

# DO THE MIGHTY ALWAYS SURVIVE?

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*“Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change”*,  
Stephen Hawking

## Introduction

Is it “power” the fundamental capability of those who survive in the long-term? This interdisciplinary study aims to demonstrate the need of adaptability of species and organizations in the field of biology, business, technology and education. The motivation of the study stems from the disappearance of the larger creatures ever lived on Earth, the dinosaurs. These reptilian giant creatures were the strongest creatures of Mesozoic Period (230-65 m. years ago) due to their various characteristics, such as oversized body and physical strength. Despite these characteristics, which make them the dominant species in the planet, dinosaurs became extinct about 65 million years ago because of their inability to adapt to the rapid changes of their environment that have taken place at the end of the Cretaceous Period. This study focuses on the conditions under which species and social organizations (i.e. companies) are sustainable and manage to survive in the long term.

## Methods

The paper pursues its scope through secondary research and the case study methodology. In particular, the study analyzes the environmental conditions under which dinosaurs lived and examines various causes -exogenous and endogenous- related to their disappearance. Moreover, the research focuses on the evolution of the human kind through the ages (from Australopithecus afarensis to Homo sapiens; divergent evolution) revealing the competences the human species developed in order to adapt successfully to the rapidly changing environment and manage the competition from other interrelated species.

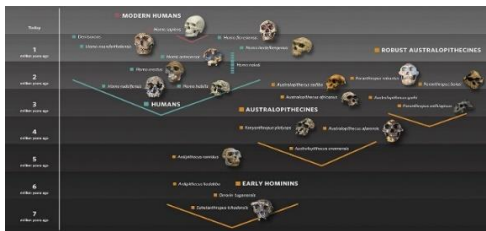


Figure 1: The evolution of the human species

Next, the paper presents various case studies of leading corporations that did not survive the disruptive effects of technological evolution. In addition, the paper discusses the process of adaptability as a key competence for survival in the business world where technology disrupts the business environment and some companies manage to adapt and thrive. Through field research, the study documents how Anatolia College in Greece managed to quickly adapt and overcome the severe impact of the recent economic crisis in the country. As adaptability is a key competence for the long term survival of the species and organizations, the study focuses on how an education system helps students to be flexible and adaptable through the learning methodology of "learn-unlearn-relearn", and thus "learn how to learn".

## Results

The study documents that power is very important for success in the short term but adaptability is the competence of sustainability and long term survival.

## Conclusion

The present study presents evidence that long term survival and sustainability does not depend on power but instead on the fundamental capability of adaptability. There is ample evidence both in biology and in the business world that power without adaptability to the evolving conditions of the environment help organizations to succeed in the short term but not to achieve long term sustainability.

## References

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