

Introduction to the Minitrack on Knowledge Flows: Knowledge Transfer, Sharing and Exchange

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Abstract

This short paper serves to introduce the minitrack on knowledge flows and to summarize its constituent proceedings articles.

1. Introduction

Most practitioners and researchers recognize that knowledge flows are extremely important, especially in the current age where organizations have to learn and innovate continually in order to remain competitive. Given that knowledge is distributed unevenly through the enterprise, rapid and reliable knowledge flows are essential for organizations' sustainable competitive advantage.

Knowledge flows across people, organizations, places and times of creation, sharing and application. Knowledge flows are dynamic. And in order to harness the competitive power of this dynamic phenomenon, it is imperative to understand and manage effectively the associated knowledge-flow processes.

This minitrack examines the nature and role of knowledge flows (e.g., knowledge transfer, sharing and exchange) in the organizational context. The Call for Papers welcomed theoretical and empirical pieces addressing technical, managerial, behavioral, organizational, and economic perspectives on knowledge flows.

2. Summary of Articles

Six papers are presented as a part of this mini-track. We introduce them briefly below.

Shuradze and Wagner, in their paper titled "Data Analytics and Knowledge Integration Mechanisms: The Role of Social Interactions in Innovation Management," use the social capital literature as a base of argument for developing knowledge sharing in intraorganizational settings. They find that social interactions between IT and the organizational marketing function allow for knowledge sharing to take place. Holford, in his paper titled "Knowledge Flows in the Form of Entanglement

and 'Cuts': An Agential Realist Perspective on Knowledge Construction Phenomena Within an Aircraft Engine Manufacturing Workplace," explores the agential realist concept of phenomena, entanglement, and "cuts" where tacit and explicit knowledge is concerned. By examining a qualitative case study from the aerospace sector, the agential realist concept is confirmed, along with a better understanding of the uses of expert knowledge. Peng et al., in their paper titled "Co-membership, Networks Ties, and OSS Success: An Investigation Controlling Alternative Mechanisms for Knowledge Flow," examine the impacts of co-membership in open source software development (OSS). They investigate whether direct watching and observation are a possible means for learning and knowledge flow. Their study confirms that co-membership and watching are both positive influences in OSS development, and that co-membership is an effective method for building online social networks. Kim and Annabi, in their paper titled "Where Affinity Meets Practice: Emerging Communities of Practice to Meet the Needs of Korean IT Professionals" investigate the growing forms of social and professional support structures in the Korean IT industry. Their study reports on a case study regarding *Changball*, a Korean support entity similar to an "Affinity Group" or "Community of Practice" in the US, and they draw conclusions on the practical implications to the IT industry. Zhang's paper titled "Exploratory Key Nodes in the Inventor-Author Knowledge Diffusion Network" examines the literature in science and technology journals, along with data on technology patents, to determine the critical relationship nodes among different knowledge diffusion networks. After identifying these nodes, the paper makes recommendations on how to leverage the nodes for promotion and enhancement of knowledge diffusion. Finally, Bitar and Ryan, in their paper titled, "Designing Technology to Overcome the Lack of Transmission of HPV Facts: Step One—A Theory of the Problem," examine the apparent lack of information that is passed to women about the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). The study posits that ample medical information regarding both the disease and prevention exists, but

little of it is transferred to the population. The study theorizes about the lack of transmission of these HPV facts and identifies some barrier and resource factors to this effect.

3. Publication Opportunities

The minitrack papers published in this part of the proceedings will be considered further for adaptation into journal-length and – quality articles. Two established knowledge management journals have expressed interest: *Knowledge Management Research & Practice* [1] and the *International Journal of Knowledge Management* [2].

4. References

[1] Knowledge Management Research & Practice; URL: <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/kmrp> (2004).

[2] International Journal of Knowledge Management; URL: <http://www.idea-group.com/journals> (2004).