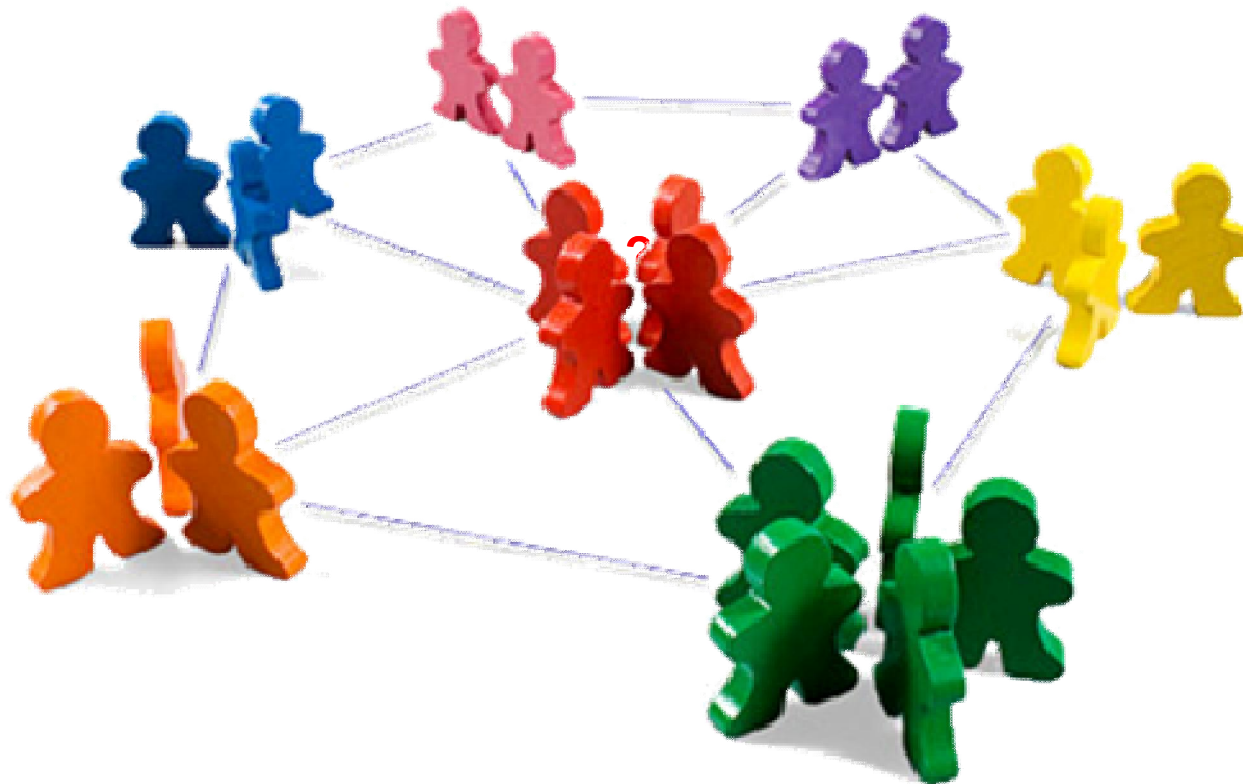


Knowledge Governance in Corporate Knowledge Sharing Networks



Sirkka L. Jarvenpaa

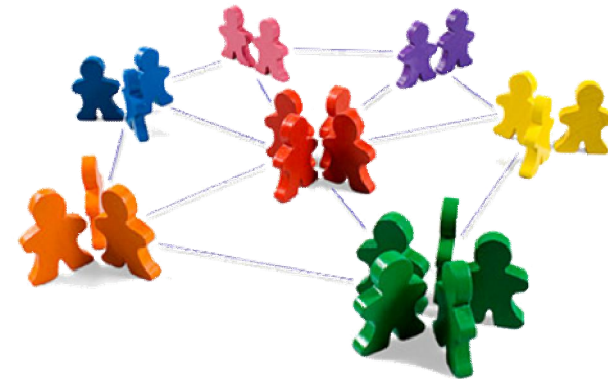


Leveraging Organizational Knowledge

"If only HP knew what HP knows, we would be three times more productive."

– Lew Platt, Former CEO of HP

How can companies effectively tap the employee crowd to become more productive (and innovative)?



McKinsey's 2010 Web 2.0 Report (N = 3, 249)

70% reported investing in technologies to build an **informal electronic advice network** within their firms

to increase speed of access to in-house expertise and to share knowledge across organizational silos



Focus

- **Knowledge Governance:**

Choosing structures and mechanisms that can influence the processes of sharing and creating knowledge in preferred directions and towards preferred levels

- Example Formal Structures: awards, monetary rewards, specialization, departmentalization (Foss et al 2009)

- **Knowledge Sharing Networks:**

Informal networks, culture, communities of practice, volunteer networks, self organizing, problem solving, innovation



Informal Knowledge Sharing in Organizations

“We built it, but they did not come”

Have you tried endorsing informal knowledge sharing and learning in your org?

Like allowing employees to wear Jeans on Friday?

Never mind!

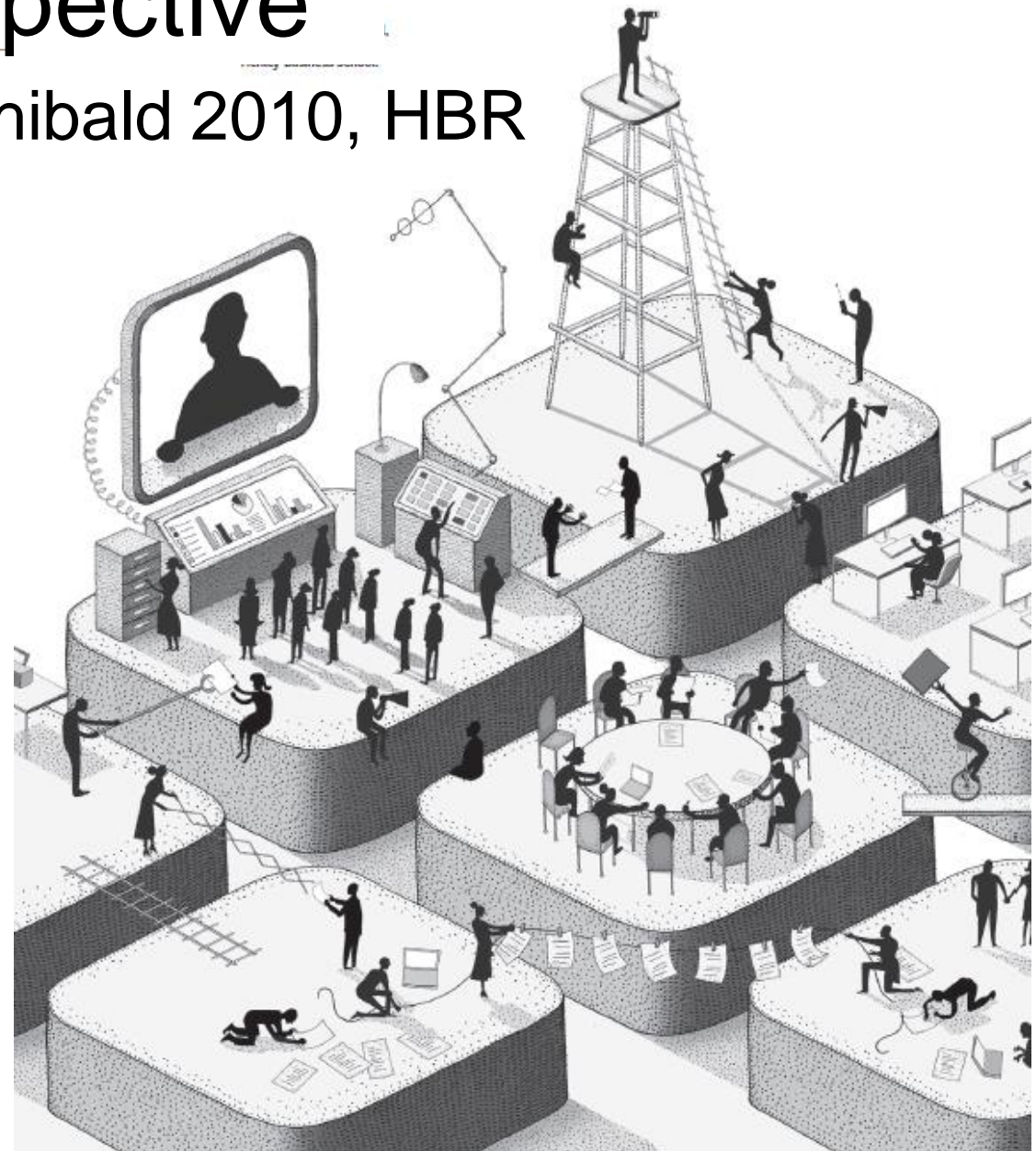




Practice Perspective

McDermott and Archibald 2010, HBR

“in-house networks of experts—or “communities of practice”—were **once entirely unofficial**, today they are **increasingly integrated into companies’ formal management structures**”





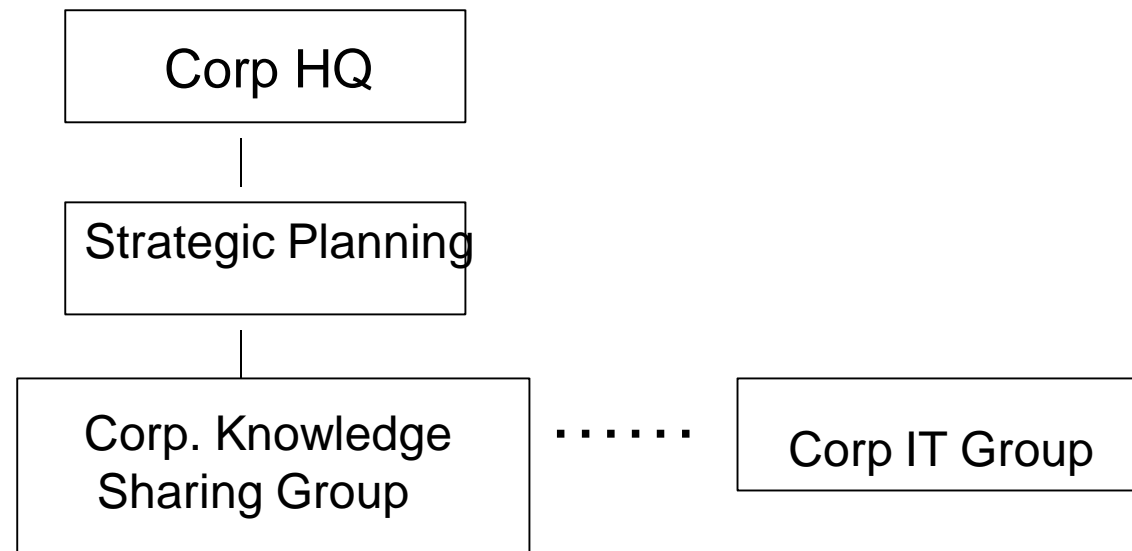
Academic Perspective

- **Knowledge sharing is a prosocial and extra role behavior**
 - Intrinsic motivation, reciprocity, social capital
- **Knowledge sharing participation cannot be forced or mandated; knowledge sharing is fundamentally rooted in an individual's autonomous actions**
- **Knowledge sharing is ...“voluntary acts of helping others by providing information”**



Case Study

- **Large diversified global organization (autonomous business units)**
- **Centralized Knowledge Sharing Group**

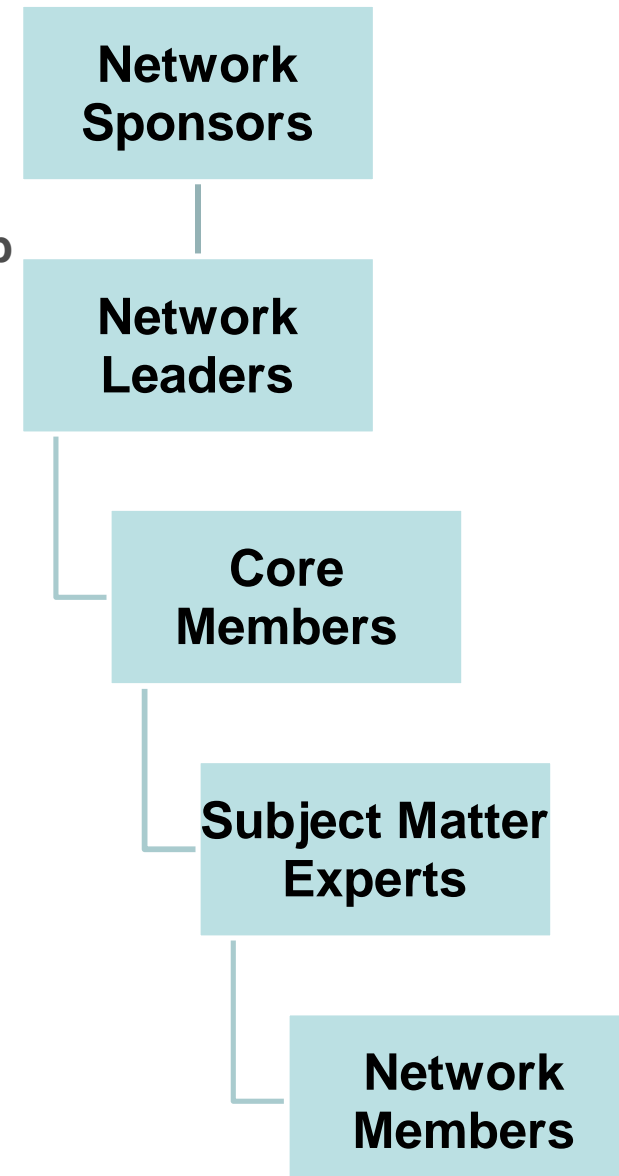


Enterprise wide KS approach yet business unit funded



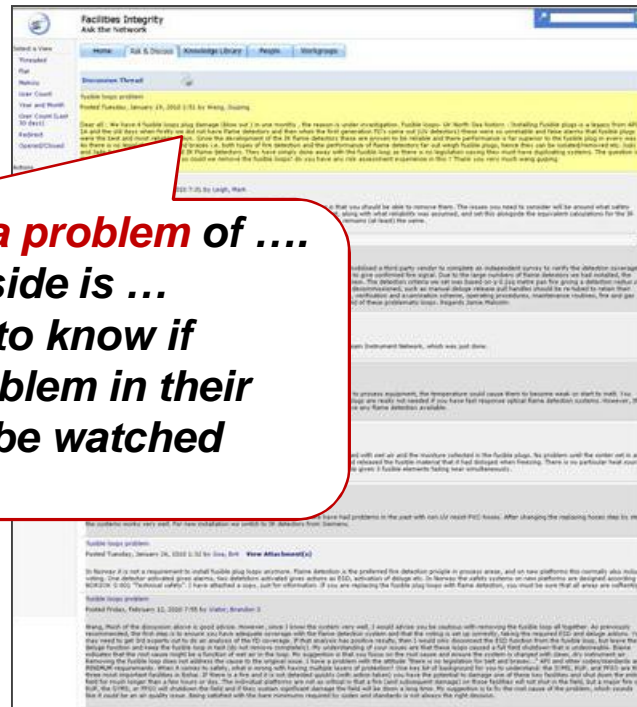
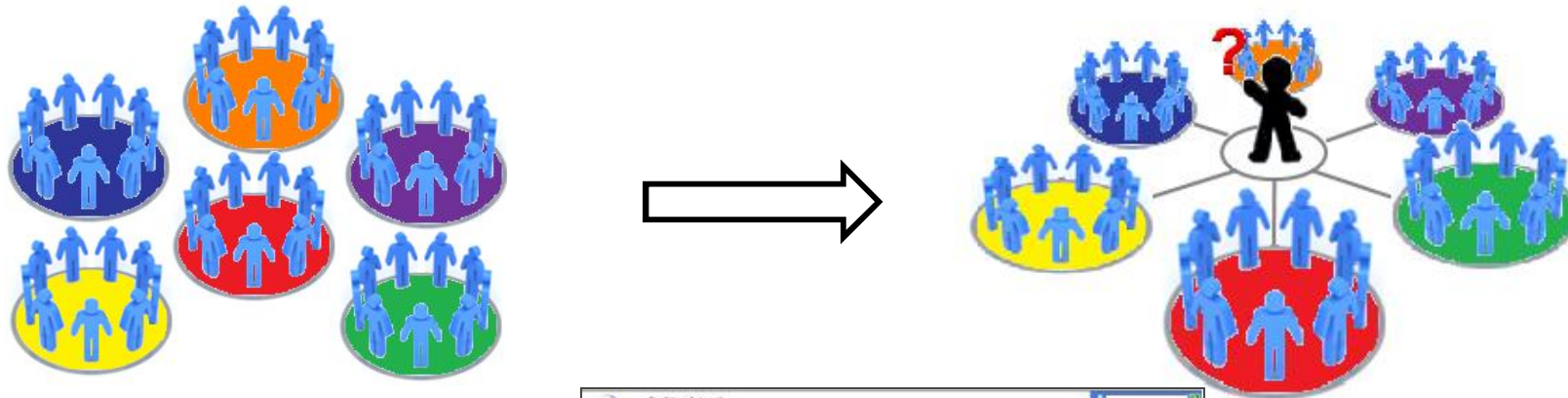
Formal Structure Builds and Leverages Accountability

- Formal network governance structure matches the corporate business units
- Provides structure, governance & leadership necessary for effective networks
- Core network members are made up of line managers from BUs and functions; accountable for networks
- KS Process: advise seeker-> volunteer members-> core members->leader->subject matter experts->advise seeker
- Annual network measurement across business goals, corporate wide awards





Formalization of Networks Facilitates Cross Network Communication



“For our project on ... , we have a problem of One solution is ..., but the downside is ... Another solution is We’d like to know if others have experienced this problem in their project and what aspect need to be watched for....”

- Facility Integrity
- Facility Optimization
- Facility Integrity
- Facility Optimization
- Power Automation
- Facility Integrity
- Equipment
- HSI
- SSS



Knowledge Sharing at the Company

Analysis: 5 yrs of activity in 130 knowledge forums with 13,000 unique members





Overall TopLine Findings

Members part of the formal structure are 7 times more likely to reply to a question

More formal members participate, more other formal members participate (no impact on members out of the formal structure)

Formal structure is a double edged sword because it weakens the influence between those in the formal structure and those not in the structure.

Formal structure does not mitigate the negative effect of individual's geographic distance for contribution

Formal structure weakens the network's geographic dispersion (“local knowledge diversity”)



Proposition

- **Too formalized knowledge governance can promote “divide” between those in formal and out of formal structure because of their different contribution rates and influence**
- **The implications of the “divide” might be counter to promoting innovation and strategic change in the company**



Knowledge Governance

**Formal
Structures**

**Informal
Structures**





Question at Issue

- *What should be the principles of knowledge governance so that there is balance between informal and formal knowledge structures and mechanisms?*

The screenshot shows a web application titled 'Leveraging Knowledge for Continuous Improvement'. The main content area is for a 'Facility Optimization' network. It includes a navigation menu on the left with options like 'Home', 'Ask & Discuss', 'Find & Submit', 'People', 'Workgroups', and 'Tools'. The main content area features a 'Network Purpose' section, a list of 'LATEST ITEMS' with columns for subject, replies, posted by, and modified, and a 'NEWS' section with a 'Recognize & Reward' banner. The interface is designed for collaborative knowledge sharing and management.