
Our Best of 2015: New Paths to Success



By , Editor, INSEAD Knowledge

What the most popular INSEAD Knowledge articles of 2015 tell us.

Every year, we compile a list of the most popular articles and share them with you, our loyal readers, to summarise some of the key trends we see emerging.

This year showed us that orchestrating transformational change is top of mind, but crucially, change that is defined by inclusive and thoughtful growth, not victory at all costs. At the centre of this change is the leader who is increasingly looking to make theirs and others' careers more meaningful in the process.

Topping our list, Quy Huy finds in an in-depth, interview-based study into **the fall of Nokia**, that the company's indiscriminate use of fear as a motivator proved disastrous. To reduce this risk, leaders should be attuned to the varied emotions of the collective. As Huy points out **in related research**, those able to identify varied collective emotions are seen as effective transformational leaders.

Continuing on the subject of change, Joerg Niessing reminds us that digital disruption is a far bigger challenge than it may seem in his article on the [most common big data myths](#). Companies assuming the colossal amounts of data they are now either purposefully or inadvertently collecting, are good data, are in for a rude awakening. Algorithms can do wonders, but somewhat reassuringly, many human beings will be needed to help organisations cope with this new world.

What all of this means for us mere humans is that our careers are getting longer and our jobs less secure, which means we need to start diversifying our careers, argues [Horacio Falcão, in this blog](#). He borrows the terminology of finance to recommend a “barbell strategy” for your career, which involves diversifying a little time into your passions or even another part of your company to keep you nimble in a rapidly changing environment. While this requires a [negotiation with your boss](#) or even your family, settling on greater time and task diversity may be just as important for our emotional and professional fulfilment as haggling over a salary.

The European crisis hovered in our sights for most of this year. The Greek bailout negotiations in the first part of the year stole headlines and showed us that using illusory power to stand taller in a negotiation often undercuts you later, which the Greek Prime Minister, Alexis Tsipras learned. This reminded Martin Gargiulo of his research into [the power of the weak](#), where he finds that weak players can indeed reduce their dependence on powerful actors in organisations, but the techniques one uses can later become shackles to further advancement. He offers some antidotes to this in a [follow up](#) that ran in April.

The most popular article of the year over on our new [mobile and tablet app](#), was Antonio Fatas’ article on how [European reforms](#) need to take on a more national hue. Reform, he says, is ultimately a domestic political business where trade-offs need to be made between economic efficiency, social goals and the way power and income are distributed in a society. He argues that consensus is not always possible when it comes to European reforms and forcing “more Europe” on countries that are not willing to commit is a losing battle.

As Falcão recently argued on the subject of [“take-it-or-leave-it” negotiators](#), translating power into value is not a given or an easy task. Much more on that to come in 2016.

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We wish you a peaceful and prosperous holiday season!

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