

# Finding Growth, Innovation and Differentiation in Disruption

## Agenda

April 2-3, 2025  
Prof. Ashish Nanda

### Wednesday, April 02

6:00 – 8:00 PM Reception & Dinner

### Thursday, April 03

8:00 – 9:00 AM Small Group Discussion & Breakfast

9:00 - 9:15 AM Program Roadmap

9:15 – 10:30 PM Topic: The Innovators' Dilemma

Interactive Discussion: Managing Disruptive Innovation

*Disruptive innovation* describes a process by which a product or service initially takes root in a small niche in the market and then relentlessly moves to the mass market, eventually displacing established competitors.

Faced with disruptive innovation, incumbents face a quandary, characterized as the innovator's dilemma: whether to continue to invest in sustaining innovations, which improve the performance of existing offerings along the dimensions that mainstream customers have historically valued, or to invest in new, potentially disruptive products and services that initially do not meet the needs of their mainstream customers and could undermine their current business models.

We will discuss some of the disruptions confronting the world, specifically public relation (PR) firms, and how the disruptions might be addressed effectively.

10:30 – 10:45 AM Break

10:45 AM–12:30 PM Topic: Strategy and Alignment in Professional Service Firms (PSFs)

Interactive Discussion: Practice Segmentation & Client Portfolio in PSFs

We will discuss how a professional service firm's (PSF's) strategy must be aligned with the segments in which the practices operate and the portfolio of clients it serves. We will discuss the implications of these choices for organization, people, and culture. We will also discuss the drivers of economic performance in PSFs and the role that pricing plays in driving the economics of PSFs.

12:30 – 1:30 PM Lunch

**1:30 – 3:00 PM**

Topic: Ownership Structure and Governance in PSFs

Case Discussion: The Finsbury Glover Hering Proposal

In 2019, leaders of three of the global communications giant WPP's subsidiaries — Finsbury, Hering Schuppener, and the Glover Park Group—proposed to WPP's CEO Mark Read that the three firms merge and undergo a management buy-out (MBO). Through investigating the proposal, we will explore whether such a transaction would be value-creating, who would benefit or lose, and what would be the opportunities and risks in implementing such a transaction.

The discussion will allow us to deliberate on how ownership structure affects not only economic value but also the culture of PSFs and the motivation of their professionals.

**3:00 – 3:15 pM**

Break

**3:15 – 5:00 PM**

Topic: Development of Professionals

Case Discussion: *Rob Parson at Morgon Stanley*

Rob Parson, a star producer recruited from a competitor the prior year, has generated substantial revenues since joining Morgan Stanley. But Parson's reviews from a 360-degree performance evaluation process reveal that he is having difficulty adapting to the firm's culture. His manager, Paul Nasr, must decide whether to recommend Parson for promotion to managing director.

The case allows us to explore the challenge associated with performance appraisal and the development of professionals in PSFs.

**5:00 – 5:30 PM**

Plenary

Interactive Discussion: Opportunities and Challenges Facing PR Firms

We will discuss the opportunities and challenges facing PR firms and how they can best respond to them.

**5:30 PM**

Adjourn