

Pre-assignment for Friday September 25th: External environment and strategy process
DL Wed 23.9. at midday

This session is about external environments and strategy making. In the class we explore the ways to understand and analyze the environment from multiple perspectives. The pre-assignment sensitizes you to such analyses by a) providing the understandings on the types of strategies that might be valid in different types of environments (Reeves et al., 2012); and b) exploring what might be effective ways to address and cope with disruptive innovation (Furr & Snow, 2015).

The MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) case is very topical (Jacoby, 2014). Distant learning instigated by the COVID-19 pandemic arguably has an impact on the development and change of both the educators' skills to provide courses fully online, as well as experience and aptitude for students to conduct their learning in online environments. The assignment asks you to consider the implications for universities and their strategies of the current situation but also the broader trend for online learning, also drawing on your own experiences.

Readings:

1. Reeves, M., Love, Claire, and Tillmanns, P. (2012). Your Strategy Needs a Strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, September issue.
2. Furr, N. and Snow, D. (2015). The Prius Approach. *Harvard Business Review*, September issue.
3. Jacoby, J. (2014). The disruptive potential of the Massive Open Online Course: A literature review. *Journal of Open, Flexible and Distance Learning*, 18(1): 73–85. (edited)

Please answer the following two questions. Answers should be 300-500 words each.

Question 1: Based on Reeves et al. (2012) and Jacoby (2014), consider what strategic style(s) are relevant for business schools in the face of the growing trend for online learning. What are the major traps for business schools, such as Aalto, to engage in effective strategizing?

Question 2: Based on Furr and Snow (2015) and Jacoby (2014), explore the possible hybrid strategies that a business school, such as Aalto, can use in the face of these challenges to gradually transition to potential future operating models.