

**Information & Knowledge Management (MIS 381N.7)
Fall 2006 Course Syllabus**

Unique number: #03785
Meeting time: MW 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.
Meeting location: GSB 3.130

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Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the organizational and management issues surrounding the emergence of information and knowledge as a key factor in the competitive advantage of a firm. The course is organized around two ideas, 1) knowledge as a manageable asset, and 2) why organizations don't use what they know. A basic assumption of the class is that organizations are complex adaptive systems operating in a highly competitive, information and knowledge rich environment.

A short summary of the first part of the course might be, “How do you get people who work for you to talk to each other around the water fountain about things of benefit to you and to the firm?” While the talk might be quite sophisticated and it might be technology enabled, the problem is still the same. The second part of the course might be summarized as, “Why do smart people with good intentions often fail to use management strategies that have been shown to work?” The reasons are sometimes simple and sometimes not, but the problem must be solved in order for someone to be a successful knowledge manager.

Required Course Materials

1. Davenport, Thomas H. (2005). *Thinking for a Living*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
2. Pfeffer, Jeffrey & Sutton, Robert I. (2006). *Hard Facts, Dangerous Half-Truths, & Total Nonsense: Profiting from Evidence-Based Management*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
3. Course packet available from the University Duplicating Service in GSB Distribution Center.

Student Deliverables

- First paper on a topic related to working knowledge (30% of final grade) **due Monday, October 23.**
- Short presentation of first paper (10% of final grade).
- Second paper on a topic related to evidence-based management (30% of final grade) **due Monday, December 4.**
- Short presentation of second paper (10% of final grade).
- Class participation (20% of final grade).

Example Paper Topics

1. Typical managerial beliefs that may inhibit good knowledge management.
2. How can one go about valuing a knowledge asset?
3. Critical difficulties in the codification and abstraction of knowledge in a service company.
4. The role of technology in effective knowledge management in organizations.
5. How can managers use social network analysis to better understand and influence the flow of information and knowledge among employees?
6. What are strategies managers use to reconcile the tensions between fundamental unknowability and knowledge management?

COURSE SCHEDULE

Part I: Knowledge as a Manageable Asset - Managing People and Organizations that Think for a Living
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Wednesday, August 30, 2006

Introduction and overview of the course; organizations as complex adaptive systems

Reading:

- McDaniel, Reuben R., Jr. (2004). Chaos and Complexity in a Bioterrorism Future. In John D. Blair, Myron D. Fottler, & Albert C. Zapantam (Eds.). *Advances in Health Care Management*, Vol. 4 (pp.119-139). Oxford, UK: Elsevier, Ltd.

Monday, September 4, 2006

Labor Day Holiday – No class

Wednesday, September 6, 2006

Organizations as complex adaptive systems and implications for information and knowledge management; knowledge as a manageable asset

Readings:

- Davenport, T.H. & Prusak, L. (2000). "What do we talk about when we talk about knowledge?" Chapter 1: *Working Knowledge*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Boisot, M. & Child, J. (1999). Organizations as Adaptive Systems in Complex Environments: The Case of China. *Organization Science*, 10(3), 237-252.
- Davenport, T. H., DeLong, D. W. & Beers, M. C. (1998). Successful Knowledge Management Projects. *Sloan Management Review*, Winter, 43-57.

Monday, September 11, 2006

Managing people who think for a living; what is a knowledge worker? What do we mean when we talk about knowledge codification, knowledge abstraction and knowledge diffusion?

Readings:

- Davenport chapters 1 & 2: “What is a knowledge worker anyway?” & “How knowledge workers differ and the difference it makes”
- Boisot, M. & Cox, B. (1999). The I-Space: A Framework for Analyzing the Evolution of Social Computing. *Technovation*, 19, 525-536.

Wednesday, Sept 13, 2006

Understanding knowledge generation in organizations; managing tacit and explicit knowledge

Readings:

- Nonaka, I. (1994). A Dynamic Theory of Organizational Knowledge Creation. *Organization Science*, 5(1), 14-37.
- Stenmark, D. (2000-2001). Levering Tacit Organizational Knowledge. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 17(3), 9-24.

Monday, September 18, 2006

Issues of measuring knowledge and knowledge management in organizations

Readings:

- Davenport chapter 3: “Interventions, measures, and experiments in knowledge work”
- Pfeffer & Sutton (2000). “When Measurement obstructs good judgment.” Chapter 5: *The Knowing-Doing Gap*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Nonaka, I., Umeno, K., & Sasaki, K. *Managing and Measuring Knowledge in Organizations*. Chapter 6: Three Tales of Knowledge-Creating Companies, 146-172.

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Knowledge work processes; creation, application, distribution, innovation, learning and sensemaking.

Readings:

- Davenport chapter 4: “Knowledge work processes”
- Brown, J.S. & Duguid, P. (1991). Organizational learning and communities-of-practice: Toward a unified view of working, learning, and innovation. *Organization Science*, 2: 40-57.

Monday, September 25, 2006

Information technology as an enabler and inhibitor of knowledge management

Readings:

- Davenport chapter 5: “Organizational technology for knowledge workers”
- Alavi, M. & Leidner, D. E. (2001). Review: Knowledge Management and Knowledge Management Systems Conceptual Foundations and Research Issues. *MIS Quarterly*, 25(1), 107-136.
- Silver, C. A. (2000). Where Technology and Knowledge Meet. *Journal of Business Strategy*, November/December, 28-33.

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

The practice of managing knowledge workers; managing dynamic knowledge networks; the reasons that people talk with each other might not be the reasons that we expect.

Readings:

- Davenport chapters 6 & 7: “Developing individual knowledge worker capabilities” & “Investing in knowledge workers’ networks and learning”
- Rosenkopf, Lori (2000). Managing Dynamic Knowledge Networks. In George S. Day, Paul J.H. Schoemaker, & Robert E. Gunter (Eds.) *Wharton on Managing Emerging Technologies*, Chapter 15, p. 337-357. John Wiley & Sons, New York, NY.
- *Do Talk to Strangers: Encouraging Performative Ties to Create Competitive Advantage* (2005). Knowledge Management at Wharton.
<http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/index.cfm?fa=printArticle&ID=1285>

Monday, October 2, 2006

Guest Lecture: Professor Huseyin Tanriverdi, Department of Information, Risk, and Operations Management, McCombs School of Business.

Topic and any assigned reading(s) will be provided during the semester.

Wednesday, October 4, 2006

Work environment and knowledge management; knowledge worker productivity

Readings:

- Davenport chapter 8: “The physical work environment and knowledge worker performance”
- Drucker, P. F. (1999). Knowledge-Worker Productivity: The Biggest Challenge. *California Management Review*, 41(2), 79-94.

Monday, October 9, 2006

Knowledge management in action; the knowing-doing gap

Readings:

- Davenport chapter 9: “Managing knowledge workers”
- Pfeffer & Sutton (2000). “Knowing ‘what’ to do is not enough.” Chapter 1: *The Knowing-Doing Gap*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Battling Bad Behavior, (Article on the web, go to: <http://www.the-scientist.com/2006/2/1/51/1/>), 20(2), p51, February 2006.

Wednesday, October 11, 2006

Paper presentations

Monday, October 16, 2006

Paper Presentations

Wednesday, October 18, 2006

Paper presentations

Part II: Evidence-Based Management

Monday, October 23, 2006

First paper due

Introduction to evidence-based management

Readings:

- Pfeffer & Sutton chapters 1 & 2: “Why every company needs evidence-based management” & “How to practice evidence-based management”

Wednesday, October 25, 2006

The interrelationship between work life and personal life

Readings:

- Pfeffer & Sutton chapter 3: “Is work fundamentally different from the rest of life and should it be?”
- Pratt, M. G. & Ashforth, B. E. (2003). *Positive Organizational Scholarship*. Chapter 20: “Fostering meaningfulness in working and at work” pp. 309-327, San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Monday, October 30, 2006

Knowledge management issues surrounding hiring the people who work for you and managing people through incentives.

Readings:

- Pfeffer & Sutton chapters 4 & 5: “Do the best organizations have the best people?” & “Do financial incentives drive company performance?”

Wednesday, November 1, 2006

Strategy as an activity that illuminates and obscures effective action; change and innovation as strategies for organizational survival

Reading:

- Pfeffer & Sutton chapters 6 & 7: “Strategy is destiny” & “Change or die?”

Monday, November 6, 2006

Control in organizations: do managers control the people who work for them?

Reading:

- Pfeffer & Sutton chapter 8: “Are great leaders in control of their companies?”
- Worline, M. C. & Quinn, R. W. (2003). *Positive Organizational Scholarship*. Chapter 10: “Courageous principled action” pp. 138-157, San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
- Kelleher, Herb (1997). A culture of commitment. *Leader to Leader*, 2, 20-24.

Wednesday, November 8, 2006

Using evidence-based management practices for effective knowledge management

Readings:

- Pfeffer & Sutton chapter 9: “Profiting from evidence-based management”
- Lesser, E., Mundel, D., & Wiecha, C. (2000). Managing Customer Knowledge. *Journal of Business Strategy*, November/December, 35-37.
- Edmondson, Amy C. (1996). Learning from mistakes is easier said than done: Group and organizational influences on the detection and correction of human error. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 32 (1), 5-27.

Monday, November 13, 2006

Successful knowledge management; sensemaking, learning and methods of experimentation.

Readings:

- Thomas, J. B., Sussman, S. W., & Henderson, J. C. (2001). Understanding “Strategic Learning”: Linking Organizational Learning, Knowledge Management, and Sensemaking. *Organization Science*, 12(3), 331-345.
- Edmonson, A. C., Bohmer, R. M. & Pisano, G. P. (2001). Disrupted Routines: Team Learning and New Technology Implementation in Hospitals. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 46, 685-716.
- Sommer, Svenja C. & Loch, Christopher H. (2004). Selectionism and learning in projects with complexity and unforeseeable uncertainty. *Management Science*, 50(10), 1334-1347.
- Thompke, Stephan, von Hippel, Eric, Franke, Roland (1998). Modes of experimentation: an innovation process – and competitive – variable. *Research Policy*, 27, 315-332.

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

Future knowledge management issues; knowledge management and leadership

Readings:

- Lyles, M. A. & Easterby-Smith, M. (2003). *The Blackwell Handbook of Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management*. Chapter 32: Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management: Agendas for Future Research, pp.639-652. Blackwell Publishing Ltd., Malden, MA.
- Senge, Peter (2005). Missing the Boat on Leadership. *Leader to Leader*, 38, 28-30.
- Austin, Rob & Devin, Lee (2004). Successful Innovation through Artful Process. *Leader to Leader*, 32, 48-55.

Monday, November 20, 2006

Paper presentations

Wednesday, November 22, 2006

******No Class******

Monday, November 27, 2006

Paper presentations

Wednesday, November 29, 2006

Paper presentations

Monday, December 4, 2006

****Second paper due****

Information and knowledge management review

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

****Last day of class****

Information and knowledge management review