The Realities of Virtuality: 25 Principles of Proven Practice

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Topics

- Why Go Virtual?
- Dimensions of Virtuality
- 25 Principles of Proven Practice
- An Example
- Challenges and Success Factors
The Realities of Virtuality: Why Go Virtual?

- Access to scarce/expensive resources (scale)
- Pooling resources/expertise (scope)
- New insights, new expertise (reach)
- Cross-fertilization of knowledge & experience
- Creating communities of excellence
- Flexibility - resources with responsiveness

"Collaboration gives the ability to link diverse assets into unique capabilities and leverage in pursuit of new opportunities" (Ghoshal and Bartlett)

Three Megatrends

Technology
- Performance; Connectivity; Portability

Information/Knowledge Work
> 70% of work is information intensive

Globalization
- of markets, products and resources/labour
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The New Economy

Global, Knowledge-based, Networked

Location Independence

... A ‘Virtual’ World

Virtual Working and Trading

Space

Local-Global
Synchronous-Asynchronous
Specified-Flexible etc.

Time

Structure

Stable-Dynamic
Aggregated-Dispersed etc.

.... Many Opportunities for Innovation
New Strategies (examples)

- 24-hour unmanned ‘shop’ - the WWW
- Remote back-office, call centre e.g. Dell
- Outsourcing e.g. software in India
- Global partners/individuals e.g. designer in Finland
- Virtual teams / organizations e.g. AgileWeb, VClip
- Sunshine engineering e.g. Ernst & Young Y2K
- Formalize teleworking e.g. Ericsson

New (Virtual) Work Patterns

- Virtual Organizations
- Virtual Labs etc.
- Virtual Teams
- Telework

Adapted from a network ‘holonomy’ - a whole yet a part (Koestler/ Lipnack and Stamps)
Virtual Knowledge Teams

- Many types e.g.
  - distributed people in a team
  - distributed teams around the world
- One person - many teams/links
- Used in design, projects, problem-solving
- Video-conferencing popular
- Becoming part of daily work
- Effectiveness varies widely

25 Principles of Proven Practice

5 groups of 5:
- Teams and Teaming
- Team Commitment
- Team Communications and Processes
- Team Technology
- Team Knowledge
Teams and Teaming

1. Teams are the organization powerhouse
2. Best knowledge teams: 5-8, multi-disciplined
3. Larger groups for cohesion or networking
   … but not real work!
4. Each individual in 2 or more teams
5. Distinguish person and role.

Team Commitment

6. Clarity of purpose - mission, vision, goals
7. Norms and values
8. Map out networks - core and extended teams
   e.g. Netmap often shows teams are wrong!
9. Determine interdependencies/ flows
10. Individuals maintain personal networks
Team Processes

11. Communicate, communicate, communicate
12. Active listening - play back - understand
13. Recognize fuzziness of decision making
14. Learn together - all the time
15. Build trust in depth
......don’t get too task focused!! Think process

Team Technology

16. Not just email - a broad mix
17. Agree standards and product set
18. Make team documents web-centric
19. Content/usages standards e.g. email
20. Experiment - but don’t use a technology just for the sake of it
Knowledge Communities

**Effective**
- Clear shared purpose
- People profiles
- FAQs
- Threaded conversations
- Good moderation
- Knowledge editing
- Attention to process/FTF

**Ineffective**
- When time constraints
- Wrong participants
- No clarity/coherence
- Wandering ‘off topic’
- Off vs. on record clarity
- No summarizing/FAQs
- Technology gimmicks

Team Knowledge

21. A vital resource - who is responsible?
22. Emails are embryonic knowledge
23. A knowledge editor for each domain
24. Capture lessons all the time
25. Personal Knowledge: Know your colleagues!

......Conversations and Collections
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Value through Knowledge Flows

External Environment

Tacit Knowledge

Knowledge Creations

Learn

Knowledge Absorption

Rapid Conversion

Embedded Knowledge
- Products
- Processes etc.

Knowledge Base

Explicit Knowledge

Tacit Knowledge

Ideas

Insights

Knowledge Creation

Codification

Rapid Conversion

Knowledge Base

 Explicit Knowledge

The ETD Experience

- 7 partners/40+ collaborators (global)
- Extensive use of email/lists (not forums)
- Basic communications standards/’rules’
- Project intranet (via the Internet - layers)
- Web-centric knowledge - database driven
- Periodic face-to-face meetings

..... focus on communications - not technology

Bottom line: World’s premier telework web site
**The Realities of Virtuality: 25 Proven Principles**

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### Critical Success Factors
- Complementary Competencies and Culture
- Compelling Vision
- Clear expectations: needs vs. offers
- Well developed KM/ICT infrastructures but..
- Focus on People and Processes
- Continuous learning and experimentation
- A Set of Working Principles!

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### A Framework for Success

- Technology & Networks
- Strategy & Process
- Knowledge
- Virtualization
- Globalization
- People & Organization

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Virtualization - a balancing act

Same Place-Time
- Close relationships
- High interaction
- Contextual awareness
- Physical resources
- ‘Casual encounters’
- Creative stimulation

Different Place-Time
- Access ‘world-class’
- Richness-Diversity
- Global perspective
- Quality- local validation
- Timeliness
- Cost avoidance

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