



Downsizing, organizational and territorial renewal: A critical management perspective

Organisers

***Professor Rachel Beaujolin-Bellet**, Reims Management School, France
rachel.beaujolin@reims-ms.fr

Associate Professor Ola Bergström, Göteborg University, Sweden

Professor David Knights, Keele University, UK

Professor Géraldine Schmidt, University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, France

*Key contact

Downsizing, lay-offs and organization redesign or restructuring have proliferated over the last few decades such that they could be seen as a universal feature of both public and private sectors, traversing most countries and diverse types of employees. While reflecting and reproducing “crisis situations”, they are believed to be a competitive-enhancing force.

Downsizing generates some consequences on employees, not only those who are directly affected by dismissals, but also on the “survivors”. It has therefore substantial long-term effects on the organisation of work, on working conditions, on individual trajectories and careers, on internal relations, and on global performance.

Downsizing consequences broaden to the territory, deprived cities and economic areas, and may threaten economic attractiveness, financial health, social situation and long-term competitiveness of a region or territory.

Hence, there is a need, not only to critically analyse the role of workers, union representatives, managers, HR departments, shareholders, consultants, administrative and political actors (...) that are involved in initiating and implementing downsizing, but also its consequences for internal and external stakeholders.

This round table invites empirical and theoretical contributions that elaborate on the driving forces and consequences of downsizing, drawing on a range of different theoretical and methodological approaches. In particular, we welcome papers that address the following topics:

- Analyses of the rhetoric, ideology and discourses on organizational change, redesign, and downsizing
- Studies of the relationship between downsizing and organizational redesign
- Studies of the decision making and bargaining process of downsizing
- The role of managers as facilitating or resistant actors
- The consequences of downsizing on employees, industrial relations (trade-unions) as part of more general processes of individualization and de-collectivisation
- The relationship between downsizing and gender, ethnic and age discrimination.

- Institutionalization and social acceptability of downsizing
- The practices of downsizing bargaining
- The ways individuals (employees, unionists, consultants, managers, etc.) are coping with downsizing: mental health, occupational careers, work centrality, dual commitment, etc.
- The nature of relationships between the different stakeholders (conflict, shared responsibilities, cooperation, etc.)
- Practices in revitalizing territories
- Assessment of downsizing effects on short and long term economic performances

Key words: downsizing, restructurings, lay-offs, critical management studies (CMS), industrial relations, local development