

## **New Directions in Leadership Research Conference**

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**Paper title:**

Leading Dynamic Capabilities in DNA Organizations

**Abstract:**

Using a qualitative study of product development teams in two R & D organizations, we examine the leadership practices across the organizations that facilitate the dynamic capability of new product development in DNA organizations—organizations that started out as collaborative enterprises rather than top-down bureaucracies. Our findings reveal a “distributed leadership system” with three core interdependent leadership activities: entrepreneurial, enabling, and meta-structuring leadership. We also see evidence of leadership at all levels that is not necessarily associated with formal power and roles, but with advancing the product development process. The power of distributed leadership is that many individuals take on these behaviors resulting in a distributed innovation with emergent macro processes. These emergent processes enable the firm to take advantage of phenomena shown in open-systems platforms that pull on the collective intelligence of the firm and create a prediction market and the ability to balance freedom and control.