

Strategic Plan

**President's Message:**

**Co-creating Our Future: The 2008-2010  
Strategic Planning Task Force Report**



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It's time for us to take stock of who we are, what we do, and what we all hope to accomplish in the years ahead. It has been almost ten years since we concluded our last strategic planning exercise (2000-2001). Much happens in ten years. First of all, our entire leadership has turned over ... twice. The executive officers of our divisions and the AOM itself serve us for five years; representatives-at-large serve us for three. The direct benefit of engaging in that strategic planning effort is long gone. The results of that work live in our organization's memory and are largely preserved in the annual socialization and acculturation experiences of our new leaders. But of course we might be playing a game of "telephone" as we socialize each other to our work. What our officers communicated to their new colleagues in 2002 might be quite different from what our officers, now years removed from that last planning exercise, communicated to their new colleagues this year. And of course, even if the ideas of that last effort were perfectly transmitted through time, the ideas themselves may need a fresh look. The AOM and its institutional environment are not what they were back in 2000. And so, with all of that in mind, the AOM's Board of Governors launched a strategic planning initiative almost two years ago. I would like to share the broad outlines of that work with you, invite you to explore a website that captures it all (<http://strategicplan.aomonline.org>) and most importantly, ask you to help us co-create our future.

The AOM's Board of Governors is comprised of nine representatives-at-large and five executive officers. Given that this planning effort spanned two years, twelve representatives and six executive officers actively engaged the work. We also invited the leaders from eight divisions, the editors of our publications, and our professional staff in New York to offer their counsel as well. Our work was facilitated by one of our longstanding members. Coming together five times over these past two years, we began by inviting representatives from both the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business and the European Foundation for Management Development to educate us about global trends in business and business education. We mined our member database for information about who we are and then surveyed our members for their ideas about what we can be. We also sat down with the AOM's entire leadership group at our 2009 annual meeting and took stock of the effort at its midpoint. We are pleased to be able to share the results of our work with you. Again, I invite you to help make us better.

Our first -- and arguably most important -- task was to take stock of ourselves. We needed to clearly articulate our bedrock values, our fundamental mission, and our abiding vision for the future. While this challenge provoked a lively conversation, it did not really pose much of a challenge. It was remarkably easy to find a consensus on these matters.

Here are the AOM's values, mission, and vision as we know them:

### Our Values

- We value high quality research, teaching and practice in the field of management and organization.
- We cultivate and advocate ethical behavior in all aspects of our work.
- We provide a dynamic and supportive community for all of our members, embracing the full diversity of our background and experiences.
- We respect each of our members' voices and seek to amplify their ideas.
- We build cooperative relationships with other institutions committed to the advancement of scholarship and teaching about management and organization.

### Our Mission

- To build a vibrant and supportive community of scholars by markedly expanding opportunities to connect and explore ideas.

### Our Vision

- We inspire and enable a better world through our scholarship and teaching about management and organizations.

It is instructive to take a look at President Andy Van de Ven's report on their planning initiative in 2001. Our foundational principles and aspirations have changed little over the years. Only our vision differs. Our colleagues back then believed that "the Academy of Management is an association of scholars that exists primarily to serve the scholarship needs (research, teaching and practice) of its members." Ten years later, we too want to serve our scholarship needs but we were quick to add the hope that our scholarship will inspire and enable a better world.

We digested an incredible amount of information about ourselves and our environment. Taking stock, we were animated by the desire to remain indispensable to our members. All of that work, however, is just a prelude to what comes next. It's time to act. We need to better organize ourselves (as someone observed, we are good at differentiation but maybe not so good at integration), better serve our members (particularly look-

ing at how and where we gather and how and what we publish), and fruitfully collaborate with the many like-minded associations that are emerging worldwide. We imagined a host of objectives, objectives that can be arrayed into four strategic intent statements. Let me briefly introduce you to them.

With more than 19,000 members hailing from over 100 countries, we are now over 50 percent larger than we were in 2001. While the AOM was conceived by two colleagues from the University of Chicago and the University of Michigan in 1936, our growth rate from outside the United States today is almost three times that it is from within. International is a word that readily came to mind. It is fair to say that everyone is inspired by our membership. Thankfully, our growth is matched by a great deal of satisfaction. Only 1 percent of us report being dissatisfied with our membership. Our chief opportunity then is to benefit from our amazing diversity and at the same time, beware the many "isms" that can bedevil such a heterogeneous mix of people (sexism, racism, ageism, parochialism, ethnocentrism, and the like).

Our own diversity is matched by a wide variety of employment contexts and expectations about our work. What it means to be a scholar may no longer be as clear today as it once was. For example, the AACSB counts over 12,000 business schools worldwide. The conditions of our employment and the expectations that so many hold for us are many and varied. We are alert to the state of our profession and want to be sure that we have a clear voice in shaping the work we do.

We are also alert to how we organize ourselves. I mentioned differentiation and integration. We know that people find their way to the AOM for the opportunities to connect with like-minded colleagues, to learn, and to share their ideas with each other and the world. The challenges of size notwithstanding, we need to ensure that this happens. We also need to ensure that we do our work in a fiscally sound, efficient, and ethical manner. The Academy's management matters.

Ultimately, we are a group of scholars who care about the enduring impact of our work. While we aim to inspire and enable a better world, we know that people enact the words "inspire and enable" and "better" in all manner of ways. The "end" and the "means to that end" in our work are open to conversation. We care deeply about our professional impact and look forward to that conversation, as well as to our collective appreciation for the many ways that our colleagues bring our aspirations to life.

I last wrote to you in the fall to offer what I called "[A Look Inside our Invisible College](#)". Reflecting on my time in office, I wanted to share my awe and appreciation for what we do with and for each other. Literally thousands of us seem to be on the lookout for ways to help make us all better. My hope is that the work of our Strategic Planning Task Force will serve as a catalyst for us to do that work in an even more impactful manner. Take a look at all of our work (<http://strategicplan.aomonline.org>) and see what strikes you as important and worthy of your own efforts ... and then give us a hand. The Board of Governors and our professional staff in New York stand ready to help you help us. I can't wait to see what we can accomplish together in the years ahead!



- James P. Walsh  
President, Academy of Management