

# ▼ Introduction to Knowledge Flows: Knowledge Transfer, Sharing and Exchange in Organizations Minitrack

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## 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

Twelve papers are presented in four sessions as a part of this mini-track. We introduce them briefly below.

Richard Jolly and Wayne Wakeland in their paper examine information sharing in organizations by integrating game theory analysis with agent-based simulation. Mark Chun, Kiho Sohn, Priscilla Arling and Nelson F. Granados, in their paper describe one company's use of a systems thinking approach to define and improve knowledge management within the firm. Yongsuk Kim and Sirkka Jarvenpaa, in their paper expand theoretical and empirical understanding of the role of boundary spanners in increasing the situational visibility in cross-boundary knowledge sharing in a global company. Wang et al.'s paper examines the effect of individuals' involvement in Communities of Practice (CoP) on their learning, and job performance. Holford et al., drawing on the results of a qualitative study, proposes a new framework for

achieving effective knowledge sharing, and suggests that sharing of knowledge occurs as a result of boundary construction/actor interactions. Drawing on the theory of planned behavior and prior literature on social capital, Chou et al. proposes (and empirically validates) a model on how to effectively create knowledge within networks of practice. Li and Holsapple, in their paper, adopt a social network theory perspective, and attempt to understand how work is designed in knowledge-based organizations. Song et al.'s study differentiate between solicited knowledge sharing (KS) and voluntary KS, and attempt to examine the role of both types of actual sharing behaviors in relation to: task structure, culture, and knowledge process at work unit level. Chilton et al.'s study proposes and tests the relationships between the users of both tacit and explicit knowledge and their preferred cognitive style. Samarah et al.'s paper builds on Nonaka's theory of organizational knowledge creation to present and test a research model that focuses on knowledge conversion in CT supported group work. Cooper's paper extends the concept of weak and strong ties to the relationship between an individual and a project, in the context of a formal review process. Massey et al.'s paper conceptually compare and contrast media perceptions and meanings, and the implications for KT when (in) congruencies exist between KT partners.

## 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 relatively new 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).