

Knowledge Management and Organizational Design: Confluence and New Perspectives

IAE Aix En Provence
International Seminars May 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 2005

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Objectives of the Seminar

This seminar aims at providing a background and methodology for future managers who intend to tackle knowledge management issues in their career.

Evaluation

Evaluation is based on hands-in papers and class participation.

May 2nd, 2005

Design, Knowledge and Management

1. Definitions and theory

In this introductory discussion, we explore the different definitions of knowledge (organizational and individual), managerial cognition, and the differences between information and knowledge in organizations. We will try to answer the following questions:

- What differences there are between information and knowledge?
- Why superior information does not systematically lead to superior knowledge?
- Why accumulating information is not correlated to generating new knowledge?

OPTIONAL READINGS

Bill Starbuck - "Is Janus the god of understanding?" Paper associated with slide show: W.H. Starbuck, "Is Janus the god of understanding?" Pages 351-365 in T. Lant and Z. Shapira (eds.), *Managerial and Organizational Cognition*. Erlbaum, 2000. <http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~wstarbuc/Janusweb/index.htm>
Kenneth LAUDON and William H. STARBUCK, (1996) "Organizational Information and Knowledge", in M. Warner (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of Business and Management*, London: Routledge/Thompson Business Press, 1996, Vol. 4, pages 3923-3933. <http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~wstarbuc/infowork.html>
STENMARK, D. (2001) "The Relationship between Information and Knowledge", in *Proceedings of IRIS 24*, Ulvik, Norway, August 11-14. <http://w3.informatik.gu.se/~dixi/publ/iris24-DS.pdf>

2. Knowledge Renewal And Transformations

This part of the seminar will focus on knowledge generation, preservation, dissemination and discontinuation in organizations. In particular, we will address the issue of knowledge repositories in organizations, and how to develop a long term knowledge management that takes knowledge properties into consideration.

OPTIONAL READINGS

William H. STARBUCK (1992), "Learning by knowledge-intensive firms", *Journal of Management Studies*, 1992, 29(6): 713-740 <http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~wstarbuc/KIF.htm>

W.H. STARBUCK (1984), "Organizations as action generators." *American Sociological Review*, 1983, 48: 91-102. Reprinted in D. B. Gutknecht (ed.), *Meeting Organization and Human Resource Challenges*; University Press of America. <http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~wstarbuc/Actgens.htm>

3. Knowledge and Organizational Design

This part of the seminar focuses on the relationship between organizational design and knowledge generation and flows. In a first part, we will discuss the reciprocal influences between knowledge and physical architecture, by studying the Gehry building of the Case business school. Then, we will discuss knowledge acquisition and exploitation at NASA, as we will try to identify which design flaws led to the Columbia and Challenger disasters.

May 3rd, 2005

Tacit Knowledge, Knowledge Sharing and Competition

4. The Critical Role of Tacit Knowledge

Tacit knowledge has driven much attention from scholars and practitioners in the past decade. The objective of this session is to explore the research design and strategy when dealing with tacit forms of knowing, behaving and cognition. This class discussion will focus mainly on analyzing the research design of the "Familiar Stranger" project from Berkeley Intel Labs, and finding new research that could be conducted within the same hypotheses.

OPTIONAL READINGS

Ph. BAUMARD (1996), *Organisations déconcertées* Paris: Masson.

PH. BAUMARD (1999), *Tacit knowledge in organizations*, London : Sage.

Stephen GOURLAY (2002), "Tacit knowledge': the variety of meanings in empirical research", *Proceedings of the OKLC 2002 Conference* http://www.ofenhandwerk.com/oklc/pdf_files/B-2_gourlay.pdf

5. Knowledge Sharing & Transfer

Transferring knowledge between individuals and units is critical for organizational competitiveness. This session focuses on the mechanisms and processes of knowledge transfer within organizations. We will particularly focus on barriers and obstacles to knowledge transfer.

Optional Readings

Mihnea MOLDOVEANU, (1999), "The Ratification Fallacy", *Working Paper*, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto <http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/bicpapers/199909.pdf>

Case study: *Intel Research Berkeley Labs' "Familiar Stranger" project.*

<http://berkeley.intel-research.net/paulos/research/familiarstranger/index.htm>

6. Knowledge in Competition

Does a competitive advantage necessarily mean superior knowledge? We will try to challenge current myths on knowledge and competition by discussing several business cases. The objective of the session is to identify the critical factors that can turn organizational knowledge into competitive advantage.

OPTIONAL READINGS

Philippe BAUMARD (1996), "Oblique strategists: Gaining Competitive Advantage through Conjectural Knowledge in Unusually Aggressive Environments", *Working Paper* 9605, University of Paris-Dauphine. http://www.iae.univ-aix.fr/cv/baumard/oblique_knowledge.htm

Philippe BAUMARD and William H. STARBUCK (2004), "Learning from failures: Why it doesn't happen", *Working Paper, submitted to Special Issue of LRP: Long Range Planning on Organizational Failure*.

MAY 4TH, 2005

DESIGNING STRATEGY THAT ENCOMPASSES A KNOWLEDGE ADVANTAGE

7. Managing Knowledge in Networked Organizations

The second day of our seminar is dedicated to the management of knowledge in cooperative situations; i.e. extended organizations, networks of organizations and alliances with partners and complementors. This first session is an overview of the contingent factors affecting knowledge management in networked organizations.

Optional Reading

Henrich R. GREVE (1998), "Managerial cognition and the mimetic adoption of market positions: what you see is what you do", *Strategic Management Journal*, 19: 967-988 (1998)
http://faculty.fuqua.duke.edu/ciber/programs/pdf/greve_1998.pdf

8. Developing knowledge rents with complementors

This session focuses on knowledge management with partners that share the modeling of the business or the industry. A particular focus is given to the management of customer knowledge cooperatively with industry partners, and how organizations can mutually learn from each other when developing their customer's knowledge.

Optional Reading

Paul INGRAM and Gaurab BHARDWAJ (1998), "Strategic persistence in the face of contrary industry experience: Two experiments on the failure to learn from others", *Working Paper*, Columbia Business School. <http://www.columbia.edu/~pi17/expdrft3.pdf>

9. Aligning Knowledge with Corporate Strategy

The concluding session of the seminar focuses on the alignment between the corporate strategy and the knowledge capitalization of the firm. We will use Hax & Wile "Delta Model" in order to discuss how organizations can take the leadership on their industry and customers' knowledge through "lock-in" strategies, and ecosystem strategic leadership.

Optional Readings

William H. STARBUCK & Bo HEDBERG (2001), "How organizations learn from success and failure," with Bo L. T. Hedberg. Pages 327-350 in M. Dierkes, A. Berthoin Antal, J. Child, and I. Nonaka (eds.), *Handbook of Organizational Learning and Knowledge*, Oxford University Press.
<http://www.fek.su.se/home/boh/BillBo1230.doc>

Philippe BAUMARD (2002), « Connaissances tacites et implicites dans les délibérations de réorientations stratégiques », *Conference Proceedings*, AIMS 2002, Paris.
<http://www.strategie-aims.com/actes02/Fichiers/Baumard.pdf><http://www.iae.univ-aix.fr/cv/baumard/TaciteDirigeants.pdf>