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### Master Document Text

Topics and Titles:

An exploration of the link between personality characteristics and the emergence of dynamic capabilities

Dynamic capabilities (DC's) are increasingly positioned as something superior and high performing firms possess, and as such, how to obtain them is increasingly gaining momentum in the literature. This study would introduce dynamic capabilities drawing on a wide body of literature and would do so to understand what form they take and how they can be developed within a firm (marking the need to move away from black box interpretations). Arguing that in order to develop dynamic capabilities we have to understand individuals within the firm, personality data would then be collected to establish what personality traits are needed in project teams to develop dynamic capabilities. This is a novel and unique area of study due to this being a previously unexplored area, despite increased attention being directed towards the value of the individual employee in the creation of dynamic capabilities. There is a possibility for this research to be industry specific or more generalised with a focus on employing a quantitative methodology in the form of a likert scale questionnaire which would complement the qualitative nature of personality data collected.

Indicative sources

Helfat, C. E., & Peteraf, M. A. (2015). Managerial cognitive capabilities and the microfoundations of dynamic capabilities. *Strategic Management Journal*, 36(6), 831-850.

Teece, D.J (2009) *Dynamic capabilities: organising for innovation and growth*. Boston: Harvard University Press.

Wilden, R., Gudergan, S. P., Nielsen, B. B., & Lings, I. (2013). Dynamic capabilities and performance: strategy, structure and environment. *Long Range Planning*, 46(1), 72-96.

A critical examination of the importance and subsequent challenges of knowledge transfers in international strategic alliances in China.

China has been predicted by Wilson and Purushothaman (2006) to be the world's largest and strongest economy by 2050, and as a result a great deal of research has been and is still being directed towards the uniqueness of the Chinese market. This research would focus upon strategic alliances in particular, due to their rise in China in order to understand if strategic alliances result in a greater focus on knowledge transfers and learning within the firm which promotes the growth of Chinese firms. Underpinned by learning theory and the very notion of the learning organisation, this research would collect primary level data measuring learning within those firms where strategic alliances have been undertaken in order to understand what types of knowledge transfer take place between Chinese firms and their international strategic alliances. Empirical data would be based on existing scale items and linked to theory to produce an exploratory study which is able to understand what form knowledge transfers take, but is also able to provide recommendations for how knowledge transfers can be improved. This is particularly important due to the strong links between knowledge transfers, competitive advantage and innovation.

Indicative sources

Fang, S. C., Yang, C. W., & Hsu, W. Y. (2013). Inter-organizational knowledge transfer: the perspective of knowledge governance. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 17(6), 943-957.

Jiang, X., Li, M., Gao, S., Bao, Y., & Jiang, F. (2013). Managing knowledge leakage in strategic alliances: The effects of trust and formal contracts. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 42(6), 983-991.

Yang, H., Zheng, Y., & Zhao, X. (2014). Exploration or exploitation? Small firms' alliance strategies with large firms. *Strategic Management Journal*, 35(1), 146-157.

Reference List

Wilson, D, & Purushothaman, T. (2006) *Dreaming with BRICS: the path to 2050* [online]. Available from: <http://www.goldmansachs.com/our-thinking/archive/brics-dream.html> [Accessed 20.12.16].

Change management and leadership styles: understanding the importance of transformational leadership in guiding effective change.

A number of change management theories exist which highlight the importance of effective leadership styles as part of the change management process, with transformational leadership in particular being highlighted as one of importance. This research will seek to empirically understand what the most important transformational leadership characteristics are in order to empirically test the theories, which dominate the change management literature. Based on primary data from industry specific employees, a questionnaire will be designed to capture what transformational leadership characteristics promote effective change management and, importantly, sustainable change management. This is a particularly interesting and important area given the increasingly dynamic nature of the 21st century, which requires firms, more than ever, to be agile and adaptable to change.

Indicative sources

Appelbaum, S. H., Degbe, M. C., MacDonald, O., & Nguyen-Quang, T. S. (2015). Organizational outcomes of leadership style and resistance to change (Part Two). *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 47(3), 135-144.

Cameron, E., & Green, M. (2015). *Making sense of change management: a complete guide to the models, tools and techniques of organizational change*. Kogan Page Publishers.

Hayes, J. (2007) *Theory and practice of change management*. London: SAGE publishers.

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