



New Tools for Coordination and Leadership of Virtual Work

WORKSHOP SESSION 1

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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.
- If you do use our work, please give appropriate credit to our team and the National Science Foundation*, and indicate if any changes were made in our original materials/work.
- You are welcome to adapt or make changes in any reasonable way, but not in any way that suggests that we or the NSF endorses you or your use.”

•“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

■ A Workshop in Four Sessions

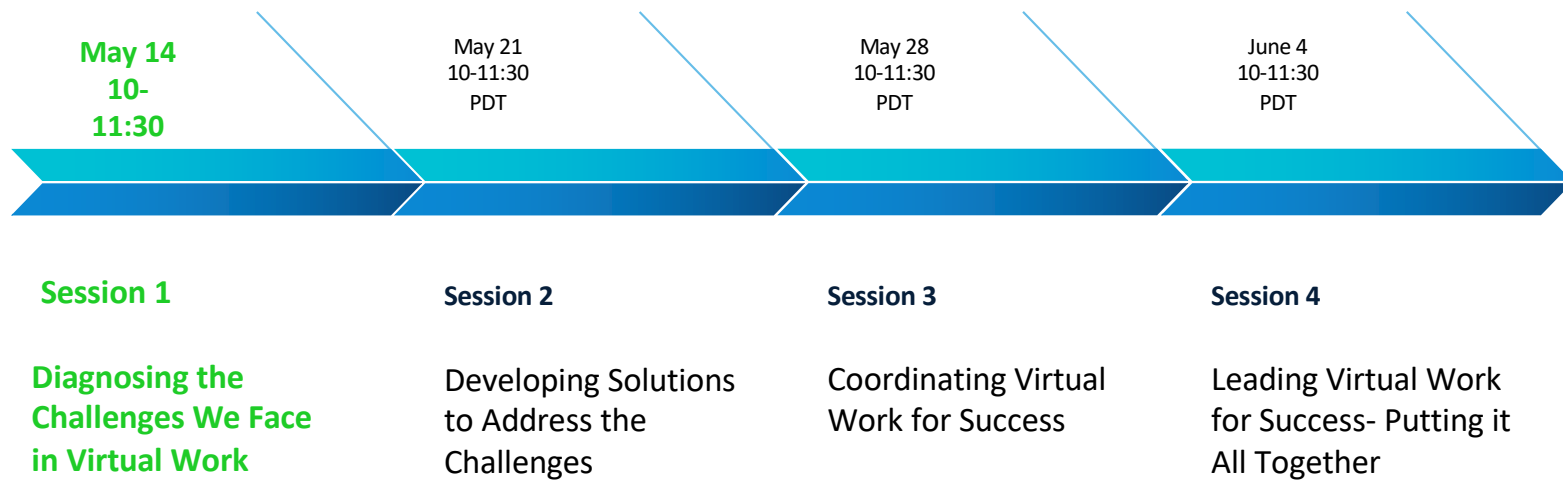
Overall Series Objectives:

- To share diagnostic tools and design options to better coordinate and lead virtual work
- To provide an interactive forum to explore the new challenges of virtual work



New Tools for Coordination and Leadership of Virtual Work

How the Series Works



Session 1 Objectives: Diagnosing the Challenges We Face in Virtual Work


How clear are we about the nature of the work in which we are engaged?

- ✓ Learn to identify the level of uncertainty involved in the various stages of our work
- ✓ Learn why coordination is so important in virtual work
- ✓ Learn to identify key conversations and issues that need increased clarity for better coordination



TODAY'S AGENDA



- Welcome
 - Workshop Overview and Session Objectives
 - Participant Introductions via CHAT
 - Work We are Doing Virtually That Involves Others
 - Key Concept: Continuum of Work Uncertainty -
Breakout Room Activity
 - Key Concept: Key Conversations/Deliberations
 - Wrap-Up & Homework
- 

Who is here today?

Directions:
Open CHAT and quickly
respond to these questions.

- **What is your work role?**
- **What type of organization are you a part of?**
- **What brought you here?**

Participant Activity

Directions:

Take 1 to 2 minutes to reflect on your virtual work.

Please write your response in CHAT.

What is the work you, your team, or your clients are doing with others virtually?

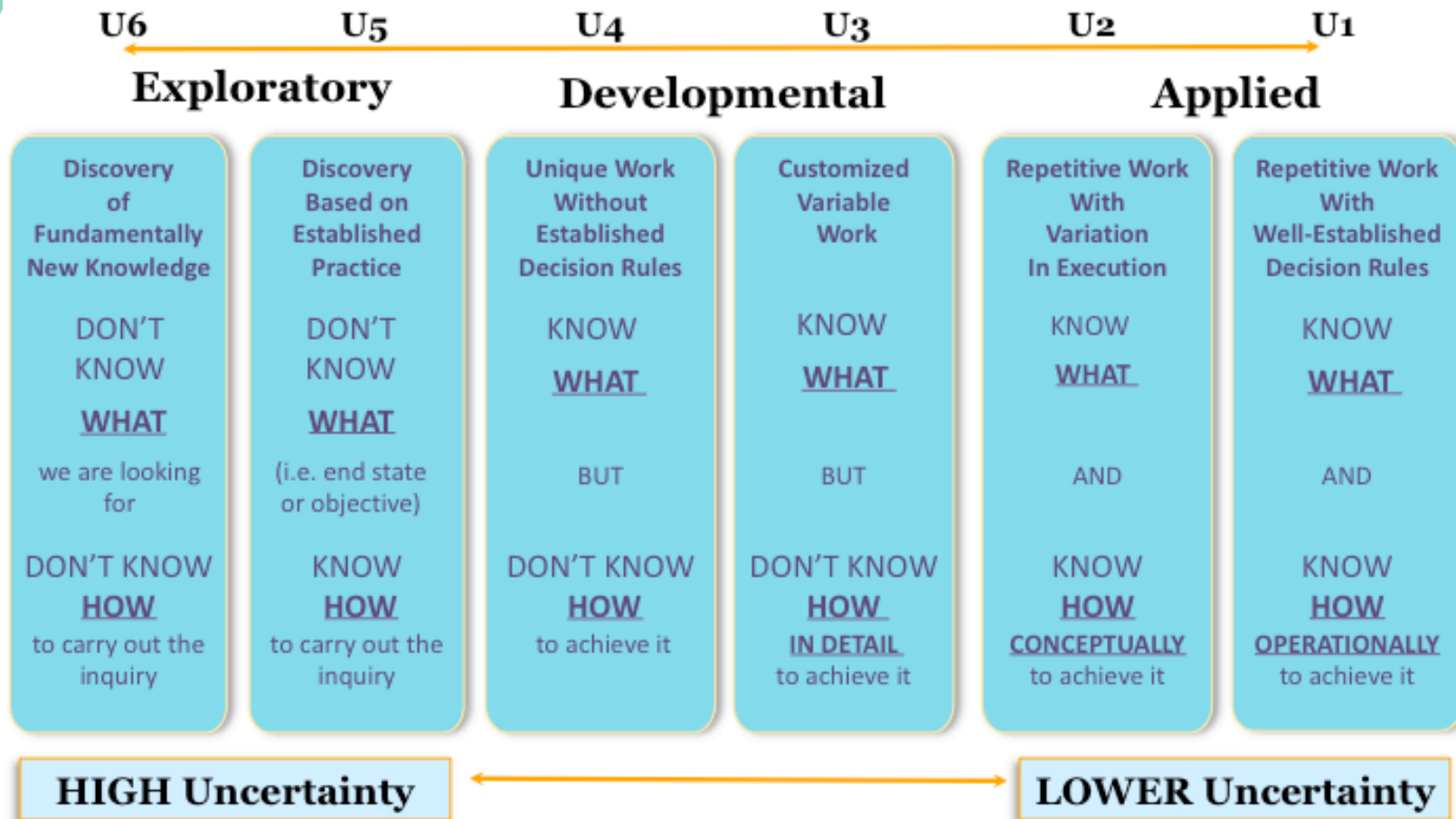
For example:

Working with a team to determine how to get meals to students in need when there is no school

“Most knowledge work processes have hardly been designed at all. People just start doing them and then they make ad hoc changes as they go.”

Nelson Repenning,
MIT Sloan
Associate Dean
Leadership and Special Projects

CONTINUUM of WORK UNCERTAINTY

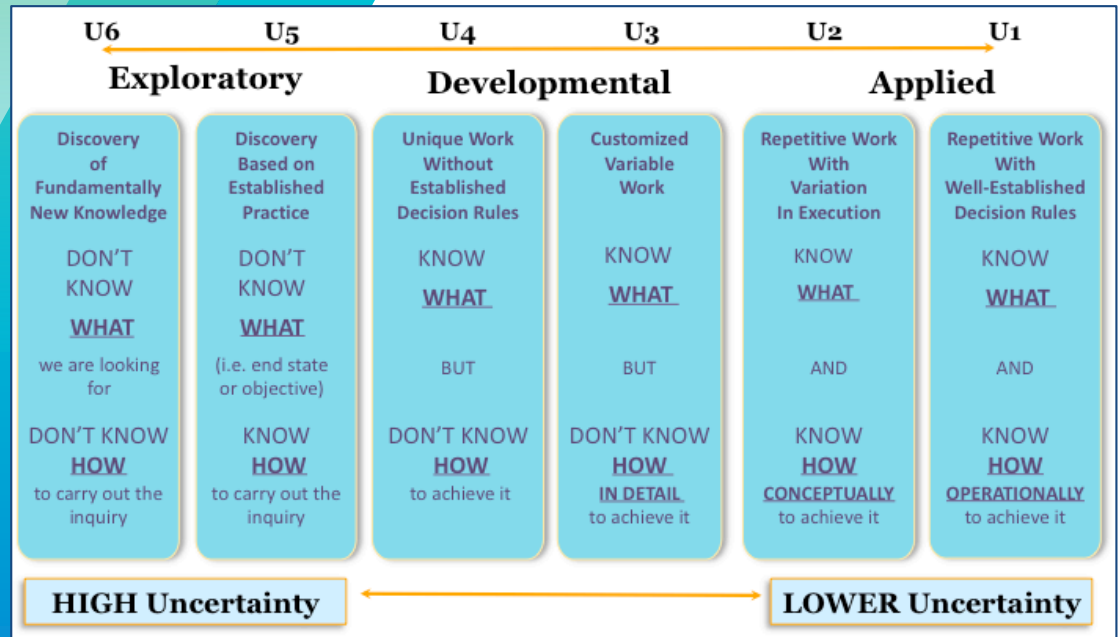


Adapted by Carolyn Ordowich, STS Associates, Inc. from Andrew C. Revkin, R2-D2 and Other Lessons From Bell Labs, New York Times, Dot Earth Blog, December 12, 2008 & Eddie Obeng, Putting Strategy To Work, 1996, Financial Times Pearson Publishing.

Group Activity

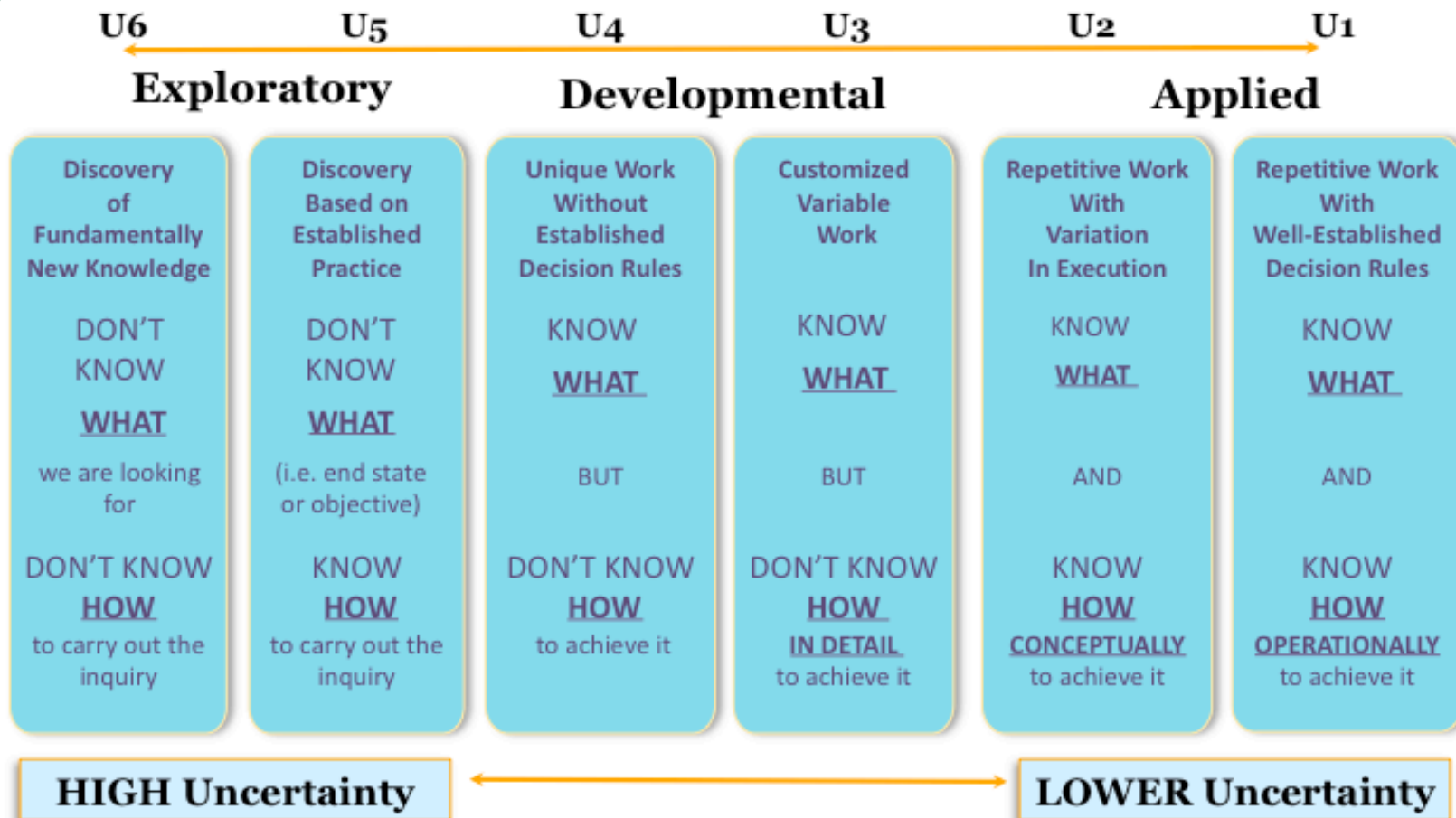
Take 2 minutes and place your work or a project on the uncertainty continuum. Now, move into your assigned Zoom Group and share your responses with the group. You will have 15 minutes for this discussion.

Where do you place your work on the work uncertainty continuum?
Why do you place it there?



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.

CONTINUUM of WORK UNCERTAINTY




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What are the Issues that Need to be Resolved in order to Move the Work Forward



Addressing key conversations/deliberations helps us coordinate and resolve problems – to reduce the uncertainty and ambiguity of problematic issues

- what are key conversations? how do we identify them?
 - which ones are the 'right' ones to address?
 - which will help us move forward?
- 

What are Key Conversations/Deliberations?

Key Conversations/Deliberations:

Sequences of exchange and communication in which people engage to reduce the unpredictability and ambiguity of problematic issues that are critical to moving the work forward.



Identifying Key Conversations/Deliberations?

The initiating step in determining a work unit's key conversations/deliberations is to identify the topics (or problematic issues) that require the most scrutiny to move the work forward.

What are Key Conversations/Deliberations

Some examples from our experience:

- How do we as a school district ensure that children in need get proper meals?
- What impact do clients have on our business model?
- What is the scope, time, and cost estimate of the work?
- How do we dramatically increase our testing capability?
- How do we manage our program funding given fluctuations in endowments?
- How can we ensure all students have internet access?
- How do we engage small and medium manufacturers in developing a digital supply chain platform?

Participant Activity

Directions:

Take 2 minutes to reflect on the key topics impacting you and your work.

Please use CHAT to capture a key topic(s) in your work.

What key topics in your work need greater clarity/certainty to move the work forward?

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

Today's Key Lessons:

- Understanding the degree of uncertainty in our work can help us be alert to the volume of information that must be processed between decision makers during execution of the work
- Identifying the key topics and conversations for which we need increased certainty helps us move forward

What's Coming Up in Session 2?

- Understanding of the other elements that we can manage to enhance the quality of key conversations/deliberations
- Explore the barriers, what gets in the way of doing virtual work well
- Develop solutions to address those barriers/challenges

Homework

Before our next session:

- ✓ Validate your work position on the Uncertainty Continuum
- ✓ Validate the key topics needing greater certainty/clarity for forward progress on your work/project
- ✓ Bring that information with you to the next session where we will continue to build on it

Don't forget to sign up for Session 2 on May 21, 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



See You Next Week

