



KAM programme failure: organisational context factors

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Wilson and Woodburn (2014) “The impact of organisational context on the failure of Key and Strategic Management Programmes” Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing Vol29 No5

Literature review: organisational context

Table 1: Factors in organisational context identified in the literature

Authors	Contextual elements identified	Authors	Contextual elements identified
Rollinson et al, 1998	Configuration, horizontal and vertical Degree of centralisation Specialisation Formalisation Standardisation	McDowell & Ford, 2001	Communication Co-ordination Problem solving Adaptation Negotiation
Homburg, Workman & Jensen, 2002	Activity Intensity Actors Resources	Nystrom, Ramamurthy & Wilson, 2002	Age of organisation Organisational climate Slack resources
Kreipl & Lingenfelder, 2002	Clan Hierarchy Adhocracy Market dependent	Burns, Cooper & West, 2003	Strategy Structure Culture Human resources
Zhao, Young & Lee, 2004	Organisational size Management perception of task importance Environmental uncertainty	Gray, 2004	Market orientation Relational competence Joint alliance competence Operational competence
Rice, 2005	Structure, control, hierarchy Support, interaction, communication and consultation Risk taking orientation Atmosphere	Porter & McGloghlin, 2006	Culture/climate Goals/purpose People/composition State/condition Structure Time
Goodman & E Haisley, 2007	Task and technology infrastructure Organisational structure Social infrastructure/ culture Unique qualities of the work force	Zupancic, 2008	Strategy Solution People Management: structures/ processes/ coordination Screening
Woodburn, 2009	Strategy Structure Leadership Culture Transnational issues Knowledge sharing/ data/ communications Rewards and performance measurement	Pardo, Missirlian, Portier & Salle, 2011	Structure Power and politics Processes, monitoring & measurement systems Time focus: long/short-term Integration Compliance/enforcement

Summary of literature review

- Wide range of contextual factors cited
- Emerging themes:
 - Strategy and structure
 - People and culture
 - Processes and resources
- Strategy and structure: frequently mentioned, more structure than strategy
- People and culture: also frequent, variety of terms (e.g. climate, clan, culture, atmosphere)
- Processes and resources: less mentioned, although vital to implementation, maybe more sector/task specific? Or not interesting to academics?
- Emphasis literature on what *should* be in place, rather than what obstructs and what to change.

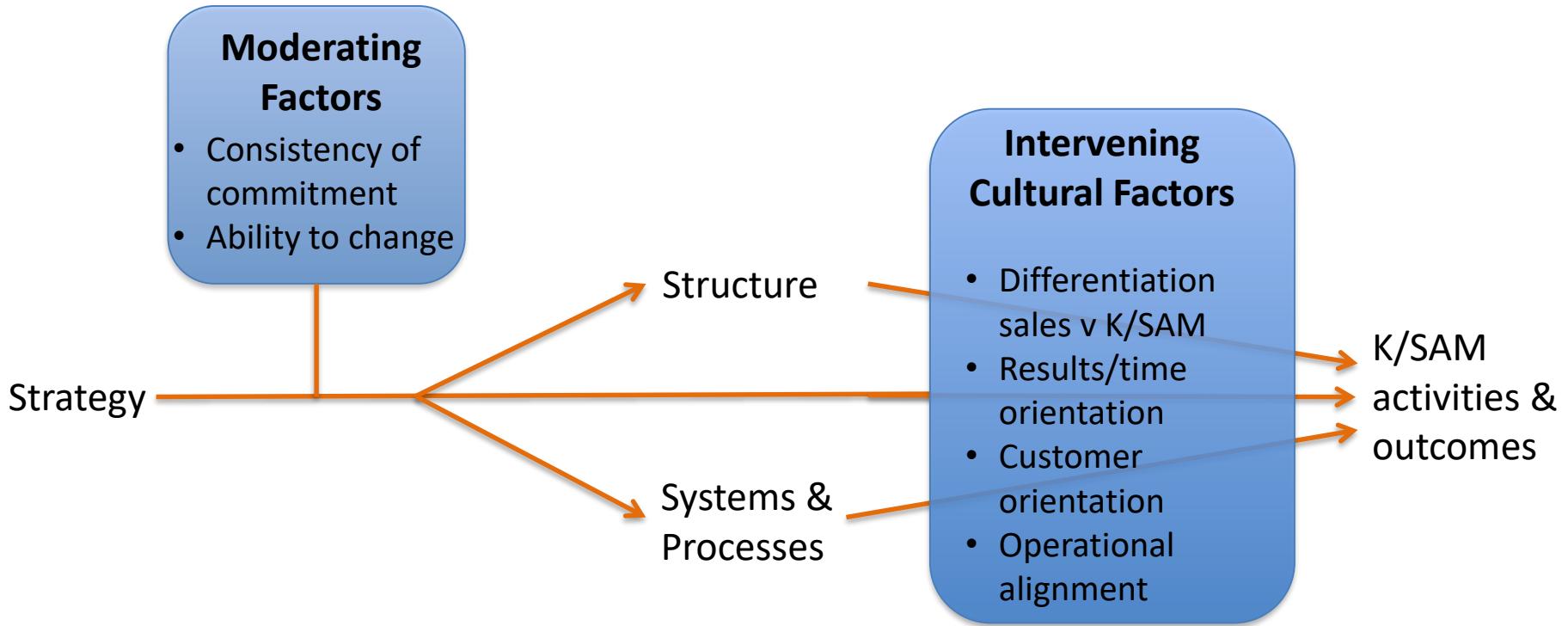
Preliminary research approach

- Single question: Why do SAM/KAM/GAM programs fail?
- Addressed to 6 special interest groups on LinkedIn
- 74 responses from 71 respondents (all practicing key/ strategic account managers or managers of KAM/SAM programs)
- Analysis of themes and patterns emerging from the discussions

Findings

- Reasons for failure fairly evenly divided between:
 - formal elements, i.e. strategy, structure, systems and processes
 - ‘spoilers’, i.e. lack of commitment and capability of changing
 - culture and people issues

A model of linkages between organisational elements



Wilson and Woodburn,
Journal of Marketing Management, 2013

Discussion

- Formal elements were blamed less than we expected: clear strategy, structures, systems and processes are a necessary but not sufficient condition for success
- Informal elements have the power to frustrate formal intentions
- Two types of informal elements are apparent: ‘moderators’ acting directly on strategy and compromise its conversion to other formal elements like structure, systems and processes.
- ‘Intervening’ factors act on the application of formal elements and block their effectiveness in KAM activities and outcomes
- Suppliers often seem ignorant of the fact that their KAM programme is failing, or presumably they would tackle the problem
- A model of how KAM programmes fail may increase awareness of failure factors and how to turn them round.

A challenging conclusion

“Everyday behaviour and management practice prevents KAM from becoming anything other than a theoretical construct, the DNA and culture of the organization conflict with KAM processes and management.”

Questions

- Which of these factors have you observed in operation?
- How does it cause KAM failure?
- What could be done to counter it?

AKAM Potential

- How can AKAM improve KAM practice?

Key Account Managers

- What do Key Account Managers want from AKAM?

Next steps

- Who would like to join the Main Board?
 - 2 each of corporate, academic, practitioner, consultant
 - 1st skype meeting 1st Feb – establish roles and plan future
- Who would like to join the Academic Board?
 - 8 maximum
 - 1st skype meeting 3rd Feb – discuss accreditation process
- What could you contribute to the website?
- What should be our next steps?
- Next meeting?