



Conversations with Patti Anklam

Principal Consultant, Hutchison Associates

Prepared by Carol Butler, AOK Archivist

Note: The asynchronous nature of online discussion groups can be confusing, as the reader often encounters several unrelated messages between one question and its reply. The Star Series discussions at AOK are a rich resource for those of us interested in knowledgework. In appreciation for all that our guest moderators and fellow AOKers do to make these discussions so interesting, I attempt here to create an archival record that feels more like a face-to-face conversation. All contributions to this Star Series conversation are reproduced below in their entirety, but the order has been modified to create a smoother narrative. – Carol Butler, AOK Archivist

More information about this and other Star Series discussions can be found at the AOK website (<http://www.kwork.org/Stars/stars.html>).

*About the Archives. A sentence or two from most messages has been highlighted in blue to make it easier to scan the document for a [quick overview of the entire conversation](#). Most messages contain 2 Subject lines. The first **subject line** was provided by an AOK editor, and appeared in the subject line of the message delivered to members; the last subject line was written by the person posting the message and appeared within the text of the message. Long signatures have been reduced to the **poster's name**.*

Date: Sun Aug 17, 2003 12:45 pm

Subject: **KM Mavens: Please Welcome Patti Anklam to the STAR Series - Jerry Ash**

From: **Jerry Ash**

STAR Series with Patti Anklam

Perhaps you have already read Patti Anklam's bio when you prepared for "Conversations with Patti Anklam" at:

<http://www.kwork.org/Stars/anklam/anklam.html>

If not, please go do your homework! Patti has written an excellent overview just for you.

[Patti Anklam is an independent consultant specializing in assessing environments and recommending strategic interventions or programs in systems, processes and work practices including community of practice development, social network analysis, and information architecture and knowledge management systems.](#)

Recent clients include a defense industry consulting firm, an eLearning solution development company, and a financial services firm. She is author of numerous articles on knowledge management for Knowledge Management magazine and Knowledge Management Review; presenter, panelist and keynote at conferences sponsored by KMWorld, Delphi Group, InfoToday, and e-Gov.

Patti's capstone corporate position was at Nortel Networks, as Director of Knowledge Management for the Global Professional Services organization. Responsible for assessment, design, implementation and management of knowledge management programs for community-of practice development, action-oriented "lessons learned," information architecture, learning and capability development, and knowledge management context-setting, connections, and innovations in KM.

The overall program proved the efficacy of a systemic approach to knowledge management, encompassing collaboration and learning, knowledge engineering for repeatability and leverage of intellectual capital, and the integration of knowledge capture and synthesis in the core business processes.

Patti was formerly a Senior Consultant and Knowledge Architect at Compaq Services Group (formerly Digital Services) of Compaq Computer Corporation. In her 25+ years in the computer industry, she has worked primarily in systems software and systems integration groups.

[Her integration of her personal knowledge and experience in technology with her interest in social network analysis provides an ideal professional mix for knowledge thought leadership.](#)

Please help me welcome Patti Anklam as guest moderator for the August 2003 edition of the STAR Series Dialogue.

Date: Sun Aug 17, 2003 12:45 pm

Subject: [KM Mavens: Do People Reveal Their Networks? - Charles Savage](#)

[NOTE: Repeated from an earlier message prior to the start of the STAR Series with Patti Anklam.]

From: Charles Savage, Knowledge Era Enterprises, Intl, Munich, Germany; and former STAR Series moderator (with TWO Chapters in "STARS OF THE NEW ORDER."
Subject: RE: [AOK_K-Net] Digest Number 208

Folks, we are in for a treat. I can remember how impressed I was with Pitti's work when we were both at Digital. She was creative, cutting edge, and what I also liked about it was that she was keenly aware of the "people" aspects of the triangle that we then called PBT (People - Business - Technology). Thanks for your intriguing and stimulating background paper.

Patti, as you are into networking analysis and social networking, I have a question: [do people really like to reveal their networks?](#)

I remember how John Galloway developed Netmap to do just this, but found that, in general, people preferred to keep their social capital to themselves, rather than reveal them. On the other hand, with the development of Social Software and Blogging, social networking seems to be taking on a life of its own. Perhaps, Patti, you could put these developments into perspective for us.

Cheers,

Charles

Date: Mon Aug 18, 2003 10:11 am

Subject: **KM Mavens: Do People Reveal Their Networks? - Charles Savage**

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: KM Mavens: Do People Reveal Their Networks? - Charles Savage

Charles -- I was delighted that you were the first person to engage in this dialogue, and to see your warm acknowledgment.

I'll first turn the compliments. During the period we worked together at Digital, I was engaged in a project whose mission was to bring fresh ideas into the software development process. We used the concept of concurrent engineering as the basis for the work and research, and looked both outside and inside Digital for emerging practices, particularly those that brought people together from across disciplines and perspectives. You offered a number of Knowledge Networking events using a methodology that you practiced as part of Digital's consulting services, but also offered internally. This was the first time I heard the term "knowledge networking," and this term is forever linked to you in my mind. I attended an event, and it was a watershed in my experience and thinking.

During the two days, you used a number of processes to enable the random set of attendees to truly get to know about each other -- experience, knowledge, and skills. In today's parlance, you created social capital where none had existed before -- including a measure of trust.

You also proposed a vision for how this "network" you created, and any other, could make a difference for Digital, which had at that point just begun its decline. The power, the power of networks, of bringing diverse sets of knowledge together. It was a powerful idea, and remains so. [I'll elaborate on this a bit in my response to Denham Grey.] We couldn't save Digital, no one could, but we have had the opportunity to disseminate and grow many ideas we were able to nurture at that idea-loving company.

You also introduced, on that day in 1992, the first social network analysis tool I ever saw, the Netmap software you refer to in your note. I obtained my own evaluation copy and tried to install and get it working < I was so impressed by the possibilities inherent in having such an organizational diagnostic. Who knew that eight years later I'd encounter Rob Cross, in a context where I could actually learn and apply SNA in a global corporation? And that it would be in the context of knowledge management, where I once again also encounter knowledge networking -- and loop back to you!

Some of the response to your questions is the in preceding. Your questions (paraphrased) are "Do people really like to reveal their social networks?" and, "Have the new developments in social software and blogging given social networking a life of its own?" Your second question provides a part of the response to the first. The web-based social software (Friendster, LinkedIn, tribe.net, ZeroDegrees, Ryze, etc.) are demonstrating that at least some people are comfortable seeing their own personal networks instantiated and exposed to some extent. Blogging provides people with an even richer way of representing their social networks -- both real and virtual. I am still feeling my way through this -- writing a blog, participating in a number of web-based networks, and so on -- and I would love for the AOK community to chime in here! I have not participated in any of the "social" (dating, flashmobbing, hobbying interests) aspects of these, so my experience appears to be within the community of people who sign up for these because they are interested in the idea of the thing itself.

Both of your questions also beg differentiation of context. [Social network analysis, performed as a diagnostic within a company as part of knowledge management or organizational development effort, doesn't explicitly ask people to expose their networks. It asks focused questions that get at how people get their work done, and the knowledge, information, energy, sensemaking, trust relationships that hinder or contribute getting that work done effectively.](#) It happens that the social network is exposed through this process, but the questions don't go in that direction. A project may include individual "ego network" analysis, in which people draw or reveal their networks, but this again is oriented to providing awareness for the individual. It all hinges on how the SNA project is designed and presented.

In the web-based networks, my experience is based on networks of "people in the world," as opposed to people within organizations (corporations, government, NGO). In these networks, I experience a few motivations: learning (how people bring ideas into practice, catching new ideas, and learning about networking) and expanding one's network. Until today, I have not had the experience of using a web-based social network to display or present my own ideas. I'm really pretty shy.

Date: Mon Aug 18, 2003 10:41 am

Subject: [Idea Mavens: Who is Rob Cross? - Jerry Ash \[+Patti Anklam\]](#)

From: Jerry Ash

Subject: Should We Know Who Rob Cross Is

Hi Patti.

Should we know who Rob Cross is, or is that reference just for Charles Savage to understand

Hi, Jerry,

Sorry, we should put in that Rob Cross is one of the leading experts on SNA (social network analysis). His research at the Institute for Knowledge Management at IBM launched a number of KM practitioners into social network analysis. He's currently finishing up a book to be published by the Harvard Business School Press -- it deserves a plug, because it includes insights into many of the cases he has worked on. He's also published quite a few articles on SNA in Harvard Business Review, MIT Sloan Review, and others. He's currently at the University of Virginia.

Patti

Date: Thu Aug 21, 2003 7:40 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: You Don't Know Rob Cross? - Matt Simpson [+Jerry Ash]

From: Matt Simpson

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: Who is Rob Cross? - Jerry Ash [+Patti Anklam]

You don't know who Rob Cross is?..... I would say that you should learn who Rob Cross is. ;-)

From: **Jerry Ash**

Subject: UNGH, you got me.

Asking a "dumb question" is never easy even if the one who asks is fond of encouraging the timid by saying, "There is no penalty for not knowing." But there is no way to avoid the embarrassment. To the timid, I say (with some experience) the price is worth it!

Matt, in my rush yesterday I did make a quick effort to know who "Rob Cross" is. According to Google he is alternately:

* a lecturer in organizational behavior at Boston University's School of Management and a research manager at IBM's Institute for Knowledge Management;

* an exceptional, versatile athlete and lacrosse player who could see action on the crease or as a midfielderŠmatriculated at UMBC, last year, but did not practice with the team;

* a musician who has a demo CD;

* a meteorologist in Canada;

* an actor who played Terry McCorry in M. Lennon Perricone's Last white family on dorchester road.

* a coach at Morey State College.

Now, logic told me it was probably the first Rob Cross, but I'm not inside Patti's head and I wasn't sure everyone on the list would come to the same conclusion even if it were correct. There may be other "Rob Crosses" that fit the same profile.

So, not to be too defensive, the point is this -- make no assumptions (even in email communication) that everyone knows who you're talking about. Our group has a broad audience. Many are newbies. Too many of those don't ask "dumb questions." I'll help by asking them. Contributors could help by making "dumb questions" unnecessary.

Thanks Rob. I took your jab with the good humor with which it was given -- but you gave me a chance to make a point from my Communications 101 folder! :-) Thanks for paying attention and contributing to the STAR Series. You are a valued member of the network.

Jerry

P.S. Patti's Rob Cross turns out to be the first one listed above. This was at the bottom of my post yesterday:

Sorry, [we should put in that Rob Cross is one of the leading experts on SNA \(social network analysis\). His research at the Institute for Knowledge Management at IBM launched a number of KM practitioners into social network analysis.](#) He's currently finishing up a book to be published by the Harvard Business School Press -- it deserves a plug, because it includes insights into many of the cases he has worked on. He's also published quite a few articles on SNA in Harvard Business Review, MIT Sloan Review, and others. He's currently at the University of Virginia.

Patti

Date: Sun Aug 17, 2003 12:45 pm
Subject: KM Mavens: KM & Ideas & Eras
From: Denham Grey, Grey Matter Inc.
Subject: KM & ideas & eras

Patti writes:

>> "What marks each of these eras, and the response of KM practitioners, is the way that ideas arise, merge and mingle, and land in the practitioner's path."

Patti's focus on ideas is an interesting one. Ideas -- those fragile, ephemeral, half-objects sit neatly between the tacit and the explicit, between thoughts and shared concepts, between personal ego and a shared identity.

Often wonder where 'ideas' fit?, what quality they bring as a knowledge representation?, where they belong? -- somewhere between a story and rule,-- less than a pattern but more than a perception. They carry shades of distinctions but fail to explicate trajectory or context. Ideas straddle the divide between inherited meme and conceived conjecture, moving from belief to conviction.

My question then is: why all this attention to ideas when there are more powerful representations, more robust objects for reasoning and inference, more enduring ways to capture and encapsulate?

Gathering and sharing ideas is close to the core of KM - I'm keen to hear more.

Denham

Date: Mon Aug 18, 2003 10:32 am

Subject: KM Mavens: Those Who Bring Ideas With Them - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: KM Mavens: KM & Ideas & Eras -- Denham Grey

Denham -- your question is phrased so much more eloquently than any response I could make! Thanks for asking about the central idea, "ideas." When Jerry and I were talking about the possibility of my participation in this event, he asked me for a theme. I had just received a copy of "What's the Big Idea?"* by Tom Davenport and Larry Prusak, and was thinking about ideas; in the conversation with Jerry when the term "maven" came up, it stuck. I've been worrying about the distinction for a while. A maven, to use Malcolm Gladwells "The Tipping Point"* definition, is not necessarily a practitioner:

*[Please buy them through the AOK Bookstore: Big Idea:

<http://www.kwork.org/Store/new.html>] Tipping Point:

<http://www.kwork.org/Store/featured.html>]

"A Maven is one who accumulates knowledge, a database if you will. What sets a maven apart, though, is not so much what they know but how they pass it along. The fact that Mavens want to help, for no other reason than because they like to help, turns out to be an awfully effective way of getting someone's attention."

Davenport and Prusak define "idea practitioners" as the people in organizations who bring ideas into organizations, harmonize them with the organizational context, and implement them. (They naturally devote a chapter to knowledge management, as an example of the life cycle of ideas.) I am really a cross between a practitioner and a maven, bringing new ideas that will make a difference into an organization, and passing

ideas along to those who may need them. In both cases, the role requires manipulation of distinctions: a word you use in your question: "[ideas] carry shades of distinctions but fail to explicate trajectory or context." [I think that it is the role of the idea maven or practitioner to bring context to the idea and to envision and articulate a possible trajectory for the idea. The idea made distinct becomes a robust object.](#)

For example, I mentioned concurrent engineering as an idea we thought about applying to software engineering in Digital. Concurrent engineering was at that time not only an idea, but had methodology and a body of techniques used to align product development and manufacturing. What did this mean for software? We took the principle idea and presented it in concrete ways. The idea? Time-to-market and product quality would be enhanced by ensuring that all the stakeholders in the life cycle of a product participated (as appropriate) during all stages of the development of the product.

Then we drew a simple diagram, a model, that showed the constituencies in software development (research, software engineering, marketing, services, field support, customers, technical writing, manufacturing) and the types of information they needed and that they could contribute at each phase of the life cycle. We took this model -- originally very rough -- around to talk with people who represented these groups. The idea, attached to an artifact, compelled people to build on and further refine the idea, and make it their own.

I'll also add here that I sometimes use "distinction" in a very precise way, to refer to a concept that has emerged from among a collection of thoughts, experiences, and ideas and comes to stand on its own as something that has a name, can be examined, and discussed - - and makes robust objects for reasoning and inference. Mavens create distinctions.

P.S. I would love to hear from any linguistic experts on this list about language and distinctions!

Patti

Date: Wed Aug 20, 2003 7:03 am

Subject: KM Mavens: Shared Distinctions Are Building Blocks - Denham Grey

From: Denham Grey

Subject: KM Mavens: distinctions

Patti writes:

>>I would love to hear from any linguistic experts on this list about language and distinctions!

Being a linguistic expert is not a distinction I can claim, however allow me share some 'layman's' experiences and thoughts around distinctions.

In my work with global teams, I have come to appreciate the power and promise of distinctions as a fundamental knowledge practice. We create new worlds, raise awareness, build new concepts and make useful connections via explicating and refining distinctions.

Shared distinctions drive the organization's ability to decide quickly and adapt to new emergent circumstances. At a very fundamental level it is our combined ability to recognize, formulate, filter and evaluate distinctions that confer competitive advantage, enable innovation and determine future trajectories.

[Distinctions are indeed the building blocks of learning and adaption - qualities that are closer to ensuring survival than optimization based on current conditions.](#) Some of the most valuable distinctions arise as questions in a dialog.

Without a name and an understanding of difference or separation, we have great difficulty recognizing a concept or its absence. I will add, a distinction which is not shared loses all of its potential and power - like a meme without a medium, it does little to augment intelligence, increase knowledge or add value if kept to yourself.

How then do distinctions connect with ideas / memes / thoughts / conceptualizations / beliefs?

Denham

Date: Wed Aug 20, 2003 7:42 am

Subject: [Idea Mavens: Shared Distinctions](#)

From: **Jack Ring**

Subject: Re: Shared Distinctions Are Building Blocks

Denham's note on distinctions has been described quite well in the book, "Learning, Creating, and Using Knowledge" by Joseph D. Novak, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998. Dr. Novak explains what they are, how they are discerned and their applications and effects (particularly in fostering knowledge claims). This is not conjecture. It has been proven in education for more than three decades.

One caveat regarding "a distinction which is not shared loses all of its potential and power" is the benefit of dialogue that leads to self-realization of erroneous mental models. The fifth discipline relies heavily on this. Yes, [a concept may have more power if 'signed' and shared but it can be valuable if not.](#)

Jack

Date: Thu Aug 21, 2003 6:54 am

Subject: KM Mavens: Distinctions Matter - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] KM Mavens: Shared Distinctions Are Building Blocks - Denham Grey

Denham and Jack R:

I'm glad the distinction of the term "distinction" resonated with you. It is something that I often find difficult to describe, especially when I am confined to words and can't use my hands (as I do when I talk!).

Denham, thanks for the elaboration. You used the words, "survival" and "competitive advantage," which put me in mind of the example that many people use to describe distinctions. The eskimos have different words for different types of snow. Their ability to make distinctions about the heaviness of snow, rate of fall, velocity of wind, and so on, is often a matter of survival. In English, we have snow and blizzard, and also rain, drizzle, and downpour. [The distinctions matter. We acquire them by experience and, as you say, through dialogue.](#) Just think about all the conversations that have occurred over the last ten years as people have wrestled with the distinction of "knowledge" in our business.

Jack, thanks for the caveat with respect to the danger of shared distinctions becoming "erroneous mental models." It's important to revisit distinctions from time to time. Thanks also for providing a reference for folks on distinctions. I'm not familiar with that work, and I'm sure others will appreciate it.

Patti

Date: Sun Aug 24, 2003 7:06 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Thanks for the Distinction - Soheil Ghorashi

From: Dr. Soheil Ghorashi, Ph.D., KM Consultant, Online Biz Systems Inc., Toronto, Canada

Subject: Re: Distinction

The idea was well raised and pointed out. It is true completely. [It is different to go for optimization or to survive, as the concept lies here.](#) I would like to express my appreciation for this very intelligent and excellent expression and well done elaboration.

Dr. Soheil Ghorashi, Ph.D.

Date: Mon Aug 18, 2003 2:58 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: KM Put Monsanto on 'Most Admired' List - Jack Vinson

From: Jack Vinson, knowledge manager, Pfizer

Subject: Ideas

Denham said: "Patti's focus on ideas is an interesting one. Ideas -- those fragile, ephemeral, half-objects sit neatly between the tacit and the explicit, between thoughts and shared concepts, between personal ego and a shared identity."

Jack: [Even though I didn't know it at the time, I was part of a Monsanto that put a heavy emphasis on knowledge management. In particular, Monsanto leadership were interested in creating opportunities for serendipitous encounters of ideas.](#) Bipin Junnarkar and others developed the idea of creating "white spaces" where this could happen: physical spaces, seminars, getting practitioners to interact -- anything that could generate the next new pharma-agro-food combination. Life Sciences companies were all the rage in the mid-late 90's, and the belief that cross-fertilization of ideas between the plant biologists, biochemists, pharmaceutical engineers, food scientists and many others that made up the company at the time.

Thinking of this sort put Monsanto on the early lists of Most Admired Knowledge Enterprises.

Jack

Date: Tue Aug 19, 2003 6:42 pm

Subject: [Idea Mavens: KM Put Monsanto on 'Most Admired' List - Jack Vinson](#)

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: KM Put Monsanto on 'Most Admired' List - Jack Vinson

Jack,

Thanks for bringing in a couple of great topics, and I hope giving others (besides myself) some motivation to learn a bit more about the Monsanto KM program. I found a couple of articles, and was very interested to see an article by Bipin Junnarkar on the models (maps) that he used in developing a system: a business model, an information architecture model, a knowledge process map, a 'scorecard', and technology. Since I work with a set of system models myself, I am always eager to refine and add to them by looking at what others have done.

I am especially interested in your description of "creating white spaces." Let's talk about the various ways that this term has been used. Junnarkar refers to his work as implementing the white spaces as defined by Garl Hamel and C.K. Prahalad. In their core competency matrix, [the "white space" represents the place to ask, "what new services/products could the company create by redeploying or recombining the company's core competencies?"](#) So Monsanto got energized around finding ways to find these spaces -- [by providing ways of connecting people.](#) One of the ways that he did this, as you indicate, was to "create spaces" for meeting to meet and mingle -- a place where

people and ideas could connect. I like thinking of these as white spaces also -- like whiteboards, clean and fresh, ready for ideas to leap from mind to finger to board.

A whiteboard is a great place for face-to-face collaboration, or for enrolling people in a vision. I was once recruiting an information architect into the KM program I was building at Nortel. I started drawing the community model; each of the systemic parts of the system was really a community, and the communities were all linked together through KM work. As I drew parts of the model, his responses kept suggesting more connections, more richness, and by the end, he sat back and said, "I feel like a fly whose just been drawn into a spider web." That's the power of a white space.

Physical spaces, and managing connections in physical spaces for serendipity, or off-the-cuff chat. Coincidentally (or not!), I came by the great paper on the KnowledgeBoard by Space SIG 9 (<http://www.knowledgeboard.com/cgi-bin/item.cgi?id=83735>). There are some really useful bits in this article, written by Victoria Ward and Clive Holtham over a year ago. Recent questions in the Knowledgeboard discussions brought the article to the "front burner" and I found it a great read. Part of keeping in practice in KM is revisiting topics from time to time, and I enjoy being reminded of ideas that haven't flown by in a while.

Almost the same day as I came on the article, a client asked if I had any suggestions for keeping a group about to be dis-located connected with its current neighbors. The group is moving to a building a few miles away. The possibility of serendipity will be significantly lessened. He's thinking about "always on" video setups (as in the original Xerox experiment many years ago). Any thoughts? I'd love some ideas!

In the same vein, I'd like to ask the AOKers out here what they have done with physical spaces to assist in connections -- and particularly, what worked? Jack has pointed out the use of seminars as well as physical spaces. Ward and Holtham note that intentional caf?s, put in place to encourage collaboration around coffee places, are frequently deserted. What brings people to these spaces? What is your experience

Another thread on the term "white space" I'd like to pick up if anyone is interested, would be the way that Geary Rummler and Alan Brache use it: "the relationships and information flows between the boxes on an organization chart." Nortel colleagues introduced me to the Pritchett Rummler-Brache methodology of process design, which works to understand and acknowledge these white spaces. [It was a wonderful collaboration, to integrate KM practices into the very bones of the design of new processes...and note that this definition of white space also brings to mind the value of social network analysis, and its value in demonstrating "where the real work gets done," which is so often in those spaces -- the richly connected place where ideas meet and mingle.](#)

Patti

Date: Tue Aug 19, 2003 6:03 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: What's the Business Case for SNA? - Bill Hall

From: Dr. William Hall, Documentation Systems Analyst, Tenix Defence, Williamstown, Victoria, Australia

Subject: RE: [AOK_K-Net] Digest Number 218

Patti

Social network analysis is fascinating from a theoretical point of view, but I do not yet see a compelling business case for devoting scarce people and budget resources to doing it in competition with a range of other KM activities the resources could be used for.

I represent a technology oriented defence contractor with a culture strongly divided into a number of divisional silos encompassing stovepiped projects (we don't need formal SNA to tell us this is a problem!). We are just starting to think about managing knowledge consciously (every organization has organizational knowledge that gets managed one way or another). Much of our KM activity is currently being driven from workfaces and upper middle management rather than from the executive.

Your 5 part architecture, with the people, process, systems (which we term infrastructure) in the middle has been used to structure a number of proposals. The company has invested in significant corporate IT infrastructure with KM capabilities able to cross the silos, but we are only now beginning to ask questions about how it might best be deployed to encompass people and process issues.

At this stage in our evolution, I believe that our KM priorities must be to establish:

1. a KM Architect role with confidence and support at the board level and
2. cross-divisional communities of practice who are given a role in helping to specify and lead deployment and use of the infrastructure and process.

Both areas show progress, but I would be interested in your thoughts as to the possible role of SNA at this stage in our development and how it could be justified in terms of cost and resources.

Regards, Bill

Date: Thu Aug 21, 2003 6:41 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: Cost/Benefit of SNA Is an Issue - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: What's the Business Case for SNA? - Bill Hall

Bill,

You ask a central, pivotal question about social network analysis, which I call the "so what?" question. SNA *is* interesting, but it's not an end in itself. An SNA project needs to be done in the context of a business problem -- it's a tool that comes out of the KM toolbox when it's the appropriate tool for the problem at hand. And [you should not think of social network analysis as being in competition with other programs, it is really a diagnostic tool that helps you target knowledge management programs and activities.](#)

For example, you can use social network analysis as part of a knowledge architecture of the organization. If your program includes developing a baseline of the knowledge bases, collections, and valuable sources of knowledge in the organization, you may want to do a social network analysis to find out where people go to get answers to particular categories of question -- which may be people (each other) as well as repositories, web sites, and so on. So your map can show people and what they actually use in addition to the content that has been collected.

(I'd love to have Denham Grey say more about this -- he has really done the most of this kind of work of anyone I know, and I also know that he is very committed to developing the data through interviews and anthropological techniques.)

Social network analysis is also very useful in setting up communities, particularly if you are looking at communities that cross organizational boundaries, or in planning the type of change management or team building you might want to do. How will you select the people to participate in this cross-divisional communities? A social network analysis within these groups might tell you who the most connected, trusted people are.

You might also want to think about the upper middle managers who are supporting the KM program. What are their goals and what do they want to achieve? If they want to see better cross-divisional collaboration, then wouldn't it be good to know where collaboration is working and where it is not, and put effort in the places where improvement is needed?

Cost is an issue in any program activity, and the cost of SNA must always include the cost of the time that it takes the people in the organization to contribute the data (via survey or interviews). You do need to be judicious in using social network analysis where it will matter the most.

I hope this helps.

Patti

Date: Wed Aug 20, 2003 7:46 am

Subject: [Idea Mavens: Business Case Example for SNA](#)

From: **John Barrett**

Subject: Business Case for SNA

Hi Patti and welcome.

I want to ask a question in a similar vein to the one posed by Bill Hall. That is, [what are the characteristics of a situation or issue that would lead one to say "SNA would be beneficial here?"](#) Could you cite a example or story that we might use in this regard where SNA was a key element in developing a successful solution

John Barrett, Principal ITI Associates

Date: Thu Aug 21, 2003 6:49 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: One Business Case Example for SNA - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: Business Case Example for SNA

Hi, John!

I think my response to Bill Hall illustrate [some examples of places where it's useful to ask if SNA would be beneficial -- a knowledge map, sourcing a cross-divisional team for change management, understanding collaboration patterns. Determining the relationships among communities of practice is another.](#)

One of the most effective analyses that I worked on is the case of the executive team, which is documented in the KM Magazine article. I also use it in my SNA talks.

<<http://www.kmmagazine.com/xq/asp/sid.EDBF0817-86A4-11D7-9D4E-00508B44AB3A/articleid.F79B4E31-7854-4B6A-9202-164FB18672D3/qx/display.htm>>.

[Note: Long URLs often need to be pasted into your browser window.]

I was requested to do analysis by the HR manager for the group, who was really struggling with what to do in a "team building" session designed to generate more collaborative behavior. Because of my prior work with SNA, he called me to talk specifically about whether "SNA would be beneficial here." I said yes, and it was.

[I think the SNA question is appropriate whenever there is doubt about the extent of collaboration occurring.](#)

That's my story. I know there are other SNA practitioners in the AOK community, and it's time to hear from some of you!

Patti

Date: Thu Aug 21, 2003 7:05 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: SNA or ba

From: David Hawthorne

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Digest Number 219, SNA or ba

Bill Hall asks for a "business case" for communities of practice and he has a point, but I wonder if it's the right point. Ikujiro Nonaka and Ryoko Toyama ("The Knowledge-creating theory revisited: knowledge creation as a synthesizing process," Knowledge Management Research & Practice, www.palgrave-journals.com/kmp) provide another perspective on "communities" with their concept of ba.

"Ba is a way of organizing that is based on the meaning it creates, rather than a form of organization such as hierarchy or network. ...Although the concept of ba seemingly has some similarities to the concept of 'communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998), there are important differences. ... (B)a is a place where new knowledge is created.... While a community of practice has an identity and its boundary is firmly set by the task, culture, and history of its community, the boundary of ba is fluid and can be changed quickly, as it is set by the participants.Ba is created, functions, and disappears according to need." (Let us all restrain ourselves from clever riposte on the possible association of the sound "ba" with any unfamiliar idea.)

In this context, I wonder if SNA might not -in some manner - be used to assess, monitor and/or nurture the structure of ba? And if it can be used in such a manner, wouldn't it be better to learn to use it so that we nurture value creation (through knowledge creation)? What is the business case for any "creative" process? Does it work? Does it, in fact, create more value than some other process. Certainly if we employed SNA toward monitoring the health of creative cross boundary collaborations the "business case" would be easier to make.

-David Hawthorne

Date: Sat Aug 23, 2003 7:02 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Hmm...a Network Goodness Number? - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: SNA or ba

David,

'Ba' is a great idea that needs dialogue -- and experience -- to become a distinction. I'm not sure I quite have it yet, but it is coming out of the background of definitions of community, people, place, and ideas, I need to roll it around in my mind a lot to get to a point where it's distinct. I'm getting there.

[**Jerry Ash:** Okay, guys, you forced me into it. On behalf of the timid, I ask, "What's ba?" Even my favorite glossary of business jargon doesn't tell me. So, what are you talking about here?]

With my current understanding, I'd like to probe your question about whether SNA can be "used to assess, monitor, and/or nurture the structure of ba?" Here's one way that I would ask this question: "[Can you use SNA to tell when the conditions in an organization are ripe for collaboration and innovation?](#)" I would then think about this in terms of patterns and even, to some extent, some of the network measures that come from a survey or analysis. I was working with a project management expert a few weeks ago, looking at ways that we could use SNA in diagnosing underlying causes of imminent project failure. He was very excited about SNA, and wanted to be able to do an analysis, get all the numbers, and have a formula that would tell a client exactly what her "network goodness" number was.

Hmm...a network goodness number. How could that be, when all network analysis is contextual? I asked Andrew Parker. Andrew is the collaborator of Rob Cross in the social network analysis research at the Institute for Knowledge Management at IBM. Andrew replied, "that number is the 'holy grail' of social network analysis!" In other words, it would be long and fruitless search to find some absolute numeric scale with which to assign a value to the health of a network. BUT: we know what good patterns look like, and we know that some measures will tend to suggest the degree of goodness. This is where the practice of SNA comes in. No absolutes. All organizations are different (even different at different points in time), but through learning, mentoring, and experience the practitioner understands what patterns to look for, what interventions work in particular circumstances, and goes out and asks new questions.

[To nurture value/knowledge creation and creativity, you could design a social network analysis that asked questions about the creativity in relationships.](#) (Rob and Andrew have mapped "energy" relationships in companies by finding out what people give energy and what people take it away. This would be very similar.) You could then gather business metrics that might in some way relate to creativity (new product ideas, process improvement, marketing campaigns) and compare these over time as you map the network. These are indeed the kind of longitudinal case studies of social network analysis that are needed in order to make the business case easier.

But I really like the idea of making the vision for SNA the ability to manage the patterns in a network so as to achieve the highest possible ba.

Patti

Date: Wed Aug 20, 2003 10:48 am

Subject: KM Mavens: Why Not "Colorful Spaces?" - Charles Savage

From: Charles Savage, former moderator of the STAR Series Dialogues

Subject: RE: [AOK_K-Net] Digest Number 219 - comment to Patti et al

Patti et al,

Thanks for remembering what we were doing those days at Digital. It was certainly a special place and a special time, and I found your work and that of others most inspiring as well.

David Hawthorne, you rightly point to the importance of making sense, (sense making). Would you agree that it is "sense over cents?" or "meaning over money?" True, both are important, but certainly meaning matters more than we've given it credit.

Patti, it is nice you remember Bipin's "white spaces" and similar notions of others. Instead of calling them white spaces, why not think of them as "colorful spaces?"

As you will remember in Knowledge Networking (something Juanita Brown renamed Knowledge Café) we really open ourselves so that we can get painted by the colorful ideas, the textured feelings, and the spirited visioning of one another. It works when we open ourselves to connect with the energy of the others, and learn how to build on their competencies.

+**[JUANITA BROWN, Ph.D., founder of Whole Systems Associates, collaborates as a strategist and thinking partner with senior leaders in developing knowledge-based organizations and large scale change initiatives. She has served as a Senior Affiliate with the MIT Center for Organizational Learning and co-leads the SOL Executive Champions Workshop with Peter Senge. <http://www.theworldcafe.com/about.html>]**+

I have never made a big thing of this, but I have always understood Knowledge Networking, the "White Space," or Nonaka's "BA," in the context of human time (as opposed to clock time). Each of us has a past that flows with us and is ever present, just waiting for us to reach down and pull up a special capability. Similarly, our future already flows with us in terms of our aspirations. If we can reach up and connect with this energy in one another, then things begin to happen, and in colorful ways.

When we take the time to open ourselves to participate in the capabilities flowing with our colleagues, and when we touch and are touched by their aspirations, then an innovative energy is released and we are able to weave our ideas, inspirations, insights and inventions together.

This is why I asked the question about social networking, because for me it is known, lived and understood in the experience more than in the analysis. Done right we come alive in the context of others who care, challenge, listen and are willing to build upon one another's capabilities and aspirations. This reveals colorful, spirited and meaning rich space, primarily because it happens in human time! Perhaps we are not just reaching for meaning, but meaningful encounters that energize. Could this be what we are all reaching for?

Charles

Date: Thu Aug 21, 2003 6:58 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: Energy Produces Ideas - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] KM Mavens: Why Not "Colorful Spaces?" - Charles Savage

Charles,

Your response brings back the warmth that suffuses the knowledge networking sessions that you orchestrate. Thanks for reminding me that there is another set of dimensions to social capital and social networks, and in particular that ideas (to get back to the main theme) grow and ignite through the energy that comes from real people interacting in "colorful spaces."

And yes, it is all about meaningful encounters that energize -- and in our business context, we need to be looking for the energy that produces results. [Did you know that social network maps based on energy-giving and meaning-making provide really interesting insights?](#) And I'll bet that the energy-givers are idea mavens, too.

Patti Anklam

Date: Thu Aug 21, 2003 9:23 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: White Spaces Off the Org Chart - Jack Vinson

From: Jack Vinson

Subject: White spaces

Unfortunately, Monsanto's KM effort died out as it merged and de-merged and remerged, and this was just as I was developing my own interest in KM. I know as much as anyone else who has read the articles from Junnarkar and others. At the end, we had a CKO in Susan Welsh, MD.

Patti's discussion of various forms of white space tickled a number of thoughts, particularly [the idea of white space as the "relationships that aren't represented on the organization chart."](#) Isn't this exactly what Social Network Analysis shows us? Bill Hall asks the value of SNA, and I think this is as good an explanation as any other. While the silos and formal organizational structures provide one view of the organization, a good SNA will help point out how information really flows around an organization.

"So what?" Well, this information can help you propose communication changes to address specific shortfalls. Implement the change, and then run another SNA to see if this change has had any impact. The best examples are at <http://www.orgnet.com/> (Valdis Krebs' company), check out <http://www.orgnet.com/decisions.html> for a comparison between the official and the actual networks.

Date: Sat Aug 23, 2003 6:49 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Six Myths About Informal Networks - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: White Spaces Off the Org Chart - Jack Vinson

Thanks, Jack, for filling in the white spaces in my responses to earlier questions. SNA does indeed tell you where the hidden organization is, and what kinds of information, knowledge, and ideas flow between the boundaries, in that colorful white space we've been talking about.

Unfortunately, this doesn't always make a business case. [Executives are prone to believe that they already understand what happens in their networks](#). This is one of the "The Six Myths about Informal Networks and How to Overcome Them." The complete myth list:

1. To build better networks, communicate more.
2. Everyone should be connected to everyone else.
3. We can't do much to aid informal networks.
4. How people fit into networks is a matter of personality, which can't be changed.
5. Central people who have become bottlenecks should make themselves more accessible.
6. I already know what is going on in my network.

You can find access details for the article by Rob Cross, Nitin Nohria and Andrew Parker at <http://smr.mit.edu/past/2002/smr4337.html>

That said, it is also true that the argument you make does work for the executives who "get it."

Thanks also, for adding the links to Valdis Krebs site and cases. I was remiss perhaps in not giving a complete set of resources earlier in this dialogue, but will close off with a resource list. Valdis has been practicing SNA/ONA for many years, and has also, through his company, mentored many other practitioners. I sent him a note when I started this STAR series dialogue, and you've already seen what happened: he joined!

Patti Anklam

Date: Sun Aug 24, 2003 7:15 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: A Seventh Myth - Valdis Krebs

From: Valdis Krebs

Subject: Re: Six Myths...

[Excellent list Patti!](#)

I run into that thinking all of the time.

A new myth that I am seeing more and more of...

* Every network is scale-free [dominated by one or a few very highly connected nodes, while most nodes only have 1 or a few connections]

Lots of people are reading the recent crop of network books like "Linked" and "Nexus" and "Six Degrees" and are becoming "instant pundits" on networks. The same type of over-simplified thinking that helped to create the list of 6 is adding to the list.

Valdis

Date: Mon Aug 25, 2003 6:56 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: A Seventh Myth - Valdis Krebs

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: A Seventh Myth

Valdis,

Great observation. (Just when I thought I was becoming an expert in SNA, I find that anybody can do it!)

[The trouble with making facile arguments about networks based on a "little knowledge" is that the practice of SNA, used with sensitivity to organizational context and respect for the individual, could be in jeopardy.](#) I already blogged the USA Today article in which you said, "the Chernobyl of SNA ... is out there."

<http://www.usatoday.com/tech/webguide/internetlife/2003-08-03-connected_x.htm>

[Note: You may need to cut and paste this long URL into your browser.]

This also has a good description of the software phenomenon itself.)

The problem is that the data -- the mathematics and graphs, the metrics and n-degree computations -- don't carry the context of the network. Reliance on the technology as a solution to the problem of "just-in-time relationships" has all the earmarks of the first days of KM -- when technology would solve everything.

patti

Date: Thu Aug 21, 2003 11:45 am

Subject: FW: New Member Prompts New Question - Valdis Krebs [+Jerry Ash]

From: Valdis Krebs

Subject: New member Intro

Hello Everyone!

My name is Valdis Krebs. I am a management consultant and software developer specializing in Organizational Network Analysis [like social network analysis but more business org. specific]. This week's STAR, Patti, introduced me to this list.

I reside in Cleveland, OH and on the WWW at: <http://www.orgnet.com>

I look forward to stimulating discussions and productive idea exchanges!

Valdis Krebs Cleveland, OH valdis@o... <http://www.orgnet.com>

[**Jerry Ash.** Welcome to AOK membership, Valdis. Since you are so eager, I sent you a copy of today's Digest and praised Patti Anklam's turn in the STAR seat even before I knew you knew each other!

Today, by the way, there is some discussion about the difference and similarities of SNA and ba. Now you come with ONA! And, just as I was wondering if all of these related research protocols could be batched with a Knowledge Audit. I mean, how many questionnaires can one group of people fill out to satisfy multiple studies about related matters?]

P.S. If that thought gets lost down here, I may restate it in another post tomorrow. -- Jerry

Date: Fri Aug 22, 2003 10:15 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: ONA and SNA - Valdis Krebs

From: Valdis Krebs, founder and owner, orgnet.com

Subject: ONA and SNA

Jerry,

ONA and SNA are very similar. IBM Global Services started using the ONA term because their executive clients preferred that term... it was more business-oriented. ONA consultants also tend to focus on a few of the hundreds of SNA metrics/methods available. Again the driver is the client. Whereas some academic SNA projects take 18 months or more, most ONA projects take 18 days to 18 weeks -- most are 3-6 weeks.

ONA does not require you to ask more questions, add another survey, etc. It is basically SNA as it has evolved for business organizations and their needs.

Date: Sat Aug 23, 2003 6:43 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Sorting Out SNA and ONA - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: ONA and SNA - Valdis Krebs

Hi, Valdis,

Valdis -- thanks for joining me over here. Jerry manages a great network of thinkers and practitioners. And, I hope you'll bail me out on questions regarding the finer points of SNA!

Regarding SNA/ONA.

I recently read the article "Networks, Netwars, and the Fight for the Future," available from First Monday, at http://www.firstmonday.dk/issues/issue6_10/ronfeldt/index.html.

The article itself describes how the nature of conflict -- within and between governments, in particular -- is changing, and the need for hierarchical military agencies to adapt to fight enemies who are using networked organizational forms. The authors, David Ronfeldt and John Arquilla, spend some time setting the context for their primary argument, and in so doing provide some pretty good descriptions of social network analysis. They describe the difference between SNA and ONA as follows:

Social network analysts detect the patterns of connection among people and "...search for the formal and informal networks that undergird [a system] and emphasize their roles in making that social organization or system work the way that it does."

Organizational network analysts treat networks as organizational forms and ask "whether the actors recognize that they are participating in a particular network, and whether they are committed to operating as a network."

Using these distinctions, the two disciplines remain closely related with each offering something different.

Patti

Date: Sun Aug 24, 2003 7:13 pm

Subject: Idea mavens: 'Ba' is Collaborative Space or Context - Denham Grey

From: Denham Grey

Subject: Idea mavens: 'Ba' and SNA

Jerry (I believe) was asking for more information on "Ba".

In short a Ba is a collaborative space or a context for knowledge flows & exchanges - either face to face and physical or virtual. The concept comes from Japanese culture. A key reference is the 1998 article by Nonaka & Konno "The concept of 'Ba': Building a foundation for knowledge creation," California Management Review 40 (3) 40-54.

This concept is well covered in "Enabling Knowledge Creation" by Krogh, Ichijo & Nonaka, 2000 pp178-180.

Some "Bas" are so subtle that participants may not be aware they even exist! In these circumstances -- [where knowledge sharing and creation is deeply embedded within the organizational ethos, culture and traditions](#) -- I suspect traditional SNA would not be a very useful tool for their explication and discovery.

Date: Mon Aug 25, 2003 7:03 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: 'Thou Shalt Not Kill a New Product Idea' - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: 'Ba' is Collaborative Space or Context - Denham Grey

Thanks for the additional definition of 'ba,' Denham. I assume that I, like many others, have had some difficulty "distinguishing 'ba'," that is, 'ba' is a distinction that comes from a language that is foreign to most of us. It takes time, and much re-reading of Nonaka, for me to finally get there. The point about understanding 'ba' is that when you understand the four types of 'ba', then you can design the culture, environment, and infrastructure necessary to support knowledge creation.

In the California Review article you mention (thanks for pointing it out, by the way), there's a great description of how 3M manages it: " 'Thou shalt not kill a new product idea' is a rule at 3M that provides an organization-level, interacting 'ba' for dialogue where people engage jointly in the creation of meaning and value."

This dialogue also puts me in mind of a great definition of knowledge management that I picked up from a talk by Susan Mohrmann (Center for Effective Organizations, University of Southern California) at last year's KMworld: knowledge management is "Creating the context for effectively acquiring, leveraging, generating, applying and deriving value from knowledge."

There's that context word again. Creating the context. If an organization does well at creating the context for knowledge processes, then there are almost certainly environments within that organization in which the notion of social network analysis makes no sense. On the other hand, [SNA can be useful in the initial design of the organizational structures, physical environments, and knowledge networking processes that enable 'ba' to occur.](#)

patti

Date: Mon Aug 25, 2003 6:59 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: Ba About What Happens, Not What Is - Jack Ring

From: Jack Ring

Subject: Ba

One way to think about Ba is to consider the duality of something -- a chair, for example. A chair can be seen for what it is but can also be seen for what it does (or how it can be

applied in some situation). A chair can be described as a structure (four legs supporting a horizontal plane supporting a vertical plane). A chair can be described as a weapon, a resting place, a location of discipline, etc.

[Ba is more about what happens than what is.](#) Jazz combos experience this as do many teams having higher levels of consciousness. Accordingly, observed structure changes quickly in because it is not about physical entities but about relationships among conceptual entities.

I daresay that depending on the questions asked an SNA may reveal only the static relationships within a community (rather like a citation analysis across several bibliographies which reveal the 'political' mores of the group more than the 'knowledge' mores). [With a different set of questions an SNA can reveal the 'flow' pattern - more the Do side of 'Know - Do - Be'. Could this be the distinction between SNA and ONA](#) Be aware of the possibility that if a community does not have a compelling goal then their criteria for relationship building is much different than otherwise. And if they have a compelling goal but are feeling overwhelmed then another pattern may be 'reported' by the very same people.

Date: Wed Aug 20, 2003 3:53 pm

Subject: [KM Mavens: Social software - Jack Vinson](#)

From: Jack Vinson

Subject: Social software

Patti, we are in for a real treat if all your responses are as detailed as those we have seen the first couple of days!

The people partaking in social software (blogging, newsgroups, user-driven support) are those who don't mind having their "networks exposed" this way. Those who aren't interested in exposing themselves proceed in different directions. There are plenty of people who choose not to expose themselves but who love to read what others have to say.

I am blogging because I love to share ideas and information with people (the David Weinberger blogging archetype), and there aren't enough people at work who are interested. Being this type of person does not always work to one's benefit. I just ran across Kevin Mark's blog, where he tells us how he "emailed himself into a job and blogged himself out:"

http://epeus.blogspot.com/2003_08_01_epeus_archive.html#106133327387671172.

[Note: If this URL wraps into a second line in your email window, you may need to cut and paste it into your search function.]

[The people who believe that social software is The Big Thing are convinced that those who do not participate are going to be marginalized. I suspect that is not really the case,](#)

but that social software will find its proper place within corporations, just as many other technologies have grown to fit needs of the company. (Or is it that companies have grown to see the value of the technologies?)

Jack

Date: Sat Aug 23, 2003 7:09 pm

Subject: KM Mavens: Blogs Aren't Necessarily Social Networks - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] KM Mavens: Social software - Jack Vinson

Jack,

Thanks for providing such a thought-provoking response to Charles Savage's initial question, which was "do people really want to share their social networks." This response mentioned blogs as social software, but I've been doing so much reading and thinking lately about social networking software (LinkedIn, Ryze, etc.) that I think we need to bring this into the conversation as well (at some point).

Regarding Blogs, what I share about my network is not necessarily my social network. For example, I blog as a record of what has happened to me and things I read that interested me. I write it carefully, and make it public (it puts something at stake in it), but I wouldn't claim that many of the authors of blogs that I link to are really in my social network. They are in a kind of knowledge network -- I would get in touch with any of the people I've linked to for further conversation or questions. (And I've done so.) So in that sense, the blog might represent as much my "future network" as my current network. The story, "How I emailed myself into a job and blogged my way out of it," is a little like that. You can email and blog your way into a social network. And when you do so, you are making this aspect of your network public. It's a little scary, but can also be rewarding when some of those people actually call you up or send you mail because they resonated with something that you blogged.

And I agree, that everyone will take up the next Big Thing; many will keep their blogs private, guard their contacts closely, and forever be lurkers in email lists. And that's fine. One of the patterns that a social network analysis shows is that of "outliers" in an organization. These are the people who, for whatever reason, are not connected to others. The analyst needs to be very sensitive to the context in which these people lie outside -- and to ask the right questions to find out if this is a prickly expert who contributes valuable ideas, innovations, and insights when needed, or a newcomer who wasn't properly introduced, or an obnoxious lout. Each one of these might choose to Blog, for very different reasons, but I like to think email lists and collaboration forums in the past, and blogs, wikis, and whatever else comes next, are technologies that enable people who haven't been able to build networks and share ideas through social contacts a new way to communicate. Or not.

The technology acquisition process is another interesting slant on the question. I don't think it is an either/or (either technologies grow to fit the needs of the company or that companies have grown to see the value of the technologies). Technology co-evolve with their customers. Customers take software in directions the designers had not imagined, and the insights from customers enrich the product, which in turn "fits" better.

Patti Anklam

Date: Mon Aug 25, 2003 8:36 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: Picking and Choosing Network Sharing - Jack Vinson

From: Jack Vinson

Subject: KM Mavens: Blogs Aren't Necessarily Social Networks

Patti,

Thanks for your thoughts regarding blogs and other social software. I think you are right in that my "social" network is not represented in my blog. But, like the water cooler or coffee pot, my blog gives me an opportunity to express ideas in the (expected) company of people who are interested in the same topics. Clearly, blogs aren't the only place one can do this, there are mailing lists and user forums and ... coffee pots.

I have heard people talk about this as "thinking out loud" or "socializing ideas." The benefit that I get from socializing with these like-minded folks is a much wider range of ideas and opinions than I would ever get strictly within my company or other local interest groups. [Social software \(of whatever variety\) doesn't so much replace my social network as expand the sources from which I can draw ideas and with whom I can share ideas.](#)

And back to Charles' question about sharing one's social network, it is probably not critical that I share my "complete" social network in any given situation. I only need to be able to bring to bear those people in my network who might have relevance to the discussion or question at hand. Patti brought Valdis Krebs aboard, and our other STAR moderators have brought in co-authors and colleagues as well. We do this here at AOK, when we bring in references from outside work that connect with what we are discussing. I also post comments based on ideas that have been percolating through my head or through countless other readings without necessarily bringing those others into the conversation.

Jack

Date: Mon Aug 25, 2003 10:52 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: Picking and Choosing Network Sharing - Jack Vinson

From: Jack Ring

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: Picking and Choosing Network Sharing - Jack Vinson

Jack Vinson wrote:

The benefit that I get from socializing with these like-minded folks is a much wider range of ideas and opinions than I would ever get strictly within my company or other local interest groups.

I get a richer panoply of ideas and opinions from those who are **not** like-minded. Or do you include contrarian thinkers in your like-minded?

Date: Tue Aug 26, 2003 9:00 am

Subject: **Idea Mavens: Weak Ties/Strong Ties - Patti Anklam**

From: **Patti Anklam**

Subject: Re: Idea Mavens: Picking and Choosing Network Sharing - Jack Vinson

Jack,

I agree that it is important to have those nonlike-minded people in your network, especially during the time that you are bringing new ideas into organizations. The socialization process is as much about finding out where the resistance or contrarian ideas might be. Certainly, for the idea maven, it's absolutely necessary to get outside of one's core network to see what is happening in other parts of the world.

Another social networking concept might be useful to bring in here, and that is the distinction of "weak ties versus strong ties." In a network, the tie is the connection between two nodes -- the relationship between two people. In the network of like-minded folks who speak or exchange email or blog each other frequently, the tie is likely to be a strong one. A weak tie, on the other hand, represents a looser connection, perhaps a person you see only occasionally at parties, or someone whose blog you've read, but have never been in a dialogue with.

One of the foundational pieces of research in social networks is called "The Strength of Weak Ties," by Dr. Mark Granovetter. He asked the question, "in job searches, are people more likely to find a new job through their weak ties or their strong ties?" The answer: the weak ties. Why? Because the weak ties are actually links into other networks -- and to people you don't know. If you are looking for a job and ask only the people you know, the likelihood of finding something is considerably less than if you contact the people you know only slightly -- because they know so many more people.

The same, I think, is true for getting ideas. *If you only share ideas with the like-minded people you already know, you are less likely to encounter ideas from other disciplines, domains of experience, or perspectives.*

I don't think that Jack Vinson meant that he doesn't look outside his like-minded network; his responses to many of the posts here indicate that he is always out looking for new ideas and letting them bounce around and interact with what he already knows. Plus, the activity of skating and skimming blogs will frequently land you in contrarian opinion spaces.

Date: Tue Aug 26, 2003 11:34 am

Subject: FW: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: Weak Ties/Strong Ties - Patti Anklam

From: Jack Ring

Subject: Re: Weak Ties/Strong Ties - Patti Anklam

Patti, I appreciate your response and the citations.

It turns out that coherency may be a better distinction than weak or strong because then one can talk about coherency regarding a number of attributes.

Have you noticed that coherency of meaning is important (Senge's mutual mental models)? This is important in the knowledge production and utilization world because of the inexplicability of a new distinction to someone not prepared for it.

Date: Wed Aug 27, 2003 7:13 am

Subject: FW: Idea Mavens: Picking and Choosing Network Sharing

From: Jack Vinson

Subject: Idea Mavens: Picking and Choosing Network Sharing

Jack Vinson wrote: >The benefit that I get from socializing with these like-minded folks is a >much wider range of ideas and opinions than I would ever get strictly within >my company or other local interest groups.

Then, Jack Ring replied: >I get a richer panoply of ideas and opinions from those who are *not* >like-minded. Or do you include contrarian thinkers in your like-minded

Now Jack Vinson replies: Caught by imprecise language. I was thinking of "like-minded" in the sense of people who share similar interests, not those who necessarily share the same views on those interests. Actually, my willingness to hear opposing ideas depends upon the particular community of interest. Even then, it depends on how those views are presented. Those who vociferously defend their viewpoint without acknowledging alternate readings bug me, no matter where I stand. I certainly learn a lot in discussions that highlight the important points of a debate.

Date: Wed Aug 27, 2003 9:52 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: Re. Jack Vinson Picking and Choosing

From: Jack Ring

Subject: Re: Jack Vinson Picking and Choosing

Thanks, I suspected that you meant like interests rather than like positions.

But now I must ask about like styles (both interpersonal and learning). You seem to enjoy compatible ones more than other kinds.

This is not intended to be an expose' of Jack Vinson, only an exploration of the kinds of factors that must be tolerated in a truly open, expeditionary community of purposeful practice.

I ask because of one of my favorite observations, with which most people do not agree ---
[There are two kinds of people in the world. Kind 1 are more concerned with how something is said than with what is said. Kind 2 are successful.](#)

Date: Thu Aug 28, 2003 7:11 pm

Subject: [Idea Mavens: Why Something is Said - Dirk Scheuring,](#)

From: Dirk Scheuring, founder/chair, Xyco Text Animation Services

Jack Ring wrote:

>There are two kinds of people in the world. Kind 1 are more concerned with >how something is said than with what is said. Kind 2 are successful.

[May I ask where people who are concerned with "why something is said" fit into this picture?](#)

Cheers,

Dirk

Date: Mon Sep 1, 2003 5:25 pm

Subject: [Idea Mavens: Responding to Dirk Scheuring - Jack Ring](#)

From: Jack Ring

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: Why Something is Said - Dirk Scheuring,

Sure. Those who are concerned with why something is said are Kind 2. I suspect you knew that. Also they consider when, where, who, etc. [In short, they are egoless which is the prerequisite to 'leaderful.'](#)

Cheers, Jack

Date: Thu Aug 28, 2003 12:20 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: like-minded vs. not like-minded - Valdis Krebs

From: Valdis Krebs

Subject: like-minded vs. not like-minded

Interesting post on FAST COMPANY's blog about the benefits of diverse network ties...

-- http://blog.fastcompany.com/archives/2003/08/25/want_to_innovate_dump_your_friends_.html

[Note: Because it wraps into two lines, you may need to copy and paste this URL into your browser.]

And here is my response to it...

I see the researcher is paying homage to his well known colleague at Stanford -- Mark Granovetter -- the originator of the 'strength of weak ties' theory. This research verifies Granovetter's well-established theory once again.

- [Diverse/Weak ties for Innovation.](#) - [Trusted/Strong ties for Implementation.](#)

You need both to be successful -- it is an AND condition. The innovative entrepreneur who cannot implement his/her ideas is not a success.

So, it is NOT a good idea to dump your friends... keep 'em. Just don't spend all of your time with them!!

Valdis

Date: Sat Aug 23, 2003 6:23 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Trust vs. Expedient Social Networking - Judith Meskill

From: Judith Meskill

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Digest Number 220

Greetings Patti,

I receive the AOK discussion group in digest form and this morning, with the exception of Charles Savage (do you have a weblog Charles?), all participants are already linked in my blogroll.

One of the many things I love about weblogs is the opportunity to quickly share thoughts in domains in which you have an interest as there is an extreme level of generosity in the exposure of social networks and respected opinions in the weblog and wiki communities [expediency]. And yet, as in most modes of social networking, inclusion as a valuable member of these networks may take time [trust].

Are you familiar with Ross Mayfield's views on social networking models? Back on March 30, 2003 Ross published the following post on his weblog:

<http://radio.weblogs.com/0114726/2003/03/30.html#a376>

Herein Ross proposes a framework "for understanding how Social Networking Models differ by how personal connections are made."

Social Networking Models

Network Type	Connection	Example	-----	-----	-----	Explicit
Declarative	Ryze	Physical	In-person	Meetup	Conversational	Communication
LiveJournal;	Weblogs	Private	Referral	Friendster		

Ross posits that "trust" ascends through these four models whereas "speed of contact" descends.

Patti, [what is your view of "trust" versus "expedient" social networking, and of the new "Social Software" examples that Ross refers to in his "Social Networking Models" framework?](#)

I look forward to your response.

Best Regards, Judith Meskill

PS: Denham's question on "how then do distinctions connect with ideas / memes / thoughts / conceptualizations / beliefs" inspired the following alliterative "haitech haiku" that i published on my weblog this afternoon: [<http://www.meskill.net/weblogs/>]

most memes may mutate memetical morphosis. mind to mind virus

Date: Sun Aug 24, 2003 7:23 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Competence-Based Trust etc. - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: Idea Mavens: Trust vs. Expedient Social Networking - Judith Meskill

Dear Judith,

What a remarkable thing that you have posted a note to this series! Just last Friday, I came on your excellent blog while I was googling something, and discovered that you had given me a plug for the STAR series as well. (Thanks for that, by the way.) I actually did a "blog this" on your site, but haven't had the time this week to go back and fix it up and publish.

Which is an excellent example of how we develop our social networks through blogs. The principle that "people are attracted to people like them" (homophily, to scientists), also holds true in the blog space. When I come across a blog I haven't seen before, and start skimming archives, it's always so interesting to see blogs on articles that have also caught my interest.

I had seen Ross Mayfield's framework for looking at the types of social connections (thanks for giving the reference!). But it had not made an impact on me until you brought it back to my attention just now. It's a great introduction to the categories of social software, with plenty to chew on.

With respect to trust, I hesitate to bring this topic into the conversation here because there have already been so many dialogues about it lately in the communities of practice forums, and also here (I think). However, [there is a connection between the research in social network analysis and trust](#), and I want to be sure to provide a reference to it. This work (also by Rob Cross at the Institute for Knowledge-Enabled Organizations), brings into focus two types of trust: competence-based trust and benevolence-based trust.

Competence-based trust describes a relationship in which an individual believes that another person is knowledgeable about a given subject area. This differs from the benevolence-based form in which an individual will not intentionally harm another when given the opportunity to do so. (See http://www-1.ibm.com/services/files/ibv_trustandknow.pdf). In the context of social software, damage to one's reputation is always at risk.)

So you could add a dimension to Ross's framework, which is around the type of trust. In an online setting, I would think that competence-based trust would arrive first -- at the level of declarative relationships. Benevolence-based trust would come after the conversational and private levels have been established and experienced. Unfortunately, I do not have an aptitude for perceiving spatial relationships, so I can't quite "see" charted in three dimensions, but it is interesting to think about.

Then there is the fourth dimension, time-to-trust. And certainly, the personal referral shortcuts a lot of the time that elapses while you wait to see how many of the "people like you" also like to read and think about another person's writing. So people who have been blogging for a while get linked to a lot, and the more links, the more quickly I trust that person, especially if linked to by other people I know. It is like building a real social network during those frantic first several weeks at high school or college, isn't it? We're all writing a lot (because, perhaps as Ross points out, we have so much more time on our hands these days), and transferring ideas at a lightning pace, but often with no place to bring those ideas down to earth and practice.

As for the entire social networking software applications, I am still working at this. I'm in Ryze, LinkedIn, Tribe.net, and working with a group that is beta testing ZeroDegrees. Because I join these mostly as a matter of curiosity, I've seen no personal benefit -- which may be due to the fact that I have signed up without a specific purpose or goal in mind.

Like anything, you need a purpose before you make a commitment. And a practice field.

Date: Sun Aug 24, 2003 7:08 pm

Subject: FW: KM Mavens: Alternatives to Surveys - Denham Grey

From: Denham Grey

Subject: KM Mavens: networking engines

Was interested to see Patti mention her ongoing study of 'networking engines' such as Ryze, Friendster, LinkedIn, Ecademy.....

Wondering what software functionalities and affordances are key to social networking?

What technology features really separate a 'professional' from a personal network

<https://www.linkedin.com/>

<http://ryze.com/>

<http://www.friendster.com/index.jsp>

On another track, I would appreciate hearing comments on the usefulness of surveys and questionnaires vs. ethnography and action research as ways to gather data for SNA. My experience is simply - people tell you what they think you should or wish to know, and very seldom supply what they really believe, think or do.

Surveys then tend to give a biased view and cannot be trusted to provide a true, accurate or actual 'picture' of relationships, information flows, informal support or activity within firms.

Date: Mon Aug 25, 2003 6:53 pm

Subject: KM Mavens: Closer Look at Software, Surveys and Interviews- Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: KM Mavens: Alternatives to Surveys - Denham Grey

Denham,

As usual, you ask the questions that challenge. Your first question is, "what software functionalities and affordances are key to social networking?" I had to go back to my books to recall the exact definition of "affordance," which is the set of things that a user interface actually allows a user to do. (It also has to do with how well the software lets the user know that he or she can actually do something.)

What are the key things that the software needs to do

- 1) Let users create and maintain profiles
- 2) Let users create and manage their personal contact lists (friends, resources, whatever)
- 3) Let users search the profiles of all the other users in the network
- 4) Manage the database of links among individual contacts
- 5)

Protect an individual's privacy by ensuring that requests for meeting come only through a known contact

For readers who haven't yet been introduced to social networking software, Friendster has a quick tour at: <http://www.friendster.com/info/tour.jsp>.

This software lets you see the friends of your friends, and you can send messages to them directly. Professional business software provides a more discrete introduction process - it sends an email to your friend, asking your friend to make the contact. You need to provide the reason that you want to make the contact to help your friend decide whether to pass it on or not. The Ryze model is that you can search the network and get in touch with anyone, without an intermediary, but since it is through Ryze, the person you get in contact with can see your page, and your connections, and look for interests or friends in common.

What separates a "personal" network from a "professional" network in these software programs? The personal network is just that -- making new friends, connecting with people who have the same interests, like to do the same things, read the same books, and so on. In a professional context, there is a difference between the enterprise software and the public software. The public sites are currently "open" to anyone, and for the moment, free.

This will change once the network is large enough to be valuable. For example, LinkedIn tells me I have over 6400 people in my "network," 3100 of whom are job seekers. If I'm looking for a job, this isn't a good prospect. At the point at which the overall population in LinkedIn is sufficient large to give good results -- for finding experts, making deals, and so on -- then LinkedIn will want to charge for a successful connection.

Inside an enterprise, software like Visible Path, Spoke, and ZeroDegrees use the same basic functions to help sales people find contacts. In this case, the software can actually create profiles and networking contact lists for employees by reading their Outlook contact lists. (Actually, they do let employees filter the lists, so Grandma and Grandpa don't get into the network.) Then a sales person who wants to make a call inside a particular corporation simply searches the network on the name of that corporation, hoping to find someone in his/her company who knows someone (one hopes it will be a Vice President!) in that corporation. Voila.

Second question: on the usefulness of surveys vs. qualitative interviews and action research. You already know my views on this, but thanks for asking the question here, so that others can provide their views. I have not personally used ethnography or action research in SNA projects, but I would consider doing so. Nor do I have access (nor the skills) to develop software to mine emails and users' interactions with knowledge repositories. These are all legitimate ways of collecting information for an SNA, and mostly benefit from combination.

You will never get 100 percent accuracy in what people say in the surveys, but overall, the experience of practitioners to date is that the patterns revealed in the analysis do, indeed, reflect what is happening in a network. A very important part of doing the survey is ensuring that the context is set before the survey, so that people will be engaged in answering as honestly as possible. This is the role of the manager/sponsor of the project, and the SNA consultant needs to assist in developing and implementing a good communications plan -- before, during, and after. It is also very critical to interview people in the network after seeing the preliminary results, to understand the context of specific patterns, and to act on them. This is naturally more applicable to the use of SNA to diagnose the extent of knowledge sharing and collaboration.

For the purpose of creating a knowledge map, I think that the ethnographic research and contextual interviews are likely to be more effective -- and you are the expert on that!

cheers

patti

Date: Mon Aug 25, 2003 10:51 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: Homophily and Data Collection

From: Valdis Krebs

Subject: Re:homophily and data collection

Quick comment on two posts in the recent AOK digest...

Homophily -- birds of feather flock together -- is one of the underlying dynamics in human behavior. This results in clustering in human networks.

Denham, to answer your question about data collection properly would take too much typing and would probably be better in real time with the opportunity for questions and immediate feedback -- it is not a simple answer. Part of the problem is that, IMHO, people are asking stupid questions in their network surveys, i.e. "Who do you trust in the organization?" Duh! Of course everyone will answer that so to 'look good' or 'save their job'.

There is much data available that reveals social networks... much of it is very public. I created a network map of the 9-11 terrorists from public information. There is plenty of data to map the network behind Enron fraud, or most other major news stories out there. Amazon reveals proxy networks by revealing which books are bought together... which also illustrates homophily very well!

-- <http://www.orgnet.com/leftright.html>

Valdis

Date: Mon Aug 25, 2003 10:51 am
Subject: FW: SNA and the Blackout -Valdis Krebs
From: Valdis Krebs
Subject: SNA and the blackout

No, you can't use SNA to analyze the power grid -- because electricity flows much differently than info/knowledge in human networks.

But, this is an interesting high level analysis of what went wrong in the grid. The point about about a 'parochial' view transfers well to social nets and org. nets.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/25/opinion/25STRO.html>

[NY Times requires a free registration to view article]

Valdis

Date: Mon Aug 25, 2003 6:42 pm
Subject: Idea Mavens: Yes, But . . . One Failed Subsystem Endangers Others - Jack Ring
From: Jack Ring
Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] FW: SNA and the Blackout -Valdis Krebs

Valdis Krebs wrote:

>No, you can't use SNA to analyze the power grid -- because electricity flows much differently than info/knowledge in human networks.

Jack Ring: The most important message is that if all 'subsystems' of the organization are not pursuing goals that are coherent with other 'subsystem' goals then any one subsystem can endanger all the others. [Inadequate \(incomplete and incoherent\) goals is probably the more prevalent failure mode in organizations.](#)

Date: Sat Aug 23, 2003 6:37 pm
Subject: Idea Mavens: Once We Know, What Next? - Bernice Johnston [+Jerry Ash]+
From: Bernice B. Johnston, president, Milestone Unlimited Inc., Portland, Oregon U.S.
Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Digest Number 220

Hi,

There seems to be so much lofty thinking and grand words and academic discussion in this digest, I hesitate to leap in for fear what I ask or contribute has already been answered somewhere I haven't been or that it's so simple it may not be worthy. Perhaps that's how some others feel on occasion -- hence the lurking. I do admire the contributors and for making me think and I do thank you all for that. So leaping in -- I have a question and a response.

Response first to "white space" use.

Instead of white boards I use flip chart easels with Post-It sticky pads because these can be put on walls, reduced to size, photo'd and mailed, kept for posterity. We brainstorm, color, draw squiggly lines and dashes and arrows, and register opinions with sticky dots. I have also affixed along walls in hallways long sheets of butcher paper or flip chart paper with questions, charts, proposed schedules, etc., as the topic, leaving nearby large Post-It notes. As folks wander past they stop, ponder, and then write on a post-it and up it goes. Soon a great deal of knowledge is shared with no formal meeting but nevertheless a gathering of minds. I still have a picture of a wall of just such a "white space project" when we built a three week training program from a concept to a happening. I still use that process to track knowledge of processes and connectors and touchpoints and "touchers."

Question.

Most of the ideas that have been shared since I've been reading this digest have been spent on defining knowledge, debating knowledge, dissecting knowledge, and very little on the management part. [Once we KNOW that we know it, what do we do with it -- physically, emotionally, intellectually?](#) Just on the physical side alone: One of the very earliest postings I read was from someone who asked how to manage the knowledge he had collected in his office in the last 20 years --- books, papers, magazines, file cabinets, computer files. I'm still waiting for the answer to that one 'cuz I got the same thing. I have HAD clients for years -- how do I manage their files and their knowledge and my knowledge about them? How do I remember what I know? If I forget it, do I no longer "know" it? If I lose it in my file cabinet, do I no longer "know" it? Emotionally -- how do you get people to use the knowledge they already know, for example, to stop smoking? Intellectually -- why do we keep voting for a man whom we know to be lying? Or is it that so much is emotional and/or political and that's what gets in the way of actually moving from intellectualizing knowledge to operationalizing knowledge? Or to get me to organize somehow the knowledge containers in my office? [How do you all manage the knowledge you get from this digest and the ideas that flow from it?](#)

Bernice

[**Jerry Ash:** Welcome from the shadows to the light, Bernice. And from moving us from strategy to tactics and implementation. You are exactly right -- we need more of that! It takes a lurker to bring that to our attention. You see, you brought your own light with

you! Thanks.]+

Date: Sun Aug 24, 2003 7:31 pm

Subject: **Idea Mavens: My Personal Knowledge Management - Patti Anklam**

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: Once We Know, What Next? - Bernice Johnston [+Jerry Ash]

Bernice,

Your question is **so** good. I also thank you for coming "out of the shadows." One of the goals that Jerry and I had for this dialogue was to bring out the "readers" (I like this term better than "lurker") and to make the space safe for people who are not comfortable jumping into an abstract discussion.

First, thanks for the practical scenario of filling the white spaces of flip charts with "stickies" so you can have the advantage of a white board with portability and reusability! It's something I should practice more, as I am always sad to leave the room in which my white board creations have sparked so many new ideas. Maybe others out there have their own interpretation of what it means to "fill in the white spaces"? How many different interpretations can bring us some new ideas?

Now to the problem of the personal knowledge management.

I think there are people who are specialists in this, and I hope they will offer suggestions. Here's what I was doing during the first part of today. I decided to "clear the decks" around my workspace so I could be a bit more organized to start a new client project tomorrow. At the same time, I have the questions from today's STAR series slipping around in the back of my brain. I'm refreshing my to-do lists. Trying to get rid of the SoBig.F virus. Checking to see if I've cleaned up my Blog. Rummage through the "pile cabinets" as well as the file cabinets. What should I read today that might help me answer questions or get ready for my client work? Which files can move from "in progress" to "completed?" Days like this are really good for idea recall -- it's how I manage the "how do I remember what I know?" Even though I agree, as David Snowden says, that we only know what we know at the moment we need to know it, there is still a bunch of stuff we forgot we knew **about**.

For example, in my response to Judith's posting about Ross Mayfield's social software framework, I recalled that I had seen it, so I knew about it, but didn't really know it. Scanning the stuff we have, taking the opportunity of the occasional purge to reorganize, rearrange, revisit -- this is the best response I can give for the physical side of managing the stuff that represents some of my personal knowledge.

Two specific tips on this. One, [I started blogging because I thought it would be a good idea to keep track of ideas, where I found them, and what I thought about them.](#) More than once, I've been able to go back to my blog to find a URL for a site I wanted to share

with someone. For my new client project, I may start a private blog, for much the same reason. Blogs are free (or very cheap) and provide a way to organize thoughts about ideas that come in. Second, [I keep a "nuggets" folder in Outlook, that just contains notes](#). This is for ideas and quotes that I may want to use sometime in the future, good things I will want to refer back to. Just that one central place, even though it will never catch up to the 20+ years behind me, at least I've got a starting point when an idea's time has come.

Emotionally and intellectually -- wow. Have you read "Prisons We Choose to Live Inside," by Doris Lessing (1987)? I hadn't thought of that book for years until I read your question. I can't put my hands on the section of the book that most impressed me, but you put your pen on it, exactly. Thanks for the timely reminder.

Date: Mon Aug 25, 2003 10:51 am

Subject: [Idea Mavens: Learning from Applying New Ideas - Jack Vinson](#)

From: Jack Vinson

Subject: RE: Once We Know, What Next

Bernice asks an excellent question: "Once we KNOW that we know it, what do we do with it -- physically, emotionally, intellectually?"

I like to split this into two pieces. The "easier" one is personal: what do I do with this knowledge? What do I do with things I learn? Do they just get filed (in my brain, on my computer, in my cabinets)? Or do they run around my head and help inform other ideas up there? Or do I operationalize that knowledge and apply it to something I am doing today - to my work or my life? For me, [applying new ideas is where I really learn them, whether that is writing some new computer code or implementing a new organization design principle. I have a bunch of tools that help me with the collecting and organizing aspects, from Outlook to PersonalBrain to my blog.](#)

The other piece is for the organization: How does the organization learn? How does the organization store, retrieve and make use of what it has learned? The fact that we are now dealing with a whole collection of people implies that we have to have good ways of understanding the collective knowledge of the group (the starting point for Bernice's question). AND we need to have good ways to share and build upon one another's' ideas to build value for the organization. Finally, we need to be able to learn from these experiences and re-incorporate the experiences back into the fabric of the organization, so that the experiences inform later decisions.

Jack

Date: Tue Aug 26, 2003 12:19 pm

Subject: [Idea Mavens: Gatekeepers; Listkeepers as Inhibitors - Jack Ring](#)

From: Jack Ring

Subject: Re: SNA or ONA Suppressor Agents

I have a question that may reveal my lack of homework ---

In the modeling or mapping of social or organizational networks practitioners typically look for the 'beneficial relationship' parties. Do they also inquire about the 'gatekeepers' especially the 'undiscussables list keepers' and show them as inhibitor relationships? Where might I learn more about this?

Date: Tue Aug 26, 2003 6:15 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Roles People Play in Networks - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: Gatekeepers; Listkeepers as Inhibitors - Jack Ring

Hi, Jack,

Identifying "gatekeepers" is absolutely one of the key results of a social network analysis. The terms more frequently used are "hub" and "central connector." In any event, these are people who have many more ties to them than others in the network. This is a good example of why you need interviews to obtain the context of the organization when you do an SNA: a central connector could be a really valuable resource, or a gatekeeper. You have to talk to people to find out if these are people who are keeping information moving or who are choking it off; in some cases, the gatekeeping may be valid organizational role.

The statistical analysis of SNA identifies a number of other roles that people play in networks:

- Broker (someone who communicates across subgroups) - Boundary spanner (who connect a department with other departments) - Peripheral specialist or "isolate" (someone less connected or not connected at all) - Pulsetaker (someone who uses their connections to monitor the health of an organization)

There is some great additional reading on Valdis' web site, specially <http://www.orgnet.com/orgnetmap.pdf> on organizational network analysis.

Date: Wed Aug 27, 2003 6:09 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: The End is Coming (Sort of) - Jerry Ash

From: Jerry Ash

Today is the day I normally tell those who follow the Digest, that today (Thursday) is the last day to post a message with any certainty that it will be get a response from the current guest moderator who has committed through Friday.

Patti says she will be happy to field stragglers. Nevertheless, we need to begin wrapping up the Conversation with Patti Anklam in the next few days. That doesn't mean dialogue has to stop -- we encourage continued knowledge sharing with or without the "Star."

I also want to "talk" to you about the value of posting from the AOK Yahoo page.

In a nutshell, posting online speeds up the turnaround in messages considerably. For example, you post a message from Yahoo in the morning; the moderator answers later in the day; maybe a couple of other members jump in; and, the entire exchange comes out the following day in the Digest. But, you may have read it "yesterday" online -- the same day you posted YOUR message!

Compare that with this scenario:

You open a Digest and decide to jump in. You use your Reply Function and send an email. It appears in the Digest the next day, but without a response from the moderator. The next day, a third Digest arrives in your mailbox with a response from the moderator and perhaps a member or two -- elapsed time, three days!

When Patti Anklam and I got our heads together on doing the current Series, I asked her if she would consider doing her work online. She said yes, making her one of a small minority of guest moderators to "do it online."

So, how'd you like it
Jerry

P.S. You don't Yahoo. That's okay too. But if you want to start, see the directions for registering with Yahoo; then start posting online!

Date: Wed Aug 27, 2003 9:46 am

Subject: Idea Mavens: Unfair Judgment, Suppression of Ideas - Jack Ring

From: Jack Ring

Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: Roles People Play in Networks - Patti Anklam

Patti,

Thanks for the response and the pointer to the good background document on Valdis' web site. I now understand how you use 'gatekeeper.' and that is not what I intended to convey. I did not ask the right question. Let me restate it.

[I am inquiring about any experience with network modeling and analysis that highlights the persons who, or factors that, inhibit enterprise success.](#)

Examples of structural factors are the many references made (not by Patti) to the Command and Control organization being 'bad' and a flattened organization being 'better.'

Examples of persons would be 'Who unfairly judges and suppresses your ideas?' or 'Who do you try to avoid when promoting a new idea?' 'Who has learning styles that seem incompatible with yours?' This in contrast to the sample questions on page 399 of Valdis' document you cited which IMO only explore the 'positive' aspects of life in an organization.

Does this inquiry make sense, now? Anyone else have any information about this?

Date: Wed Aug 27, 2003 5:51 pm

Subject: FW: Idea Mavens: Unfair Judgment, Suppression of Ideas - Jack Ring

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: Idea Mavens: Unfair Judgment, Suppression of Ideas - Jack Ring

Hi, Jack,

I think I did understand your question the first time. A 'gatekeeper' may in fact be someone who is hindering the flow of knowledge in an organization. An SNA will highlight the people who are in obstructive roles.

Personally, I would not use negative questions in a survey. You can determine the net effect and patterns of relationships with questions posed positively. For example, if you ask "Indicate the extent to which you are comfortable proposing new ideas to this person" then on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 means "not comfortable at all." In the aggregate, if a large number of people give this relationship a low number, then you may surmise that this person doesn't encourage or support ideas.

[I think at this point Denham will want to chime in that this is in fact one of the problems with surveys!]

Date: Thu Aug 28, 2003 12:11 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Correction - Jack Ring, Not Peter West

From: Jack Ring

Patti, Thanks for the follow-up. I simply had never seen any SNA examples that highlighted the suppressors in an organization and was looking for examples.

I, too, would not use negative questions in a survey. I worded the examples that way to ensure my intent was clear in this interchange.

Thanks,

Date: Fri Aug 29, 2003 3:24 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: The Bright (Not Dark) Side of SNA - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: Idea Mavens: Wouldn't Use Negative Questions - Jack Ring

Jack,

Good to hear that we are really aligned on this. (I didn't think you would be advocating negativity, by the way!) There's enough out there, with still a number of people focusing on the "dark side" of SNA and its application in targeting people to downsize.

best,

patti

Date: Thu Aug 28, 2003 5:27 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Gates Aren't Just People - Jack Vinson [+Jerry Ash]

From: Jack Vinson

Subject: gatekeepers

I am heading away from my computer(s) soon, and I am going to have to catch up on this conversation when I get back after a much-deserved week off.

The gatekeeper question in social network analysis has just combined nicely with my reading of [_Advanced Project Portfolio Management and the PMO: Multiplying ROI at Warp Speed_ by Kendall and Rollins](#). In this light, gatekeepers are not only people but also anything that gets in the way of successfully doing the things that benefits the company. In a project management environment, these are usually called bottlenecks or constraints -- gatekeepers. In some cases, there may be physical constraints, like a piece of equipment being able to process only so many pieces per hour. The more interesting issues are things like policy constraints which (artificially) slow progress on a project. Just as with equipment, there may also be resource constraints -- not enough people to do the work that has been assigned, which is also a guarantee of unpredictable project completion and a drain on \$\$ for the organization.

Advanced thanks, Patti, for an excellent exchange!

Jack

[**Jerry Ash:** Jack Vinson is one of our four EZine editors and this week he has the task of summarizing the Conversations with Patti Anklam for the EZine due out Monday (well, Tuesday, since Monday is a U.S. holiday). In it, he breaks down the dialogue into several threads:

1. The original "mavens."
2. Social software.
3. Quality of networks.
4. White spaces.
5. Action steps.
6. Strong v. weak.

That's followed by Briefs and Links!

If you have not been able to follow Patti Anklam's prolific dialogue in detail, or if you have been storing it for future reading, be sure to open Jack Vinson's K-Net EZine when it arrives in your e-box.]

Date: Fri Aug 29, 2003 3:43 pm

Subject: FW: Idea Mavens: Gates Aren't Just People - Jack Vinson [+Jerry Ash]

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: Idea Mavens: Gates Aren't Just People - Jack Vinson [+Jerry Ash]

Jack (and Jerry)

Enjoy the holiday. Thanks for the great support during these past two weeks. Jack - you brought up the subject of SNA and project/program management which, as it happens, is a current interest of mine. I'll look forward to following up....

We really did cover a lot of ground. I hope that "prolific" doesn't equate to verbose. I always feel that someone who takes the time to write and ask a question, deserves an answer with thought.

My summation will follow in a day or two.

Patti

Date: Wed Aug 27, 2003 5:50 pm

Subject: FW: KM-Maven - How Social Network Analysis Can Resolve Conflict in Multinational Teams

From: Peter West, consultant, Continuous Innovation

Subject: KM-Maven - How Social Network Analysis Can Resolve Conflict in Multinational Teams

AOKers:

[New Article: How Social Network Analysis Can Resolve Conflict in Multinational Teams](http://knowledge.emory.edu/articles.cfm?catid=13&articleid=707) <http://knowledge.emory.edu/articles.cfm?catid=13&articleid=707>

[Note: You have to sign up for free membership.]

Date: Thu Aug 28, 2003 12:06 pm

Subject: Idea mavens: 'Ba' - The Next Generation? - Peter West

From: Peter West, senior consultant, Continuous Innovation

Subject: "Ba" - The next generation
Denham and interested AOK_K-Net-ers:

Are you aware of a recent Nonaka article that "revisits" the knowledge creation theory, through the SECI model and Ba, and tries "to advance them further by incorporating the dialectic thinking."

* The knowledge-creating theory revisited: knowledge creation as a synthesizing process
Ikujiro Nonaka / Ryoko Toyama Knowledge Management Research & Practice, 2003, 1, 2-10 <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/kmrp>

In the same issue of the journal, there is an article entitled:

* [R&D collaboration: role of Ba in knowledge creating networks](#) Malin Brannback
Knowledge Management Research & Practice, 2003, 1, 28-38

Best regards, Peter

Date: Fri Aug 29, 2003 3:44 pm

Subject: **Idea mavens: 'Ba' - Thanks for the Links - Patti Anklam**

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: Idea mavens: 'Ba' - The Next Generation? - Peter West

Peter,

Thanks for posting links to new material (and a source I hadn't encountered before). I won't have time to read them, reflect, and comment before this series ends, but did want to thank you for links.

Patti

Date: Thu Aug 28, 2003 12:14 pm

Subject: **Idea Mavens: Preventing SNA Over-hype - Sam Marshall**

From: Sam Marshall

Subject: Preventing SNA over-hype

Hi Patti

Great to see you on AOK; I've been avidly trying to catch up with this series before it ends, but as it's been one of the most lively for quite some time that's not been easy (hope I made it Jerry ;-)

I've noticed some concern from you, Valdis and others about "SNA- abuse." As it enters the popular media, there's a danger that it gets picked up by the inexperienced, mis-used and then dismissed as a fad (KM has gone this way in many circles).

[Any thoughts on what can be done to manage this - either as a community or as individual practitioners?](#)

Kind regards

Sam

ps. For background info: I'm currently piloting SNA in Unilever - aided by some generous encouragement by Patti over the last year.

Date: Fri Aug 29, 2003 3:22 pm

Subject: FW: Idea Mavens: Certifying SNA Professionals? - Patti Anklam [+Jerry Ash]

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: Idea Mavens: Preventing SNA Over-hype - Sam Marshall

Sam, Great to hear from you! Please get in touch, I'd love to hear some details about how you've applied SNA at Unilever.

The questions about potential misuses of SNA have got me thinking along the same lines. [I would not be surprised if SNA, assuming it continues to grow among responsible practitioners, builds enough of a professional association to grant certification.](#) (Or if certification might be offered in the context of an existing KM program? Note that I am not necessarily advocating certification, but expect that the topic will come up and needs a lot of dialogue, if not a critical mass of practitioners).

In the meantime, all who work in the field need to emphasize the importance of looking into the credentials, reputation, and experience of people who propose SNA projects, and query consultants deeply about their personal philosophy.

If I have not already referenced the USA Today article about social software that quotes Valdis on the potential for an SNA disaster, this is probably a good place to do so:
http://www.usatoday.com/tech/webguide/internetlife/2003-08-03-connected_x.htm.

Cheers,

patti

[**Jerry Ash:** Patti, I can tell you that neither Charles Savage nor I are fond of the idea of "credentialing" knowledge professionals based on "standards of practice." Once there are "standards," people will seek "licenses" by memorizing someone else's cookbook! That idea may have fit in the Industrial Age; but not the Knowledge Age. Charles and I put together an alternative to KM certification. Take a look at:

<http://www.kwork.org/KRP/KRP-main.html>

Jerry.]

Date: Thu Aug 28, 2003 2:38 pm

Subject: **Idea Mavens: What is the Question Behind our Questions? - Verna Allee**

From: **Verna Allee, former STAR Series Moderator**

Subject: What is the question behind our questions

Hello Pati and lots of old friends!

What an incredibly rich discussion. I am sooo sorry to come in so late. My compliments to all who are participating in this. My head is spinning with ideas because I just reviewed this whole stream at one sitting and it is like drinking from a firehouse. I cannot begin to comment on all the wonderful themes perking here; but I can't resist throwing in a few ruminations

The right tool for the right question

The power of any visual tool lies in making the formerly invisible more visible. The previous generation's breakthrough management tools were focused around process tools and statistical analysis - fueling enormous innovation. Some of that was successful, some painful and disastrous. The pain usually stemmed from applying the new tools to the wrong questions. Now we are in the world of tools that help us "see" knowledge, intangible assets and networks. It is an exciting time as there is not just one language to master but several.

However, Valdis' caution about how easily people pick up a new language, but not the new concepts that inform it, is well taken. That makes it all too easy to jump to an answer before we even understand the question, which is a recipe for disaster. Network questions take many forms and we are evolving a whole range of tools to address them.

SNA is a wonderful tool and its rediscovery by the business community is a wonderful first step to learning how to live in -- not a new world order -- but a new world DISorder of constantly shifting, evolving and reconfiguring networks.

Business is a creative process. The "ground" or creative soup it emerges from, the social spaces where we engage in conversation, knowledge networking and cafes, weaving webs of personal and professional relationships, sharing and growing ideas, and building on each other's competencies. As Charles expressed so beautifully, these processes are incredibly alive, energizing and creative. What is less appreciated is that we are also weaving core assumptions that shape our worldviews about how things work, what is important, what "the problems" are and what we should be creating or doing together.

Different assumptions at this creative core will lead to dramatically different results and creations.

In this matrix of creativity, qualities such as "ba" and trust are vitally important. Here we can tease out the social networks with SNA. Fostering conscious conversation and dialogue can help us understand each other, move to shared values and purpose and (hopefully) make better decisions. Many of the social process tools are helping us work more consciously at the very roots of our business creativity.

How do networks evolve into organizations?

Equally important, however, is understanding the way organizations emerge from that creative ground. [I actually prefer the term "purposeful network" to the word organization.](#) (The pattern of any living system is the network and organizations, as social systems, have the qualities of living systems, including the network pattern.) Institutions and companies -- what we usually think of when we use the term organization -- are only one configuration that a purposeful network might have. The "virtual organization" described so well in previous postings is another configuration. Global action networks are another.

If our social interactions allow us to dream and imagine together then the purposeful network is the system (or organization) that we actually create. We can also model any business or organization as a network of people engaged in tangible and intangible exchanges.

<http://www.vernaallee.com/library%20articles%20pages/A%20ValueNetApproach%20white%20paper.pdf>.

[Copy and paste this long URL into your browser if a click doesn't work!]

Somewhere between these two views there is a network evolution process that I find very intriguing because we know so little about it. What happens there?

How do social networks configure and reconfigure into more purposeful networks? What could we understand about this process by comparing the network pattern of the business itself to the social networks it is embedded in? And IF we can make these networks and processes more visible to people, what happens when the network becomes aware of itself? How would that change the evolutionary process? Making networks visible is a kind of social self-knowledge that is comparable to the power of personal self-knowledge. [We behave differently when we understand our inner life. Will networks behave differently as we learn about their inner life?](#)

What is it we are really trying to learn?

[Is it possible that the enormous interest in social networks and communities of practice is because as a society we are trying to build the skills and competencies we need to work in a world dominated by a LACK of organizational structure? Or at least structures that](#)

are familiar to us from the past? Just as one small example, consider that in a traditional organization the lines of accountability run vertically. In a true network we are accountable to each other for our behaviors. Isn't this where organizations are heading? To live successfully in this type of economic order we would need to learn to live in a world of 360 degree transparency, participation and accountability. In this emerging society, global governance perhaps is guided not by nation states or the traditional power system, but by living purposeful networks where the innate collective wisdom of our species can work both locally and globally to solve the urgent systemic issues of the planet that the old system is helpless address.

Verna Allee Associates

<http://www.vernaallee.com>

<http://www.alleetoolkit.com>

Date: Fri Aug 29, 2003 3:14 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Working Without Organizational Structure - Patti Anklam

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Re: Idea Mavens: What is the Question Behind our Questions? - Verna Allee

Hello, Verna,

Thanks for taking the time to look at and reflect on all that's been contributed over the past 10 days. You'll make my summation task all the much easier!

Some of your comments that particularly resonate with me:

The evolution of our world into "purposeful" networks. Certainly those of us who operate outside of hierarchical organizations have become very mindful of what networks we "join," which ones we "watch," and which ones we bring into existence. [Managing life and work becomes a matter of managing the relationships, not just among people we know, want to know, work with, want to work with, but also the relationships among the networks themselves.](#)

This view of social networking and its awareness is very congruent with the emerging sciences of networks and applications of network theory. Anyone who read "Six Degrees," by Duncan Watts, (pp 109-121) knew immediately what probably happened to cause the massive blackout of the northeast this past month. Our perception of the world changes the world. When science was about mechanics, we focused on process; now that science is moving toward complexity, we must focus on relationships.

As we as a society and as individuals build the skills and competencies that we need, as you say, "to work in a world dominated by a LACK of organizational structure," we are experiencing -- and creating -- cracks in the edifice of the current structure of science. (I am reminded forcefully of Thomas A. Kuhn and "The Structure of Scientific

Revolutions," and the impact it had on me when I first read it, some ten years ago -- around the same time I met Charles Savage and became engaged in this great journey.)

Thanks for the great thought charmers!

patti

Date: Fri Sep 5, 2003 12:15 pm

Subject: **Idea Mavens: The Yiddish Maven - Deborah Levine [+Jerry Ash] From Deborah Levine**

Subject: Re: AOK K-Net EZine 5.1

Jack Vinson in the AOK EZine writes:

Mavens are the people who have a vast network of friends and contacts through whom they broadcast interesting ideas and discussions. . . . What happens to the maven if their network is exposed? Within the context of social software, I suspect mavens do not expose their entire social network, rather only the parts relevant to the community. Also, I don't believe that a maven loses anything by letting others know about their network, because there is more to being a maven than talking to people.

[Mavens are mavens because they have a unique ability and desire to transmit excitement and interest to a wide variety of people. Not everyone can do that, even if they have the maven's address book.](#)

It is my understanding that the word "maven" is of Yiddish origin and is one of those words that doesn't fully translate into English. A maven does have great networking skills, knows everybody, and is the hub of many discussions. But there is also an element of power implied by the term, power gained from expertise, from personal authority, and, in part, peer-bestowed. There is far more to being a maven than transmitting interest and excitement. It includes knowing when and where to share, apply, and even withhold knowledge in order to have the most impact. Having the maven's address book is virtually useless to someone with no maven potential.

Deborah Levine Communication Prose Ink www.proseink.com

[**Jerry**. Thanks Deborah! That is very enlightening. I've been thinking of giving myself the title of "maven." I like that better than CEO or coach or consultant. I'd like to fit this profile -- "the authority figure of a chief kahuna, the niggling of a coach, the knowledge of a maven, all wrapped up into one." What do you think?

Jerry Ash Founder and Maven (implying all that other stuff) Association of Knowledgework]

Date: Mon Sep 8, 2003 8:38 am

Subject: [Maven: What Someone Else Calls You - Deborah Levine](#)

From: Deborah Levine

Subject: Maven is a designation someone else gives you

Jerry writes: [" I like (maven) better than CEO or coach or consultant. I'd like to fit this profile -- "the authority figure of a chief kahuna, the niggling of a coach, the knowledge of a maven, all wrapped up into one." What do you think?]

Jerry, [The figure of the maven in Yiddish culture has its ups and downs](#). Sometimes a maven is admired and sometimes the label's authenticity can be challenged. Just last night I was watching an old rerun of the Ed Sullivan show and a very young Allen King was doing a stand-up comedy routine like this: "My wife is a maven. You know what that means? It means that she thinks she knows everything but she doesn't know anything. All the time she's saying to me 'What do YOU know?'"

This is the dark side of being a maven and why folks don't generally decide to call themselves mavens. Its a title bestowed on them by someone else and often with tongue-in-cheek because being The Expert and a communication hub can be risky business. Its entirely possible that the word "maven" is evolving into the mainstream culture without the nuances it has in the original Yiddish. But I like to think that the original implies a cautionary message that's still worthwhile.

Deborah

Date: Wed Sep 17, 2003 7:25 pm

Subject: [Mavens](#)

From: Daniel Jonas

Subject: Maven Means to Understand, to Have Insight

The word 'maven' is a lot more well-known in the US, rather than elsewhere. Funny that it should be so appropriate for the KM field, which is so full of know-alls (as we'd call 'em in London) [The Yiddish word Maven, in case anyone's interested, is probably from the Hebrew root meaning "to understand" \(Le'HaViN\) or "have insight"](#).

Daniel Jonas

Date: Tue Sep 2, 2003 12:46 pm

Subject: [Idea Mavens: Thanks for the ideas - Patti Anklam](#)

From: Patti Anklam

Subject: Thanks for the ideas

Well, it's over! I rarely find myself so challenged on a daily basis to respond to such rich thoughts and ideas. Thank you all for participating, and to Jerry for his excellent moderation.

I've been thinking about how to wrap this up and bring proper closure. I have an "ear worm" (one of those tunes that get into your head and just won't leave you) since reading Valdis' post about the Fast Company blog "Want to Innovate? Dump Your Friends" http://blog.fastcompany.com/archives/2003/08/25/want_to_innovate_dump_your_friends_.html. [You may need to copy and paste this long URL into your browser window.]

The tune was to a song I learned when I was about seven years old:

[Make New Friends But keep the old. One is Silver And the other Gold.](#)

This Idea Mavens series got into discussion about the distinction ideas and the idea of distinctions, the nature of white space and ba, and then settled into a real dialogue about one of the newest practices in knowledge management, social network analysis. I made new connections, and renewed some old ones. New thoughts and ideas enrich the old ones, and manner in which you weave them in an organization is important. In their new book, "What's the Big Idea," Tom Davenport and Larry Prusak summarize the skills required to implement new ideas as translation, harmonization, and timing. Harmonization is all about, to my mind, knowing how to weave the new and the old, into some new patterns with shape and distinction, fluidity and purpose.

Warmly,

patti

Date: Tue Sep 2, 2003 1:20 pm

Subject: Idea Mavens: Good Bye Patti; Hello Victor Newman - Jerry Ash

From: Jerry Ash

On behalf of the members of the Association of Knowledgework, I express my sincere appreciation to Patti Anklam for her excellent moderation of the STAR Series Dialogue this past few weeks. But don't let me do this all by myself! Please join me in the applause < hit your Reply Function or go to our Yahoo page and give your personal "thanks" or tell her what it meant to you:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AOK_K-Net/>

Patti, I've had my "ear to the ground" almost continuously these past three years, and yet, you brought to me an entirely fresh new terms and ideas. The STAR Series has been going long enough now that it is beginning to be difficult to recruit new "Stars" who bring something new to the table. You did it, and we are all richer for it!

In her "farewell," Patti says it's over. But it just isn't so. Patti has been a member of AOK for a long time and she will remain in our network.

Thanks for being here, Patti.

Next up Victor Newman, chief learning officer of the European Pfizer Research University and author of "The Knowledge Activist's Handbook -Tales from the Knowledge Trenches," will counsel us on his unique brand of pragmatic knowledge activism embodied within: The SuperKnowledge Declaration. Victor is particularly interested in unpacking the SuperKnowledge concept and building stories of successful implementation, as well as answering questions based on his recent book.

Disclaimer from Victor: "Please note that Victor's views on the management of knowledge are his own and are not intended to reflect official Pfizer Inc. policy."

Well, I should hope not! He says he hates the term "knowledge sharing!" This will not be for the timid. Victor is irreverent in the KM shop he loves. However, I note that one of Victor's admirers on the dust jacket is Hank McKinnell, chairman and CEO of Pfizer Inc. He writes: "Victor Newman transforms the grand and sometimes arcane concepts of knowledge management into a compelling personal call for change in how we create, use, spread and increase knowledge. Great work, colleague!"

"Preparing for Victor Newman" will be up on the AOK Web site today or tomorrow. It will include the SuperKnowledge Declaration. Please go there, do your homework and be ready to begin September 15!

Thanks again, Patti. Regardless of this big build-up, Victor has big shoes to fill!

Jerry

Date: Wed Sep 3, 2003 6:10 pm

Subject: **Idea Mavens: Thanks, plus -**

From: Judith Meskill

Subject: Re: Idea Mavens: Thanks for the ideas - Patti Anklam

--- In AOK_K-Net@yahoogroups.com, Patti Anklam via <jash@k...> wrote:

> Make New Friends > But keep the old. > One is Silver > And the other Gold.

I remember this little ditty well and also find myself singing it from time to time. This star series turned out to be an excellent intersection of KM, SNA, and SS (Social Software), and gave me fecund fodder for further fermentation! Of thought that is. (^: Thanks Patti! And thanks to all of the other generous participants in this ongoing series of AOK conversations.

Subject: Idea Mavens: Applause - Mark McElroy
From: Mark McElroy
Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Digest Number 232

Dear Patti:

I also enjoyed the dialogue during your stint here. Good stuff. Keep up the good work!

Regards,

Mark

Date: Thu Sep 4, 2003 3:44 pm
Subject: Idea Mavens: Applause - Aurora Nordlichter
From: Aurora Nordlichter, Director of Communications, Nordlichter Group
Stamford, CT

Patti, you have helped enlarge my awareness of the world and brought a very positive atmosphere to the STAR discussions--many thanks!

Date: Fri Sep 5, 2003 12:18 pm
Subject: Applause: Daily Treat - Jack Ring From Jack Ring
Subject: Re: [AOK_K-Net] Idea Mavens: Applause - Aurora Nordlichter

Patti, Thanks for sharing your considerable body of knowledge and prompt responses to our questions. Your series was a daily treat. Thanks.

Date: Fri Sep 5, 2003 6:08 pm
Subject: Idea Mavens: Gladwell Article - Patti Anklam
From: Patti Anklam
Subject: Re: Idea Mavens: The Yiddish Maven - Deborah Levine [+Jerry Ash]

I really like how Deborah has deepened our understanding of the term "maven" and makes a distinction for us.

> There is far more to being a maven than transmitting > interest and excitement. It includes knowing when and where to > share, apply, > and even withhold knowledge in order to have the most impact. > Having the maven's address book is virtually useless to someone with no maven > potential.

And, thanks to Judith, Mark, Aurora, and Jack for the acknowledgments. As an offering by way of "postscript", I give you this link to an old Malcolm Gladwell article (Malcolm, of course, brought the term "maven" into popularity in the context of social network analysis) that nicely joins two of our topics: ba/space and social network analysis.

http://www.gladwell.com/2000/2000_12_11_a_working.htm

Cheers,

patti
