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Organizational Communication Division Panel Session:
Integrating the Theoretical and the Practical: The KDI Story

is scheduled on Saturday, 5/24/2003 from 11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Participant(s):

1. [Noshir S. Contractor](#) - U of Illinois (Panelist)
2. [Edward Palazzolo](#) - (Panelist)
3. [Chunke Su](#) - Univeristy of Illinois (Panelist)
4. [Ratan Suri](#) - UIUC (Panelist)
5. [Meikuan Huang](#) - UIUC (Panelist)
6. [Andrew Swarbrick](#) - UIUC (Panelist)
7. [Charles Schroeder](#) - US Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratory (Panelist)
8. [Mario Bica](#) - The Boeing Company (Panelist)
9. [David Braga](#) - The Boeing Company (Panelist)
10. [Peter Monge](#) - U Of Southern California (Panelist)
11. [Janet Fulk](#) - U Of Southern California (Chair)
12. [Francois Bar](#) - Stanford U (Respondent)
13. [Michelle D Shumate](#) - U of Southern California (Panelist)
14. [J. Alison Bryant](#) - U of Southern California (Panelist)
15. [Francesca Gardini](#) - U of Southern California (Panelist)
16. [Yu Yuan](#) - (Panelist)
17. [Andrea Hollingshead](#) - U of Illinois (Panelist)

18. [Raymond Levitt](#) - [Stanford](#) (Panelist)

19. [Knut Oxnevad](#) - [NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory](#) (Panelist)

PANEL DESCRIPTION:

ICA Panel Proposal 2003 – Organizational Communication Division & Academic-Industry Task Force

Title:

Integrating the Theoretical and the Practical: The KDI Story

Chair

Janet Fulk, U of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Respondent

Francois Bar, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA

Round Table Participants

Peter Monge, Janet Fulk, Michelle Shumate, J. Alison Bryant, Francesca Gardini, Yu Yuan, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA

David Braga and Mario Bica, The Boeing Company, Long Beach, CA

Noshir Contractor, Andrea Hollingshead, Edward Palazzolo, Chunke Su, Ratan Suri, Meikuan Huang, Andrew Swarbrick, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL

Lucio Biggiero, LUISS University, Italy

Charles Schroeder, US Army Construction Engineering Research Laboratory

Raymond Levitt, Francöis Bar, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA

Kunt Oxnevad, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, CA

Rationale

Academic-industry partnerships can often be a means to generate, share, and disseminate new knowledge. Some of the most promising involve networks of multiple research institutions and industry participants. This panel assesses a set of mechanisms developed and employed in an academic-industry research partnership involving four universities and several industry groups. One mechanism is the development and application of a web-based Knowledge Asset Mapping Exercise (KAME) that facilitates project team members' understanding of expertise distribution and coordination. The KAME also can be a source of input to computational models of knowledge management processes, which can lead to additional hypothesis generation as well as predictions of workflow problems in the real world project. This panel will describe the opportunities and challenges associated with this and other mechanisms and interventions for knowledge management in project teams.

Transactive memory theory, public goods theory, and coevolutionary theory are the three major theoretical frameworks guiding our research. In his seminal work on the conceptualization of group mind, Wegner (1987) describes transactive memory as "a set of individual memory systems in combination with the communication that takes place between individuals" (p. 186). The whole system is transactive because the capabilities of encoding, retrieving and storing expertise knowledge are distributed in the group, yet integrated through collaborative efforts from each team member. According to Wegner, the existence of a well-developed transactive memory system in a work group can greatly expand each individual person's capacity to encode, retrieve and store information,

thereby helping the group function more effectively.

Public goods theory mainly studies the key mobilizing factors of collective action, e.g. cost and gains of contribution. Because all members of the public can enjoy the good regardless of their level of contribution and the good itself is non-rival, realization of public good remains a big challenge in social science research. In our study, we mainly focus on corporate Intranet as a form of information public goods. We want to uncover the major motivating factors that encourage members of an organization to become active contributors of the corporate Intranet.

Coevolutionary theory argues that multi-levelled variation and selection shapes the paths of individuals, teams, and organizations in knowledge networks. Monge and Contractor (2003) demonstrate that individual learning has implication for group learning and organizational learning. Each individual variation in the knowledge network, or each difficulty a team has in accomplishing a task is an opportunity for reconfiguration of the knowledge network.

Through close collaboration between academic and industry partners, we hope that the development of a more refined theory will better inform industrial practice, and vice versa. Industry will gain an intervention based upon the theoretical bases of transactive memory and public goods theories. Academics gain new insight into the predictors of behaviors and how teams coevolve over time.

75-word rationale for program

Academic and industry partnerships benefit both the quality of field research and the types of training available to industry. The KDI story, the results of a three-year National Science Foundation grant, presents an overview of several of these partnerships. Academics used web-based knowledge mapping and computational models to examine the dynamics of knowledge networks. Industry gained new forms of training for its members based upon empirical evaluation and grounded in theory.

Chair:

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