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# VSM Lectures

San Giobbe Economic Campus, Venice

April 3rd | Aula Saraceno | h. 12.30 - 14.00

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## The effects of piqued curiosity on boundary-spanning networking in organizations

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### Discussant

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Despite the demonstrated importance of spanning formal and network boundaries for organizational functioning, organizations routinely struggle to facilitate interactions across boundaries, when and where needed. To address this tension, we introduce a dynamic view of boundary spanning as motivated not just by stable structural arrangements and individual predispositions, but also by temporary situational cues that induce short-lived boundary-spanning networking. We focus on situational cues that highlight a gap between current and desired knowledge, and thus pique curiosity and the drive to learn by engaging with individuals from groups that are not one's own and are disconnected from one another. With data from a large-scale randomized controlled trial involving 2,275 middle managers in a major financial services corporation, we corroborate the predicted causal effect of piqued curiosity on boundary-spanning networking. Two additional experiments substantiate the drive to learn as the causal mechanism and establish that piquing curiosity motivates people to network across (versus within) boundaries. The findings document the transient nature of boundary-spanning networking and curiosity as an impetus for it, introducing the potential to achieve integration while also enabling an organization to adapt dynamically to changing task environments.

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