

Facetism vs Systemic Research Failures:

Independent, Result-Driven, and Implementable Knowledge

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Abstract

Research exists to produce knowledge relevant to prediction and strategy. Two systems currently dominate its formal production: academic research, organized around funding, citations, and peer-controlled prestige, and large commercial consulting, organized around revenue continuity and client retention. Both possess methodological strengths, yet both systematically under-perform the requirement of generating usable knowledge because their incentives pull them elsewhere.

This study conducts a quasi meta-analytic examination of the resulting predictive and structural failures, with particular attention to the 2008 financial crisis, long-running European demographic, fiscal, energy, and social trends, and the limited structural diagnosis of the European Union's institutional and monetary architecture. In each domain, mainstream academic and consulting outputs largely missed or under-weighted mechanisms that independent and heterodox traditions—especially Austrian and related analyses—identified earlier and more clearly.

Against this diagnosis the study recovers three complementary resources: Sun Tzu's interdisciplinary strategic calculus, SWOT analysis practiced with interdisciplinarity and intersubjectivity, and methodological standards drawn from independent research traditions that prioritize human action, sequential consequences, and ripple effects. These resources are integrated through Facetism (Kayser, 2026), an operational research orientation that rejects pure formalism and isolationism, employs mathematics only where valid, and relies on directionality and probabilistic estimates where full

quantification is inappropriate. Facetism treats context, sequence, and point in time as decisive and favors swift but adequate implementation over both extremes and indefinite hesitation.

The resulting orientation—mixed methods governed by Facetism and informed by classical strategic and independent methodological standards—offers a practical alternative particularly suited to large public and private organizations. It retains flexibility while insisting on thoroughness, reduces the scope for incentive-compatible distortion, and subordinates research once again to the production of knowledge that can actually be used. Success remains dependent on the ethics and intellectual honesty of those who apply it.

Keywords

Facetism; research incentives; academic–practice gap; consulting industry; prediction; strategy; Sun Tzu; SWOT; Austrian economics; independent research; implementable knowledge

1. Introduction

Research exists to produce knowledge that can be used. Across living systems, knowledge—whether conscious, unconscious, or subconscious—is the prerequisite for forming a workable strategy. Animals adjust movement, timing, and resource use according to sensed changes in wind, weather, and climate; the adjustment is strategic even when it is not articulated. Human research is the deliberate, systematized version of the same requirement: the generation of knowledge relevant to prediction so that strategies can be formed and adapted with higher probability of success. Even research that appears focused solely on explaining past phenomena ultimately serves this purpose. Historical and retrospective analysis is valuable precisely because it improves the capacity to understand mechanisms that are likely to operate again under comparable conditions. In this sense, prediction remains a necessity across the full range of research activity, including subjects that do not announce forecasting as their primary aim.

Strategy itself is never merely a statement of desired outcomes. It must incorporate estimates of probable challenges, resistances, and environmental shifts. Without knowledge oriented toward these requirements, strategy collapses into preference or improvisation. Sun Tzu made the environmental and conditional elements of planning explicit and methodological. Weather, terrain, relative strength, and the likely

responses of the opponent were treated as necessary inputs, not optional refinements (Sun Tzu, n.d.). The same logic applies far beyond military affairs. Marketing, organizational design, public policy, and investment all require knowledge oriented toward probable consequences. When research systems drift away from this orientation, the strategies built upon their outputs become correspondingly weaker.

Two institutional systems now dominate the production of formal research: academic research and large commercial consulting. Both claim to supply knowledge useful for decision-making. Both, however, have shifted their primary focus away from the generation of knowledge relevant to prediction. Academic research is organized around funding cycles, publication metrics, and career progression. Commercial consulting is organized around revenue continuity and client retention. In each case the original purpose—knowledge that improves the capacity to anticipate consequences and to act effectively—is subordinated to institutional survival and growth. The result is a persistent gap between the volume of research produced and its actual utility for strategy and implementation.

This dual distortion carries continuing practical costs. Monetary and institutional arrangements continue to generate recurrent instability; geopolitical forecasting remains weak at critical junctures; and large organizations in both the public and private sectors still struggle to obtain research that is timely, realistic, and implementable. Existing critiques have examined academic irrelevance and consulting self-interest separately. What remains underdeveloped is a structured examination of predictive and structural failure across *both* systems, followed by a concrete alternative that integrates classical strategic method, the methodological standards associated with Austrian and related analyses, and Facetism (Kayser, 2026).

1.1 The Two Dominant Research Systems and Their Incentive Distortion

Academic research developed powerful tools—quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods—and a culture of formal scrutiny. Its institutional incentives, however, reward publication volume, citation counts, grant acquisition, and theoretical novelty within closed disciplinary conversations more reliably than they reward timely, usable insight. Formalism and isolation from operational contexts are not accidental by-products; they are compatible with the funding and career structures that sustain the system.

Large commercial consulting developed speed, readability, and an explicit focus on decision-makers. Its institutional incentives reward continuous engagement and revenue more reliably than they reward

complete, transferable solutions. Analyses are frequently sufficient to justify fees yet incomplete enough to leave the client dependent on further advice. Integrity and conflict-of-interest problems have repeatedly accompanied this model.

Both systems therefore shift the focus of research away from the production of knowledge relevant to prediction and toward the metrics that ensure their own reproduction: funding and prestige in the academic case, revenue and retention in the consulting case. The consequences appear in repeated predictive and structural failures on matters of major importance—most notably the 2008 financial crisis, selected geopolitical escalations, and the long-running institutional and monetary architecture of the European Union. These cases are examined systematically in Chapter 3.

1.2 Thesis and Contribution

The thesis of this study is that the two dominant research systems systematically under-perform the requirement of generating knowledge relevant to prediction and strategy because their incentives pull them elsewhere. A more effective orientation is available. It combines mixed methods with Facetism and with the strategic and methodological resources drawn from classical strategy and from Austrian-related analyses of the mechanisms that mainstream systems have repeatedly under-weighted.

Libertarian and Austrian approaches appear in this study as instances of independent (and often heterodox) research—traditions that have operated largely outside the dominant academic and commercial incentive systems. They supply methodological resources that, together with Facetism, help correct the predictive and structural shortcomings diagnosed in the chapters that follow.

“Independent” research, as the term is used here, refers both to a state of mind—an orientation that privileges knowledge relevant to prediction and strategy over institutional or commercial metrics—and to structural conditions that minimize reliance on payment, licensing, career advancement, grant capture, or other benefits capable of distorting questions or findings. Under this definition both academic and commercial research can be either independent or dependent. The two dominant systems examined in this study tend systematically toward dependence because of their prevailing incentives; independence remains possible in both domains but is not the institutional default.

Facetism (Kayser, 2026) is an operational research approach that rejects pure formalism and isolationism. It deploys mathematics only where quantification is valid and useful, and relies on directionality and probabilistic estimates where full quantification is inappropriate or misleading. The resulting orientation is offered as more realistic and more relevant, particularly for large public and private organizations.

The study does not attempt a comprehensive statistical meta-analysis of every crisis, nor does it claim to generate a complete new methodology from primary fieldwork. Its scope is diagnostic and constructive: a structured comparative examination of the two dominant systems, followed by the development of a practical alternative suited to organizational use.

1.3 Methodological Positioning

This study deliberately describes its approach as a quasi meta-analysis in the diagnostic portion and a quasi grounded-theory orientation in the constructive portion. The qualifiers are intentional. Academic research culture has turned methodological labels into formalistic requirements that often prioritize semantic conformity over substance. Researchers are pressured to force their work into pre-approved categories—pure grounded theory, pure meta-analysis, pure quantitative, pure qualitative—regardless of whether those categories improve the relevance or usefulness of the results. The present study rejects that pressure. It uses structured comparative review where that method serves the examination of predictive and structural failure, and it develops concepts iteratively and close to observed practice where that serves the construction of an alternative. The labels remain secondary. What matters is whether the research produces knowledge that is relevant to prediction, usable for strategy, and capable of supporting implementation. Result orientation, not terminological purity, is the standard.

1.4 Structure of the Study

Chapter 2 describes how academic and commercial research are currently organized, with attention to methods, outputs, and incentive structures. Chapter 3 presents a quasi meta-analytic examination of their predictive and structural failures, contrasting mainstream performance with the earlier identification of key mechanisms by Austrian and complementary analyses. Chapter 4 develops the strategic and methodological resources (Sun Tzu, SWOT, and related standards). Chapter 5 elaborates Facetism as the

integrative research approach. Chapter 6 synthesizes the alternative and discusses its implications for large organizations. Chapter 7 concludes.

The criterion throughout remains practical: research is to be judged by the quality of the knowledge it supplies for prediction, strategy, and implementation, not by the institutional metrics that currently dominate its production.

2. How Research Is Currently Organized

Research does not occur in a vacuum. The knowledge it produces is shaped by the institutional arrangements, methodological conventions, incentive structures, and professional norms under which it is generated. Two systems currently dominate the formal production of research intended to inform decisions in business, policy, and large organizations: academic research and large commercial consulting. Although they differ in language, time horizon, and outward presentation, both rest on a shared empirical skeleton and both are subject to powerful incentives that systematically pull them away from the generation of knowledge most relevant to prediction and strategy.

This chapter examines how each system is organized. It describes the dominant methods, structural templates, and incentive regimes that govern academic research and large consulting research respectively, and it identifies the common pattern that emerges: a shift from knowledge oriented toward usable prediction to knowledge oriented toward institutional reproduction—funding, prestige, and career progression in the academic case; revenue continuity and client retention in the consulting case.

2.1 Academic Research: Methods, Templates, and Incentives

Academic research in the social sciences, management, economics, and related fields is organized around a relatively stable set of methodological and structural conventions. The core methodological repertoire consists of quantitative (QN), qualitative (QL), and mixed methods (MM) designs. Quantitative work emphasizes measurement, statistical inference, and hypothesis testing. Qualitative work emphasizes depth, context, interpretation, and meaning. Mixed methods attempts to combine the strengths of both. These approaches are typically embedded within a conceptual or theoretical framework that situates the study in relation to existing literature and justifies the chosen design.

Structurally, the dominant template remains the five-chapter (or five-section) model: introduction, literature review, methodology, results or findings, and discussion/conclusion. Variations exist by discipline and outlet, yet the underlying architecture is remarkably consistent. “Rigor” is treated as a central virtue and is operationalized primarily through adherence to methodological protocols, transparent reporting of procedures, engagement with prior literature, and the production of claims that can survive peer review. The peer-review system itself functions as the principal quality-control and gatekeeping mechanism.

These conventions are not neutral. They are sustained by a distinctive incentive structure. Career progression, tenure, promotion, and institutional ranking depend heavily on publication in ranked journals, citation metrics (including the h-index), and the acquisition of competitive external funding. Grant success, in turn, often requires alignment with prevailing theoretical fashions, methodological orthodoxy, and the priorities of funding bodies. The cumulative effect is a system that rewards formal sophistication, theoretical novelty within closed academic conversations, lengthy production cycles, and the accumulation of citations more reliably than it rewards timely, decision-relevant insight or demonstrated implementability (see, for example, the long-standing relevance literature in management research, including critiques summarized in Kieser et al., 2015, and related analyses of the academic–practice gap).

Isolation from operational contexts is a frequent by-product. Research questions are often shaped more by gaps in the academic literature than by the predictive and strategic needs of organizations. Formalism can become an end in itself: the correct performance of methodological rituals takes precedence over the usefulness of the resulting knowledge. None of this implies that academic research lacks genuine strengths. At its best it produces careful measurement, cumulative understanding, and transparent protocols. The problem lies in the systematic bias introduced by incentives that privilege institutional metrics over knowledge relevant to prediction and strategy.

2.2 Large Commercial Consulting: Methods, Templates, and Incentives

Large commercial consulting firms—particularly the major strategy houses (McKinsey, BCG, Bain) and the large advisory networks—operate under a different set of conventions, yet the underlying empirical sequence is closely related. Typical engagements rely on some combination of surveys, interviews, internal

data analysis, benchmarking, and structured frameworks. The temporal logic often follows a baseline–analysis–end-line or diagnostic–recommendation pattern. Outputs are packaged for senior decision-makers: concise, visually structured, written in accessible language, and oriented toward actionable recommendations rather than extended theoretical discussion.

The methodological repertoire is pragmatic rather than doctrinaire. Quantitative and qualitative elements are combined as needed, but the governing criterion is client utility and presentational clarity rather than academic notions of rigor. Frameworks (including variants of SWOT, portfolio matrices, and proprietary tools) are used extensively to organize information and to structure recommendations. Time horizons are short relative to academic production cycles; the pressure to deliver within commercial deadlines is constant.

The incentive structure is equally distinctive and equally powerful. Revenue depends on continuous client engagement. Firms therefore face a structural temptation to produce analyses that are sufficient to demonstrate value and justify fees, yet incomplete enough that further work remains necessary. Knowledge transfer that fully equips the client to proceed independently can reduce future billings. Proprietary framing, selective emphasis, and the cultivation of dependency are compatible with this commercial logic. High-profile integrity and conflict-of-interest problems have repeatedly accompanied the model, reinforcing the perception that self-interest can distort the knowledge product (see, for example, critical examinations of the consulting industry such as those discussed in Mazzucato and Collington, 2023, and related journalistic and academic accounts).

As with academic research, the consulting model possesses real strengths: speed, readability, decision orientation, and the ability to mobilize resources quickly around a client problem. The distortion arises from incentives that reward revenue continuity and client retention more reliably than they reward complete, transferable, prediction-oriented knowledge.

2.3 Shared Skeleton, Divergent Distortions

Despite their differences in language, tempo, and outward presentation, academic research and large consulting research share a common empirical skeleton. Both typically move from some form of data

gathering or baseline assessment, through analysis, to conclusions or recommendations. Both draw on quantitative and qualitative information. Both claim to reduce uncertainty for decision-makers.

The divergence lies in the incentives that shape what counts as success. Academic research optimizes for funding, prestige, citation, and career progression within a peer-controlled system. Consulting research optimizes for billable work, client retention, and revenue growth. In both cases the original purpose of research—the production of knowledge relevant to prediction so that better strategies can be formed and implemented—is subordinated to the metrics that ensure the reproduction and expansion of the research system itself.

This shared pattern of incentive-compatible distortion sets the stage for the systematic examination of predictive and structural failures in Chapter 3. When the generation of usable knowledge is no longer the primary organizational objective, repeated shortfalls in anticipation and diagnosis become predictable rather than accidental.

2.4 Overlap and Mutual Reinforcement

The two systems are not sealed off from each other. Significant conceptual and practical traffic runs in both directions. Many frameworks now treated as standard in academic management and social-science research originated in corporate practice. Human-resource concepts, performance-management systems, and a range of organizational development tools were first developed inside companies and only later formalized, theorized, and diffused by universities. Once inside the academic system they acquired the language of research, the apparatus of “rigor,” and the legitimacy of peer-reviewed publication.

The reverse flow is equally important. Academic constructs are rapidly absorbed by large corporations and consulting firms, then returned to the academic world as funded research topics, case studies, and curriculum content. In recent decades this reciprocal relationship has been particularly visible in the rapid institutionalization of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) frameworks, environmental, social and governance (ESG) metrics, and certain strands of gender studies. These domains were heavily promoted and resourced by large corporations and international groups. Universities supplied theoretical elaboration, measurement instruments, and the appearance of scientific authority; corporations and consulting firms supplied funding, implementation mandates, and diffusion across industries.

Corporate influence is not limited to the diffusion of concepts. Large firms and foundations also shape university research agendas directly through funding and grants. In Germany this dependence on third-party and industry funding (Drittmittel) became the subject of sustained public and academic debate around 2017–2018. Organizations such as Transparency International Germany and the Hochschulwatch project documented the scale of private and corporate contributions, the proliferation of foundation professorships, and the associated risks to research independence and agenda-setting (Transparency International Deutschland / Hochschulwatch, various reports; see also contemporary coverage in *Der Spiegel* and related analyses). Critics argued that growing reliance on external economic sources systematically tilted research priorities toward the interests of well-resourced funders. While defenders of industry collaboration emphasized mutual benefit and knowledge transfer, the structural effect is clear: when universities become dependent on corporate and foundation funding for a significant share of research activity, the incentive to produce knowledge aligned with those funders' preferences strengthens, and the incentive to pursue questions that might challenge them weakens.

The result is a zone of overlap in which academic and commercial incentives reinforce each other, systematically sacrificing predictive relevance. Research that aligns with the priorities of large, well-resourced organizations finds both funding and rapid practical uptake. Research that challenges those priorities faces higher barriers. In this overlapping zone the formal apparatus of academic or consulting legitimacy can be maintained while the primary function of the knowledge product shifts from generating insight relevant to prediction and strategy toward legitimizing preferred organizational, political, or market arrangements. At the extreme, this incentive structure opens the door to outright corruption of the research process—whether through selective question framing, suppression of inconvenient findings, or the elevation of ideologically preferred claims beyond the evidence. The predictive, empirical, and competitive consequences of these developments are examined in Chapter 3.

3. Quasi Meta-Analysis of Predictive and Structural Failures

The organization of research described in Chapter 2 produces measurable consequences. When academic incentives privilege funding, citations, and formal conformity, and when consulting incentives privilege revenue continuity and client retention, the generation of knowledge relevant to prediction and strategy is systematically weakened. This chapter examines that claim through a structured comparative review of

predictive and structural performance across three domains of major consequence: the 2008 financial crisis, selected geopolitical escalations, and the institutional and monetary architecture of the European Union. In each case the dominant systems largely failed to deliver timely, mechanism-level insight, while certain non-mainstream analyses identified the relevant dynamics earlier and more accurately.

The review is quasi meta-analytic rather than a formal statistical meta-analysis of effect sizes. It systematically compares the record of mainstream academic and large consulting outputs with the record of Austrian and complementary analyses on the same phenomena, focusing on predictive timing, identification of causal mechanisms, and residual usefulness for strategy and implementation.

3.1 The 2008 Financial Crisis

The global financial crisis of 2007–2009 constitutes the clearest large-scale test of the predictive capacity of contemporary research systems. Mainstream academic macroeconomics and the risk and strategy work of major consulting and advisory firms largely failed to anticipate the severity, timing, and transmission mechanisms of the crisis. Dynamic stochastic general equilibrium (DSGE) models that dominated academic and central-bank forecasting omitted critical features of the financial sector and credit intermediation; many professional forecasts continued to project resilience or only moderate slowdowns well into 2007 and early 2008 (Greenspan, 2013; Stiglitz, 2018; textual analyses of working papers in Gropp et al., 2020). Large consulting and financial advisory organizations, deeply embedded in the same modeling and risk-management paradigms, likewise provided limited early warning of systemic collapse.

By contrast, the Austrian tradition of business-cycle analysis had long identified the core mechanism: artificial credit expansion under fiat money regimes lowers interest rates below natural levels, distorts intertemporal coordination, generates malinvestment (especially in interest-sensitive sectors such as housing and construction), and eventually produces a bust when the credit impulse slows or reverses (Mises, 1912/1953; Hayek, 1931/1935; Rothbard, 1963/2000). In the years preceding 2008, economists working in or influenced by this tradition issued repeated public warnings of a housing bubble and the unsustainability of the credit-fueled expansion (Thornton, 2004; multiple contemporaneous statements collected in Austrian prediction records). Complementary analyses reinforced the same diagnosis from related angles. Richard Werner's quantity theory of credit and his earlier work on Japan's bubble (*Princes of the Yen*) emphasized how bank credit creation, rather than purely savings-driven investment, drives

asset inflation and subsequent collapse when directed into non-GDP transactions (Werner, 2003, 2005).

Empirical work in the classical-liberal and Chicago-influenced tradition (Sowell) and monetarist critiques of discretionary policy (Friedman, with the qualifications noted earlier) likewise highlighted monetary mismanagement and the dangers of sustained distortion.

A concrete transmission mechanism illustrates the point. Hybrid adjustable-rate mortgages, particularly the 2/28 structure (two years of fixed “teaser” rates followed by 28 years of adjustable rates), became a dominant product in the U.S. subprime market. These instruments were viable primarily while house prices rose rapidly and refinancing remained easy. Once price appreciation stalled and liquidity tightened, rate resets produced sharp payment increases and widespread distress (FCIC, 2011; Sengupta and Tam, 2010; Federal Reserve analyses of hybrid ARMs). The product design itself was a predictable outgrowth of a fiat-and-credit regime that required continuous asset-price inflation to remain stable. Mainstream research systems, focused on diversified risk, efficient markets, and short-term econometric fit, underweighted this structural dependence. Austrian and credit-focused analyses did not.

In this context it is relevant to note the mixed record of Modern Monetary Theory (MMT). MMT achieved certain punctual predictive successes by correctly emphasizing the distinction between currency issuers and currency users; proponents argued that a country retaining full monetary sovereignty faces different constraints from one that has surrendered it (as Greece did upon adopting the euro), and that conventional default forecasts often overstated immediate collapse risks for sovereign issuers (see Mosler and related MMT discussions; Kelton, 2020). Yet MMT fails at the level of general understanding. By embracing fiat currency and the permanence of monetary expansion and devaluation, it correctly recognizes the short- to medium-term power of central banks while systematically underestimating the long-term cumulative damage. Continuous inflation and debt expansion produce severe distortion and collapse risks, only with deeper structural ramifications—eroded savings, distorted capital allocation, and the progressive exhaustion of productive capacity (critiques in Edwards, 2019; Cochrane and related fiscal-monetary analyses). The euro itself functions as a zombie currency: formally alive, yet sustained through successive crises (including Covid-era interventions and the economic shocks linked to the Ukraine conflict) and through continued, often shortsighted, territorial and institutional expansion. MMT-oriented economists tend not to jump to immediate collapse forecasts precisely because they understand how long powerful

central banks can postpone insolvency. Austrian, Chicago-influenced, and broader evidence-based analyses, by contrast, have demonstrated higher long-term accuracy by treating the underlying fiat-and-credit mechanism itself as the source of recurrent instability rather than as a neutral or indefinitely sustainable tool (Mises, 1912/1953; Hayek, 1931/1935; Rothbard, 1963/2000; Werner, 2003).

The crisis therefore exposed more than a forecasting error. It revealed an incentive-compatible blindness: systems optimized for funding, citations, and billable continuity systematically undervalued the very mechanisms that generated the instability.

3.2 Geopolitical Forecasting Shortfalls

A parallel pattern appears in the analysis of long-term structural and geopolitical trajectories in Europe. Both academic research and the bulk of large consulting and policy advisory work have repeatedly failed to integrate observable, well-documented trends into coherent predictive assessments.

Several facts are individually well established and supported by official statistics and multiple studies. Most EU member states exhibit persistently sub-replacement fertility rates, a demographic trajectory with direct implications for labor supply, pension systems, and fiscal sustainability. Simultaneously, tax burdens and public debt ratios have risen substantially across large parts of the Union. Energy prices, particularly electricity, have increased sharply in the wake of successive “green deal” and related regulatory packages, contributing to accelerated deindustrialization in energy-intensive sectors. In parallel, large-scale inflows of low-skilled migrants—disproportionately young men from regions with lower average educational and productivity profiles—have imposed measurable additional costs on welfare systems, housing, and public services.

Official data series document each component. Eurostat records the EU total fertility rate at 1.34 live births per woman in 2024, the lowest since comparable figures began in 2001 and far below the approximate replacement level of 2.1 (Eurostat, 2026). Parallel Eurostat and ECB data show elevated public debt ratios, high tax burdens, and sustained increases in industrial electricity prices relative to major competitors, with associated pressure on energy-intensive industry (Eurostat, 2026; European Central Bank, 2026).

Specialized studies and national statistical offices further document the fiscal and social-service costs associated with large-scale low-skilled inflows. The component facts are therefore not in serious dispute; what remains missing is their integrated assessment.

What mainstream media, academic research, and most large consulting outputs systematically fail to supply is a combined assessment of their interaction. The compounding effect—demographic decline plus rising fiscal and energy costs plus elevated welfare and social expenditures associated with low-skill inflows—receives little integrated treatment. Research systems whose incentives favor disciplinary specialization, grant alignment, or politically acceptable framing have structural difficulty producing the very synthesis that strategic decision-making requires. The result is knowledge that remains fragmented and therefore of limited predictive and strategic value.

This is not a claim that every alternative analysis has been correct in every detail. It is an observation that the dominant research systems have left a clear, multi-variable risk constellation largely unevaluated as an interacting whole, despite the availability of component data.

The same unexamined interaction carries direct geopolitical consequences: fiscal strain, demographic contraction, and elevated social expenditures reduce the resources and political room available for strategic action, leaving European states with diminished capacity to respond to external pressure or prolonged instability.

3.3 The European Institutional and Monetary Architecture

A third domain concerns long-running institutional diagnosis rather than discrete crisis prediction. The European Union's political and monetary architecture has produced persistent relative underperformance in growth, savings, and SME dynamism across significant parts of the continent, alongside rising fiscal and regulatory centralization. Mainstream academic research and large consulting work have extensively analyzed individual policies, cohesion funds, and convergence metrics. What they have largely failed to supply is a structural diagnosis of the regime itself as a form of centralized planning with predictable effects on incentives, capital allocation, and savings behavior.

Richard Werner has argued that key features of the EU's institutional design—particularly the concentration of legislative initiative in an unelected Commission and the limited powers of the elected Parliament—were modelled on Soviet structures, with the Commission functioning analogously to a politburo (Werner, various interviews and public statements, including discussions of the “Sovietization” of European governance). Whether or not every historical detail of that claim is accepted, the functional

parallel is analytically useful: highly centralized, non-market coordination of money, regulation, and fiscal rules generates the same class of distortions previously observed under explicit central planning—suppressed price signals, misallocation of capital, discouraged private saving, and reduced space for productive experimentation by smaller firms. Fiat monetary arrangements under the euro amplify the problem by removing exchange-rate adjustment and imposing a one-size-fits-all credit environment. The resulting fiscal pressures make meaningful detaxation politically and financially difficult, locking in high tax and regulatory burdens.

Neither the dominant academic literature nor the bulk of large consulting output has placed this structural diagnosis at the center of analysis. Instead, research has tended to treat symptoms within the existing institutional frame. The incentive structures examined in Chapter 2 help explain why: research that questions the foundational architecture of a major political and monetary regime faces higher barriers to funding, publication, and client acceptance than research that operates inside the accepted frame.

3.4 Common Pattern: Incentive-Compatible Blindness

Across the three domains a consistent pattern emerges. Academic research, optimized for funding, citations, and formal conformity, and large consulting research, optimized for revenue continuity and client retention, systematically under-produce knowledge that is timely, mechanism-focused, and usable for strategy when that knowledge challenges prevailing institutional or commercial interests. In contrast, analytical traditions less constrained by those incentives—most notably the Austrian business-cycle tradition and complementary credit and institutional analyses—identified core mechanisms earlier and more clearly.

The failures are therefore not primarily failures of individual intelligence or of the basic QN/QL/MM toolkit. They are failures of organization and incentive. When the metrics that reproduce the research system diverge from the metrics that measure predictive and strategic usefulness, the system drifts. Chapter 4 turns to the strategic and methodological resources that can counteract this drift.

4. Strategic and Methodological Resources for Better Results

The diagnostic chapters have shown that the two dominant research systems systematically under-produce knowledge relevant to prediction and strategy. Academic incentives pull toward funding, citations, and

formal conformity; consulting incentives pull toward revenue continuity and client retention. Both leave large organizations with analyses that are either too detached from operational reality or too incomplete to support independent action.

This chapter turns from diagnosis to resources. Three complementary bodies of thought supply practical correctives: classical strategic method as articulated by Sun Tzu, the modern diagnostic instrument of SWOT analysis, and the methodological standards associated with Austrian and related free-market economics. None of these is offered as a complete research methodology in itself. Together they restore the orientation that the dominant systems have lost: the generation of knowledge that improves the capacity to anticipate consequences, form workable strategies, and adapt during implementation.

4.1 Sun Tzu's Strategic Calculus

Sun Tzu's *Art of War* remains one of the most concise and durable demonstrations that effective strategy rests on the integration of wide-ranging knowledge rather than on narrow formal rigor. Sun Tzu does not prescribe an academic method; he shows that success depends on the capacity to connect seemingly disparate domains and to treat them as simultaneous, mutually relevant inputs. Meteorology, geography, and psychology are handled as essential and concurrent forms of knowledge: weather and terrain shape the possible, while morale, deception, and the opponent's mental state shape the probable. The same text incorporates practical insights that today would be classified under physics (leverage, momentum, fortification), biology and chemistry (logistics of supply, effects of terrain and climate on men and animals, use of fire), and, crucially, finance.

Sun Tzu's financial acumen is particularly sharp. He states plainly the enormous cost in money and blood of protracted fighting on the battlefield and argues that superior intelligence—especially the systematic use of spies—can avert those costs by revealing the opponent's plans, strengths, and vulnerabilities before irreversible commitments are made. Knowledge is therefore not an ornament of strategy; it is the primary means of reducing both financial outlay and human loss. The general who invests in accurate information saves treasure and lives; the general who neglects it pays repeatedly in both.

Contemporary developments confirm the continuing validity of this reasoning. Online disinformation campaigns, spyware, malicious software, artificial intelligence, drones, and autonomous systems are

modern extensions of the same logic: information dominance and the capacity to shape or anticipate the opponent's perceptions and capabilities remain decisive. At the same time, the spectacle of the largest economies laboring under escalating public debt underscores Sun Tzu's warning about the cumulative financial burden of poorly informed or prolonged conflict. When states and organizations act without adequate predictive knowledge, the costs compound across budgets, balance sheets, and societies.

Sun Tzu's method is therefore interdisciplinary by necessity and predictive by design. It demands the assembly of knowledge from multiple domains, the estimation of relative strengths and probable responses, and the continuous adjustment of plans in light of new information. In the context of this study it supplies a classical standard: research that isolates itself within narrow disciplinary or methodological boundaries, or that subordinates the search for usable knowledge to formal or institutional metrics, fails the test that Sun Tzu set more than two millennia ago.

4.2 SWOT as Practical Diagnostic Instrument

SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is a later and simpler formalization of the same diagnostic logic that Sun Tzu applied through multiple domains at once. Originating in business strategy practice and widely diffused through both corporate and academic channels, it forces an explicit mapping of internal factors against external conditions. Its real power, however, appears only when it is used interdisciplinarily and with deliberate attention to intersubjectivity—the recognition that assessments of strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat are formed by differently situated observers whose partial perspectives must be combined rather than suppressed.

When SWOT remains confined within a single disciplinary lens or a single institutional viewpoint, it degenerates into ritual. Strengths are inflated, threats are softened, and the resulting matrix ratifies existing preferences. When it draws on multiple knowledge domains and on the differing observations of actors who do not share the same incentives or blind spots, it becomes a genuine instrument of predictive clarity. Interdisciplinarity supplies the range of relevant variables; intersubjectivity supplies the correction for individual and institutional bias.

Contemporary academia actively throttles both requirements. While actual research and development in the natural sciences, engineering, and medicine treat crossover work as the standard rather than the

exception—and while neuroscience in particular has advanced rapidly precisely through its intersections with psychology, computer science, medicine, and engineering—the teaching disciplines and large parts of the social sciences have moved in the opposite direction. Increasing isolation within disciplinary and ideological boundaries reduces the range of admissible evidence and admissible questions. The result is a structural lose-lose: the disciplines themselves lose depth and predictive power, and the organizations that rely on their outputs lose usable insight. A properly interdisciplinary and intersubjective SWOT analysis would have made this outcome foreseeable. The internal weaknesses (ideological closure, methodological narrowing) and the external threats (loss of relevance, declining trust, superior performance by more open research cultures) are visible once the analysis is allowed to cross conventional boundaries.

SWOT is also highly compatible with game-theoretic reasoning. Both require explicit consideration of the other party's likely responses, of relative payoffs, and of the stability of any proposed course of action under alternative scenarios. When SWOT is practiced in this spirit—interdisciplinary in the knowledge it draws upon and intersubjective in the perspectives it incorporates—it organizes existing information into a form immediately usable for prioritization, contingency planning, and strategic adjustment. It does not generate deep causal theory by itself, yet it prevents the two most common failures of incentive-distorted research: the neglect of internal limitations and the neglect of external constraints that do not fit prevailing academic or commercial narratives.

In combination with Sun Tzu's broader calculus, SWOT therefore supplies a practical bridge between diagnostic insight and actionable strategy, provided it is kept open to multiple domains of knowledge and to the corrective force of differing observational positions.

4.3 Austrian and Related Methodological Standards

Libertarianism and Austrian economics are treated in this study not as political programs but as examples of independent, and in important respects heterodox, research traditions. Both developed largely outside the incentive structures that dominate contemporary academic and large-scale commercial research. Their methodological commitments—prioritizing logical consistency, evidence over preference, attention to human action and sequential consequences, and skepticism toward empty formalism—have repeatedly produced earlier and clearer identification of mechanisms that mainstream systems under-weighted. In this sense they exemplify the broader category of independent research: inquiry that is not primarily

organized around academic funding and prestige metrics or around consulting revenue continuity. The present study addresses the failures of the two dominant systems by combining such independent methodological resources with Facetism as an operational orientation capable of turning those resources into usable, context-sensitive, and implementable knowledge.

The Austrian tradition and allied free-market analyses supply the third resource: a set of methodological commitments that have repeatedly demonstrated superior long-term accuracy on questions of money, credit, and institutional distortion.

Several commitments are especially relevant. First is the insistence on starting from human action rather than from aggregate constructs or policy preferences (Mises, 1949). Research that begins with the purposeful behavior of individuals and firms is less likely to treat statistical artifacts as causal mechanisms. Second is Hayek's emphasis on dispersed knowledge: much of the information required for effective coordination is local, tacit, and never fully available to any central observer or model (Hayek, 1945). Research systems that assume comprehensive data or perfect model specification systematically overestimate their own predictive power. Third is the critique of scientism—the inappropriate transfer of methods suited to the physical sciences into the study of purposeful human action (Rothbard, 1960; Mises, 1949). Formal rigor that ignores the open-ended, interpretive character of social phenomena produces elegant but misleading results. Fourth is the consistent prioritization of logical consistency and evidence over ideological preference or institutional convenience. The same standard is applied to political and monetary institutions as to commercial ones.

A further and deeper affinity links Austrian methodological standards to Sun Tzu's strategic calculus: both understand and systematically leverage praxeology (the logic of purposeful human action) and ripple effects (the secondary and tertiary consequences that propagate through interconnected systems). Mainstream academic economics and much social-science research consistently ignore or under-weight both. They treat the economy as a set of algebraic equations seeking abstract equilibrium, thereby abstracting from the open-ended, sequential, and often non-linear character of real action. Sun Tzu's insistence on tracing how initial conditions and decisions cascade through terrain, morale, logistics, and opponent responses is methodologically continuous with the Austrian emphasis on malinvestment, intertemporal distortion, and the unintended consequences of monetary and institutional intervention.

Research that restores attention to praxeological sequences and ripple effects recovers the capacity to anticipate developments that formal equilibrium models systematically miss.

In practical research terms this changes the questions that are asked. An evaluation of a major monetary or regulatory intervention, for example, does not stop at first-round effects on inflation, credit volume, or compliance costs. It traces the subsequent sequence: altered investment horizons, shifts in the composition of capital spending, changes in savings behavior, secondary effects on SME viability, and the eventual feedback onto public finances and social cohesion. The same sequential logic applies to large-scale migration or energy-policy packages. Research that truncates the analysis at the first or second stage systematically underestimates both risk and opportunity.

These commitments do not dictate political conclusions; they dictate research habits. They favor mechanism-level explanation over purely correlational description, long-term consequence over short-term fit, and honesty about uncertainty over the appearance of precision. As Chapter 3 demonstrated, these habits enabled earlier and more accurate identification of the fiat-and-credit dynamics that mainstream systems under-weighted.

4.4 Restoring the Knowledge–Strategy–Implementation Sequence

Taken together, the three resources counteract the distortions diagnosed earlier. Sun Tzu supplies the strategic frame that treats knowledge as instrumental to successful action and demands explicit attention to probable challenges. SWOT supplies a practical diagnostic format that organizes knowledge for decision use. Austrian and related methodological standards supply the habits of mind that keep research focused on real mechanisms rather than on incentive-compatible formalisms.

The sequence that results is straightforward. Research generates knowledge relevant to prediction—estimates of direction, magnitude, conditional probabilities, and structural constraints. Strategy translates that knowledge into courses of action that explicitly address probable obstacles and environmental shifts. Implementation proceeds with continuous feedback and adaptation. When any stage is subordinated to funding metrics or revenue continuity, the sequence breaks. The resources outlined in this chapter are means of keeping it intact.

They are not, however, sufficient by themselves for a complete research practice suited to large organizations. They require an operational approach that can integrate varied methods, avoid both pure formalism and pure isolationism, and handle domains in which full quantification is either impossible or misleading. These resources—Sun Tzu’s interdisciplinary calculus, SWOT practiced with interdisciplinarity and intersubjectivity, and Austrian attention to praxeological sequences and ripple effects—remain incomplete without an operational research approach capable of integrating them. Facetism, developed in Chapter 5, supplies that approach: it rejects pure formalism and isolationism, deploys mathematics only where valid, and relies on directionality and probabilistic estimates where full quantification is inappropriate, thereby making the foregoing standards usable in actual research design for large organizations.

5. Facetism as Integrative Research Approach

The preceding chapters have diagnosed the incentive-driven failures of the two dominant research systems and identified strategic and methodological resources capable of restoring predictive and practical relevance. Those resources—Sun Tzu’s interdisciplinary calculus, SWOT practiced with interdisciplinarity and intersubjectivity, and Austrian attention to praxeological sequences and ripple effects—remain incomplete without an operational approach that can integrate them in actual research design. Facetism supplies that approach (Kayser, 2026).

Facetism is not a new formal methodology competing with quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. It is a research orientation that governs how methods are chosen, combined, and interpreted. Its core commitments are negative and positive at once: it rejects pure formalism and disciplinary isolationism, and it insists on selective, purpose-driven use of the available tools of inquiry. Mathematics is employed where quantification is valid and informative; where full quantification is impossible, misleading, or premature, Facetism relies on directionality (the probable direction of change) and probabilistic estimates (reasoned judgments of likelihood and magnitude under stated conditions). The aim is knowledge that remains relevant to prediction and usable for strategy.

5.1 Rejection of Pure Formalism and Isolationism

Formalism becomes pathological when adherence to methodological protocol or terminological purity is treated as more important than the generation of insight that improves anticipation and action.

Isolationism becomes pathological when research questions, evidence, and admissible interpretations are confined within a single disciplinary or ideological boundary. Facetism treats both as design failures. It requires the investigator to ask, at every stage, whether the chosen form of analysis is serving the production of knowledge relevant to prediction or merely satisfying institutional expectations.

Interdisciplinary evidence and intersubjective correction of perspective are necessary conditions for reducing the blind spots that incentive-compatible research systems systematically reproduce.

5.2 Selective Quantification, Directionality, and Probabilistic Estimates

Not every important relationship is fully quantifiable at the moment a decision must be made. Facetism distinguishes three legitimate modes: full quantitative modeling where measurement is reliable and assumptions remain realistic; directional assessment where the probable sign of change can be established with reasonable confidence; and probabilistic estimation where reasoned judgments of likelihood and approximate magnitude, under explicitly stated conditions, are the best available form of knowledge. This selectivity protects research from false precision on one side and from vague commentary that never risks a testable claim on the other.

Facetism typically draws on a deliberately wide but non-arbitrary range of supporting frameworks. Systems and complexity theory supply tools for understanding interconnected variables and non-linear interactions. Chaos theory and game theory help model sensitive dependence on initial conditions and strategic interdependence among actors. Behaviorism and neuroscience inform the analysis of actual human response patterns rather than purely stylized rational-actor assumptions.

Selected insights from quantum physics are used more cautiously and by analogy rather than by direct transposition. The relevant contributions concern the limits of classical determinism, the role of observation and measurement conditions in shaping what can be known, and the necessity of working with probabilities rather than certainties when systems are open and interactive. These ideas reinforce Facetism's refusal of false precision and its insistence on stating the conditions under which any estimate holds.

Bell curves (normal and related distributions) offer a particularly well-suited practical example. They frequently describe growth and diffusion phenomena that exhibit an initial rise, a plateau or inflection region, a possible tilt point, and eventual slowing or regression. Critically, the curves never appear in identical form. Their exact shape, location of inflection, height of plateau, and rate of regress vary with the specific circumstances, the chosen metrics, and the surrounding institutional and material conditions. Facetism therefore treats such distributions as flexible diagnostic instruments rather than as fixed templates: the researcher must determine, for the case at hand, which parameters matter and how the observed pattern is likely to evolve under alternative interventions.

This range of frameworks is neither accidental nor opaque, nor is it formalized into a single mandatory template. For each study a specific subset proves more suitable than others. Facetism's task is to identify, for the problem and context at hand, the combination that yields the most reliable directional and probabilistic insight. Methodological choice remains subordinate to the requirement of usable prediction; no framework is retained for its own sake.

5.3 Operational Implications: Context, Sequence, and the Point in Time

The distinctive practical contribution of Facetism becomes visible in applied work. In a series of studies on Ghana, Uganda, and Rwanda, Facetist analysis produced recommendations that appear, at first glance, inconsistent: in some contexts a 10 percent flat tax or a time-limited reduction of tax rates was defended as the most feasible improvement; in other contexts the same research program argued for the complete abolition of particular taxes. Parallel variation appears in education policy. Certain studies identified existing government programs that could be leveraged to accelerate university reform; other studies concluded that government should withdraw from education provision altogether.

From a Facetist standpoint these positions are not contradictions. They are context- and sequence-dependent assessments. One option may be superior under present institutional capacities, political constraints, and economic conditions; alternatives may still generate net benefits even if they fall short of the theoretical optimum. The point in time is decisive. Measures that would be optimal in a later institutional environment can be destructive if imposed before the necessary supporting conditions exist. Conversely, excessive hesitation in the face of clear directional evidence imposes its own cumulative costs.

Facetism therefore favors swift but adequate implementation over two symmetrical errors: the overnight imposition of extreme measures that ignore current constraints, and the indefinitely delayed “perfect” reform that never leaves the page. The research task is to identify the highest-feasible improvement available now, to estimate its probable direction and magnitude of effects (including ripple effects), and to specify the conditions under which a more ambitious subsequent step would become viable. In this way Facetism operationalizes the praxeological and sequential reasoning discussed in Chapter 4: policy is treated as a series of purposeful actions whose consequences unfold over time and through interconnected systems, not as a once-and-for-all algebraic solution.

5.4 Compatibility with Mixed Methods

Facetism does not replace mixed methods; it orients them. Quantitative and qualitative techniques remain valuable. What changes is the criterion of success. Mixed methods under a Facetism orientation are judged by whether the combination improves the capacity to anticipate consequences and to support adaptive strategy under real institutional constraints. Interdisciplinary evidence and intersubjective correction are admitted as legitimate components of the design. The Ghana–Uganda–Rwanda studies illustrate the point: tax and education recommendations were derived by combining fiscal data, institutional analysis, political-economy constraints, and comparative evidence rather than by applying a single formal template.

5.5 Facetism and the Quasi Grounded-Theory Orientation

The development of Facetism within this study itself illustrates the quasi grounded-theory stance described in the introduction. Concepts have been refined iteratively in light of diagnostic evidence and applied work rather than imposed a priori in finished form. The orientation remains close to observed failures of existing research systems and to the practical requirements of large organizations and reform processes. Result orientation, not terminological purity, remains the standard.

Facetism therefore completes the constructive movement of the study. It converts the strategic and methodological resources of Chapter 4 into an operational research approach capable of producing context-sensitive, sequence-aware, and implementable knowledge. Chapter 6 examines the resulting synthesis and its implications for large public and private organizations.

6. Synthesis and Implications

The preceding chapters have moved from diagnosis to resources to operational approach. Chapter 3 demonstrated that academic research and large commercial consulting systematically under-produce knowledge relevant to prediction and strategy because their incentives pull toward funding, citations, and revenue continuity. Chapter 4 recovered three complementary resources: Sun Tzu's interdisciplinary strategic calculus, SWOT practiced with interdisciplinarity and intersubjectivity, and Austrian methodological attention to praxeological sequences and ripple effects. Chapter 5 developed Facetism as the orientation that makes those resources usable—rejecting pure formalism and isolationism, employing mathematics only where valid, and relying on directionality and probabilistic estimates where full quantification is inappropriate or misleading.

This chapter synthesizes the resulting alternative and examines its implications, particularly for large public and private organizations.

6.1 The Coherent Alternative

The alternative is not a new formal methodology that displaces quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. It is a reorientation of research practice around a single criterion: the production of knowledge that improves the capacity to anticipate consequences and to support adaptive strategy under real constraints. Mixed methods remain the basic toolkit. Facetism governs how the toolkit is selected, combined, and interpreted. The strategic and Austrian resources supply the habits of mind that keep analysis focused on mechanisms, sequences, interdependencies, and probable challenges rather than on institutional metrics or first-round effects alone.

In operational terms the sequence is straightforward. Research begins with the predictive and strategic requirement rather than with a literature gap or a client's preferred framing. Evidence is drawn across relevant domains and corrected through intersubjective comparison of differently situated perspectives. Analysis attends to praxeological sequences and ripple effects. Quantification is used where it adds reliable precision; elsewhere, directional and probabilistic estimates are stated explicitly together with their conditions. Recommendations identify the highest-feasible improvement available under present circumstances, indicate probable effects and risks, and specify the conditions under which a subsequent, more ambitious step would become viable. Implementation is expected to be swift but adequate—neither the overnight imposition of extreme measures nor indefinite postponement in search of perfection.

A particular advantage of baseline evaluation, as commonly practiced in commercial and applied research, is its flexibility. It allows investigators to adjust focal points, incorporate emerging information, and tailor the depth of inquiry to the decision at hand. The same flexibility, however, can be used to conceal methodological shortcomings or poor data. Incomplete series, selective presentation, and unstated assumptions can be smoothed over when the governing criterion is client acceptability rather than transparent accountability. Academic insistence on thorough data presentation and explicit reporting of limitations is therefore not necessarily an empty formal demand; at its best it protects against precisely this form of weaseling.

Facetist guidance aims to retain both virtues while reducing the scope for abuse. Research is granted the leeway to adjust focal points and to match the intensity of analysis to the practical requirement—baseline freedoms remain. At the same time it is held to a standard of scientific honesty and strict mixed-methods adherence: data and assumptions must be presented thoroughly enough that a critical reader can assess strength, coverage, and residual uncertainty. Directional and probabilistic claims are admissible, but they must be accompanied by the conditions under which they hold and by acknowledgment of the quality of the underlying evidence. The combination prevents two symmetrical failures: the rigid academic template that sacrifices relevance for the appearance of rigor, and the overly elastic applied template that sacrifices transparency for the appearance of usefulness.

Result-oriented and market-specific research therefore need not imply any compromise in quality or depth. The same non-institutionalized efficiency—focused problem formulation, selective method choice, attention to sequences and ripple effects, and explicit treatment of uncertainty—can be applied to topics that appear more conventionally academic. What changes is the starting point and the criterion of success, not the underlying demand for honest evidence and coherent reasoning. In this way Facetism seeks to combine the best of the two dominant methods while subordinating both to the production of knowledge that remains usable for prediction and strategy.

This orientation directly counters the distortions diagnosed earlier. Where academic incentives favor formal conformity and isolation within disciplinary or ideological boundaries, Facetism requires interdisciplinarity and intersubjectivity. Where consulting incentives favor incomplete solutions that sustain dependency, Facetism requires recommendations that transfer usable knowledge and specify

conditions for independent adaptation. Where both systems under-weight long sequences and secondary consequences, the combination of Austrian and Sun Tzu-derived habits restores attention to ripple effects.

6.2 Particular Relevance for Large Organizations

Large public and private organizations face decision environments characterized by multiple interacting variables, incomplete information, sequential consequences, and significant downside risks. They cannot wait for academic production cycles measured in years, nor can they afford repeated cycles of consulting advice that leave internal capability underdeveloped. They require research that is timely enough to inform action, robust enough to survive contact with implementation, and transparent enough that managers can revise course when conditions change.

The orientation developed here is particularly suited to these requirements. By insisting on context- and sequence-dependent assessment, it avoids both the false universalism of many academic models and the generic frameworks sometimes offered by large consultancies. By treating point-in-time feasibility as a central variable, it produces recommendations that can actually be executed with existing capacities while still indicating the path toward further improvement. By making ripple effects and interdependencies explicit, it reduces the likelihood of first-round “wins” that generate larger second- and third-round losses.

In fiscal, regulatory, educational, industrial, and organizational domains, the same logic applies. A large ministry or corporation does not need a theoretically perfect policy or structure that cannot be implemented; it needs the best feasible move under present constraints, together with a clear view of how that move alters the landscape for subsequent decisions. Facetism, oriented by the strategic and methodological resources outlined above, is designed to supply exactly that form of knowledge.

6.3 Contrast with Dominant Incentive Structures

The contrast with the two dominant systems can now be stated sharply. Academic research, as currently incentivized, optimizes for publication, citation, and grant success within peer-controlled networks. The resulting knowledge is often careful by internal standards yet weakly linked to prediction under institutional and political constraints, and still more weakly linked to implementation. Large consulting research optimizes for billable continuity and client retention. The resulting knowledge is typically more

readable and decision-oriented, yet frequently incomplete in ways that preserve dependence and underweight long-sequence risks.

Neither system is organized primarily around the criterion that justifies research in the first place: the generation of knowledge that enables better anticipation and more successful action. The alternative synthesized here reverses that priority. Institutional metrics and commercial continuity become secondary. Predictive relevance, strategic usability, and implementability under real constraints become primary. Mixed methods, classical strategic reasoning, Austrian attention to action and consequences, and Facetist selectivity in quantification and method choice are coordinated to serve that primary purpose.

The result is not guaranteed correctness. No research orientation eliminates uncertainty or error. It is, however, an orientation less likely to reproduce the systematic blind spots documented in Chapter 3 and more likely to produce knowledge that large organizations can actually use to navigate complex, sequential, and high-stakes environments.

6.4 Implications for Research Practice

Facetism takes its name from “facets” in the sense of aspects or faces of a phenomenon. The orientation is deliberately multi-perspectival: it seeks to include multiple relevant aspects and observational positions in order to reach a deeper understanding and to avoid one-way thinking. By combining different scientific viewpoints, interdisciplinary work consistently yields more robust results than inquiry confined within a single frame. This requirement is especially acute in the social sciences, which stand in particular need of stronger infusion of empirical and mechanism-oriented science and of the reduction of ideological capture. Whether Facetism can succeed in practice, however, depends heavily on the ethics and academic honesty of individual researchers. The same incentive realities that distort institutional research systems also operate at the personal level. Just as many firms in business and marketing will continue to design research primarily to maximize revenue rather than to maximize predictive insight, many researchers will continue to optimize for career, funding, or ideological alignment. Facetism can reduce the scope for such distortion by making criteria of relevance, transparency, and sequential honesty explicit; it cannot eliminate the underlying human and institutional incentives.

6.4.1 Direct Implications

For researchers the practical implications are direct. Problem formulation should begin with the decision or strategic requirement at stake. Method choice should follow from the nature of the knowledge needed rather than from disciplinary habit or template compliance. Evidence should be drawn across relevant domains and subjected to intersubjective correction. Analysis should trace sequences and ripple effects rather than stopping at first-round results. Recommendations should be ranked by feasibility under present conditions, accompanied by explicit directional and probabilistic estimates, and linked to the conditions for further advance. The standard of evaluation should be whether the work improves the user's capacity to anticipate and to act, not whether it satisfies formal or commercial secondary metrics.

For large organizations the implication is complementary: demand research that meets these criteria. Prefer analyses that make their assumptions, uncertainties, and sequential consequences explicit over those that offer false precision or generic frameworks. Prefer recommendations that transfer capability over those that create recurring dependence. Prefer work that can be revised when conditions change over work that presents itself as final.

6.4.2 Concrete contrast and boundary

The difference in practice can be illustrated by a single problem type—evaluation of a proposed tax or regulatory reform in a developing or emerging economy. A standard academic output typically begins with a literature gap, applies a preferred formal model or identification strategy, and concludes with carefully qualified claims about average treatment effects, often under strong *ceteris-paribus* assumptions and with limited attention to sequential political and institutional constraints. A standard large-consulting deliverable typically begins with the client's stated objectives, applies familiar frameworks and benchmarking, and produces a set of recommendations packaged for decision-makers, frequently stopping short of full capability transfer or explicit mapping of second- and third-round risks.

A Facetist treatment of the same problem begins with the predictive and strategic requirement facing the organization or polity. It draws evidence across fiscal, institutional, political-economy, and comparative domains; states directional and probabilistic estimates together with their conditions; ranks options by feasibility under present constraints rather than by theoretical optimality alone; and specifies the conditions under which a more ambitious subsequent step would become viable. The result is less elegant

by conventional academic standards and less generic than many consulting products, yet more tightly linked to implementation under real constraints.

Facetism cannot, however, guarantee superior outcomes. It reduces the scope for certain forms of distortion by making criteria of relevance, transparency, sequential honesty, and feasibility explicit, but it cannot eliminate the underlying incentives that shape individual researchers or the institutions that employ them. Success remains dependent on the ethics and intellectual honesty of those who apply it.

Chapter 7 concludes by restating the diagnostic and constructive claims of the study and by locating the contribution within the broader requirement that research remain subordinated to the production of usable knowledge.

7. Conclusion

This study began from a simple premise: research exists to produce knowledge that can be used. Across living systems, knowledge—conscious, unconscious, or subconscious—is the prerequisite for forming strategy. Human research is the deliberate version of the same requirement. Even work that appears purely retrospective ultimately serves the understanding of mechanisms that are likely to operate again.

Prediction, in this broad sense, remains intrinsic to any research that claims practical value. Strategy, in turn, is never merely a statement of desired outcomes; it must incorporate estimates of probable challenges and environmental shifts. When research systems cease to prioritize knowledge relevant to these tasks, they cease to serve their primary purpose.

Two institutional systems currently dominate the formal production of such knowledge: academic research and large commercial consulting. Both possess real strengths. Academic research has developed powerful methodological tools and, at its best, a culture of careful scrutiny. Consulting research has developed speed, readability, and an explicit orientation toward decision-makers. Yet both systems are organized around incentives that systematically pull them away from the generation of knowledge most relevant to prediction and strategy. Academic incentives reward funding, citations, and formal conformity within peer-controlled networks. Consulting incentives reward revenue continuity and client retention. In each case the original purpose of research is subordinated to the metrics that reproduce the research system itself.

The consequences appear in repeated predictive and structural shortfalls. Mainstream academic and consulting analyses largely failed to anticipate the mechanisms of the 2008 crisis; Austrian and complementary credit-focused analyses identified the role of fiat money, artificial credit expansion, and instruments such as hybrid adjustable-rate mortgages with greater clarity and earlier timing. Parallel patterns of fragmented knowledge and missing combined assessment appear in the treatment of long-running European demographic, fiscal, energy, and social trends, and in the limited structural diagnosis of the European Union's institutional and monetary architecture. These are not random errors. They are consistent with incentive-compatible blindness.

Against this diagnosis the study recovered three complementary resources. Sun Tzu's strategic calculus demonstrates that effective action rests on the interdisciplinary integration of wide-ranging knowledge—meteorology, geography, psychology, logistics, finance, and intelligence—rather than on narrow formal rigor. SWOT analysis, when practiced with genuine interdisciplinarity and intersubjectivity, organizes that knowledge for decision use and exposes the lose-lose consequences of disciplinary and ideological isolation. Austrian methodological standards restore attention to purposeful human action, dispersed knowledge, praxeological sequences, and ripple effects—elements that mainstream equilibrium approaches consistently under-weight.

These resources remain incomplete without an operational orientation capable of integrating them under real constraints. Facetism supplies that orientation. Named for the multiple facets or aspects of a phenomenon, it rejects pure formalism and isolationism, employs mathematics only where quantification is valid, and relies on directionality and probabilistic estimates where full quantification is inappropriate or misleading. It treats context, sequence, and point in time as decisive. It favors swift but adequate implementation over both overnight extremes and indefinite hesitation. It draws selectively on systems and complexity theory, chaos and game theory, behaviorism and neuroscience, limited analogies from quantum physics, and variable distributional patterns such as bell curves, without formalizing any of these into a rigid template. Applied work on fiscal and education policy in Ghana, Uganda, and Rwanda illustrates the practical consequence: recommendations that appear inconsistent when judged by universal templates become coherent once feasibility under present conditions and the path to subsequent improvement are taken as central criteria.

The resulting synthesis—mixed methods oriented by Facetism and informed by classical strategic and Austrian methodological standards—offers a coherent alternative. It is particularly relevant for large public and private organizations that require timely, robust, and transferable knowledge under conditions of complexity and sequential risk. It retains the flexibility of baseline evaluation while insisting on the thoroughness that prevents the concealment of weak data. It does not guarantee superior outcomes; success continues to depend on the ethics and intellectual honesty of those who apply it. Many researchers and many firms will continue to optimize for career, funding, ideology, or revenue. Facetism can reduce the scope for distortion by making criteria of relevance, transparency, sequential honesty, and feasibility explicit. It cannot abolish the underlying incentives.

The broader requirement remains unchanged. Research is justified only insofar as it produces knowledge that improves the capacity to anticipate consequences and to act effectively under uncertainty. Institutional metrics and commercial continuity are secondary. When they become primary, research drifts. The orientation developed in this study is one attempt to reverse that drift and to return research to its proper subordination: the production of usable knowledge.

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