



RE[FRAMING]: Seeing something else

This Week's **Research Reflection**

## The Meaning of Time

*My Christmas Story is about Time and weaving in the five domains, Timing, Entraining, Accelerating, Sustaining, and Narrating from Välikangas et al.'s new research [article](#) in Academy of Management Discoveries, 2024. A wish for the coming year is to learn more about how I experience time, which will symbolize the sixth domain: The Meaning of Time.*

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*This reflection is part of my journey of discovery. If you're interested in reading more, feel free to contact me.*

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**GUIDEPOST**

**TEMPORAL INTENTIONALITY: PROMPTING  
TIME-RELATED DELIBERATIONS IN STRATEGIC ACTION**

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Time has long been of interest to strategy scholars. Speed may be a source of competitive advantage, strategic planning structures action across time, and temporal norms open and close opportunities. Yet, temporality has mostly remained only a backdrop for strategic action in strategy research. Thus, in this Guidepost we call attention to temporal intentionality. This includes a focus on timing of action and nonaction, but also accelerating, entraining, sustaining, and narrating action. We elaborate on these different aspects of temporality and propose new questions for exploratory, abductively oriented research on temporal intentionality.

Time can be a source of competitive advantage or a trigger for innovation (Kunisch, Bartunek, Mueller & Huy, 2017). In the current geopolitical environment, it may also imply a strategic threat, as in, "We will respond at a time of our choosing." In strategic man-

up a framework of increasing intentionality with regard to time. Each aspect deserves special attention in its own right, but there are also issues and questions that cut across these domains, such as shaping the identity of a strategy actor and others'

### A Christmas Story About Time

08.30 December 20, 2024

I sit at my office desk at home, surrounded by memories. My father's photo stands firmly in front of me, the one thing I would grab if my house were on fire. It's not just a picture; it's a compass, a reminder that my life carries a story, that I have lived, that I have loved, and that I still have time.

But what does it mean to have time? Soon, in one hour my yoga session will start. A thought strikes me: *Is time something I can control, or is it simply something I must adapt to?* Hurry up, deliver, perform, these mantras echo from the year that has passed. But something within me whispers that time holds a deeper meaning, if only I listen. With thoughts of my father's history and





the upcoming yoga class, I turn to reflect on the rhythms that shape us.

Domain	Time concept	Value
Timing	Clock	Act
Entraining	Rhythm	External pace
Accelerating	Tempo	Speed/stop
Sustaining	Interrupting / Closing	When to ask: are we done?
Narrating	Positioning oneself	Our story, in change
Learning	Meaning of Time	Time intelligence

(Adapted from: L. Välikangas, E. Vaara I. Peixoto, 2024)

### **Timing: The Choice When to Act**

Christmas is filled with action. Gifts to buy, food to prepare, candles to light. But at the same time, it is a season of rest. In the military, I learned that “The time you have for a task is enough time” But how do I know *when* it's time to start? Perhaps this Christmas moment is an invitation to reflect on which moments require action and which call for waiting. I remember my father picking me up from Grandmum's place during Christmas, his familiar smile warming the cold winter air. Those moments with my father and his sisters became a thread in the fabric of my Christmases, grounding me in who I am, and how families that are seperated can still create a safe enviornment for their children.

Time is not just something to use; it's also something to understand, I think as I let my hand rest for a moment from writing. ... .. Perhaps the text is finished when it feels finished, not when the clock says it is. When is the time to do things, and when is it time not to act?

### **Entraining: The Rhythms That Shape Us**

The church bells of Skogsö will soon echo across Baggensfjärden during Christmas, reminding us of Christmas's shared rhythm. We all





follow it: the Lucia procession, Christmas Eve's Donald Duck on TV in Sweden, the New Year's countdown. These rhythms are not just traditions; they are external timekeepers that shape our lives. But how much of these rhythms do I choose, and how much do they choose me?

Wednesday's visit to Hedvig Eleonora Church in Stockholm for the Christmas concert *Stålande Jul* takes me back to the early mornings of Christmas Day I experienced as a child. The memories are vivid, like a scene from a timeless winter painting. Traveling by horse and carriage in the cold dawn, wrapped in a wolfskin coat and holding flickering torches against the biting chill, it was as if the world was both asleep and alive in a sacred stillness. That's how it felt for me, being transported to Liden's Church outside Sundsvall.



My gaze wanders to the chaos of my desk: an orange pair of scissors, a half-empty glass of Loka pear water, piles of papers. It's as if they have their own rhythm, a chaotic tempo guiding my thoughts. Can I create my own pace amidst this clutter? What rhythms in your life are chosen by you, and which do you follow without thinking?

### ***Accelerating: When Speed changes to stop***

I feel the pressure. The text must be finished before yoga, before the holiday break truly begins. Innovation is speed, they say. But Christmas reminds me of something else, the importance of slowing down. Between the seconds lies a breath, a pause where something deeper can emerge. Hurry up, a voice whispers. But I choose to write slower now, letting the words find their own rhythm. Perhaps that's where creativity lives?

The black cat next to me, sleeping on the sofa, reminds me of the profound stillness of rest and the sharp focus of hunting. It's a



reminder of how life, even in its calmest moments, carries a latent energy, waiting for the right moment to awaken. It usually takes a few days to settle in after a period of high pace, and similarly, it's challenging to get started again after a vacation. The longer the period of hunting, the longer the time needed for rest.

New Years dinner was usually hare in my family. It was more than just food, it was a ritual, a connection to the hunt, and a symbol of the closeness of nature.

**Sustaining: Holding On or Letting Go**

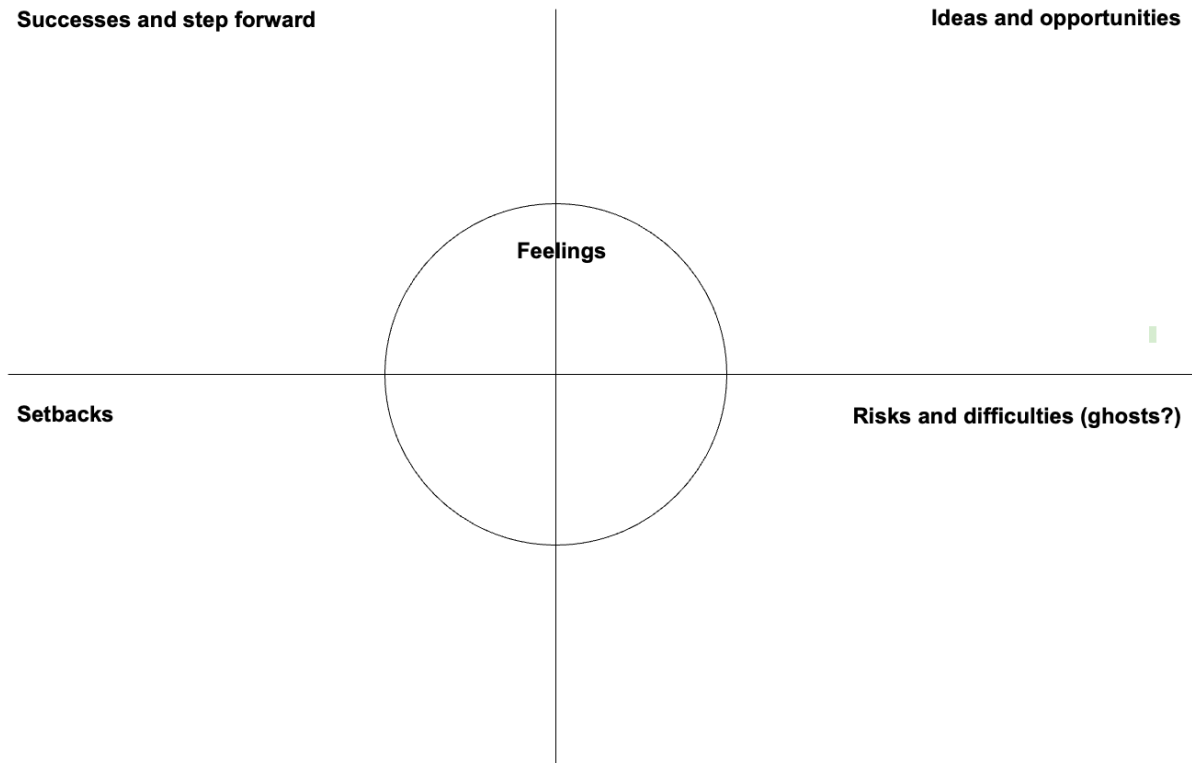
With the stillness of the Christmas season as my frame, I look back on the year that has passed. It has been filled with projects, programs and successes, but also setbacks.. What should I hold on to, and what should I let rest? A new year is a reminder that some things are worth nurturing, while others are best left behind. In this moment of reflection, I see not just the year but also myself. What of all this do I want to carry into the future, and what should I leave behind as memories in the snow?

How I've experienced the year gone by

What the year that will come can mean

**Successes and step forward**

**Ideas and opportunities**



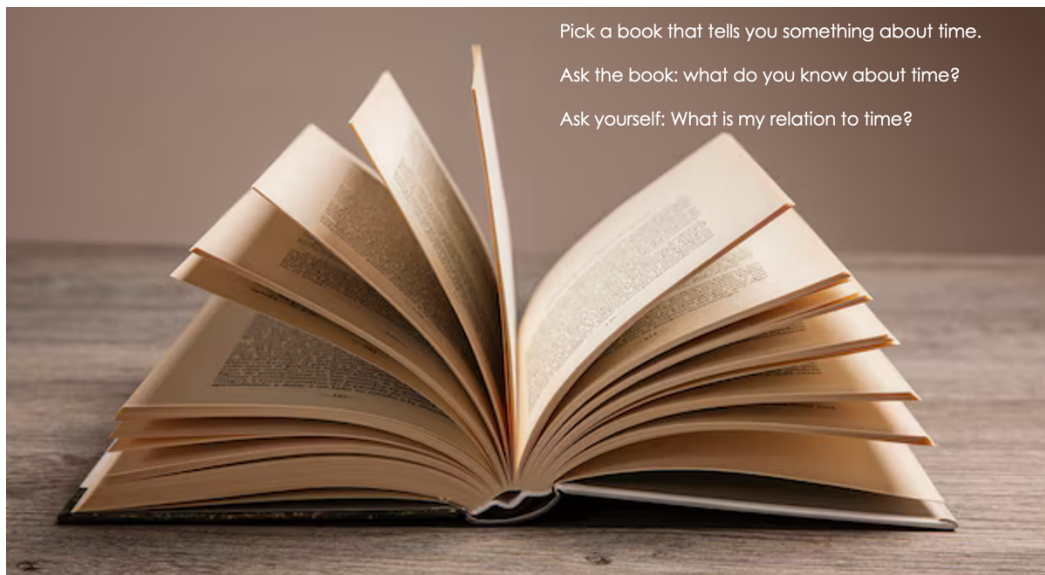




Above is a framework I use as the year comes to an end. It helps me reflect on both the positives and negatives of the past year and, together with my family, formulate intentions and challenging thoughts for the year ahead.

### ***Narrating: Time as a Story***

As I write, I think about how each year is a chapter, each day a sentence. The story of time is not just about what happens, it's about what we make of what happens, and how we tell about the bigger episodes. Last year former Archbishop Antje Jackelén participated in a program I led in Istanbul, we engaged her in discussions about culture, when east meets west. It is a milestone for me.



I look back at the photo of my father, If he would be with me he could have said; "You are Jane and I am Tarzan. Next Year is another story." The year that has passed, all are part of the story I write. It's a story about time, but also about myself, about who I've been and who I can become.

### ***The Meaning of Time: The Sixth Domain***

As I look forward to the new year, I realize that my greatest wish is to understand the meaning of time. My partner turned 60. Time is limited. It's not just a resource to use, but as a dimension to explore. Time is more than minutes and hours; it is our valuable gift, and it is also the gift we give to others. Next year, I don't want to do more, but



to be more, to write more, to read more. Perhaps that's where the meaning of time lies, in the moments we truly live.

09.25 Now it is time to stop. Let's slow down with yoga.

### The mission with this logbook

"In reading a novel, any novel, we have to know perfectly well that the whole thing is nonsense, and then, while reading, believe every word of it. Finally, when we're done with it, we may find... that we're a bit different from



what we were before we read it, that we have changed a little, as if by having met a new face, crossed a street we never crossed before. **But it is very hard to say just what we learned, how we were changed...** The truth is a matter of the imagination." (Ursula K. Le Guin)

The Meaning School  
is a garden



Take care of the blueberries