

Contextual Intelligence: A Prerequisite for Success in a Rapidly Changing Environment

Doreen J. Gooden¹, Suzanna A. Holness²

¹*Florida International University, Miami, Florida, USA*

²*University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston, Jamaica*

Abstract

In recent years, there has been a fundamental shift in the competitive landscape confronting many businesses. This shift is fueled by rapid environmental changes, along with changes in technology, political systems, and globalization and which present many opportunities and challenges for businesses. Changes in the environment have resulted in more enforced environmental regulations and stricter labor standards, emerging technology has transformed business processes and efficiencies, geopolitical trends have influenced business decisions, and globalization has facilitated cross-border trade and investments. These changes require leaders to make decisions in a very pragmatic, consistent, and timely fashion. Thus, to exploit these opportunities and counter these challenges, it is incumbent on organizational leaders to understand the context within which these changes are taking place thereby positioning their organization to compete effectively. Drawing on Matthew Kutz's (2008) model of Contextual Intelligence, this paper seeks to highlight ways for leaders to enhance organizational performance by accurately diagnosing their surroundings or environment, and to adjust their behaviors accordingly. Specifically, the paper will highlight the 12 behaviors of contextual intelligent leaders and the application of the theory to the sustainable competitive advantage of organizations within the context of a rapidly changing environment.

Keywords: competitive landscape; environmental changes; globalization; technology; organizational leaders.

