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Abstract

For sustainable enterprises tensions due to their goal plurality of reaching sustainable and economic goals are almost inevitable. Accumulating research has looked at the organizational implications and management strategies of these often paradoxical tensions. However, these organizational-level studies are often missing the micro-foundations of individual management strategies. In response, we take an individual approach to the cognitive strategies sustainable entrepreneurs use to deal with tensions in their enterprises. Using qualitative methods, we gathered insights from 20 companies in two industry sectors. We identified two distinct cognitive strategies: embracing the paradox through cognitive framing and accepting the paradox through external attribution. We also show that mission confidence – personal beliefs about the desirability and

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