

## **Chapter 19**

### **Knowledge-Based Organizations**

#### 1. Describe the broad outlines of emerging knowledge-based organizations

Organizations will increasingly be seen as joint human-computer knowledge processing systems

Their participants will be regarded as knowledge workers

Issues

- How to design and manage knowledge based organizations
- How to understand their opportunities
- How to be aware of and handle their challenges

#### **Knowledge-Based Organizations (KBOs)**

- Technological infrastructure
  - workstations with knowledge management software
  - communication paths
  - support centers
    - server
    - coordinator
  - knowledge storehouses
- Plugging into external technological structures
  - commercial information services
  - the Internet
  - part of the trend toward virtual corporations

#### 2. Discuss the challenges and opportunities that will face knowledge workers in the years ahead

Knowledge workers

- concerned with managing knowledge to meet an organization's goals
- new computer-based tools specifically designed for knowledge work (i.e. DSSs)
- Training
  - technical skills
  - interpersonal communication skills
  - problem solving skills
  - formal study of knowledge management
  - real-world savvy
  - continuous learning skills

Cooperation among knowledge workers

- knowledge sharing
  - avoid duplicated knowledge acquisition/derivation efforts
  - promotes consistent decision making
- coordinated division of labor
- coordinated timing of knowledge-processing tasks

#### **Managing KBO's**

- Chief knowledge officer

- being an advocate for knowledge and learning, changing organization culture and individual behavior to focus on the importance of knowledge management.
- designing, implementing, and overseeing an organization's computer based knowledge management facilities, human knowledge management resources, research units, libraries, and conduits to external knowledge sources -- all of which contribute to an organization's knowledge management infrastructure
  - serving as the main liaison with external knowledge providers
  - instigation, fostering, and shaping the internal creation of knowledge
- Creation
  - involves careful planning of its design and construction
  - prefabricated versus customized technological infrastructures
  - reengineering
- Ongoing operation
  - knowledge processing requests
  - knowledge preprocessing
- Requirements for realizing KBOs
  - common objectives that are simple, clear, and translate into specific actions
  - organizational concentration on a small number of objectives
  - a realization that most knowledge workers are specialists who cannot be told how to play their roles, but rather need to be focused on jointly achieving something
  - a clear statement of management's performance expectations for the organization, task forces, and individuals
    - organized feedback for comparing results with performance expectations -- as a basis for evaluation, learning, and knowledge worker self-control
    - an organizational culture in which all participants practice knowledge responsibility, with each constantly thinking through what knowledge he or she needs to make a contribution and what knowledge is possessed that could benefit others in performing their duties
- Problems for realizing KBOs
  - developing incentives, compensation and recognition schemes, career opportunities for knowledge worker specialists
  - designing the management structure for an organization of task forces
  - creating and instilling a unified vision across the organization's specialized knowledge workers
    - ensuring that top executive knowledge workers are in ample supply of knowledge that is well prepared, and adequately tested

### 3. Appreciate the broad outlines of the emerging global knowledge society

#### **Emerging Knowledge Society**

- Environment of KBOs and knowledge workers
- New learning technologies and continuous learning
- Central work force comprised of highly specialized people
  - implies much multiparticipant work
  - suggests need for affiliation with at least one organization
- Essential Purpose of management will be to make knowledge productive
  - knowledge regarded as the key resource
  - every KBO (and knowledge worker) will need to assess competitiveness of its knowledge competencies in the world economy