35 <sub>x</sub>
	$F_{3, 59} = 2.56$	$F_{3, 59} = 1.63$	$F_{3, 52} = 4.03^{**}$
Consultant title			
Senior partner	3.85	3.03	3.44
Other partner	3.75	3.21	3.63
Other management	4.13	3.47	3.26
Other staff	3.83	3.22	3.46
	$F_{3, 71} = 0.69$	$F_{3, 71} = 1.33$	$F_{3, 59} = 0.44$
Consultant area			
General management	3.95	3.11	2.97 <sub>x</sub>
Strategy	3.95	3.16	3.26 <sub>x</sub>
HR	3.82	3.23	3.80 <sub>y</sub>
Other	3.72	3.19	3.69 <sub>x, y</sub>
	$F_{3, 83} = 0.50$	$F_{3, 83} = 0.09$	$F_{3, 69} = 4.73^{**}$

**TABLE 4**  
(Continued)

Demographic Characteristic	Cause No. 1: University Promotion and Tenure Guidelines and Ph.D. Program Training	Cause No. 2: Lack of Academics' and Practitioners' Resources and Time and Educational Institution Pedagogical Norms	Cause No. 3: Practitioners' and Consultants' Incentive-Related Constraints
Gender			
Women	3.68	3.32	3.78
Men	3.80	3.02	3.51
	$F_{1, 512} = 2.28$	$F_{1, 512} = 20.45^{***}$	$F_{1, 439} = 11.83^{***}$
Degree obtained			
Bachelor's degree or less	4.04	3.14	2.41
Masters	3.73	3.15	3.51
Ph.D.	3.71	3.12	3.63
	$F_{2, 512} = 0.31$	$F_{2, 512} = 0.04$	$F_{2, 436} = 2.83$
Region <sup>b</sup>			
North America	3.65	3.06	3.62
South America	4.16	3.56	3.86
Europe	3.78	3.04	3.47
Middle East	3.11	3.36	4.16
Africa	3.91	3.11	2.50
Asia	3.66	3.33	3.49
Australia/New Zealand	3.98	3.47	3.83
	$F_{6, 496} = 1.93$	$F_{6, 496} = 2.76^{**}$	$F_{6, 426} = 1.98$
<i>Interval data</i>			
Age	$r = .05$	$r = .03$	$r = -.01$
Academic experience in years	$r = -.04$	$r = -.01$	$r = .04$
Business experience in years	$r = .16^{***}$	$r = .07$	$r = -.03$
Consulting experience in years	$r = .10^*$	$r = -.01$	$r = -.07$
Number of academic publications	$r = -.15^{***}$	$r = -.04$	$r = .04$
Number of top-tier academic publications	$r = -.21^{***}$	$r = -.04$	$r = -.02$
Number of practitioner publications	$r = .08$	$r = -.01$	$r = -.05$
Number of top-tier practitioner publications	$r = .05$	$r = -.08$	$r = -.07$

<sup>a</sup> Mean differences are shown for categorical data. Different subscripts indicate significant differences (within each column's demographic categories). Correlations with each factor are shown for interval data.

<sup>b</sup> Because of insufficient respondents in certain regions, no individual *t*-test differences could be calculated.

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

and time and incentive systems that require remediation if these two groups are to collaborate more fully in creating and transferring knowledge. This possibility, plus the interpretations for our findings that we have offered above, are all in need of research.

### Are the Solutions for the Two Translation Problems the Same or Different?

We also asked respondents to indicate (1 = "not at all," to 5, "extremely") how strongly they believed that various actions would solve these translation problems. Appendix B gives our items de-

scribing these actions and the results we found when we submitted all of these items to an exploratory factor analysis. Table 5 presents the results of an analysis of the relationships between demographic characteristics and perceptions of the solutions to the two translation problems.

More specifically, results obtained from the EFA on the solution items revealed three factors (using eigenvalues greater than one and an examination of scree plots), each of which held a mixture of translation problem solutions. As can be seen in Appendix B: (1) factor 1 was associated exclusively with *AOM workshops and activities designed to bring academics and practitioners together*, (2) factor 2

**TABLE 5**  
**Relationships between Demographic Characteristics and Perceptions of Translation Problem Solutions<sup>a</sup>**

Demographic Characteristic	Solution No. 1: Workshops and Activities to Bring Academics and Practitioners Together	Solution No. 2: Getting Practitioners Involved in Reviewing for the AOM Conference and Journals	Solution No. 3: Providing Hands-on Help in, and Outlets for, Writing for Practitioners
<i>Overall mean</i>	3.56	3.34	3.45
<i>Categorical data</i>			
Job type			
Academics	3.50 <sub>x</sub>	3.21 <sub>x</sub>	3.37 <sub>x</sub>
Businesspersons	3.83 <sub>y</sub>	3.96 <sub>y</sub>	3.89 <sub>y</sub>
Consultants	3.88 <sub>y</sub>	4.03 <sub>y</sub>	3.75 <sub>y</sub>
	$F_{2, 509} = 6.59^{***}$	$F_{2, 507} = 13.57^{***}$	$F_{2, 507} = 7.61^{***}$
Academic rank			
Tenured professor	3.49 <sub>x, y</sub>	3.09 <sub>x</sub>	3.33 <sub>x</sub>
Untenured, tenure-track	3.42 <sub>x</sub>	3.21 <sub>x</sub>	3.35 <sub>y</sub>
Untenured, non-tenure-track	3.73 <sub>y</sub>	3.72 <sub>y</sub>	3.68 <sub>y</sub>
	$F_{2, 420} = 3.68^*$	$F_{2, 418} = 6.92^{***}$	$F_{2, 418} = 4.07^*$
Academic field			
Strategy	3.47	3.38	3.35
HR	3.48	3.33	3.47
OB	3.59	3.02	3.46
OT	3.33	2.98	3.16
Other	3.62	3.41	3.51
	$F_{4, 454} = 1.10$	$F_{4, 452} = 1.90$	$F_{4, 452} = 1.00$
Academic teaching load			
Two courses per year	3.54	3.39 <sub>x</sub>	3.34 <sub>x, y</sub>
Three courses per year	3.40	2.84 <sub>y</sub>	3.29 <sub>x</sub>
Four courses or more per year	3.53	3.36 <sub>x</sub>	3.56 <sub>y</sub>
	$F_{2, 415} = 0.98$	$F_{2, 413} = 6.46^{**}$	$F_{2, 413} = 3.32^*$
Business title			
Nonexecutive board member	3.57	3.62	3.03
CEO, CFO, or other chief	3.65	3.94	3.66
Other senior officer	3.77	3.81	3.71
Other management	3.92	3.90	3.87
Other staff	4.17	4.71	3.65
	$F_{4, 58} = 2.24$	$F_{4, 58} = 1.36$	$F_{4, 58} = 1.11$
Business function			
General management	3.79 <sub>x, y</sub>	3.62	3.63
Strategy	3.53 <sub>x</sub>	4.10	3.66
HR	4.23 <sub>y</sub>	4.42	4.06
Other	3.82 <sub>y</sub>	3.85	3.55
	$F_{4, 59} = 5.03^{**}$	$F_{3, 59} = 2.34$	$F_{3, 59} = 1.78$
Consultant title			
Senior partner	3.71	3.93	3.45
Other partner	3.73	3.90	3.81
Other management	4.00	4.20	3.77
Other staff	4.00	4.03	3.66
	$F_{4, 71} = 1.06$	$F_{3, 71} = 0.33$	$F_{3, 71} = 0.79$
Consultant area			
General management	3.55	3.77	3.35
Strategy	3.74	3.98	3.64
HR	4.00	4.05	3.60
Other	3.74	3.88	3.63
	$F_{4, 83} = 1.52$	$F_{3, 83} = 0.26$	$F_{3, 83} = 0.37$

**TABLE 5**  
**(Continued)**

Demographic Characteristic	Solution No. 1: Workshops and Activities to Bring Academics and Practitioners Together	Solution No. 2: Getting Practitioners Involved in Reviewing for AOM Conference and Journals	Solution No. 3: Providing Hands-on Help in, and Outlets for, Writing for Practitioners
<i>Categorical data</i>			
Gender			
Women	3.70	3.49	3.65
Men	3.50	3.28	3.35
	$F_{1, 508} = 7.37^{**}$	$F_{1, 506} = 3.07$	$F_{1, 506} = 11.64^{***}$
Degree obtained			
Bachelor's degree or less	4.20 <sub>x</sub>	3.66	3.53
Masters	3.78 <sub>x, y</sub>	3.70	3.55
Ph.D.	3.52 <sub>y</sub>	3.29	3.43
	$F_{2, 507} = 3.77^*$	$F_{2, 505} = 2.92$	$F_{2, 505} = 0.43$
Region <sup>b</sup>			
North America	3.48	3.27	3.38
South America	3.85	3.66	3.83
Europe	3.55	3.56	3.31
Middle East	3.86	2.45	3.48
Africa	4.05	2.66	4.36
Asia	3.87	3.16	3.63
Australia/New Zealand	3.93	3.85	3.86
	$F_{6, 492} = 2.78^*$	$F_{6, 490} = 2.02$	$F_{6, 490} = 2.25$
<i>Interval data</i>			
Age	$r = .00$	$r = .05$	$r = -.04$
Academic experience in years	$r = -.08$	$r = -.11^{**}$	$r = -.12^*$
Business experience in years	$r = .15^{**}$	$r = .21^{***}$	$r = .09$
Consulting experience in years	$r = .06$	$r = .07$	$r = -.02$
Number of academic publications	$r = -.14^*$	$r = -.21$	$r = -.20^{***}$
Number of top-tier academic publications	$r = -.16^{**}$	$r = -.21$	$r = -.28^{***}$
Number of practitioner publications	$r = -.01$	$r = .03$	$r = -.03$
Number of top-tier practitioner publications	$r = -.06$	$r = -.01$	$r = -.07$

<sup>a</sup> Mean differences are shown for categorical data. Different subscripts indicate significant differences (within each column's demographic categories). Correlations with each factor are shown for interval data.

<sup>b</sup> Because of insufficient respondents in certain regions, no individual *t*-test differences could be calculated.

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

was associated with *getting practitioners involved in reviewing for the AOM conferences and journals*, and (3) factor 3 was associated with *providing hands-on help in, and outlets for, academics who wish to write for practitioners*. The alpha coefficient for reliability for each of these factors was .93, .94, and .81, respectively, and, in each case, the reliability weakened if any of the factor's items were dropped.

Although we did not find differences in the solutions supported for these two gap-related problems, we did find that the support expressed for various solutions was influenced by people's de-

mographic characteristics, as shown in Table 5. In general, the differences across demographic groups in their levels of support for these three solutions are quite consistent with the patterns we observed when analyzing the results on the perceived extent and causes of the translation problems. In all cases, those currently being best served by the systems in place at universities, academic journals, and professional associations perceive less need to change them. Tenured academics who publish more in top-tier journals have less interest in AOM-sponsored activities to bring academics and practitioners together, less interest in sharing the leadership

roles they may be playing as gatekeepers for AOM conferences and journals, and less interest in changing university P&T systems. Undoubtedly, these academics perceive much risk and, potentially, little return in such changes.

Importantly, too, some management scholars have expressed the belief that making management research more relevant *for practice* (rather than for their own academic communities) is undesirable for intrinsic reasons, as well as unrealistic. For example, Daft and Lewin (in press: 9) state, "The reality is that academic journals that act primarily as knowledge sources are uncertain about how knowledge in published articles will be received, interpreted and used." Daft and Lewin also reiterate a view that they stated six years ago at the tenth anniversary of the Organization Science Winter Conference—namely, that the competitive advantage of organization scholars is "anchored in their intellectual and empirical explorations and publications." They emphasize that organization scholars ought to be concerned with relevance for their own academic communities, not for the world of practice.

On the other hand, those who may feel underserved by the current system—people such as managers and consultants with pressing business problems that aren't being addressed by academic research, or untenured/non-tenure-track faculty looking to carve out practice-oriented research niches that might provide consulting opportunities and improve their teaching—perceive greater upside and less downside from reorienting the AOM's activities toward researcher-practitioner collaborations. In addition, less experienced academics with limited publication records are naturally more interested in receiving hands-on help with writing for practitioners, and more outlets for the dissemination of such work.

## IMPLICATIONS

The simplest yet perhaps most important conclusion from our survey is that AOM members who responded to our survey—no matter their job, experience, location, publication record, or other defining characteristic—*do* perceive a gap between management research and practice and are at least somewhat concerned about it. No matter how we phrased the question, and no matter how we split the data, the majority of respondents agreed that such a gap exists. Of course, given the nature of the survey, our sample is likely to have some selection biases, in that those who responded are more likely to feel strongly (one way or another) about these translation issues than the general body of management scholars and practitioners. Nonetheless, the

results do show a general pattern of concern about the management research–management practice gap among academics, business people, and consultants.

More specifically, our respondents see this gap as the result of two separate and distinct translation problems, which we have labeled "lost before translation" and "lost in translation." This finding is crucial in that any attempt to mend this gap must address both problems. Focusing only on methods to improve the translation of academic research to management practice, for example, will not close the gap if such research is not aligned with the interests of practicing managers.

How, then, might we as individuals and collectively, as members of the AOM, take action to begin mending the gap? First, we have to acknowledge that the very fact that academics and practitioners perceive a gap is an important indicator of just how difficult it may be to significantly mend this gap. The fact that both sides perceive the gap indicates that both are well aware that they tend to frame business issues in different ways and that when it comes to creating and disseminating business knowledge, they have different interests, capabilities, time and resource constraints, and incentives. As a result, it is no surprise that they would tend to identify different root causes for these translation problems and, thus, different possible solutions. The tenured, well-published academic is less concerned about university P&T systems and potentially has a lot to lose and little to gain from including practitioners in the competition for coveted conference and journal review positions. The experienced manager is also likely to favor self-serving explanations for the causes of the gap (e.g., problems with academic incentives) and to think the solution lies with "changing the other side" (e.g., opening up the Ivory Tower to practitioners and their concerns).

Another practical concern that emerges from consideration of possible solutions is that the AOM and its members have very little control over some of the identified root causes of the gap. Although university P&T systems may be an important driver of the two translation problems, these systems serve other vital purposes within universities, and it is unlikely that the AOM members would favor dismantling them in the hope of generating better practitioner-oriented research!

Therefore, solutions must face these three hard facts: (1) academics and managers do live in different worlds, so that the gap is quite wide; (2) solutions must address both *lost before translation* and *lost in translation* problems; and (3) some of the most important drivers of the gap cannot be im-

pacted (or shouldn't be impacted) by the AOM, at least in the near future.

It seems at this writing that any solution must start with the premise that academics and practitioners should spend more time together, appreciating and understanding each others' worlds better (Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & Konno, 1998). If we faced just a one-phase, lost in translation problem, then maybe we could just focus on training, workshops, publication outlets, and incentives that helped academics better translate and disseminate their research results to practitioners. But there is no guarantee that this brilliantly translated work would be of any interest to the vast majority of practitioners. Thus, it would appear that academic-practitioner collaborations should be continuous rather than merely event-driven, in-person rather than merely virtual, in the form of two-way conversations rather than one-way presentations or translations only, and focused on research programs rather than results alone. Such action might be reflected by management scientists more frequently seeking federally supported research funds, such as National Science Foundation (NSF) grants—an action that also promises to alert granting agencies to the importance of management science and the work that management scholars do. The importance of the latter might be more clearly conveyed when stated conversely: management scholars' tendency to *not* seek NSF funds has threatened to reduce the size of the NSF budget for funding management research (Rousseau, 2005). Not seeking funds from the NSF (or from other granting agencies) thus also potentially threatens management scholars' ability to procure future resources for researcher-practitioner collaborations.

Is creating a more continuous, two-way dialogue between researchers and practitioners doable? Notwithstanding the challenges listed above, the results of the survey presented in this FTE support cautious optimism. Consider, for example, two ideas that scored among the most-favored potential solutions in the survey: sponsoring sabbaticals for academics in business practice as either "translators" of research results or as researchers on a set of practitioner-oriented research issues. Alternatively, consider the widely supported solution of assisting more practitioner sabbaticals as executives-in-residence at business schools or as fellows at research institutes in which they help shape and participate in research programs. Both of these scenarios would act to promote more "boundary-spanning" behavior as a means to develop professionals who are perfectly comfortable on either side of "the great divide." Just as product R&D shops often have "technology gatekeepers" who span the

applied research and basic research communities to make sure their companies shape and apply the latest research programs, might the AOM and business schools put more into identifying, training, and placing professionals who span the worlds of practice and research and serve as expert interpreters?

This is just one set of ideas, and further research and experimentation are needed to determine what, if anything, might close the research-practice gap that AOM members perceive to be such a problem today. As the debate continues, though, we urge all to keep in mind that the gap cannot be closed without addressing both problems—lost *in* translation and lost *before* translation—and that everyone is prone to self-serving explanations (and thus self-serving solutions) for these problems. These caveats suggest that solutions cannot be devised and implemented unilaterally, on only one side of the divide. Forums and other vehicles for bringing academics and managers together more often are an easy way to enhance existing collaborations but, ultimately, systems and processes that provide incentives for more continuous, two-way sharing of everything from preliminary research ideas to peer-reviewed, published results are necessary.

Importantly, some groundwork for mending the gaps identified in our survey has already been laid. For example, in contrast to our survey results suggesting that the most "successful" academics may be the least likely to act on these gaps or to be concerned about them, many of the AOM's leading academics have been at the forefront of recent efforts to better diagnose and solve management research translation problems. For example, there are the initiatives noted earlier via Rynes et al.'s (2001) *AMJ* special research forum, recent AOM symposia involving practitioners and researchers, and the AOM Web forum in December 2005—all meant to provoke brainstorming about ways to close the research-practice gap. Additionally, via their presidential speeches AOM presidents have urged the thousands of AOM members to increase external stakeholders' awareness of the important work that AOM members do. Former AOM president Donald Hambrick did this, for example, when he provocatively asked, "What if the Academy mattered?" Former president Denise Rousseau did it too, when she noted that AOM members' own students, managers-to-be, ought to be more exposed than they probably are to "*evidence-based* management pedagogical approaches"—that is, to the empirical evidence guiding their teachers' conclusions about management phenomena. Pfeffer (1998) and Pfeffer and Sutton (2006) have written highly visible books

about the transfer (or not) of behavioral research findings to practice, and what it will take to move both translation gaps in more satisfactory directions. Ouchi's (2003) *Making Schools Work* illustrates that it is indeed possible for research and practice to iteratively inform each other, and in so doing significantly, positively impact the organizations (for Ouchi, public school systems and their constituent groups) that are the subjects of study. If thought leaders and academic "heavy hitters" get more involved, then the total number of individuals who need to be involved (at least in the early stages) should be lower.

In addition to these speeches and books by prominent members of the Academy, some important initiatives have been launched by the AOM to increase the involvement of AOM members in knowledge creation and knowledge transfer activities affecting national health care policy. These actions include hiring publicist Ben Haimowitz, partnering with the UN Global Compact on a conference in October 2006 sponsored by Case Western University, and collaborating with some national U.S. organizations, such as the Institute of Medicine, that have the potential to affect national health care policy.

Interestingly, the description thus far of the groundwork being laid to mend the research-practice gap—and more accurately, the two translation problems associated with this, as reported here—refers to "them" (i.e., the AOM, AOM presidents, other champions). But if the translation problems are to be improved, the survey findings suggest that the solution must involve *all of us*, since the patterns in the tables presented here show that the perceived causes and solutions involve us as well as our institutions. We hope that this FTE, at a minimum, has sensitized readers to the fact that the translation problem is not singular, but bidirectional. Thus, it is hoped this FTE inspires you to think about championing efforts to improve the double translation problems noted here and to submit to *AMJ* theory-guided studies regarding how to most effectively improve both initial research designs and *translations* between management researchers and practitioners.

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## APPENDIX A

### Factors, Items, and Scale Reliabilities for the Causes of the Lost before Translation and the Lost in Translation Problems<sup>a</sup>

#### Factor 1: University Promotion and Tenure Guidelines and Ph.D. Program Training (12 total items; $\alpha = .93$ )

##### *Lost before Translation*

To the extent that a gap exists between the research questions pursued by academic researchers and the challenges faced by practicing managers, to what extent do you believe that each factor listed below contributes to this gap?

1. University tenure- and promotion-systems that reward faculty members for publishing only in top-tier academic-oriented journals
2. University tenure- and promotion-systems that discourage faculty members from publishing in practitioner-oriented journals
3. University tenure- and promotion-systems that discourage faculty members from pursuing applied research programs
4. The lack of interest by academics in changing their University tenure- and promotion system
5. The lack of interest by University officials in changing the University tenure- and promotion system
6. Ph.D. programs in business schools that train doctoral students to publish only in top-tier, academic-oriented journals

##### *Lost in Translation*

To the extent that a gap exists between research findings and management practices, to what extent do you believe that each factor listed below contributes to this gap?

7. University tenure- and promotion-systems that reward faculty members for publishing only in top-tier academic-oriented journals
8. University tenure- and promotion-systems that discourage faculty members from publishing in practitioner-oriented journals
9. University tenure- and promotion-systems that discourage faculty members from pursuing applied research programs
10. The lack of interest by academics in changing their University tenure- and promotion system
11. The lack of interest by University officials in changing the University tenure- and promotion system
12. Ph.D. programs in business schools that train doctoral students to publish only in top-tier, academic-oriented journals

#### Factor 2: Lack of Academics' and Practitioners' Resources and Time and Educational Institution Pedagogical Norms (14 total items; $\alpha = .89$ )

##### *Lost before Translation*

To the extent that a gap exists between the research questions pursued by academic researchers and the challenges faced by practicing managers, to what extent do you believe that each factor listed below contributes to this gap?

1. The lack of time that academics have to collaborate with practitioners
2. The lack of interest that practitioners have in collaborating with academics
3. The lack of time that practitioners have to collaborate with academics
4. The lack of funding that academics have to collaborate with practitioners
5. Lack of good practitioner contacts among academics
6. Curricular or pedagogical norms for MBA-, EMBA-, and corporate training programs that discourage instructors from asking class-participants for assistance in formulating research ideas
7. The difficulty that students in MBA-, EMBA-, and corporate training programs have in identifying research questions or hypotheses in need of research due to lack of skills or experience for this purpose

##### *Lost in Translation*

To the extent that a gap exists between research findings and management practices, to what extent do you believe that each factor listed below contributes to this gap?

8. Lack of time that academics have to collaborate with practitioners
9. The lack of time that practitioners have to collaborate with academics
10. Lack of funding that academics have to collaborate with practitioners
11. Lack of good practitioner contacts among academics
12. Curricular or pedagogical norms for MBA-, EMBA-, and corporate training programs that discourage instructors from translating research results in class
13. The inability of students in MBA-, EMBA-, and corporate training programs to effectively translate research results discussed in class to their organizations due to lack of skills for this purpose
14. The inability of students in MBA-, EMBA-, and corporate training programs to effectively translate research results discussed in class to their organizations due to lack of relevant work experience

#### Factor 3: Practitioners' and Consultants' Incentive-Related Constraints (6 total items; $\alpha = .81$ )

##### *Lost in Translation*

To the extent that a gap exists between research findings and management practices, to what extent do you believe that each factor listed below contributes to this gap?

1. Practitioners' difficulty in translating academic research results into findings that they would find useful due to the high level of research complexity

<sup>a</sup>Prefacing stems and their subsequent items are verbatim from the survey.

2. Practitioners' lack of interest in reading academic and practitioner-oriented journals
3. Practitioners' lack of incentives to read academic and practitioner-oriented journals
4. Practitioners' lack of time to read academic and practitioner-oriented journals
5. Consultants' incentives to promote their own ideas which may keep them from being objective translators of academic research to other practitioners
6. Practitioner-oriented outlets' willingness to publish ideas that "sell" but are not necessarily scientifically supported

## APPENDIX B

### Factors, Items, and Scale Reliabilities for the Solutions of the Lost before Translation and the Lost in Translation Problems<sup>a</sup>

#### Factor 1: Workshops and Activities to Bring Academics and Practitioners Together (13 total items; $\alpha = .93$ )

##### *Lost before Translation*

The gap between research and practice (regarding the relevance of research questions chosen by academic researchers and issues of importance to practicing managers) could be eased if the Academy of Management . . .

1. provided AOM members with workshops and tips regarding how to effectively select and frame research problems with the assistance of business practitioners.
2. provided AOM members with practitioners who could serve as mentors.
3. provided AOM members virtual access to dialogues with business practitioners (for example, via the Academy website).
4. provided AOM members activities that bring academics and business practitioners together, such as Symposium-sessions that require these two groups to jointly create knowledge.
5. provided doctoral students access to business practitioners in consortia or workshops.
6. provided doctoral students with tips for how to effectively select and frame research problems with the assistance of business practitioners.

##### *Lost in Translation*

The gap between research and practice (regarding the communication of research findings) could be eased if the Academy of Management . . .

7. provided AOM members with tips regarding how to effectively translate their research findings for business practitioners.

8. provided AOM members with business practicing-mentors.
9. provided AOM members with workshops regarding how to translate research findings for audiences that include business practitioners.
10. provided AOM members access to dialogues with business practitioners virtually (for example, via the Academy website).
11. provided AOM members activities that bring academics and business practitioners together, such as Symposium-sessions that require these two groups to jointly create knowledge.
12. provided doctoral students access to business practitioners in consortia or workshops.
13. provided doctoral students with tips for how to effectively translate their dissertation findings for business practitioners.

#### Factor 2: Getting Practitioners Involved in Reviewing for AOM Conference and Journals (4 total items; $\alpha = .94$ )

##### *Lost before Translation*

The gap between research and practice (regarding the relevance of research questions chosen by academic researchers and issues of importance to practicing managers) could be eased if the Academy of Management . . .

1. included practitioners on AOM conference review committees.
2. included more practitioners on AOM journal editorial boards and as reviewers.

##### *Lost in Translation*

The gap between research and practice (regarding the communication of research findings) could be eased if the Academy of Management . . .

3. included practitioners on AOM conference review committees.
4. included more practitioners on AOM journal editorial boards and as reviewers.

#### Factor 3: Providing Hands-On Help in, and Outlets for, Writing for Practitioners (5 total items; $\alpha = .81$ )

##### *Lost before Translation*

The gap between research and practice (regarding the relevance of research questions chosen by academic researchers and issues of importance to practicing managers) could be eased if the Academy of Management . . .

1. provided AOM members a "template" to use when writing papers for audiences that include business practitioners.
2. developed more outlets for practitioner-oriented publications (e.g., the Academy of Management Perspectives).

##### *Lost in Translation*

The gap between research and practice (regarding the communication of research findings) could be eased if the Academy of Management . . .

<sup>a</sup>The prefacing stems here have been paraphrased for simplicity; the items immediately following them are verbatim from the survey.

3. provided AOM members access to “Translators” whose job is to communicate members’ research findings in ways that will be readily clear to practicing managers.
4. provided AOM members a “template” to use when writing papers for audiences that include business practitioners.
5. developed more outlets for practitioner-oriented publications (e.g., the Academy of Management Perspectives).



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