

31 Strategic Flexibility Creating Dynamic Competitive Advantages

[Get access >](#)

Henk W. Volberda

<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199275212.003.0031> Pages 939–998**Published:** 02 September 2009

Abstract

This article first explores the concept of flexibility in theories of strategic management. Subsequently, it provides a more dynamic approach in strategic management in which strategic flexibility is considered as a constructive friction between change and preservation, in particular between routines and dynamic capabilities, learning and unlearning, and administration and entrepreneurship. On the basis of this paradox of flexibility, the article develops a strategic framework that distinguishes the building blocks needed to analyse and discover viable strategic positions in various competitive environments. In this framework, flexibility is a managerial as well as an organization design task. The managerial task involves the creation of capabilities for situations of unexpected disturbance. On the basis of the variety of these capabilities and speed of response, four types of flexibility are distinguished: steady-state, operational, structural, and strategic flexibility.

Keywords: [strategic flexibility](#), [competitive advantages](#), [strategic management](#), [change and preservation](#), [organization design task](#), [operational flexibility](#)

Subject: [Business Strategy](#), [Business and Management](#)

Series: [Oxford Handbooks](#)

Collection: [Oxford Handbooks Online](#)

You do not currently have access to this chapter.

Sign in

[Get help with access](#)


Personal account

Institutional access

- Sign in with email/username & password
- Get email alerts
- Save searches
- Purchase content
- Activate your purchase/trial code
- Add your ORCID iD

Sign in >

[Register](#)

 [Sign in through your institution](#)

[Sign in through your institution](#)

[Sign in with a library card](#)

[Sign in with username/password](#)

[Recommend to your librarian](#)

Institutional account management

[Sign in as administrator](#)

Purchase

Our books are available by subscription or purchase to libraries and institutions.

[Purchasing information](#)