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Managing Dynamic Technology-Oriented Businesses

**High-Tech Organizations
and Workplaces**



Dariusz Jemielniak & Abigail Marks



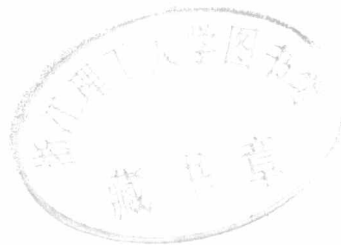
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High Tech Organizations and Workplaces

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Preface

HIGH-TECH ENVIRONMENTS: TO BOLDLY GO

The high-tech work environments of work, and of the new knowledge workers (Alvesson, 2004; Jemielniak, 2012; Marks & Baldry, 2009), have been a topic of growing interest from researchers in management and organization science. These environments are in many ways different from the traditional organizational settings.

For example, software engineers and other professionals in high-tech industries seem to enact their identities differently from their counterparts in the traditional professions (English-Lueck, Darrah, & Saveri, 2002; Jemielniak, 2008; Marks & Scholarios, 2007; Marks & Thompson, 2010; Westenhof, 2006). High tech environments and career perceptions are also strongly gendered (Bourne & Özbilgin, 2008; English-Lueck, 2011).

High-tech professionals' work-life balance is seriously affected by the organizational pressure and normative control, and knowledge workers are often in strong opposition to management (Jemielniak, 2007; Kunda, 1992; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). In addition, time spent at work plays a symbolic, ritualistic role in negotiating social position and status in knowledge-intensive organizations (Jemielniak, 2009; Perlow, 1997; Sharone, 2004). Workers in high-tech environments are often subject to burnout and excessive managerial pressure. The high-tech environment is also unpredictable, and is often a venue of distrust among key actors (Baba, 1999; English-Lueck, et al., 2002; Latusek & Jemielniak, 2007).

At the same time, high tech professionals often perceive work as a "serious game" (Strannegård & Friberg, 2001), and not drudgery: they involve in playful behaviors at work (Hunter, Jemielniak, & Postuła, 2010). Software engineers often participate in non-paid, open collaboration production (Lakhani & Von Hippel, 2003).

Modes of collaboration established in virtual and high-tech communities are similarly transforming workplace relations in the brick-and-mortar organizations (Benkler, 2006). They precede and foreshadow more general trends in organizational designs (Argyris, 1973; Beck, 2000; Castells, 2004). Understanding the high-tech workplace, and learning about the management practices and routines in knowledge intensive companies is, thus, of utmost importance for contemporary management scholars and practitioners. This volume addresses all of these urgent issues and more.

Gerbasi and Latusek present results of a qualitative study on a high-tech start-up from Silicon Valley. The chapter explores the problem of trust in joint ventures, between Polish and American partners. Cultural differences, determining varied reliance on knowledge-based and social capital-based kinds of trust are explored. The advantages and disadvantages of building trust in relation to teams, peers, and organizations are considered.

Ciesielska and Iskoujina analyze trust, open innovation, and software development modes. The study of the GNOME and Nokia collaboration shows how trust can be perceived as a strategic resource,

which is actually the crucial ingredient of successful collaboration. In particular, they distinguish the professional (expert) trust and the political trust. This dichotomy is proposed as an interpretive key to understanding trust enactment in open source communities.

Juntunen brings the focus to management of virtual teams. Through a qualitative analysis of virtual teams in a commercial ICT environment in Finland, he describes their success factors, balancing internal and external knowledge. Like Ciesielska, he emphasizes the importance of trust in the IT environment, and especially in fostering long-term strategic relationships.

Roofe-Sattlethight and Armagan's chapter continues the explorations of virtual work processes. It analyzes the relations and alliances among leaders, members, and teams in a virtual environment. Their quantitative study indicates that such a three-way alliance indeed emerges, but the role of the leader is smaller than in non-virtual settings. Members tend to develop their relationship with the group by building rapport with other members, rather than through the leader.

Lorentzen Hepsø and Hepsø's study offers insight into ERP systems, on the example of performance indicators used in an oil and gas company. The aggregated performance measurement algorithms are often used in knowledge-intensive companies, and yet their development, as well as actual implementation, is rarely studied from within the organization, in particular with the use of actor-network theory.

Legault and Ouellet have a look at the video game industry. They focus on the issue of time management and long hours spent at work, in the accounts of 53 game designers from Canada. The system of normative control, as well as work evaluation and reputation building, enforced through organizational expectations of "professionalism" are described and offered as a possible explanation of overtime unpaid work that is regularly expected, even when it is prohibited under the law.

Russell's contribution, relying on a long-term, ethnographic study, describes a case of high tech gadgets negotiated by employees. Through an analysis of engineers bargaining for smartphones, he shows how organizations can increase their control over the employees through new technologies, and how the employees make a rod for their own backs.

Trux's piece, similarly to Russell's, pertains to the topic of normative control. She describes the new forms of organizational resistance, emerging in knowledge-intensive organizations. She recognizes the contemporary methods of managerial propaganda and coercion, yet suggests that the new organizational configurations and bifurcation of identities also benefit the counter-managerial employee movement.

Kippist, Hayes, and Fitzgerald delve into the topic of language used between managers and professionals. They research it by comparing two contexts: researchers discussing with managers in Australian hybrid industry-research and health care organizations. Interestingly, several modes of dissent and distinctive patterns of communication were noted. This study indicates that successful management in knowledge-intensive organizations depends on proper argumentative strategies.

Henriksen's chapter departs from the traditional academic discourse by introducing a narrative approach to technology studies. By introducing storytelling, as well as antenarrative analysis, he offers an alternative perspective on software project development. He brings interesting insights into a story of a failed project, which is particularly interesting given that success stories are much more likely to be shared.

Jørgensen and Strand follow the narrative analysis, and propose a new material-discursive understanding of technology in a form of "material storytelling." They show the usage of technology in organizations in terms of story performance. Consequently, they resituate the relationship of discourse and technology, and shift the focus of organization studies from human agents to everyday routines, and human-nonhuman actants.

Sköld and Olaison's piece delves into Lacanian and Deleuzian interpretations of late capitalism's dynamics. In an unusual analysis of a heavy-duty industry (trucks), incorporating storytelling, they describe different stakeholders and narratives at play, negotiating perceptions of the product, imaginary scenarios, and desires. They show the marketing background and enacted fantasies, linking customers and suppliers.

Karube, Kato, and Numagami's chapter presents the results of a project on relations between an organization's features and its likelihood of deteriorating. Their study relies on a large sample of questionnaires from 16 Japanese corporations. It shows that both an organization's size and its hierarchical structure contribute to its deterioration; participative planning, vertical communication channels, and strict and precise strategy building process prevent it.

Ertürk's study is a timely application of Hofstede's organizational culture framework. His findings indicate that power distance is negatively associated with both empowerment and with innovation capability. Uncertainty avoidance, however, is also negatively related to innovation capability, but positively related to empowerment. Collectivism is positively related only to empowerment. These results support the thesis that knowledge work is particularly compatible with participative management techniques.

Finally, Tran explores the "glass cliff" in high tech environments. He studies women in positions of leadership, who are put on the glass cliff of more precarious and riskier posts than their male counterparts. Following an analysis of empirical data, Tran proposes the possible paradigm shift needed to recognize the glass cliff, and why it is still taboo.

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Alexandra Gerbasi, Grenoble Ecole de Management, France & California State

University Northridge, USA

Dominika Latusek, Kozminski Business School, Poland

This chapter presents results from the qualitative field study conducted in a Silicon Valley-based American-Polish start-up joint venture. It investigates the issues of collaboration within one firm that is made up of individuals from two countries that differ dramatically in generalized trust: Poland and the United States. The authors explore differences between thick, knowledge-based forms of trust and thin, more social capital-oriented forms of trust, and they discuss how these affect collaboration between representatives of both cultures. Finally, the authors address how these differences in trust can both benefit an organization and also cause it difficulties in managing its employees.

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Malgorzata Ciesielska, Teesside University, UK

Zilia Iskoujina, Newcastle University, UK

This chapter analyzes trust, open innovation, and software development modes. Basing on the case of GNOME – Nokia collaboration, it shows how trust can be perceived as a strategic resource, which is actually the crucial ingredient of successful collaboration. The dichotomy of the professional (expert) trust and the political trust is proposed as an interpretive key to understanding trust enactment in open source communities.

Chapter 3

Management of Virtual Teams and Capabilities in Business Networks	30
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A.T. Juntunen, University of Helsinki, Finland

This chapter investigates and analyzes the management of capabilities in virtual teams in a business network context. This is a qualitative case study in the ICT-sector in Finland. This chapter will demonstrate that the organizations have a good chance to succeed if they can harness the external and internal knowledge and utilize the capabilities and knowledge in virtual teams to support organizational goals

and strategies. It also illustrates the importance of trust in building and maintaining relationships. This chapter aims to contribute to the prior strategic management and business networks research.

Chapter 4

Group Processes in the Virtual Work Environment: Evidence for an Alliance-Building

Dimensionality 48

Andrea Roofe Sattlethight, Innovative Strategies, LLC., Miami, USA

Sungu Armagan, Florida International University, USA

This chapter explores an alternative approach to group processes in the virtual environment as a system of alliances, encompassing leader, member, and group. The purpose of this research is to determine if a system of alliances encompassing leader, member, and team exists in the virtual environment. The authors explore the applicability of alliances to a 21st century management environment by testing a conceptual model using 20,000 bootstrapped samples of 96 employed professionals and students studying in an online environment. They find evidence that group processes in a technology-mediated environment can be defined by a three-way-system of alliances in which the leader plays a less dominant role than in traditional groups. The authors find that the individual's relationship with the group may be built through a trust relationship with other members rather than a direct relationship with the leader. Directions for future research and implications for management practice are also discussed.

Chapter 5

Creation of Indicators Determining the Work of High-Tech Business Practitioners:

Validity, Reliability, and Negotiation Revisited 67

Irene Lorentzen Hepsø, Sør-Trøndelag University College/Trondheim Business School, Norway

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The authors address how performance indicators are configured and engineered in ERP-systems to follow up the activities of the knowledge workers in an oil and gas company. ERP-systems enable the development of new performance indicator systems, and give management simple dashboard tools to follow up and compare the performance of the organizational members across time and space. Decisions in organizations are increasingly taken on the basis of these abstract indicators that work as signs and inscriptions. This makes the development of such accounting indicators an interesting area of research because the representation of such indicators will to a large extent govern the decision making and practices of the organization. Who inscribes and controls the indicators controls the business. The authors discuss the development of such indicators as an inscription and translation process and how the indicators develop as a consequence of negotiations between influential actors. Finally, they address the consequences of these indicators and argue that they are dependent upon three key issues: the validity of the indicators, their reliability, and how indicators are negotiated. The authors' research question is how do disparate organizational groups interplay with physical and technical elements to create indicators determining the work of high-tech business practitioners?

Chapter 6

So Into It They Forget What Time It Is? Video Game Designers and Unpaid Overtime 82

Marie-Josée Legault, Téléu-QUAM, Canada

Kathleen Ouellet, Université de Montréal, Canada

This chapter draws on 53 interviews from a case study led in Montreal in 2008 to demonstrate the existence of Unlimited and Unpaid Overtime (UOO) among video game developers and illustrate an emerging workplace regulation model of working time in the videogame industry. It brings to light a

sophisticated and efficient system of rewards and sanctions, both material and symbolic, that drives professional workers in these trades to adopt a “free unlimited overtime” behavior despite the Act Respecting Labour Standards. Efficiency of this system is rooted in combined Project Management (PM) as an organisation mode and high international mobility of the workforce that both makes portfolio and reputation utterly important. This chapter focuses on (de)regulation of working time only, but it opens a path to theoretically account for (de)regulation of work among an expanding workforce: the “new professionals” in knowledge work.

Chapter 7

- Making a Rod for One’s Own Back: Employee Bargaining for Smartphones in a Telco’s R&D Department..... 103
Christopher Russell, Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK

This chapter identifies a new pattern of bargaining for technology, based upon nine months’ ethnographic fieldwork amongst the engineers of a Telco’s research and development department. Bargains for smartphones were initiated by the employee and negotiated with the employer by reference to the productivity discourse of the vendor. After a honeymoon phase of exploration, the reality of operation was markedly different, resulting, in several cases, in the disposition of the smartphone or, in one case, the disposition of the employee to leave. Such bargains were driven by conceptions of the personal and organisational use value of the artefact, and this finding reveals shortcomings in the drivers, influences, and stages of adoption found in existing models. A new conceptual framework is presented that facilitates exploration of the contribution of personal and organisational use value to technology adoption.

Chapter 8

- In the Name of Flexibility: Three Hidden Meanings of “The Real Work” in a Finnish Software Company 119
Marja-Liisa Trux, Aalto University School of Economics, Finland

This chapter takes you to a data security workplace in Finland. It presents reflections on the tensions of managing selves and others, as experienced by the employees and the managers. It argues that a generally critical approach to normative management may overlook the actual complexity and ambiguous nature of the late modern cultural environment. Both self-authoring and manipulative moves are made difficult by the amalgamating hegemonic and countercultural currents. The author points at chances for resistance through new forms of literacy. Instead of dropping “culture” as a conservative or managerial pursuit, we must learn to navigate successfully in the broken cultural landscape of today’s workplaces. The very same images that can be used for manipulation are open to more solidary configurations by the cultural and social imagination of organizational members.

Chapter 9

- Professional and Managerial Language in Hybrid Industry-Research Organizations and within the Hybrid Clinician Manager Role 141
Louise Kippist, University of Western Sydney, Australia
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Janna-Anneke Fitzgerald, University of Western Sydney, Australia

Interactions between professionals and managers are vital to medical and commercialization outcomes. This chapter considers how boundaries between professionals and managers are expressed through language in two contexts: between researchers and managers in temporary Australian hybrid industry-research organizations and within the same individual performing a hybrid clinician-manager role in

Australian health care organizations. Semi-structured interviews of twenty scientists, engineers, and managers, focusing on their experiences, and perceptions of occupational culture, revealed that language norms contributed to knowledge creation, and played a role in maintaining a hierarchy among research institutions. Semi-structured interviews of twenty doctors and managers, focusing on their perception and experience of the hybrid clinician manager's role within health care organizations, revealed that professional identity influenced language norms used by doctors and managers and contributed to the tensions experienced in their interactions. Distinctive patterns of argumentation and language were identified as typical of commercial and research occupations and were also distinctive in doctors working in hybrid clinician manager's roles. The scientists, engineers, and managers working in hybrid industry-research organizations and the doctors and managers working in health care organizations reported frustration and reduced effectiveness of argumentation due to different norms for dissent.

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<i>Lars Bo Henriksen, Aalborg University, Denmark</i>	

Engineers most often organise their work in projects and consequently project management becomes an essential part of an engineer's work and working life in general. Even if most engineers are trained in project management, it seems that this is a challenge to most engineers. It also seems that the traditional project management tools are not always sufficient when it comes to managing engineering projects. In this chapter, an engineering project is examined, and it turns out that the language, the stories, and the narratives connected to the project is of greater importance to the engineers than the formal project management tools that were offered to the engineers. It also turns out that the term "project" could itself be a problem when it comes to fulfilling the project goals. Therefore, it is concluded that when working on engineering projects, language, stories, and narratives are just as important to the engineers as any other element in the project.

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<i>Kenneth Mølberg Jørgensen, Aalborg University, Denmark</i>	
<i>Anete M. Camille Strand, Aalborg University, Denmark</i>	

Material storytelling is used here to denote a material-discursive understanding of technology, and how technology works in organizations in terms of story performance. The idea is that technology configures organizations in spatial, temporal and material terms. We are inspired by Karen Barad's work in quantum physics in developing the term material storytelling, which relies on a material-discursive understanding of storytelling. By introducing material storytelling we resituate the hegemonic relationship of discourse and language over matter. As such technology regains a central space in both understanding and managing organizations. It implies that attention is relocated to the petty and lowly everyday routines, techniques and material artifacts, which are implicit in what we do in everyday life but govern the agential possibilities for acting in this world. We frame the chapter as a story of material storytelling of a change project in a bank. We experiment with the writing style by going back and forth between two different layers of text. The first layer tells the stories of material storytelling, while the other draws out the theoretical/methodological implications of this approach in terms understanding and managing technology.

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<i>David Sköld, Uppsala University, Sweden</i>	
<i>Lena Olaison, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark</i>	

This chapter demonstrates how contemporary imaginary structures, which urge us to move up in life by making the most of the possibilities we are faced with, may operate in an industrial setting where users are involved in the production of heavy duty vehicles. Opening up new domains for value creation, devoid of established norms and regulations, this appeal to elevate ourselves arguably provides little guidance for how to do so. Demanding ever more from those subjected to its call, this appealing power, the chapter suggests, follows the logic of the Lacanian superego, which according to Salecl (2004, p. 51) “commands the subject to enjoy yet at the same time mockingly predicts that he or she will fail in this pursuit of enjoyment.” As such, it makes out a central component in a creative force that feeds excessive outgrowths, which perpetually contribute to pervert, displace, and fragment established grounds for value creating activities within this industrial domain.

Chapter 13

Organizational Characteristics of Middle Managers’ Deterioration as Sources of Organizational

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Toshihiko Kato, Hitotsubashi University, Japan

Tsuyoshi Numagami, Hitotsubashi University, Japan

This chapter explores the mechanism of how structural and behavioral organizational characteristics lead to organizational deterioration as a source of organizational decline. First, using an original construct of organizational deterioration named “organizational deadweight” that is defined as ineffectual managerial load at the middle management level, the authors explore the relationships between the organizational characteristics and organizational deadweight. Data was collected through a questionnaire survey in 2006 involving more than 942 respondents from 128 business units of 16 large Japanese firms. The results suggest that reference to formal strategic planning, participation in the planning process, and vertical communication improve deterioration, whereas organizational size and layered hierarchical structure aggravate it. Finally, the authors discuss the roles of vertical communication and formal planning to safeguard against deterioration.

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Innovation Capability in High-Tech Companies: Exploring the Role of Organizational Culture and Empowerment..... 228

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This chapter analyses the influence of organizational culture components, defined in Hofstede’s (1991, 2001) cultural framework (i.e., power distance, individualism/collectivism, assertiveness focus, and uncertainty avoidance), and empowerment on innovation capability, and examines the differentiations in their influence. The hypotheses are tested by applying Structural Equations Modeling (SEM) methodology to data collected from Information Technology professionals from high-tech companies. Results of the analyses have yielded that power distance is found to be negatively associated with both empowerment and innovation capability, whereas uncertainty avoidance is negatively related to innovation capability, but positively related to empowerment. Collectivism is found to be positively related only to empowerment; yet no significant relationship was revealed between collectivism and innovation capability. In addition, no significant relationship was found between assertiveness focus and empowerment or innovation capability. Empowerment is also found to be significantly and positively related to innovation capability. In terms of managerial practice, the study helps clarify the key role played by cultural dimensions in the process of shaping an empowering and innovative work environment. Findings also

reveal that managers should focus on participative managerial practices (e.g. empowerment) to promote innovation capability of high-tech companies by considering the cultural tendencies of employees in the organization.

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The “glass cliff” is a term coined by Professor Michelle Ryan and Professor Alex Haslam in 2004. Their research demonstrates that once women (or other minority groups) break through the glass ceiling and take on positions of leadership, they often have different experiences from their male counterparts. Specifically, women are more likely to occupy positions that can be described as precarious and thus have a higher risk of failure, either because they are in organizational units that are in crisis, or because they are not given the resources and support needed to thrive. The success of the glass cliff, as a phenomenon, rests on three factors. First, it relies heavily on the quality and quantity of data available, as well as the reliability of the data. Second, it relies heavily on the acceptance, utilization, and application of its existence, for a lack of acknowledgment, acceptance, utilization, and application of any phenomenon, concept, and theory will result in extinction. Third, this phenomenon, in reality, is quite taboo in a male dominated society, regardless of culture. Nevertheless, the glass cliff, as a phenomenon, is quite neoteric, and is typically not spoken of, nor referred to when men communicate, in the same way that men do not usually refer to the glass ceiling, or the glass escalator. The purpose of this chapter is to delve into and explore the concept of the glass cliff faced by women in high-tech corporations, and how the glass cliff affects their career advancement and identity growth through empirical data. The chapter then provides three recommendations on resolving the glass cliff phenomenon, and concludes with whether the glass cliff as a phenomenon is convertible to become a theory.

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