



**It takes two to tango: combining asset specificity and uncertainty to explain  
the diversity of plural forms**

Paula Sarita Bigio Schnaider<sup>Ⓐ</sup>, Maria Sylvia Macchione Saes<sup>ᵃ</sup> and Emmanuel Raynaud<sup>ᵇ</sup>

*<sup>ᵃ</sup>Professor, University of Sao Paulo, School of Economics, Business and Accounting, Center  
for Organization Studies – CORS, Av Professor Luciano Gualberto, 908, Sao Paulo – SP,  
05510 – 08, Brazil*

*<sup>ᵇ</sup>Professor, UMR SADAPT, AgroParisTech, INRAE, Université Paris-Saclay, 16 rue Claude  
Bernard, 75231, Paris cedex 05, France*

*<sup>Ⓐ</sup>Corresponding author: Paula Sarita Bigio Schnaider – email: [paula.schnaider@usp.br](mailto:paula.schnaider@usp.br)*

---

---

## Interview guide

1. Describe a brief history of your business and its focus.
2. What are the products produced by your firm (fine wines, table wines; Milk A, Milk B; specialty coffee traditional coffee, etc.)? Mention percentages.
3. Are there different ways to capture the raw material for each product to be produced? (e.g. fine wines, table wines; Milk A, Milk B; specialty coffee; traditional coffee, sugar, ethanol, etc.)
4. Name some key raw materials: \_\_\_\_\_
5. How do you obtain these raw materials? (mention percentages). Are there are different ways obtain the raw material(s) for different end products? (use the table below)

Means of acquiring	RM1	RM2	...
Own production (vertical integration)			
Outsourced production			
Spot market			
Relational suppliers (no formal contract)			
Suppliers with formal contract			

Note: If there is a contract, are price and volume defined?

6. Has the raw material always been obtained in this way? (cite history, and if there were changes, why?)
7. Indicate the main reason for using this way of obtaining the raw material.
8. Do you provide any benefits to some suppliers? If so, which benefits and to which suppliers? (example: seedlings, manure, fertilizer, technical assistance etc.)
9. Describe the production stages coordinated by the firm (seed delivery, harvest, transportation, etc.). What are the most critical steps?
10. How many suppliers (total)? How do you choose your suppliers? Why? (proximity, raw material quality, raw material price, suppliers' technological level, etc.). Are they always the same?
11. Are there many raw material suppliers? (easy to obtain on the market). Does the supply vary throughout the year? (weather problems, single crop in a limited period of time, and no possibility to stock). How to deal with price or demand fluctuations? Are these fluctuations seen as an opportunity or a risk?
12. How and by whom is the raw material quality measured? And why? (certification, regulation, ways to measure quality – explain, give examples: local inspection, lab analysis, etc.). Is it difficult to measure quality? How is the raw material supplier monitored?
13. Are breaches of contract frequent on the part of the suppliers (non-compliance with terms, prices, quality, and quantity). What are the procedures to solve disputes? Are they formally defined? Are there punishments? What are they?
14. Is the demand of raw material predictable (stable consumption)?
15. Are there different ways/processes/technologies to produce your raw material? (mechanical cultivation and harvest, drying, different seeds – GMO, GMO-free, varietals, irrigation, GPS, etc.). Is it difficult to assess which is the best?

16. Have there been technological changes over the last years? If so, were they imposed by the government? How have they been disseminated? (briefly cite which) Are you and your suppliers equally prone to technological change and its dissemination? (cite and comment)
17. Does the raw material quality vary significantly? Is it affected by time restrictions? (perishability of the produce in the field, need to do the harvesting quickly, or scheduling of the industrial processing etc.)
18. Are specialized professionals necessary to assess the raw material quality? (own personnel, an external firm or agency etc.)
19. Do your suppliers have other buyers for their raw material? Do raw material suppliers wield bargaining power?
20. Do you have special suppliers (who receive technological information or technical assistance which others do not)? Why?
21. Is it hard to measure the performance/productivity of your employees? (describe and comment). Do you offer any special compensation? What about your suppliers? Can you tell their productivity?