New Tools for Coordination and Leadership of Virtual Work

WORKSHOP SESSION 3

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SOCIO TECHNICAL SYSTEMS ROUNDTABLE
www.STSRoundtable.com

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A Note About Using and Sharing Our Work

- We are happy to share our work with you, and to have you share it with others.
- We would love to know if you adapt or build upon it, and to have you share that with us.
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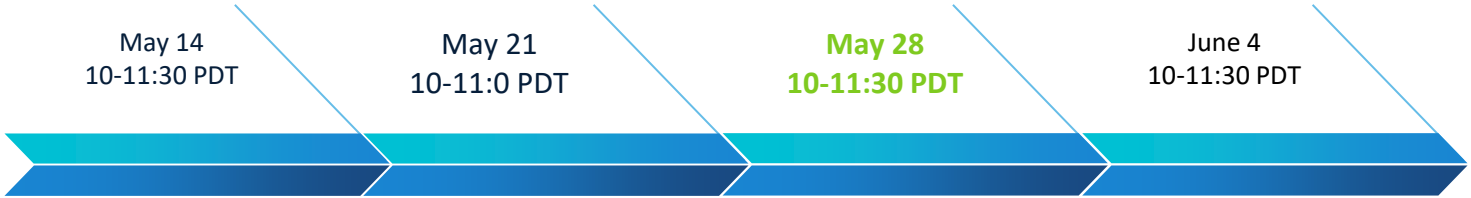
•*"New Tools for Coordination and Leadership of Virtual Work", Doug Austrom, Betsy Merck, Bert Painter, Pam Posey, STSRT, 2020.*
• *Research supported by the National Science Foundation: NSF-VOSS Award #0943237*

New Tools for Coordination and Leadership of Virtual Work

How the Series Works



Session 1

Diagnosing the Challenges We Face in Virtual Work

Session 2

Developing Solutions to Address the Challenges

Session 3

Coordinating Virtual Work for Success

Session 4

Leading Virtual Work for Success- Putting it All Together

Session 3 Objectives: Coordinating Virtual Work for Success

Reinforce our knowledge of barriers

What's the approach to resolve those barriers?

✓ Learn to design processes to better coordinate virtual individual and team effort and reduce knowledge barriers to success

TODAY'S AGENDA

- Welcome
- Workshop Overview and Session Objectives
- Participant Check-in's
- Key Concept: Knowledge Barriers
- Key Concept: Coordination Mechanisms
- Wrap-Up & Homework

Participant Check-in's

Please use the CHAT to share your questions and reflections about barriers to effective deliberations.

Deliberation Barriers You Identified

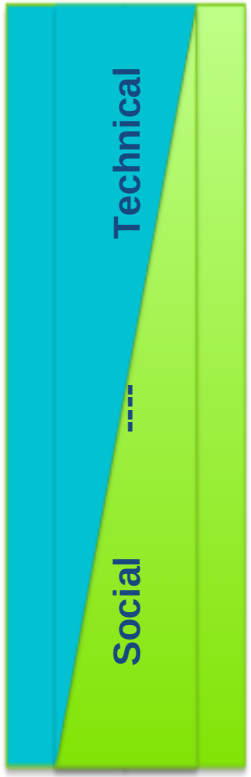
- Participants' lack of technical skills
- Technical barriers
- More exhausting to pay attention
- Potential mis-understanding and mis-communication
- More challenging to get spontaneity and incubation on ideas that then can be discussed informally
- High emotions
- High financial (cost increase, revenue decrease)
- Politics (narrow interests and agendas)
- History of previous problems and conflicts
- Not enough "chunking" of material.
- Identifying participants who have great ideas but would rather not contribute actively to the deliberations
- Ill prepared meetings
- A bias from senior leadership towards decision versus deliberative processes
- Multi-tasking (doings the things at the same time)
- Too much info sharing for exhausting medium
- Content of deliberations initially seen as same as if nothing had changed in terms of uncertainties
- Not focusing on uncertainties and getting clarity first
- Virtual takes more time
- Not focusing on uncertainties and getting clarity first
- Lack of high touch

Barriers* to Deliberation Effectiveness

Barriers	Examples
Knowledge sharing	• Lack of trust and cooperation • Conflicting goals/priorities • Unwillingness to share or involve others • Lack of serendipitous and informal sharing • Protecting proprietary intellectual property
Knowledge acquisition	• Not using existing data; incompatible data bases; imprecise analytics • Difficulties accessing relevant knowledge due to information overload • Lack of available information, data or external input
Frame of reference	• Language and cultural differences • Diverse work practices • Silo thinking • Mental models/paradigm blindness
Knowledge retention	• Poor documentation • Unclear document management procedures • Undefined/diffused responsibilities • IP Ownership conflict
Process, technology, and lack of presence	• Technology glitches; weak internet signals, software and platform limitations, etc. • Lack of planning and unrealistic time frames • Poorly managed forums/meetings • Screen fatigue • Lack of physical presence … “out-of-sight, out of mind” • Unshared tacit knowledge • Missing the non-verbal's … mis-reading emotions

* Adapted from Ron Purser et al, 1992. The Influence of Deliberations on Learning in New Product Teams,, *Journal of Engineering & Technology Management.*

Categories of Coordinating Mechanisms



Standards - rule based

- Examples: data formats, standardized procedures, process standardization, output standards, standardized training

Plans – result based

- Examples: delivery schedules, project milestones, task/project management software, compelling ‘mission’

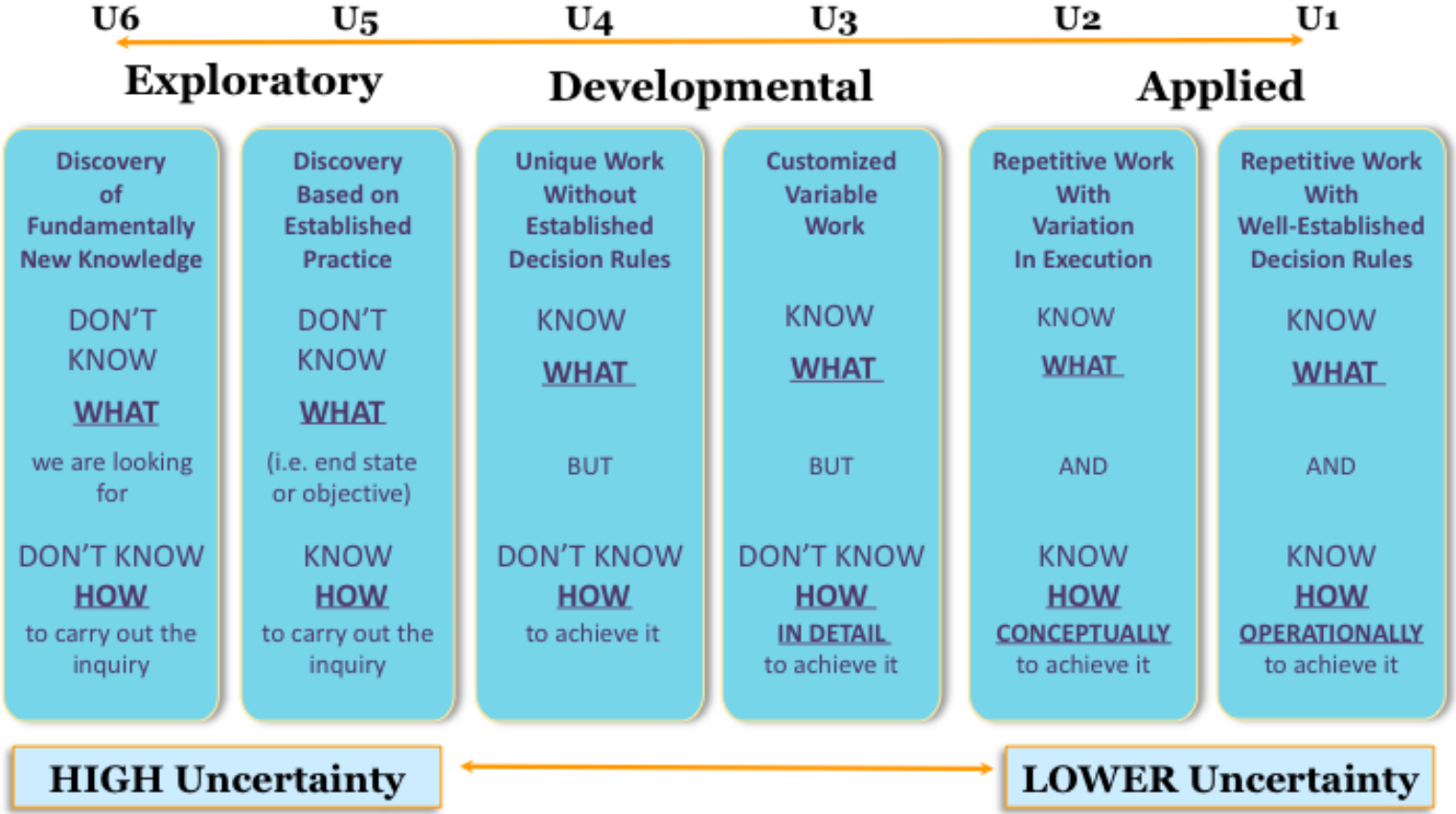
Formal mutual adjustment

- Examples: shared database/repository, content creation/communication software, formal meetings, task forces, networking roles

Informal mutual adjustment

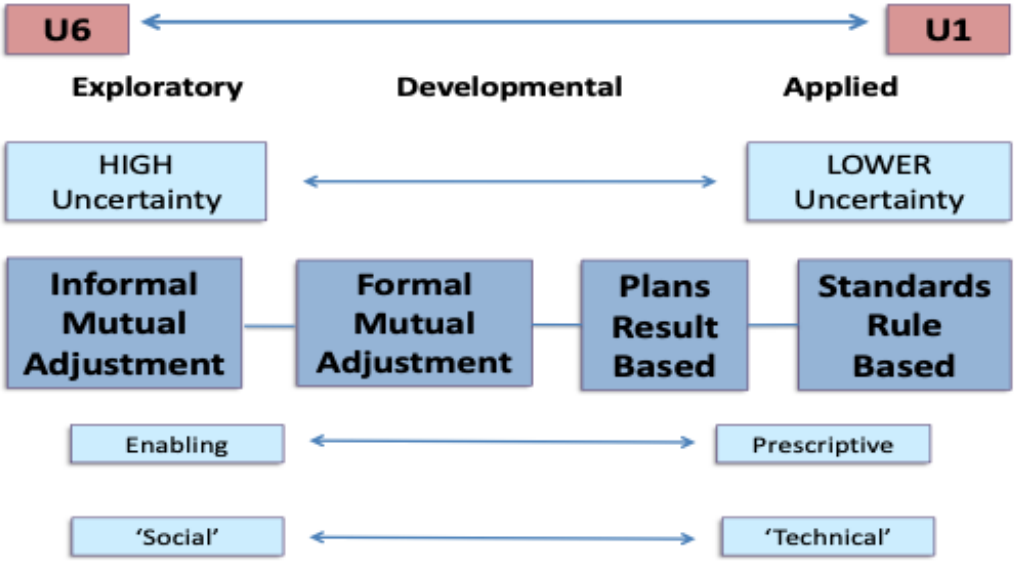
- Examples: informal meetings/chats, impromptu communications, temporary f2f co-location

CONTINUUM of WORK UNCERTAINTY



Adapted by Carolyn Ordowich, STS Associates, Inc. from Andrew C. Revkin, R2-D2 and Other Lessons From Bell Labs, New York Times, Dot Earth Blog, December 12, 2008 & Eddie Obeng, Putting Strategy To Work, 1996, Financial Times Pearson Publishing.

COORDINATION
Across the Continuum of Work Uncertainty



Breakout Group Activity

Total time: 20 minutes

Choose a spokesperson to report out on your discussions, questions and insights.

Directions

- ✓ Each of you will share the following …
  - ✓ Location of your work on the uncertainty continuum
  - ✓ A barrier you are experiencing or anticipate in your work.
  - ✓ How do you currently coordinate your work?
- ✓ With your breakout group, discuss how you might improve your current approach to coordination.
- ✓ After 5 min, move discussion to the next person in the group.

What Did We Do Today and Where Are We Going Next?

Today's Key Lessons

- Categories of Knowledge Barriers
- Coordinating Mechanisms and Relationship to the Continuum of Work Uncertainty

What's Coming Up in Session 4

- New Leadership for Success in a Virtual Environment
- Putting it All Together -- Principles for Success

Homework

Before our next session:

- ✓ Reflect on the “leadership” challenges that you are experiencing or observing in your virtual work.

Don’t forget to sign up for Session 4 on June 4, 2020, 10:00 - 11:30am PDT.

Thank you!

If you are interested in learning more about this work, a selection of readings, our Zoom session recording and our slide deck will be posted shortly on our website: www.STSRoundtable.com

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See You Next Week