



فصلنامه مدیریت شهری
(ویژه نامه لاتین)

Urban management

No.40 Autumn 2015

■ 157 - 166 ■

Received 23 Sep 2014; Accepted 11 Mar 2015

Designing and Presenting of a Model of Sense Making in Service Organizations

Ali Karbasi¹ -*Ph.D Candidate for Human Resources Management; Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran.*

Amir Hossein Amir Khani -*Associate Professor. Department of Management; Payame Noor University, PO BOX 19395-3697, Tehran, Iran.*

Sayed Ali Akbar Ahmadi -*Associate Professor. Department of Management; Payame Noor University, PO BOX 19395-3697, Tehran, Iran.*

Ali Nejatbakhsh Esfahani -*Assistant Professor. Department of Management; Payame Noor University, PO BOX 19395-3697, Tehran, Iran.*

Abstract

Organizational sense making is the process that helps managers to understand how organization's members change ideas and eventually what they chose, maintain and achieve among different meanings. This study examines and presents a model of sense making in service organizations and results in addition to the research community in other service organizations such as municipalities and municipal services organizations used. The present study investigated the subject scientific literature and research conducted try to design sense-making model in service organizations and ultimately the validity and reliability confirmed and try to provide the model. The study population included 44 PNU centers and units in the Isfahan province that have considered and 325 members of the community, according to Morgan table have chosen as a sample. According to the regression derived from the path analysis conducted, it turns out organizational changes by coefficients of 0.68 maximum impact and personal contexts 0.36 low impact and sense making with the coefficient 0.81 had more impact on individual outcomes.

Key words: *Sense making, service organization, organization, and organizational change.*

1. Corresponding Author, Tel: 021- 44660807, Email Address: karbasi@pnu.ac.ir

1. Introduction

Increasing globalization, competition and technological developments outside the organization, the organization is required to comply with environmental changes. Change in today's organization is incredibly common. However, in the present state organizations planned changes in a predictable and expected size, research shows that changing skills caused tremendous anxiety and emotional confusion among members of the organization. It does not matter how is the plans to change the technology or focus on tasks strategy skills with the concept of how things should be done by staff, should be distributed and with careful planning. Achieving organizational goals depends on the coordinated activities of the organization's members. The coordination relies on common cognitive framework among members of the organization in areas such as role expectations, identity and organizational structure. Members of the organization develop the common framework through communication and sense making. Sense making of process of the data structure, see its effect on the response and assign meaning or drawn the importance to the response (Weick, 1995). Eisenberg (1986) asserts, "The primary function of communication in organizations to facilitate the development is shared meanings, values and beliefs." Sense making create clear view of environment and changes in manager and organization in order to provide guidance on the landscape and mission in a way to manage the organization with related sense making and positive feeling about the vision and mission of the organization create a common sense and empathy in this area (Brockman, 2011). In short, the sense making answers to the question how we got to this point and with respect to environmental opportunities how are we going to achieve our goals and his means that human resources we can overcome the challenges of environment and organization guide to success (Moore, 2013).

2. Literature of sense making

Since 1972, various definitions of the sense making of the data presented. Sense making is a process by which individuals give meaning to their experiences. Research in the field sense making often used as a interdisciplinary programs or research that related to the various scientific disciplines. The beginning of the theory of sense making is a set of an approach that individual or organization recognizes failure to their understanding of events. Karl Vick studies in 2005, 1998, 1995, 1993, specifically related to sense making in the organizational level. Sense making is a way of thinking and implementation of communication projects and communication systems based on performance. Sense making is a set of philosophical assumptions, such fundamental statements and methodological principle

In a literal sense, sense making simply described as follows: "making sense" (Wake, 1995) or "making meaning" (Shovant, 2005). Researchers have offered several definitions of sense making. Starbuck and Milikon in 1998 have described the sense making "involves inserting a drive into some kind of context" (for example, the frame of reference). Sakmann see sense making as mechanism members of organization have used the ratio of meanings to events. Feldman seen sense making as an interpretive process is as necessary for members of organization to enable them to understand and their understanding of the properties of matter at what the organization is, what it is identity, what is so well explained and how to solve problems and share it (Feldman, 1989). Past research suggests that the sense making are key dimensions of data structure within a framework covers understanding and coverage of surprises, sense making, interaction and mutual understanding and patterning, in principle, sense making is the process of building a cognitive framework for definition and understanding of a situation through communication activities. Sense making is organization, occurs in the organization, and is actually part

of the “procedures interconnected in official network has collective performance” (Weick, 1995). Mills in 2003 set forth the sense making has two key aspects include first, sense making with meaning of events related to the setting up of organization. Second, a set of framework organizational activities that its members to make sense of their frame of reference.

Neil Stern (2007) in a field study research as sense making capabilities on 12 companies in the United States of America did that focus and scope of the concept was on marketing strategies. According to data collected from 12 companies he and his colleagues concluded that the three independent variables to understand the market changes, liberal and team performance, ability to understand the most effective means of changing market had a positive impact on potential means of identifying and implementing marketing strategies. These two variables are also positively influence organizational performance and manufacturers in order to achieve the objectives of competitiveness, labor productivity increased.

Steven J. DeKrey, Edwin J. Portugal (2014) in a study as a strategic sense making: challenges facing the new leader in the small and medium organizations to assess and identify the impact of new organizational leaders create organizational sense making. The aim of this study is to identify of influencing on the organizational sense making and the result is this emphasis on the first 100 days of his management that managers have completed their sense making and can create the positive and negative feel within the organization. This research study of SMEs in Asia that research data have been collected, one of the results and findings of this research are emphasized and the new managers are familiar with the sense making and informal plan and conduct sense making process has created, and create a positive atmosphere and the excellence and progress with their presence.

Osman (2015) carried a study at the University of Malaysia on the role and development of

strategic thinking skills on how language learning has occurred among foreign students. The aim of this study was to evaluate the growth and improvement of English language training among international students that influential variable in this study is strategic thinking. According to the results of this research develop strategic thinking activities based on an operational plan and a macro decision making occurred, finally evaluated, and obtain relevant feedback. Finally, this study concludes that, in particular, strategic skills influence on the amount and method of teaching language and substantial growth in this area has created.

3. Sense making in service organizations

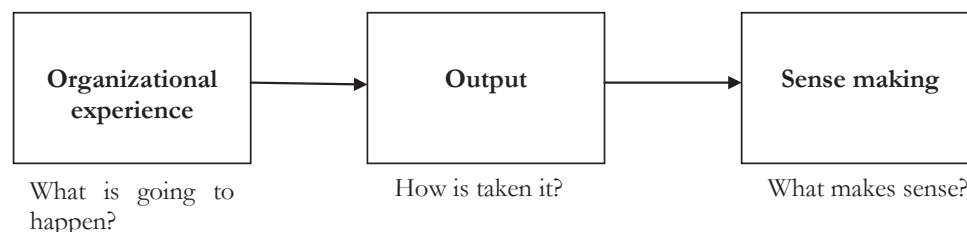
In recent years due to the complexity created at market and interaction of various factors, such as economic conditions, the complexity of the environment and the globalization of goods and services lead to significant challenges for the organization and management. To create a positive meaning to a particular product or service at the community level or more broadly at the international level could be survival, growth and profitability of the enterprise guarantee. On the other hand, given the complexity of the organizational, economic environments and introduced various meanings in these create strong and stable meaning in customer relationship management plays a very important and effective role and increase sensitivity of organization leadership role. (Mueller 1, 2010)

In trying to explain how those facts in their organization, and a significant part of the 1995 activities classified into seven different features. Weick argues that the seven characteristics of a framework for understanding the meaning of the organization (Weick, 1995, 17).

As has been shown in the following figure means the process in service organizations of the three pillars of organizational experiences and output means in reality based on the model of the means of understanding the experiences of organizations.



فصلنامه مدیریت شهری
(ویژه نامه لاتین)
Urban Management
No.40 Autumn 2015



▲ Figure 1. The process of sense making (Kumiko Ito, Takehiro Inohara, 2015)

4. Methods

This study conducted at 44 PNU centers and units, these centers faced with changing technology in the field of services, and use of information technology has begun and is moving from a manual system to an electronic system, which means part of the transition process is studied. This field of study is a case study in order to collect data from questionnaires and interviews is that an interview with university administrators and to analyze topics of interest and a questionnaire was used to collect data and test hypotheses, the questionnaire study among 325 persons from universities distributed and data collected, analyzed. The development of the conceptual model of study and research related to this field used when the relevant studies, including studies Kumiko Ito, Takehiro Inohara (2015), Njoah osman (2015), Steven J. DeKrey, Edwin J. Portugal (2014), (Moore, 2013), Brockman, (2011), Moller 1 (2010), Stern Nile (2007), Wake (2005), Showant (2005), Nathan (2004), Wake (2001), Eisenberg (1986). In the analysis of research, data according to the number of variables and normality of the data and their relationships with each through structural analysis using LISREL software has used.

4.1 Hypotheses

1.First Hypothesis: external factors influence organizational change. This hypothesis is in fact one of the strategic management principles that reflect the organizational changes of environmental factors is affected by these factors both opportunities and threats are classified.

2.Second Hypothesis: organizational changes

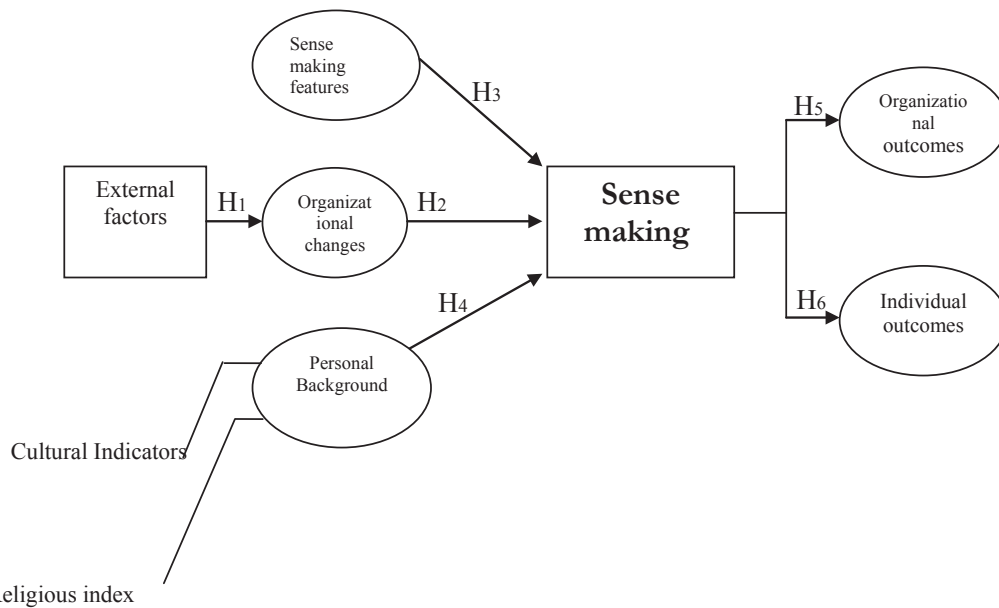
influence sense making. This hypothesis suggests that the sense making started with organizational change actually and forming of organizational changes with an impact on the organization's human resources resulted in the formation process of sense making (Kumiko Ito, Takehiro Inohara, 2015).

3.Third Hypothesis: sense making features influence sense making process. Seven sense making features of the property include the identity construction, or retrospective, enactive and legally in a predictable and rational environment, social, ongoing, focus or focus by signs and extracted cues and finally the reasonable and plausibility instead of the correct move. Each of these features associated with conceptual performance that includes key aspects of their sense making (Weick, 1995, 17).

4.Fourth Hypothesis: personal background influences the process of sense making. Personal grounds, includes the commitment to cultural values and religious instructions. Since, the sense making process associated with the emotions and personal backgrounds can affect emotional control means on sense making process.

5.Fifth Hypothesis: Sense making influences the organizational factors. The sense making process if the proper management of the organization can facilitate organizational change, creating a pagan vision and aligned to changes and compliance staff to have the organization's objectives (Nathan, 2004).

6.Sixth Hypothesis: sense making influences the individual factors. In general, the sense making is a mental framework thus directly affecting individuals, including the perception



▲ Figure 2. Research Conceptual Framework

Structures / Index	X2/df	P	RMSEA	CFI	CMIN	RMR	GFI
External factors	2.332	0.153	0.043	1.00	21.1	0.003	0.99
Organizational changes	2.116	0.124	0.078	0.94	19.75	0.05	0.93
Personal Background	1.521	0.061	0.068	0.97	16.82	0.02	0.95
Sense making	1.323	0.07	0.074	0.99	14.82	0.019	0.98
Organizational out-comes	1.037	0.083	0.055	0.97	9.34	0.017	0.96
Individual outcomes	2.106	0.127	0.097	1.00	18.98	0.005	1.01

▲ Table 1. The overall index of measuring patterns fitting

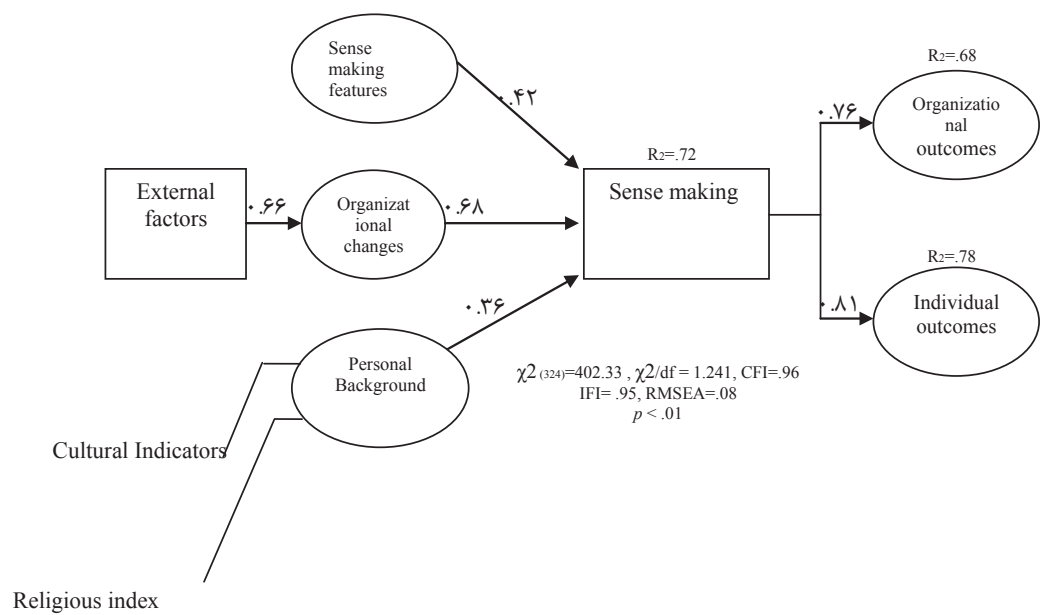
of the appropriate emotions to refresh staff sentiments noted ingenuity and sense of discipline. (Weick, 2001)

5. Data Analysis

before collecting data and to confirm the validity of the questionnaire given to 11 management faculty after receiving comments and amendments questionnaire have been approved and to determine the reliability of the study, according to the following results were obtained using structural equation parameters obtained from fitting the pattern showed high reliability research.

According to the surveys and the results of LISREL software in Figure 1 is presented and showed that the corporate sector can be control and forecast with variable of sense making

feature, and changes in the environment, when $R^2 = 0.72$ indicates that 72% of the changes in sense making is predictable by these three variables that is a good ratio. The organizational consequences $R^2 = 0.68$, which indicates that 68% of studied changes in the organizational implications can be predict by sense making control, individual outcome with $R^2 = 0.78$ indicates that 78% of individual outcome can be explained by means of institutional control and estimates with respect to the regression coefficients derived from the path analysis carried out, determined. Organizational changes by a factor of 0.68 maximum impact and personal background 0.36 have the least impact and sense making by a factor of 0.81 had more impact on the personal outcome.



▲ Figure 1. The process of sense making (Kumiko Ito, Takehiro Inohara, 2015)

Result	Critical value	Significant Level	Regression Coefficients	Hypotheses
Significance Positive effect	4.828	0.019	0.65	External factors <--- Organizational changes
Significance Positive effect	5.214	0.003	0.72	Sense making features <--- Sense making
Significance Positive effect	4.862	0.004	0.61	Organizational changes <--- Sense making
Significance Positive effect	4.729	0.021	0.54	Personal Background <--- Sense making
Significance Positive effect	3.987	0.008	0.57	Sense making <--- Organizational outcomes
Significance Positive effect	4.045	0.007	0.63	Sense making <--- Individual outcomes

▲ Table 2. The research hypothesis

Results hypotheses in Table 2 show that due to the significance level and regression coefficients of each hypothesis, at six hypotheses the effect was direct positive and significant. The results also show that due to the regression coefficient for each of the hypotheses, characteristics of the sense making has most effect on organizational sense making in terms of staff (regression coefficient 0.72) and the least

effect on the sense of personal background (regression coefficient 0.54).

6. Conclusions

According to confirm the hypothesis of the model and the validity of this model, fitness considered and this model to manage and control sense making process in service organizations proposed. One of the innovations of this model was study personal areas in sense

making those organizations with proper planning in terms of individual health guide the process of sense making to organizational health, in the use of this model have to consider that sense-making framework determine the importance of effect organization's members within the organizational change. This framework helps the reasons why some changes in the organization accepted and others rejected known. To manage change management means that members of organization created by changes and it is necessary because acceptance changing the ability of organization management to impose a sense of change in events of organization.

The sense making process showed how members of the organization reduce uncertainties through a retrospective look and social sense making. Faced with a multiplicity of meanings during personnel changes need to be valued, prioritize and explain things to them that helps to identify the most important issues and believable and acceptable means to respond to the changes of their choice. Therefore, to manage the release of the values and priorities that will help them resolve their confusion is vital. Management in light of the changed circumstances can understand multiplicity of meanings and the simplification of the basis for the change creates an acceptable performance. Meanings created during the approval and selection is temporary and experimental. Maintenance process by selecting a number of meanings, and store it in the organizational memory for intelligence or knowledge, is stability. Things tend to acceptable maintenance, connection to experiences are significant and identities and as a source of guidance and input for the ratification and the upcoming elections handled. To view the change management in line with sense management focuses on process is essential sense making. In particular, management requires knowledge of how to change the identity of the staff, how to extract signs by staff, relation of symptoms with experience and what meaning should be preserved and

stored. Knowing this enables management to anticipate and prevent conflicts and inconsistencies resulting from the introduction and implementation of changes in the organization. It has ability to play a major role in creating an environment ready for change. Information management offers by different ways in order to deal with of changing the staff. According to the results, it is clear that senior management in shaping and highlights the important role of information for staff is the ability to manage the organizational structure and number of employees who are more active than others is outstanding. The people in the organization have unequal access to roles and positions because of ambiguity in situations where members face, may be different interpretations of the same events. Empower people to play an important role in the meanings that kept. Empowerment through actions that members accept, ignore or reject expressed. People with their ability form sense making of others are managers and senior staff. So powerful figures (for example, senior staff) in the organization turned the judges legitimize the meanings created by others. Empowerment role in shaping the nature of social reality means to be part of the organization emphasized. Meaning that empower individuals selected by means of a help continuous and collective behavior that followed by a sense of what is happening during change occurred. Note that organization management should pay attention to that before the introduction and the beginning of a shift should help change the perception of the individual enable it to play its role during the change well.

7. Resources

1. Abrahamsen, M.H. Henneberg, S.C. (2012) *Sensemaking in business networks: Introducing dotto-grams to analyse network changes. Industrial Marketing Management*. 41(6). 1035–1046.
2. Akgün, A.E. Keskin, H., Byrne, J.C., 2012. *Organizational emotional memory on declarative and procedural memory and firm innovativeness. J. Prod. Innov. Manag.* 29 (3), 432–451.

مدیریت شهری

فصلنامه مدیریت شهری
(ویژه نامه لاتین)
Urban Management
No.40 Autumn 2015

■ 163 ■

3. Akgün, A.E., Keskin, H., Byrne, J.C. Lynn, Gary S. (2014) *Antecedents and consequences of organizations' technology sensemaking capability*. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change* 88 .216–231.
4. Ancona, D. (2011). *Sensemaking: Framing and acting in the unknown*. In D. Snook, N. Nobria & R. Beyer, J. M., & Hannah, D. R. (2002). *Building on the past: Enacting established personal identities in a new work setting*. *Organization Science*, 13, 636–652.
5. Brockman, C. (2011) *Sensemaking in international construction joint ventures*. *Project Perspectives*. 33. 66-71
6. Colville, I . Hennestad, B, Thoner, K. (2013) *Organizing changing and learning: A sensemaking perspective on an ongoing 'soap story'*. *Management Learning* , 1–19.
7. Colville, I., & Pye, A. (2010) *A sensemaking perspective on network pictures*. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 39(3), 372–380.
8. Combe, Ian A. Carrington, David J. (2015) *Leaders' sensemaking under crises: Emerging cognitive consensus over time within management teams*. *The Leadership Quarterly* 26 . 307–322
9. Combe, I. A., Rudd, J. M., Leeflang, P. S., & Greenley, G. E. (2012). *Antecedents to strategic flexibility: Management cognition, firm resources and strategic options*. *European Journal of Marketing*, 46, 1320–1339.
10. DeKrey, Steven J. Portugal, Edwin J. (2014) *Strategic sensemaking: challenges faced by a new leader of an SME* . *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 150 . 56 – 65
11. Eric, Thomas (2001) *Sensemaking in organisations towards a conceptual framework for understanding strategic change* . *Scand. J. Mgmt* . 17 . 109-131
12. Gioia, D. A. Chittipeddi, K. (1991), *Sensemaking and sensegiving in strategic change initiation*. *Strategic Management Journal* . 12 . 433-448
13. Henneberg, S.C. Naudé, P. Mouzas, S. (2010). *Sense-making and management in business networks: Some observations, considerations, and a research agenda*. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 39(3), 355–360.
14. Ian A. Combe, David J. Carrington. (2015) *Leaders' sensemaking under crises*. *The Leadership Quarterly*. 26 .307–322
15. Ibbara, H., & Barbulescu, R. (2010). *Identity as Narrative: Prevalence, Effectiveness, and Consequences of Narrative Identity Work in Macro Work Role Transitions*. *Academy of Management Review*, 35(1), 135-154.
16. Ito, Kumiko . Inobara . Takehiro . (2015) . *A model of sense-making process for adapting new organizational settings; based on case study of executive leaders in work transitions*. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 172 . 142 – 149
17. Jørgensen, L. Jordan, S. Mitterhofer, H. (2012). *Sensemaking and discourse analyses in inter-organizational research: a review and suggested advances*. *Scand. J. Manag.* 28 (2) . 107–120.
18. Klein, G., Phillips, J. K., Battaglia, D. A., Wiggins, S. L., & Ross, K. G. (2002). *Focus: A model of sensemaking (Interim Report -Year 1. Prepared under Contract 1435-01-01-CT-31161 for the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, Alexandria, VA)*. Fairborn, OH: Klein Associates.
19. Kreps, G. L. . *Applying Weick's model of organizing to health care and health promotion: Highlighting the central role of health communication*. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 74, 347-355 , 2009.
20. Lars Gunnar Mattsson, Daniela Corsaro, Carla Ramos. (2015) *Sense-making in business markets – the interplay between cognition, action and outcomes*. *Industrial Marketing Management* 48 . 4–11
21. Lüscher, L. Lewis, M (2008) *Organizational change and managerial sensemaking: Working through paradox*. *Academy of Management Journal*, 51(2), 221-240.
22. Magali Simard, Danielle Laberge. (2014) . *Governance representations in temporary organization: a case of governance sensemaking*. *Procedia Technology* 16 . 967 – 978
23. Maitlis, S., Christianson, M. (2014). *Sense-making in organizations: Taking stock and moving forward*. *Academy of Management Annals*. 8 . 57–125.
24. Maitlis, S., Sonenshein, S. (2010). *Sensemaking in crisis and change: Inspiration and insights from*

Mattsson, Lars Gunnar . Corsaro, Daniela.

25.Ramos, Carla. (2015) *Sense-making in business markets – the interplay between cognition, action and outcomes* Industrial Marketing Management 48 . 4–11

26.Medlin, C.J. Törnroos, J.Å. (2014) *Interest, sensemaking and adaptive processes in emerging business networks - An Australian biofuel case.* Industrial Marketing Management. 43(6). 1096–1107.

27.Möller , K. (2010). *Sense-making and agenda construction in emerging business networks – How to direct radical innovation.* Industrial Marketing Management . 39(3) . 361–371.

28.Moore , D. (2013) *Sensemaking: A structure for an intelligence revolution.* Washington, D.C.: Defense Dept ., National Intelligence University.

29.Neill, Stern. McKee, Daryn. Rose, Gregory M. (2007). *Developing the organization's sensemaking capability: Precursor to an adaptive strategic marketing response.* Industrial Marketing Management 36 . 731–744.

30.Simard, Magali. Laberge, Danielle. (2014) *Governance representations in temporary organization: a case of governance sensemaking.* Procedia Technology 16 . 967 – 978

31.Starbuck, W. H. Milliken , F. J. (1998) *Challenger: Fine-tuning the odds until something breaks.* Journal of Management Studies . 25 . 319-340.

32.Thomas, J. B. Clark , S. M. Gioia, D. A. (1993) *Strategic sensemaking and organizational performance: Linkages among scanning, interpretation, action, and outcomes .* Academy of Management Journal. 36. 239-270 .

33.Weick, E. (1979) *Cognitive processes in organizations.* Research in organisational behaviour. Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press Inc.

34.Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., & Obstfeld, D. 2005. *Organizing and the process of sensemaking.* Organization Science, 16(4), 409-421.

35.Weick, K.E. (1993). *The collapse of sensemaking in the organizations: The Mann Gulch disaster.* Administrative Science Quarterly, 38(4), 628–652.

36.Weick, K.E. (2001). *Gapping the relevance bridge: Fashions meet fundamentals in management research.* British Journal of Management, 12(s1), S71–S75.

37.Weick, K.E. (2012). *Organized sensemaking: A commentary on processes of interpretive work.* Human Relations, 65(1), 141–153.

38.Weick, K.E., & Kiesler, C.A. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing, Vol. 2,* New York: Random House.

39.Weick, K.E., & Roberts, K.H. (1993). *Collective mind in organizations: Heedful interrelating on flight decks.* Administrative Science Quarterly, 38(3), 357–381.

40.Yang , K . Chou , C . Chiu , Y. (2014) . *How unlearning affects radical innovation: the dynamics of social capital and slack resources.* Tech. Forecasting Soc. Chang. 87 (7) . 152–163.

مدیریت شهری

فصلنامه مدیریت شهری
(ویژه نامه لاتین)

Urban Management
No.40 Autumn 2015

■ 165 ■



فصلنامه مدیریت شهری
(ویژه نامه لاتین)
Urban Management
No.40 Autumn 2015

■ 166 ■