Resilience and the Future Resilience Index

Tool

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Resilience

Resilience can be defined as "the capability and ability of an element to return to a stable state after a disruption" (Bhamraa et al., 2011).

Resilience is a function of complex systems (Comfort et al., 2009) and can be applied at multiple levels, such as ecosystems (Brand, 2009), society (Allenby and Fink, 2005), communities (Norris, 2008), organizations (Starr et al., 2003) and individuals (Powley, 2009).

AMS has studied multi-level resilience, taking into account:

- Socio-ecological resilience – e.g. the 7 resilience principles from the Stockholm Resilience Centre: maintain diversity and redundancy; manage connectivity; manage slow variables and feedbacks; foster complex adaptive systems thinking; encourage learning; broaden participation; and promote polycentric governance (Biggs et al., 2015).
- Organizational resilience – e.g. the maintenance of positive adjustment under challenging conditions such as discrete errors, scandals, crises, and shocks, disruptions of routines, ongoing risks like competition, stresses and strains, so that the organization emerges from those conditions strengthened and more resourceful (Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2008).
- Individual resilience – e.g. four different components to combat negative outcomes such as burnout and compassion fatigue: neuroticism, self-efficacy, mindfulness and coping (Rees et al., 2015).

For the purpose of our applied research, we are interested in deriving and measuring multi-level future resilience from a human capital perspective. We have distilled the following 10 elements of future resilience:

- Purposeful motivation (Buck, 2018)
- Wellbeing orientation (Deloitte, 2018)
- Emergency preparedness (IBM, 2018)
- Creative adaptability (Kendra & Wachtendorf, 2003)
- Technological empowerment (Bughin et al., 2018)
- Dynamic employability (PWC, 2018)
- Diversity cultivation (Turek, 2017)
- Participative governance (Kurland, 2018)
- Systemic responsiveness (Fellow, 2013)
- Resource efficiency (BSDC, 2017)

A more detailed and fully referenced treatment of the subject can be found in the AMS paper entitled: Multi-level resilience: A human capital perspective (Jacobs & Visser, 2018).

The Randstad Future Resilience Index

The Randstad Future Resilience Index, which is designed and administered by Antwerp Management School, measures employees' perceptions about their own resilience in the workplace and the extent to which their organization supports the resilience of individuals, the organization and society.

Resilience is the capacity of individuals and groups (like families, communities, organizations, cities, societies, or nature) to cope effectively with the impact of major, rapid changes (like disasters, crises or emergencies) and to return to a healthy state afterwards.

The Index has 20 questions divided into five sections. Each question has two parts:

1. *How participants as individuals see their own capacity for resilience in the workplace;*
2. *How well the organization supports the resilience of individuals, the organization and society.*

The Index measures the following 10 elements of future resilience:

- *Wellbeing orientation* - How satisfied employees feel with their workplace.

- *Purposeful motivation* - Whether work is meaningful and leaves employees feeling healthy and happy.

- *Diversity cultivation* - How employees feel about encouraging diversity in the workplace.

- *Participative governance* - If employees feel respected equally in the organisation.

- *Emergency preparedness* - How well-prepared employees are to deal with major or unexpected changes affecting the workplace.

- *Creative adaptability* - How adaptable employees are to deal with major or unexpected changes affecting the workplace.

- *Technological empowerment* - How technology affects employees, especially information technology (IT), 'smart' digital devices and the emergence of artificial intelligence, automation, 'internet-of-things' and big-data.

- *Dynamic employability* - How employees feel about changes in their jobs and careers.

- *Systemic responsiveness* - How employees feel about wider societal and environmental issues and their impact on the workplace.

- *Resource efficiency* - How employees feel about the use of raw materials such as energy, water, and other materials.

In answering each question, participants rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement, using a simple scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree (neutral), agree, strongly agree. Answers are anonymous (we do not ask for participant names) and it is important that they answer honestly. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. The survey should take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete.

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