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APPLIED INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Communication Tactics that Describe Innovation Advocacy Leadership as a Way to Inform Organizational Strategic Planning by Leveraging Networks and Building Consensus

CAPSTONE REPORT

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July 2010

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Abstract

This study presents six communication tactics that describe innovation advocacy leadership. It examines differences in communication abilities and behaviors represented by *divergent processes,* which develop new directions necessary to support innovative ideas, and *convergent processes* which represent the dominant organizational view necessary to support formal strategic planning (Pappas, 2004). Tactics provide advocates with a procedural bridge to the new ideas they propose and include defining innovation context, developing dynamic networks, channeling opportunities, and framing perceptions.

Keywords: innovation advocate, divergent processes, strategy, communication, leadership

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Introduction to the Literature Review

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to compile a set of tactics to address the differences in communication that are represented by *divergent processes* which pull organizational strategy into new directions necessary to support innovation and *convergent processes* which represent the dominant organizational view of strategy necessary to support the formal process of strategic planning (Pappas, 2004). Focus is on the impact of these process approaches during the development of business unit opportunities (innovation) as organizational strategic opportunities (leadership). A variety of perspectives are presented. Oke, Munshi and Walumbwa (2009) examine the impact of organizational structure and leadership type on innovation adoption, while several other authors scrutinize additional key organizational characteristics such as adaptability, influence, dynamic networks, sources of resistance and communication (Uhl-Bien, Marion & McKelvey, 2007; Watson & Wooldridge, 2005). Unique leadership requirements of innovation stages are examined from a business perspective by Blumentritt and Danis (2006) while Farmer, Fedor and Goodman (1997) examine the impact of communication approaches on innovation opportunities.

According to Pietersen (2002) the cycle of innovation necessary to deliver sustained competitive advantage relies on creativity in the work place. Levitt (2002) states creativity is not lacking in the business world but acknowledges a shortage of responsible action to carry creative ideas forward to strategic adoption. According to Leavy (2002), the organizational imperative has shifted from efficiency to adaptability, establishing a creativity imperative which requires that organizations be more inventive and innovative.

The process of putting new ideas to work to create new capabilities to support competitive advantage requires that creative ideas receive strategic focus (Hamel, 2006). For example, Morrison and Lee (1979) state sophisticated resource planning associated with strategic decision making needs to be informed by divergent, fresh ideas to create breakthrough initiatives that compliment processes of continual improvement. And in another example, in the fast pace of the new competitive economy, incremental competitive advantage through actions such as cost reductions and measured service improvements may result in survival, but an organization must develop future innovative processes or offerings during highly successful periods to truly win among their competitors (Pietersen, 2002).

The assumption of this study is that strategic planning must be informed by divergent processes among leaders across the organization including the chief executive officer (CEO), business unit managers and first-level managers (Hunt, Osborn, & Boal, 2009). Dutton and Ashford (1993) suggest leaders at each organizational level are uniquely positioned to lead innovation opportunities and communicate them throughout the organization to inform strategic decision making. Floyd and Lane (2000) propose that each level of management between operational managers and top management play a specific role in informing the strategic processes, but middle managers are the information hub responsible to filter, organize and share information through a series of social interactions in different contexts.

Problem Area

Anantaraman (1993) states post-industrial society is characterized by unpredictability and requires flexibility and openness to spontaneous ideas rather than prescribed actions that limit opportunities. Pappas (2004) states competitive advantage in the current economy is dependent upon identifying creative ideas and developing them into new capabilities which, according to

O'Connor and Rice (2001), requires putting creative ideas into motion through implementation and commercialization.

There is broad agreement that sufficient creativity exists in organizations to support the flow of innovations (Levitt, 2002; O'Connor & Rice, 2001), but there is no clear path from idea origin to strategic adoption to support the shift in the organizational imperative from efficiency to adaptability according to Leavy (2002). Tsai (2000) proposes this flexible business environment requires a new approach to knowledge sharing between business units that typically lack formal communication channels to support activities such as opportunity recognition, problem solving and resource sharing. Barsh, Capozzi, and Davidson (2008) state these activities transform new ideas into innovations and deliver new capabilities, growth, and performance improvements. These communication channels are necessary paths of innovation communication, allowing business unit managers the opportunity to gain resource commitments for new ideas as they sponsor innovation communication from the operational level to the strategic planning processes (Blumentritt & Danis, 2006; Oke et al., 2009).

Tsai (2000) and Oke et al. (2009) state that large, bureaucratic organizations tend to resist the disruptive change necessary to innovate. They "develop tendencies toward rigidity and bureaucratic inertia that limit learning and creativity" according to Blumentritt and Danis (2006, p. 278). Hamel (2004) describes this as a failure to unleash the imagination of operational employees causing a blanket of bureaucracy to smother innovation. O'Connor and Rice (2001) state these organizations pay greater attention to maintaining effective business processes and developing incremental improvements, which turns attention inward and limits vision.

According to Pappas (2004) managers can address rigidity and bureaucratic inertia by demonstrating an understanding of organizational strategy so they can be included in strategic

conversations and act as a messenger for new ideas. Blumentritt and Denins (2006) state "the managerial challenge is to reconcile improvised and innovative aspects of strategy which are potentially disruptive, with existing resource endowments, capabilities and organizational routines which reflect prior strategic choices" (p.276).

However, O'Connor and Rice (2001) state business unit managers are often not prepared "to make the cognitive leap from technical idea to an envisioned and articulated business opportunity…or able to link the breakthrough technical idea with a need in the marketplace" (p.96). The process of recognizing and championing new ideas requires leadership strategies that address disruptive shifts within highly unique organizational contexts (Blumentritt & Danis, 2006; Oke, et al., 2009). Uhl-Bein et al. (2007) define this challenge as the need for *adaptive leadership*, described as leadership that adjusts to challenges organically with exploration and adjustments.

Significance

Preliminary review of research reveals there is general acceptance that sustained competitive advantage in today's rapidly changing business environment depends upon innovation throughout the entire organization (Balsano, Goodrich, Lee, Miley, Morse & Roberts, 2008; Oke et al., 2009). Floyd and Lane (2000) state organizational inertia impedes engagement in strategic renewal which, according to Jemison (1984), requires focused attention on new ideas and the changing environment. Barsh et al. (2008) report 70 % of senior executives surveyed consider innovation a key driver of growth while 65% report dissatisfaction with their ability to act on innovation opportunities.

Howell (2005) states only 10% of the creative ideas generated leave the desk of the person who conceived them. According to Johnson (1990), large organizations moving new

ideas forward require an advocate to convince others to willingly participate. O'Connor and Rice (2001) and Barsh et al. (2008) define the advocate as a *champion* that recognizes creative ideas as opportunities and protects and garners support for them. According to Dutton and Ashford (1993), business unit managers are uniquely positioned as champions to set in motion new ideas that are not apparent to upper management. There is no definitive process for advocating new ideas in larger organizations according to O'Connor and Rice (2001), so business unit managers need to select tactics to gain commitment or compliance and reduce resistance based on an understanding of the target individual and the new idea within the unique organizational context (Fable & Yukl, 1992). The dynamic process of informing the layers of an organization of an innovation opportunity is an opportunity to inform the strategic decision-making process regarding opportunities to improve competitive advantage (O'Connor & Rice, 2001).

Audience

The audience for this study is business unit managers between the chief executive officer (CEO) and first-level managers, who function without formal organizational innovation processes as *innovation advocates,* described by Pappas (2004) as individuals responsible to convey an understanding of the dominant strategic perceptions within the organization and provide a cognitive bridge to the new ideas they propose. Business unit managers are responsible for the execution of business processes; they possess the most intimate knowledge of how work is done and understand the strategic value of their units (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). According to Tsai (2000), the issues they face in isolation, when exposed across business units, reveal interdependencies that can spark creative solutions and encourage sharing of funds, human resources, specialized knowledge and unique perspectives.

Pappas (2004) states managers are key catalysts in identifying new ideas and linking them to current processes and organizational strategy to create new opportunities. The obstacle that managers face is described by Watson and Wooldridge (2005) as a lack of upward influence necessary to move a new idea to the strategic decision-making process. Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) and Tsai (2000) describe the path from operations to strategy as non-linear, discontinuous and dynamic with each new advocacy effort requiring a unique communication and leadership strategy.

Outcome

The outcome of this study is a guide, intended to provide communication tactics that business unit managers can employ when operating as innovation advocates garnering support for strategic adoption of creative ideas as innovation opportunities. The guide examines themes related to two larger concepts that frame the study: (a) definition of elements of communication and leadership that influence the struggle between divergent and convergent business processes and (b) identification of innovation advocacy tactics that support strategic adoption of innovation opportunities.

The two larger concepts are aligned with the strategic planning process within the organizational context, which is viewed by Barsh et al. (2008) as the path for delivery of greater competitive advantage. The guide is designed for professionals identified as *innovation advocates*, who must convey an understanding of the dominant strategic perceptions within the organization and provide a cognitive bridge to the new ideas they propose (Pappas, 2004). It provides practical tactics for carrying out the role of innovation advocate from a middle management position.

Delimitations

Topic. This study is based on an examination of literature that examines two related

larger concepts: (a) definition of elements of communication and leadership that influence the

struggle between divergent and convergent business processes (Deschamps, 2005; Floyd &

Lane, 2000; Hutt, Walker & Frankwick, 1995; Pappas, 2004) and (b) identification of innovation

advocacy tactics that support strategic adoption of innovation opportunities (Cable & Judge,

2003; Dutton, 1993; O'Connor & Rice, 2001; Witt & Ferris, 2003). These two concepts are

aligned with the strategic planning process within the organizational context, which is viewed by

Barsh et al. (2008) as the path for delivery of greater competitive advantage.

Topic focus. Innovation leadership is approached with a focus on (a) formal

organizational management of innovation within an institutionalized framework by appointed

individuals (Howell, 2005; Schilit & Paine, 1987), (b) from the perspective of the unique

challenges of dynamic systems (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) or (c) as an organic process carried out by

self-identified leaders without formal organizational structures (Anantaraman, 1993). This study

focuses on the space between the creative idea and organizational adoption.

Exclusions. The scope of this excludes the following concepts:

- Methods to cultivate an innovative culture

- Methods to encourage the organic emergence of leadership

- Methods of innovation implementation and commercialization

- Methods to institutionalize innovation life cycle management

- Methods to modify organizational structure to encourage successful innovation

Intended audience. This study is intended to inform managers between the CEO and

first-level managers. These individuals have access to both idea generators and other

organizational managers who can provide resources in support of new ideas to promote them toward the strategic decision-making process (Johnson, 1990; O'Connor & Rice, 2001). To address the needs of this audience, this study examines existing literature on innovation advocacy and compiles common findings and inconsistencies to create a set of strategies applicable to a broad variety of innovation opportunities within the operational level of organizations.

Time frame. The specific areas of study for this research lie within the larger areas of business culture and interpersonal relationships. Business culture has changed significantly from the prescribed practices of the industrial economy to the knowledge economy (Anantaraman, 1993; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) and finally to the *innovation economy* which is characterized by volatility according to Oke et al. (2009). Due to the hybrid of business cultures that exist as a result of slow organizational change (Oke et al., 2009; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) and its impact on the gap between divergent and convergent business processes, some sources are included in this study dated as early as the 1970s. The majority of the sources that inform the nature of business and innovation initiatives are published since 2000.

Sources that focus on interpersonal relationships and communication within business settings include literature from the 1980s and, though they represent diverse approaches, there is consistency among communication characteristics and interpersonal relationships (Witt & Ferris, 2003). Additionally, business sources and psychology sources reinforce the assumption that characteristics of interpersonal interactions are highly stable over time (Witt & Ferris, 2003).

Literature collection. The initial search for literature includes the following types of sources: journal articles, trade publications and books. The preliminary goal is to understand formal and informal organizational innovation practices and how they inform various

management layers of an organization. Searches for literature reviews on leadership of innovation opportunities to inform strategy in EBSCO in the Business Source Primier and the Academic Search Primier did not reveal comparative studies.

The bulk of the identified literature focuses on formal innovation management, innovation leadership or creating cultures of innovation. Many of these articles incorporate the importance of innovation in the strategic planning process, but there is no clear message regarding integration of the two processes. Less identified literature examines the contrast in perspectives, communication and action regarding innovation between the business unit managers and executives.

Documentation approach. Selected literature is stored in Zotero in a library subdivided by topic. Notes are stored on individual topics within each article and a copy of the article is attached to each library entry. Key words are stored as tags for each source and associated with specific notes for subsequent reference.

Selection and evaluation criteria. Literature for this study is drawn from business and psychology and located through a variety of sources. Sources are accessed with key word searches in the University of Oregon and Oregon State University library systems and through online search engines. A significant number of sources selected for this study address the business aspects of the topic and are found in the Business Search Premier database. Evaluation of sources by the following criteria ensures this study includes the strongest sources available (Bell & Smith, 2007).

- Authority of the author established by the authors' credentials, affiliation with academic institutions, the occurrence of citations by other credible authors and publication in a scholarly source.

- Currency is evaluated based on alignment of the publication date with the standards set forth under the heading of *Time frame*.

- Objectivity is evaluated based on presentation of reasonable conclusions and acknowledgement of areas for further study.

- Relevance is based on pertinence to the study topic and appropriate substantiation of facts through presented research and bibliographic sources.

- Quality is measured based on logical presentation and clear communication of information.

Data Analysis Plan Preview

The data analysis approach selected for use in this study is conceptual analysis, described by Busch, De Maret, Flynn, Kellum, Le, Meyers, Saunders and White (2005) as the examination and coding of literature based on key concepts. Conceptual analysis relies on the construction of research questions, definition of key terms and coding of sources based on the terms as they appear in relevant sources (Busch et al., 2005) This qualitative approach provides a way to categorize data, identify patterns and reveal common findings that may have broader implications (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). In this study, the focus of the conceptual analysis is guided by examination of two related larger concepts: (a) definition of elements of communication and leadership that influence the struggle between divergent and convergent business processes and (b) identification of innovation advocacy tactics that support strategic adoption of innovation opportunities.

Writing Plan Preview

This study is a literature review which evaluates, organizes and synthesizes previous research to present a new perspective (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Relevant scholarly references

are examined during data analysis with the objective to categorize the results to reveal commonalities described as themes for clear presentation. As noted by the Wesleyan University Library (2009), thematic organization supports the examination of contrasting perspectives, theoretical approaches, methodologies, findings, etc., and enables the researcher to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of, and point out any gaps in, previous research. Themes are framed in the final outcome as a set of strategies regarding tactics available to business unit managers that impact the strategic decision-making processes in support of innovation initiatives in the broad setting of today's business climate. Generalized applicability and reported challenges are examined.

Definitions

This section presents terminology specifically defined based on an innovation context. Terms and phrases are selected from the references supporting this review and include citations. Some terms are defined in the text of this document to ensure clarity and are also included in this section while many more terms are only defined in this listing. Decisions to include and exclude in-text definitions are made to support clear communication of the concepts to the audience.

Adaptive leadership – Providing a framework that encourages creativity, experimentation and adaptive capacity in organizational units (Uhl-Bien, et al., 2007).

Advocacy – Actions taken to support a new idea and proactively communicate its benefits (Advocacy, n.d.).

Ambidexterity – Simultaneously cultivating breakthrough innovations while managing incremental innovations in current operations (Floyd & Lane, 2000).

Boundary Spanning – Increased scope of practice of middle managers, allowing greater exposure to external influences such as new technologies and markets and greater potential to influence through access to higher levels within the organization (Pappas, 2004).

Business level Strategy – Decisions regarding how to compete in a market or with a particular product (Watson & Wooldridge, 2005).

Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) – "Neural-like networks of interacting, interdependent agents who are bonded in a cooperative dynamic of common goal, outlook, need, etc" (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007, p.299).

Conscientious – Done according to conscience, which is an inner sense of what is right or wrong that impels a person toward right action (Conscience, n.d.; Conscientious, n.d.).

Convergent Processes – Processes consistent with the dominant perceptions of strategy within an organization which limits the recognition of new opportunities (Pappas, 2004) or as stated by Leavy (2002), "logical problem solving towards a single correct answer (p. 71).

Corporate Level Strategy – Organizational decisions regarding involvement in markets, what competitive advantage to develop and how resources are allocated to support those decisions (Watson & Wooldridge, 2005).

Divergent Processes –Processes that deviate from the dominant understanding of strategy within an organization and lead to the development of opportunities not commonly identified (Pappas, 2004).

Emergence – Sudden, non-linear creation of coherent structures or patterns that drive the process of self-organization (Hunt et al., 2009).

Innovation – The ability to tap into fresh, value-creating ideas of employees, customers and partners (Barsh et al., 2008).

Innovation advocate – Barsh et al. (2008) define the innovation advocate as a champion that recognizes creative ideas as opportunities and protects and garners support for them. Pappas (2004) states innovation advocates are responsible to convey an understanding of the dominant strategic perceptions within the organization and provide a cognitive bridge to the new ideas they propose. Synonymous with *innovation champion*.

Innovation initiative – The development of new ideas into new capabilities and integrating them into the strategic direction of an organization (Pappas, 2004).

Issue selling – Framing opportunities as pertinent to issues of importance for organizational leadership (Dutton & Ashford, 1993).

Managerial leaders – Reside between top management and middle management and are in the best position within the organization to provide the impetuous for organizational adaption, stimulate experimentation and breakthrough thinking and channel innovation through implementation (Hunt et al., 2009).

Middle managers – Management positions at the intermediate level of the organizational structure, generally 2-3 levels below the CEO (Dutton, 1993).

New capabilities - O'Connor and Rice (2001) define new capabilities as organizational competencies gained through the implementation and commercialization of new ideas.

Perceptual deviance – "The degree to which a manager's perception of the strategic situation deviates from that of top management" (Pappas, 2004, p. C1).

Organizational interface – The hand-off between individuals and organizational structures, representing multiple points of entry into the organizational structure and facilitating movement of the innovation through organizational layers to gain resource commitment and strategic adoption (O'Connor & Rice, 2001).

Social capital – "Social context that facilitates or constrains individual actors' selection of exchange partners" (Tsai, 2000, p. 927).

Strategic decision making – The process of making decisions that profoundly affect future success while maintaining consistency among competing factors (Blumentritt & Danis, 2006; Jemison, 1984).

Strategic Influence – The ability to affect the outcome of an organizational strategic decision through social interactions between management layers resulting in the development of new ideas into new capabilities that are integrated into the strategic direction of an organization (Jemison, 1984; Pappas, 2004).

Strategic planning – Process of making decisions regarding organizational direction and

resource allocation to maintain or enhance competitive advantage (Morrison & Lee, 1979).

Strategic relatedness – "The extent to which two organizational units are strategically similar"

(Tsai, 2000, p. 927).

Trustworthiness – The "willingness to forego short-term outcomes obtainable through

opportunistic behaviors" (Tsai, 2000, p. 928).

Research Parameters

This section presents the research methods utilized to develop the literature review. These methods support the literature search and collection procedures and the process of classification, comparison and summary. Research parameters include questions and sub-questions, search strategy, evaluation criteria, approach to documentation and full descriptions of the data analysis and writing plans.

Research Questions and Sub-questions

The purpose of this study is to compile a set of strategies to address the differences in communication that are represented by *divergent processes* which pull organizational strategy into new directions necessary to support innovation and *convergent processes* which represent the dominant organizational view of strategy necessary to support the formal process of strategic planning (Pappas, 2004). The goal is to provide leadership and communication strategies that business unit managers can employ as innovation advocates to garner support for strategic adoption of creative ideas as innovation opportunities.

The following questions and sub-questions are addressed:

1. What are the defining elements of divergent and convergent communication?

    a. How does organizational position impact divergent and convergent communication?

    b. What are the characteristics of convergent and divergent communication?

2. What leadership tactics address the struggle between divergence and convergence in support of innovation advocacy?

    a. What leadership elements contribute to innovation advocacy?

    b. What communication elements contribute to innovation advocacy?

      c. How can leaders leverage divergent and convergent communication during

innovation advocacy to gain strategic support?

Search Strategy

      Search terms. Search terms derived and informed by Pietersen's (2002) book,

Reinventing Strategy are used to collect sources for this literature review. Relevant academic

articles retrieved through initial broad topic searches enhanced this list. The following key words

are used:

- Innovation
- Divergent thinking
- Breakthrough thinking
- Creativity
- Flexible
- Strategic planning
- Strategy
- Decision making
- Leadership

- Innovation leadership
- Competitive advantage
- Network centrality
- Organizational structure
- Informal communication
- Facilitate
- Upward influence
- Business unit managers

      Subtopic search terms. The following subtopic concepts and related search terms are

derived from initial research findings:

Communication

- Dynamic
- Persuasion
- Informal
- Networks

- Discontinuous
- Upward Influence
- Network centrality

Leadership

- Influence
- Advocate
- Champion

- Boundary spanning
- Business unit manager
- Leadership

Organizational Context

- Barriers
- Consequences
- Adaptability
- Complexity

- Position
- Middle manager
- Business unit manager
- Organizational structure

Record of preliminary searches. The Preliminary Research Results and Evaluations table (see Appendix A) lists searches conducted, evaluation of the result set and the criteria supporting the inclusion or exclusion of each search engine, index or library. Additionally, each tool is evaluated for the availability of full-text results, advance search capabilities and returned relevant sources without advertisements.

Literature resources. Literature review resources are collected with combinations of the keywords provided previously using the tools and information sources outlined below.

Search engines. Literature review resources are primarily collected using Google Scholar, which provided good sources on the topic from academic journals.

Databases. Literature for this review is collected from the following indexes and databases: UO Libraries Catalog, Summit Union Catalog, Science Digest database, EBSCO HOST Research Databases including the MasterFILE Premier Index and the Business Source Premier database. Searches from these resources provide relevant information on the topic.

Additional literature resources. Reference lists from relevant literature sources provide a listing of resources not revealed through other search methods. The names of researchers cited in multiple relevant sources lead to additional articles that inform this study.

Evaluation Criteria

In order to develop a set of strategies available to business unit managers in a variety of organizational situations, the literature selected for this study includes previous work from a variety of perspectives from authors in the areas of business and psychology. Literature for this study is subject to evaluation for currency, authority, objectivity, quality, and relevance (Bell & Smith, 2007). Sources that meet these criteria are available for inclusion in this study.

Currency. This study includes literature published since the late 1970s to address organizational characteristics due to the shift from the prescribed practices of the industrial economy to the dynamic nature of business in the innovation economy (Oke et al., 2009). The majority of the sources that inform the nature of business and innovation initiatives are published since 2000 due to the availability of recent works and the description of the current business setting as volatile by Oke et al. (2009).

Authority. The authority of the author is evaluated based on three criteria: (a) professional credentials or association with an academic institution, (b) citation by other authors within the subject area, and (c) publication of other articles in the same area of study. Additionally, co-authoring with researchers with a vast body of work that are well cited validate authority.

Objectivity. Objectivity is assessed based on clear statement of purpose followed by presentation of facts substantiating the hypotheses and clearly stated findings that acknowledge findings that do not support the dominant view. The presence of authoritative sources to

substantiate facts and the clear communication of reasonable conclusions are included in the

evaluation of objectivity for inclusion in this study.

Quality. The quality of a source is evaluated based on logical structure and presentation

of a roadmap through the content with clear, descriptive headings and logical flow. The content

is evaluated for factual consistency with other work by the author and their peers. Additionally,

clear description of methodology and the existence of references from authoritative sources

contribute to the quality of the source.

Relevancy. Sources are considered relevant to this study if they are published in a

scholarly journal, cover the topic of this study, present substantiated facts and lead to reasonable

conclusions rather than opinion. Relevant sources represent both primary sources including

research reports and secondary sources that represent the interpretation of previous studies and

sources on the topic. Additionally, relevant sources meet the criteria established under *Currency*.

Content. Sources are evaluated to establish if they update information from previous

works, substantiate other sources, or add new areas of information to previous areas of study.

Additionally, available sources are compared to ensure the topics of this study are covered

thoroughly with the strongest sources available.

Documentation Approach

The following documentation approach is established to ensure this literature review is

substantiated by appropriate sources and conducted objectively. Preliminary searches are

recorded in Excel and reveal keywords and phrases that effectively locate relevant sources.

Selected literature is evaluated based on criteria presented in *Research Parameters*. Sources that

meet evaluation criteria are stored in Zotero in a library subdivided by topic and notes attached to

each entry. Literature is classified under *References* to substantiate facts presented in the broader

topic discussion or as entries in the *Annotated Bibliography.* Entries in the *Annotated Bibliography* represent key sources that address research questions found in *Research Parameters* and are clearly labeled if they are included in the coding process described in *Coding Procedures.* This is followed by thorough reading of coded literature. The coding results for each source are recorded in an Excel spreadsheet for ease of reference during the development of the *Literature Review.*

Data Analysis Plan

Conceptual analysis strategy. Conceptual analysis is the process of selecting key research concepts and determining whether they exist with the intended meaning in selected sources (Busch et al., 2005). Key concepts addressing innovation, strategy, leadership and communication are coded in selected literature noted in the *Annotated Bibliography*. The results are analyzed and synthesized to provide a set of tactics available to business unit managers when operating as innovation advocates, to garner support for the development of creative ideas as innovation opportunities across a broader range of organizational contexts. To accomplish this, the data analysis is conducted in two sequential stages on the single set of literature listed for coding in the *Annotated Bibliography*, according to the eight coding steps defined in *Coding Procedures.* Stage one involves examination of the defining elements of communication and leadership as key factors that influence the struggle between divergent and convergent business processes; and stage two involves identification of innovation advocacy tactics available to innovation advocates to support strategic adoption of innovation opportunities.

The first stage is informed by broad searches of previous research on innovation, strategy, communication and leadership. Pappas (2002), Blumentritt and Danis (2006) and Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) examine innovation and leadership in relation to specific organizational characteristics

and structure and describe the gap between the processes necessary for innovation and executive leadership as it pertains to strategic planning. Floyd and Lane (2000) discuss role conflict due to the struggle between divergent and convergent processes and the unique position of middle managers as communicators. Research by Hutt et al. (1995) examines organizational and personal factors that perpetuate the struggle.

The second stage is informed by previous research from O'Connor and Rice (2001), Balsano et al. (2008) and Tsai (2000) among others who examine methods of leading innovation from a business perspective and by Witt and Ferris (2003) from a psychological perspective. Research is limited to specific characteristics of innovation or organization type and, therefore, reflects a narrow application that suggests a barrier to generalization. This stage of the analysis identifies common leadership qualities and communication tactics in previous research and extrapolates them to inform a set of tactics more broadly applicable to innovation initiatives. Circumstances and contexts are examined to provide a set of specific tactics.

Coding procedures. The conceptual analysis process for both data analysis stages consists of the following eight defined coding steps:

1. Level of analysis – Single words and phrases that represent key topics such as *communication*, *innovation, leadership, new idea* or *strategic planning* are coded.

2. Pre-defined set of concepts and categories – This single coding process is carried out in two sequential data analysis stages guided by two predetermined key concepts. Concepts include: (a) the defining elements of communication and leadership as key factors that influence the struggle between divergent and convergent business processes and (b) innovation advocacy tactics available to innovation advocates to support strategic

adoption of innovation opportunities. As additional relevant key concepts emerge in the
coding process, they are included.

3. Existence of a concept – Key terms are coded for existence rather than frequency so
   communication is coded a single time regardless of how many times it appears in a
   source, as long as the contextual meaning is consistent.

4. Level of generalization – Terms or phrases with the same meaning are recorded as
   representative of a single category. For example, *innovation* and *new idea* in a single
   source represent a single appearance and are recorded as a single concept across multiple
   sources. Similar terms that represent different meaning such as *innovation advocacy* and
   innovation initiative are coded separately.

5. Translation rules – Translation rules are developed to ensure that terms and concepts are
   categorized consistently. For instance, *persuasion* is coded under *communication* and
   both *negotiation* and *issue selling* are coded under *persuasion*.

6. Irrelevant information – If information does not influence the results, it is considered
   irrelevant and not coded.

7. Code the texts – The coding process proceeds in two sequential stages. Coding terms,
   potential relationships and relevant translation rules are recorded in Excel to ensure
   consistent application and to accommodate emerging terms. The result is used as a guide
   for coding the sources and supports the manual process of writing terms and phrases on a
   listing of the literature that includes the full citation of each source. The results are
   transferred to a summary spreadsheet for analysis.

8. Analyze results – The resulting spreadsheet is easily scanned for both predetermined and
   emerging concepts, reasonable relationships among concepts, and conclusions. Results

are categorized according to a thematic organization scheme, described in the *Writing*

Plan.

Writing Plan

Results of the conceptual analysis process are reviewed and organized into themes

(Obenzinger, 2005). Thematic organization supports the examination of contrasting perspectives,

theoretical approaches, methodologies, findings, etc, and enables the researcher to analyze the

strengths and weaknesses of, and point out any gaps in, previous research (Wesleyan University

Library, 2009).

Themes are identified concerning various leadership qualities and communication tactics

to facilitate movement of creative ideas through organizations to the strategic decision-making

process (O'Connor & Rice 2001; Pappas, 2004). Themes are presented without regard for

organization structure or economic era because, although they are influencing factors, they are

not defining constraints (Dutton, 1993; Howell, 2005; O'Connor & Rice 2001).

Organization of the concepts derived during conceptual analysis begins with an

articulation of themes related to the two predetermined key concepts: (a) elements of

communication and leadership that influence the struggle between divergent and convergent

business processes and (b) communication and leadership tactics available to innovation

advocates to support strategic adoption of innovation opportunities. Additional emergent themes

are noted. Once the themes are identified, they are aligned with the strategic planning process

within the organizational context, which is viewed by Barsh et al. (2008) as the path for delivery

of greater competitive advantage. The objective is to present tactics common across

organizational characteristics and innovation types based on similarities in context rather than the

differences focused on by previous research (Floyd & Lane, 2000; Oke et al., 2009; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007; Witt & Ferris, 2003) and to organize the information thematically (Obenzinger, 2005).

Each tactic is explored in a separate section and combined to create a set of tactics presented in the form of a guide, as part of the final outcome of the study. The guide is designed to inform business unit managers of tactics that lead creative ideas to the strategic decision-making process in the broad setting of today's business climate. The guide addresses the research questions posed in the study, and includes (a) definition of elements of communication and leadership that influence the struggle between divergent and convergent business processes and (b) identification of innovation advocacy tactics that support strategic adoption of innovation opportunities. Generalized applicability as well as reported benefits and challenges are examined. A preliminary thematic outline is presented below:

Theme one: The differences between convergent and divergent processes in strategic planning as the context of the study

- Characteristics of convergent and divergent processes
- Attributes of business and corporate level strategy that perpetuate the struggle through business process
- Interdependence of convergent and divergent processes on innovation initiatives

Theme two: Innovation advocacy and leadership

- Role of the innovation advocate as a leader
- Personal and professional characteristics of innovation advocates
- Innovation advocacy tactics that support leadership during disruptive processes

Theme three: Innovation advocacy and communication

- Communicate to garner broad adoption

- Communicate to meet the specific audience and stakeholder information needs

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Annotated Bibliography

Key references selected for this review of literature are included in this annotated bibliography. Each listing includes the complete bibliographic citation, an abstract provided in the publication, and comments that provide an evaluation of the credibility of the references and an explanation of how it is used to inform this study.

Blumentritt, T., & Danis, W. (2006). Business strategy types and innovative practices. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, *18*(2), 274-291. Retrieved April 11, 2010, from Business Source Premier database:

http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=108&sid=552a2c02-f02c-4a26-b651-6271f331feb2%40sessionmgr111

Abstract. This study draws on the strategic management and innovation literatures, we develop and empirically test hypotheses arguing that a firm's strategic orientation will impact its perception of barriers to innovation, its sources of ideas for innovation, and its targets for innovation. The study's findings suggest that a firm's strategic management and its management of innovation are highly integrated.

Comments. Blumentritt and Danis provide a literature review and primary research in this examination of interdependence between strategic orientation and innovation perspective. Although this article informs the broader current study, it is not coded to inform the guide for business unit managers that will result from this study. This study is presented logically with clear disclosure of processes, hypotheses and findings. The facts stated are substantiated in the bibliography and the references cited are from authoritative authors in this subject area.

Cable, D., & Judge, T. (2003). Managers' upward influence tactic strategies: the role of manager

personality and supervisor leadership style. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *24*(2),

197. Retrieved April 17, 2010, from Business Source Premier database:

http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1002/job.183.

Abstract. Why do managers employ certain tactics when they try to influence others?

This study proposes and tests theoretical linkages between the five-factor model of

personality and managers' upward influence tactic strategies. This study also examined

the dependence of managers' upward influence tactic strategies based on the leadership

style of their target (their supervisor).

Comments. Cable and Judge examine the relationship between the Big-Five personality

factors described by Goldberg (1990) and the taxonomy of influence tactics examined in

previous research by Yukl and Tracey (1992). The result is a set of communication

approaches that aligns with the development of tactics available to influence strategic

management in the current study. This article is organized to demonstrate the relationship

between research variables and clearly presents the findings and exceptions. Perspectives

are substantiated with appropriate bibliographic entries by authoritative sources. Cable is

an Associate Professor in the Flagler Business School at the University of North Carolina

and Judge is the Matherly-McKethan Eminent Scholar at the University of Florida and

has focused research in areas that overlap with this study including personality,

leadership and influence. This article is included in the coded set of literature.

Deschamps, J. (2005). Different leadership skills for different innovation strategies. *Strategy &*

Leadership, *33*(5), 31. Retrieved April 30, 2010, from MasterFILE Premier index:

http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1108/10878570510616861

Abstract. Discusses several ways that will allow chief executive officers (CEO) to recognize and respond to the leadership imperatives of their innovation strategy. Defining innovation leadership; Offering a simple classification of innovation leaders based on the focus of their contribution; describing a number of broad leadership imperatives implicit in each generic innovation effort.

Comments. Deschamps discusses the leadership traits necessary to champion creative ideas through the innovative process to commercialization. This aligns tightly with the goal of this study to provide a guide that is more generally applicable than previous research. Information is clearly presented and makes reasonable conclusions. The focus of this article is the impact of traits underlying actions throughout the innovation phases rather than on the actions and organizations as seen in many other sources. While this aligns with the concepts of this study, it also provides a unique perspective and is included in the set of coded literature. Deschamps has authored several articles on related topics and is cited by peers in multiple publications. He is a Professor of Technology and Innovation Management at IMD (IMD, 2010), a business school in Switzerland.

Dutton, J., & Ashford, S. (1993). Selling issues to top management. *Academy of Management Review*, *18*(3), 397-428. Retrieved April 4, 2010 from Business Source Premier database: http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=108&sid=e60a6f65-6028-40fb-bf19-314172d8405c%40sessionmgr110

Abstract. This article develops insights on *issue selling* as a process that is central to explaining how and where top management allocates its time and attention. We see issue selling as a critical activity in the early stages of organizational decision- making processes. We develop a framework for describing and studying issue selling in

organizations that draws on three different theoretical perspectives: issue selling as

upward influence, issue selling as claiming behaviors, and issue selling as impression

management.

Comments. Dutton and Ashforth are affiliated with the University of Michigan. Dutton

has several articles on related topics and is frequently cited by other researchers. This

article advocates communication of innovation to top management through *selling*,

described as framing opportunities as pertinent to issues of importance for organizational

leadership. This research informs the current study regarding message construction and

delivery and is coded during conceptual analysis.

Farmer, S., Fedor, B., Goodman, J., & Maslyn, J., (1997). Putting upward influence strategies in

context. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 18*, 17-42. Retrieved April 30, 2010, from

Business Source Premier database:

http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1002/(SICI)1099-1379(199701)18:1<17::AID-

JOB785>3.0.CO;2-9

Abstract. This study investigated whether influence strategies representing hard, soft, or

rational approaches to influence behavior would emerge in relation to upward influence

tactics of assertiveness, rationality, coalition, upward appeal, ingratiation, and exchange.

Hypotheses were offered concerning the relations of selected demographic, individual

difference, relational, and opportunity factors to these strategies. Each strategy was

related to a unique set of predictors. The results suggest a higher level of complexity for

influence strategies than previously expected.

Comments. Farmer, Fedor, Goodman and Maslyn validate results that support the

categorization of behavioral tactics associated with influence (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1985)

to establish a broad context for detailed examination of interdependence of tactics. This

article provides a behavioral examination of influence resulting in a framework

supporting strategic use of influence through communication and *leadership* tactics,

described in this study as employee empowerment independent of position. This tightly

aligns with the key concepts of this study and is included in the set of coded literature.

The authors are associated with the academic area of Management; Farmer at Clarkson

University, Fedor and Maslyn at Georgia Institute of Technology and Goodman at Perdue

University. This article is published in a peer-reviewed journal, and the foundation of the

study is previous work by well-respected researchers on this topic including Kipnis and

Schmidt (1985).

Floyd, S., & Lane, P. (2000). Strategizing throughout the organization: Managing role conflict in

structural renewal. *Academy of Management Review*, *25*(1), 154-177. Retrieved April 2,

2010, from Business Source Premier database:

http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=

108&sid=b0339376-61f6-4dd1-9de6-9066cae86a33%40sessionmgr112

Abstract. The recognition, development and implementation of innovative ideas require

organizational executives to challenge established patterns and engage in behaviors and

relationships necessary to develop new competencies and strategies. The conflict between

incremental improvement and radical development fills the void that previously spanned

these perspectives. This gap can be minimized by a "system of relational exchanges"

(Floyd).

Comments. Floyd and Lane are well-respected authors on the topic of organizational

relationships as demonstrated by the number of times their work is cited by researchers in

other publications. The focus of Floyd's research at the University of Connecticut and Lane's research at the University of Arizona is capability development in the process of strategic renewal. This article is published in a peer-reviewed journal and discusses causes of role conflict during innovation, including the struggle between divergent and convergent strategic processes. It examines the communication, level of leadership and tasks associated with organizational roles pertaining to strategic renewal. Though this study is limited by organizational context in comparison to the definitions of the current study, the concepts are pertinent and the reference is included in the set of coded literature.

Howell, J. (2005). The right stuff: Identifying and developing effective champions of innovation. *Academy of Management Executive*, *19*(2), 108-119. Retrieved April 11, 2010, from Business Source Premier database: http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=108&sid=ea1315c1-a9d1-4009-a51a-fbe9134f088f%40sessionmgr111

Abstract. Effective champions are distinguished by three behaviors: conveying confidence and enthusiasm about the innovation; enlisting the support and involvement of key stakeholders; and persisting in the face of adversity. Effective champions build support for the innovation by astutely analyzing key stakeholders' interests and tailoring their selling strategies to be maximally persuasive, and by tying the innovation to positive organization outcomes such as profitability, enhanced reputation, or strategic advantage.

Comments. Howell is associated with the University of Western Ontario. This article is published in a peer-reviewed journal, and like other work done by Howell on similar topics, is cited by other researchers. This article presents elements of leadership and

communication associated with successful innovation champions; informing the current study regarding how these elements impact the development of communication and leadership tactics for innovation advocacy. This reference is coded during conceptual analysis.

Hunt, J., Osborn, R., & Boal, K. (2009). The architecture of managerial leadership: Stimulation and channeling of organizational emergence. *Leadership Quarterly*, *20*(4), 503-516. Retrieved April 2, 2010, from Business Source Premier database: http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1016/j.leaqua.2009.04.010

Abstract. This conceptual manuscript emphasizes the indirect influence of senior managers who occupy positions between the strategic apex of the organization and its middle management. We emphasize alterations in the character of the system, its processes, its procedures and its informal structure to help the organization stimulate bottom up order for free activities and also combine these initiatives into viable adaptations.

Comments. Hunt et al. propose that organizational level and context influence the role of innovation advocates. Gaps in perception among the layers of the organization examined in this study align with the notion of a gap between divergent and convergent processes in the current study; therefore, it is coded during conceptual analysis. Information in this article is well organized and clearly presented. Hunt and Boal are associated with Texas Tech University and Osborn is associated with Wayne State University. This and other works by these authors are frequently cited in other peer-reviewed work.

Hutt, M, Walker, B. & Frankwick G. (1995). Hurdle the cross-functional barriers to strategic

change. *Sloan Management Review*, *36*(3), 22-30. Retrieved from Business Source

Premier database:

http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1016/0024-6301(95)94270-9

Abstract. The technological hurdles to strategic change are often easier to scale than the

political ones. Strategic decisions – particularly those that imply restructuring – upset

established patterns, challenge organizational units' identities, and create barriers to

strategic change.

Comments. Hutt et al. examine the issues innovation advocates must address to move

initiatives forward. Although interpretive and communication barriers examined in this

article broadly inform the current study, it is not included in the coded set of literature

due to the prevailing top-down perspective. Hutt and Walker are affiliated with Arizona

State University and Frankwick is affiliated with Oklahoma State University. The content

is well organized, substantiated and leads to reasonable conclusions.

Johnson, J. (1990). Effects of communicative factors on participation in innovations. *Journal of*

Business Communication, *27*(1), 7-23. Retrieved April 18, 2010 from Business Source

Premier: http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1177/002194369002700102

Abstract. This study focuses on a communication process crucial to the eventual

innovativeness of large companies: the process by which an innovative manager secures

support in the early stages of an innovation from other managers. The results suggest that

the classic communicative variable of persuasion had a paramount impact on

participation, reinforcing the notion that communication is central to innovative processes

within organizations.

Comments. This study focuses on innovation communication and adoption through the layers of management, which informs the current study regarding factors that define methodologies for communicating innovation. This article aligns with the key concepts of the current study and is included in the coded literature. The research is methodically presented with the limitations listed and a clear explanation of findings. Perspectives are appropriately substantiated with citations to authoritative works. Johnson is associated with Michigan State University and is cited in subsequent studies.

Leavy, B. (2002). Creativity—the new imperative. *Journal of General Management*, *28*(1), 70-85. Retrieved April 28, 2010, from Business Source Premier database.

Abstract. Creativity in business organizations is more often than not a group activity, carried out within a wider social system shaped by values, norms and structures. A fuller understanding of individuals is enhanced or frustrated by group dynamics and organizational contexts. Helping managers to deepen their insight into creativity at each of these levels, especially the personal level, has been the main focus of this article.

Comments. This article examines the cultivation of creativity and characteristics of the creative individual. These characteristics are consistent with those of the divergent thinker examined in other research (Hunt et al., 2009) and contribute to a broader understanding of key elements that inform the struggle between divergent and convergent processes. Positive evaluation of this reference is based on Leavy's affiliation as a Professor of Strategic Management at Dublin City University Business School in Ireland, the substantiated coverage of the topics, reasonable conclusions and directions for future study. Due to this evaluation and the pertinence of the topics covered, this article is included in the coded set of literature.

O'Connor, G., & Rice, M. (2001). Opportunity recognition and breakthrough innovation in large

established firms. *California Management Review*, *43*(2), 95-116. Retrieved March 29,

2010, from Business Source Premier database:

http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=buh&AN=

4372996&loginpage=login.asp&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Abstract. Within the context of the large established organization, breakthrough ideas

are frequently lost. This article describes how breakthrough innovations are captured

through opportunity recognition. The article highlights inefficiencies in current

managerial processes and provides examples of organizational structures, mechanisms,

and roles directed at reducing these inefficiencies.

Comments. O'Connor and Rice examine the informal and iterative role of middle

managers in the communication process for advocating innovations to the organizational

level. These concepts align with the research questions and sub-questions of the current

study, therefore is included in the coded set of literature for this study. This article is

published in a peer-reviewed journal. O'Connor is affiliated with the Lally School of

Management and Technology at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Rice is a Professor

at Babson College. The article is written in easy-to-read language and well organized,

demonstrating an interest in reaching a broad-based potential audience.

Oke, A., Munshi, N., & Walumbwa, F. (2009). The influence of leadership on innovation

processes and activities. *Organizational Dynamics*, *38*(1), 64-72. Retrieved April 13,

2010, from the Business Source Premier database:

http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2008.10.005

Abstract. In this paper we investigate the influence of leadership on innovation. We argue that different leadership styles are appropriate for distinct stages of the innovation process (creativity and implementation) as well as different innovation activities (exploratory and exploitative activities). Put simply, a good innovation performance will depend on having the right type of a leader leading a particular innovative effort.

Comments. Oke et al. provide a matrix that informs leadership methods best suited for innovation type and innovation stage. This information supports the effort in the current study to create a set of methodologies for communicating innovation upward through an organization. The reference is part of the set of literature selected for coding. Oke and Walumbwa are affiliated with Arizona State University and Munshi is associated with Wright State University. The research of these authors is frequently found in the bibliographies of subsequent research. The study is current, well substantiated, and the topic is pertinent to business today.

Pappas, J. (2004). Middle managers strategic influence: investigating network centrality and perceptual deviance. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, C1-C6. Retrieved March 27, 2010 from Business Source Premier database: http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid= 108&sid=9b2dbb79-87a3-4836-ac59-3618b2e6e019%40sessionmgr114

Abstract. We report the results of a study that investigates the relationship between middle managers' divergent strategic influence activity, network centrality, and perceptual deviance. Using a social network approach in a medium-sized urban hospital, we found that boundary-spanning managers exhibit higher levels of divergent strategic influence and network centrality than non-boundary spanning managers.

Comments. This literature review examines middle-management boundary spanning behaviors and network centrality in relationship to divergent processes. These are key concepts in the current study and inform the nature of divergent processes, so it is coded during conceptual analysis. Pappas is frequently cited by peers and is the author of other studies within this subject area. This article is noted as part of the Academy of Management Best Conference Paper, 2004.

Schilit, W., & Paine, F. (1987). An examination of the underlying dynamics of strategic decisions subject to upward influence activity. *Journal of Management Studies*, *24*(2), 161-187. Retrieved April 16, 2010, from Business Source Premier database: http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1111/j.1467-6486.1987.tb00942.x

Abstract. This study suggests that the strategy making process deviates considerably from typical rational comprehensive approaches in that strategies are affected by: initial sense-making activity, perceptions of risk and return, find power and negotiation skills.

Comments. This study examines strategic processes that are subject to the influence of middle managers. Schilit and Paine describe the process as incremental, providing multiple points of entry for influence from parties throughout the organization. This aligns with the topic of communication tactics in the current study so it is included in the coded literature. Schilit is associated with the University of South Florida and Paine is associated with the University of Maryland. This study is well-formatted, clearly presented and concludes with reasonable findings and limitations. The authors are cited by their peers and substantiate perspectives appropriately.

Tsai, W, (2000). Social capital, strategic relatedness and the formation of intraorganizational linkages. *Strategic Management Journal*, *21*(9). 925-939. Retrieved April 6, 2010, from

the Business Source Premier database:

http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1002/1097-0266(200009)21:9<925::AID-SMJ129>3.0.CO;2-I

Abstract. This paper investigates the evolutionary dynamics of network formation by analyzing how organizational units create new interunit linkages for resource exchange. Two important constructs: social capital, derived from the literature on social structure and network formation, and strategic relatedness, derived from research on diversification and the resource-based view of the firm, are used to explain the rate of new linkage creation. Results show that the interaction between social capital and strategic relatedness significantly affects the formation of intraorganizational linkages.

Comments. Tsai examines the role of communication in dynamic ad-hoc network development to meet specific business needs. He is a Professor at Pennsylvania State University and has focused his research on network evolution inside and across organizations. Since this focus aligns closely with the current study, it is included in the coded literature set. Tsai explains his research in significant detail and findings are discussed in relationship to quantitative data presented. Perspectives are substantiated with citations and persistent links.

Tsai, W. (2001). Knowledge transfer in intraorganizational networks: Effects of network position and absorptive capacity on business unity innovation and performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, *44*(5), 996-1004. Retrieved April 16, 2010, from Business Source Premier database:

http://search.ebscohost.com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=buh&AN=5412298&loginpage=login.asp&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Abstract. Drawing on a network perspective on organizational learning, I argue that organizational units can produce more innovations and enjoy better performance if they occupy central network positions that provide access to new knowledge developed by other units.

Comments. Tsai is a professor at Pennsylvania State University. His research is represented in multiple articles in this area of study which are frequently cited by peers. The organization of this article is methodical with facts well stated, substantiated and accompanied by reasonable conclusions. Since the content of this article aligns with the broader topics of this study without informing key areas of examination, it is not included in the coded set of literature.

Uhl-Bien, M., Marion, R., & McKelvey, B. (2007). *Leadership Quarterly*, *18*(4), 298. Retrieved April 5, 2010, from ScienceDirect.com Complexity leadership theory: Shifting leadership from the industrial age to the knowledge era.: http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.uoregon.edu/10.1016/j.leaqua.2007.04.002

Abstract. Complexity science suggests a different paradigm for leadership—one that frames leadership as a complex interactive dynamic from which adaptive outcomes (e.g., learning, innovation, and adaptability) emerge. This conceptual framework includes three entangled leadership roles (i.e., adaptive leadership, administrative leadership, and enabling leadership) that reflect a dynamic relationship between the bureaucratic, administrative functions of the organization and the emergent, informal dynamics of complex adaptive systems (CAS).

Comments. This study presents interactive and dynamic leadership as the method for meeting the demands of the current volatile economy. The context of the study is

complex adaptive systems (CAS) which limits the application in comparison to the

current study, but the leadership concepts align with the key terms and questions so it is

included in the coded literature. This literature review presents a new leadership

framework that is well-substantiated and relevant to the current business setting. The

authors are frequently cited by peers. Uhl-Bien is affiliated with University of Nebraska,

Marion is affiliated with Clemson University in South Carolina and McKelvey is

affiliated with University of California, Los Angeles.

Watson, A., & Wooldridge, B. (2005). Business unit manager influence on corporate-level

strategy formulation. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, *17*(2), 147-161. Retrieved March 30,

2010 from Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection:

http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=

108&sid=638041d3-2bd2-4fef-899b-70fcf2416e9a%40sessionmgr111

Abstract. The focus of this study is on business unit managers, and their role in

corporate-level strategy. We identified antecedents of business unit manager influence on

corporate strategy. We found that the business unit managers who exert most influence

on corporate strategy are those who report directly to the CEO, and those who manage

business units that are large relative to the corporation itself.

Comments. This study examines the impact of business unit managers on corporate

strategy through upward influence with a focus on the linkages between the business

level and corporate level. These concepts support the broader context of the current study

and the organizational antecedents of influence, but the focus is on organizational

structure rather than on specific elements or tactics of communication and leadership;

therefore, this article is not included in the set of coded literature. This article presents the

methods of the study, exceptions and findings clearly and substantiates facts presented. It

is frequently cited in other sources. Watson is affiliated with Northeastern University and

Wooldridge is affiliated with the University of Massachusetts, both as Professors in

Management.

Witt, L. & Ferris, G. (2003). Social skill as moderator of the conscientiousness-performance

relationship: Convergent results across four studies. *Journal of Applied Psychology,*

88(5), 809-820. Retrieved April 17, 2010, from the Business Source Premier database:

http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.uoregon.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=8&hid=

108&sid=5f53a188-a09c-4ea3-9bc8-7763ecff4ea4%40sessionmgr113

Abstract. The authors conducted 4 studies to test the hypothesis that the relationship

between conscientiousness and job performance reflecting interpersonal effectiveness is

more strongly positive among workers who are higher rather than lower in social skill.

Among workers high in social skill, conscientiousness was positively related to

performance. Among workers low in social skill, the relationship between

conscientiousness and performance was essentially irrelevant or negative when tested.

Potential implications of these results are discussed as are directions for future research.

Comments. Witt and Ferris discuss the impact of social skills and personality on

interpersonal influence. They examine the underlying elements and interdependence of

these factors and how they are communicated to contribute to goal-oriented action. This

research does not directly examine the key topics of this study and is not included in the

coded set of literature. The researchers are associated with Department of Management at

the University of Florida and the University of New Orleans, respectively. In 2002 a

previous version of this article was presented to the Society for Industrial and

Organizational Psychology. This article is frequently cited by researchers in other

publications. This study is coded for this literature review.

Review of the Literature

Current literature indicates significant research has been conducted on the topic of the tension between divergent and convergent strategic processes as represented by business unit and organizational strategy. Literature selected for this review explores the role of innovation advocates in addressing this tension from discrete, though overlapping perspectives including innovation type (Oke et al., 2009), organizational structure (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007), and strategic processes (Watson & Wooldridge, 2005). From these perspectives three significant themes emerge and are discussed in detail in this review of the literature: (a) the characteristics of divergent and convergent processes and their impact on innovation advocacy, (b) innovation advocacy leadership characteristics that support disruptive processes, and (c) innovation advocacy communication tactics. The first two themes are presented in this section, explicated with information derived from the data analysis process conducted on selected literature. The third theme is presented in the *Conclusions* section of the study, presented as a guide that consists of a set of communication tactics that can be used by the innovation advocate to advance innovation initiatives.

Theme One: Differences Between Convergent and Divergent Processes in Strategic Planning

Convergent and divergent processes are examined as characteristics of organizational context by Uhl-Bien et al. (2007), strategy level by Watson and Wooldridge (2005) and innovation by O'Connor and Rice (2001). This theme, which frames the larger context of the study, examines the characteristics that emerge in these studies that define divergent and convergent perspectives, and strategic processes that perpetuate the conflict between them. The

goal is to examine the impact of their interdependence on innovation advocacy and the central role the innovation advocate plays in seamlessly addressing divergent and convergent processes.

The innovation advocate plays a key role as the self-appointed leader during an innovation initiative, able to follow a promising innovation path with obsessive zeal (Leavy, 2000). According to O'Connor and Rice (2001), the innovation advocate provides the interface in organizational processes and social context between the early divergent processes of an innovation and subsequent convergent processes prescribed for strategic adoption. To fulfill this role they need to understand how far the business unit manager's perception of strategy deviates from upper management, described as *perceptual deviance* by Pappas (2004). With this understanding the innovation advocate can frame the innovation to address the executive preference for strategic relatedness while maintaining business unit level appeal (Tsai, 2000).

Characteristics of convergent and divergent processes. Convergent processes are associated with a top-down organizational structure, often steeped in bureaucracy as described by Uhl-Bien et al. (2007). Processes defined within this structure are constrained by highly static organizational procedures and policies (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). O'Connor and Rice (2001) describe convergent processes as those that are incorporated in the dominant understanding of the organization to address the need to create and depend upon efficient processes. Formal management layers associated with a top-down structure tend to mandate and protect convergent processes and dominant organizational understanding (O'Connor & Rice, 2001).

In contrast, divergent processes are associated with a flattened structure that delegates significant decision-making responsibility to business unit managers even within hierarchical organizations (Farmer et al., 1997). These decisions represent innovative ideas that diverge from the official organizational strategy and involve experimentation with new skills and market

opportunities (Floyd & Lane, 2000). Divergent decision making processes tend to support adaptive responsiveness to emerging issues (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) and are informed by broad-based, lateral and downward networks (O'Connor & Rice, 2001). According to Uhl-Bien et al. (2007), divergent processes and interactions are constrained by a sense of common purpose and inter-agent accountability that is continually defined through interactions within these networks; therefore, they provide confirmation of the perception of opportunity and availability of resources (O'Connor & Rice, 2001).

Tension reinforced by strategy. Attributes of corporate level and business level strategy leverage convergent and divergent processes respectively, perpetuating an organizational gap between these processes. Corporate level strategies maintain current processes and efficiencies through the alignment of operations with organizational goals (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). These constraints tie corporate strategic decision making to a pragmatic approach that aligns with the dominant organizational strategic understanding (O'Connor & Rice, 2001). According to Levitt (2002), a stream of information in alignment with the dominant view is quickly assessed as valuable by executives, but when the information is unique, causing strategy to diverge or introducing uncertainty, it takes greater effort to listen, evaluate and consider the possibilities. Therefore the innovative initiatives compete with incremental opportunities for attention at the executive level, limiting the information that informs organizational strategy (Levitt, 2002). Corporate level strategic decisions have long-term impact and are intended to increase competitive advantage predominantly through leveraging incremental, non-disruptive change to the deployment of existing competencies (Floyd & Lane, 2000). The focus on leveraging existing competencies creates competition at the highest level of the organization for resources

and, therefore, curtails divergent processes that support innovation opportunities (O'Connor & Rice, 2001).

Business unit strategy focuses on the ability to solve the continually shifting business issues presented at the operational level. The goal is to maintain competitive advantage (Blumentritt & Danis, 2006). Identification of the opportunities that these issues represent is a creative (divergent) act that takes place outside of predefined organizational processes (O'Connor & Rice, 2001). These opportunities are commonly ill-defined, requiring the innovation advocate make the cognitive leap from technical idea to the business opportunity associated with market need (Rice & O'Connor, 2001). This process is incremental and iterative (Schilit & Paine, 1987), requiring experimentation to modify existing competencies and develop new ones that fit emerging external circumstances (Floyd & Lane, 2000). Therefore, business unit managers continually adjust their strategic perspective away from the dominant perspective to leverage opportunity (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). This process requires the involvement of multiple individuals, each with a necessary piece of knowledge, who can be persuaded by someone operating in the role of innovation advocate to move beyond old routines and commit to the new one (Blumetritt & Danis, 2006).

Interdependence of convergent and divergent processes. The interdependence of convergent and divergent processes is reinforced by the increasingly critical role of innovation as a source of sustainable competitive advantage (Blumentritt & Danis, 2006). Floyd and Lane (2000) describe this circumstance as the strategic need for *ambidexterity*; simultaneously cultivating breakthrough innovations while managing incremental innovations in current operations. Accomplishing this requires a balance between stability and flexibility within an organization (Hunt et al., 2009). While the directive nature of organizational strategy generally

makes it a clear process, *business level strategy* is less prescribed and requires that the innovation advocate work to manage the entanglement between administrative (convergent) and adaptive (divergent) levels of management (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007).

The value of social interdependence. Oke et al. (2009) state to create opportunities for business strategy to inform corporate strategy requires creating a flexible interface between bottom-up processes and executive involvement. According to Deschamps (2005) this involves creating a path from back-end processes that exist in the informal relationships among business units to the front-end processes of formal organizational leadership. The back-end processes of early innovation initiatives are highly creative and distinctly divergent, requiring an informal approach (Johnson, 1990). According to Leavy (2000), initial recognition of innovation opportunity is generally an individual creative event which is supported by multiple interconnected acts of recognition (O'Connor & Rice, 2001) and furthered by networks of individuals engaged in loose cooperation unconstrained by structural perimeters (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). This dynamic network topology plays an important role in propagating waves of opportunity recognition through the organization and is in stark contrast to the established communication channels, policies and procedures embedded in the convergent processes of a hierarchy (O'Connor & Rice, 2001).

This dynamic process described above can shift quickly, is informal and responds organically to the needs of the operational business level. The process creates opportunities for strategic renewal that differ from top-down, executive-sponsored strategic opportunities; but it also differs because it is an intensely social process, requiring the communication of novel information from the operating level to executives and mediation between divergent opportunities and existing strategy (Pappas, 2004). Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) state innovation is an

adaptive outcome resulting from emergent and interactive processes in social systems which, according to Dutton and Ashford (1993), are most often only able to gain the attention of top management if they are relevant to organizational performance. The role of the innovation advocate, described in detail in Theme two, is to identify a business opportunity within the social context of an organization as a strategic opportunity and move it through the organization to the strategic decision-making process. O'Connor and Rice (2001) associate this with the innovation advocate's passion, persistence and ability to set off a chain reaction through organizational levels by articulating the opportunity to multiple constituents. Watson and Wooldridge (2005) state that there is value in a single message reaching corporate strategic decision makers through many channels. According to Howell (2005), support from a broad-base of individuals with differing interests is necessary to gain executive support, resulting in a robust set of *core competencies*, described by Floyd and Lane (2000) as socially complex combinations of organizational assets, knowledge and skills that deliver greater value in products and services.

The value of procedural interdependence. Dutton and Ashford (1993) state it is necessary for innovation advocates and business unit managers to link technical innovation (divergent processes) to organizational performance (convergent processes) which, according to Howell (2005), is key to gaining top-management attention. To accomplish this middle managers need the ability to maintain operational competence and understand organizational goals and strategy (Floyd & Lane, 2000). The business unit manager is uniquely positioned to recognize the need for change in the current strategy when existing processes and procedures no longer fit external circumstances (Floyd & Lane, 2000). The ability to recognize changing external circumstances as opportunities is not defined by organizational position or facilitated by dominant processes. Rather, this ability encompasses the divergent, non-linear processes of

identifying problems and finding solutions, described by Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) as highly dependent upon individual initiative and discontinuous movement involving numerous people which, according to Floyd and Lane (2000), is defined by socialization and current organizational context. The middle manager has direct access to innovative solutions and, with appropriate broad-based internal validation, is able to provide timely assessment of threats and potential solutions to executives to create a shared understanding of the issue and organizational impact (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). According to O'Connor and Rice (2001) this requires that the innovation advocate understand the *organizational interface*, described as the hand-off between individuals and organizational structures, representing multiple points of entry into the organizational structure and facilitating movement of the innovation through organizational layers to gain resource commitment and strategic adoption. Leadership attributes of innovation advocates that support bridging the procedural gap associated with strategic decision making are discussed in the second theme of this literature review.

Theme Two: Leadership Attributes of the Innovation Advocate

Leadership is examined from the perspective of leadership type as described by Oke et al. (2009), innovation type as described by Deschamps (2005), and organizational position as described by Hunt et al. (2009). Innovation advocates generally rise as self-appointed leaders due to a favorable position within the organizations and personal initiative (Deschamps, 2005). According to Howell (2005), it is possible to recognize innovation champions within an organization by identifying the personal attributes that lead to advocacy behaviors and success in the role. This section of the review of the literature examines the role of an innovation advocate in relation to the attributes associated with successful leadership to facilitate innovation advocacy activities.

According to Leavy (2000), leadership is an art requiring special attributes rather than a set of actions. Based on the amount of research conducted regarding leadership attributes and the impact of various other variables found during the reference collection process for this literature review, this researcher feels confident in saying that there is significant interest in understanding this art. Howell's (2005) assessment of the qualities that an innovation champion (advocate) values in their professional position is listed in Desires and Responsibilities of an Innovation Advocate (see Appendix B). Qualities correlate to the description of three larger attributes of the innovation advocate examined in this study.

Attribute #1: Obsessive zeal. According to Leavy (2000) innovation advocates are able to follow a promising innovation path with obsessive zeal. Their need to passionately pursue ideas, as described by Deschamps (2005), conveys confidence and enthusiasm for the new idea and is the foundation for garnering support. Howell (2005) describes the ability to enlist the involvement and support from stakeholders as one of the key qualities of an innovation advocate.

Innovation is inherently discontinuous, complex and disruptive due to the change it represents (Floyd & Lane, 2000; O'Connor & Rice, 2001; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) but, according to Hutt et al. (1995), the interpretation of value and threat associated with the innovation change varies based on the perspective and organizational context of the individual. The same innovation may be interpreted as a positive opportunity by one business unit and as a threat by another due to a perception of loss of power or simple resistance to change (Hutt et al, 1995). According to Uhl-Bien et al. (2007), it is within the role of the innovation advocate to dissipate the tension caused by differing perspectives and fear of change by zealously facilitating the transition.

Attribute #2: Conscientiousness. Conscientiousness is examined within the context of personality as discussed by Cable and Judge (2003) and Witt and Ferris (2003), and is seen as a positive indicator of effectively exercising influence to create positive change. It was previously stated that promoting innovation through acting as an information hub and garnering support are primary responsibilities of the innovation advocate. Leveraging these activities to successfully advocate for positive change as an innovation outcome is supported by the personal attribute of conscientiousness. According to Dictionary.com, a conscientious individual is impelled to do what is right based on an inner sense of right and wrong (Conscience, n.d.; Conscientious, n.d.). This aligns with research which identifies innovation efforts as self-directed and divergent from the dominant organizational view, rather than with convergent processes that compel action based on organizational mandates and dominant understanding (Pappas, 2000). According to Witt and Ferris (2003), a conscientious person creates the impression of cooperation by following social protocol and listening, and responding to information shared through formal and informal interpersonal communications. Howell (2005) states the innovation advocate perceives their position role broadly, reaching beyond the limits of those explicitly stated in the position description which leads to the ability to influence decisions and events. Jemison (1984) states innovation advocates believe they can influence the direction of events as a result of their ability to monitor and control their expressive behavior and gain contextual knowledge to appropriately leverage this control. The studies selected for examination in this review are consistent in their description of conscientiousness as central to the potential success of an innovation advocate.

Attribute #3: Ability to balance creativity and process. In addition to being conscientious, Deschamps (2005) states innovation advocates need to possess a combination of creativity and process discipline. Levitt (2002) states the innovation advocate is distinguished by

the "ability to alternate appropriately between attitudes of irresponsibility and responsibility. He doesn't hold to the former for long – only long enough to make himself more productive" (p. 139). Levitt's conclusion is that there is ample creativity, but insufficient process discipline to leverage it. Leavy (2002) states there needs to be greater focus on the creative aspects of innovation. There is broad agreement, including these two researchers, that both creativity and process are necessary for innovations to flourish in organizations. This struggle between chaos and order (or creativity and process) needs to be kept in balance by the innovation advocate (Leavy, 2002), requiring an ability to accept uncertainty and the risk and discomfort that accompany it and the willingness to learn from possible failures (Deschamps, 2005; Leavy, 2002). Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) state that a complex (innovative) environment requires leadership that is willing to encourage development of adaptive creativity within the organizational units. Floyd and Lane (2000) state that this requires the innovation advocate be pragmatic, flexible and willing to take action to protect creativity and create process discipline.

Conclusions

Current literature describes an innovation advocate as someone who possesses personal qualities that include strong interpersonal and leadership skills coupled with an understanding of the organizational context and strategy and a sense of personal responsibility. With these qualities, the innovation advocate is able to ease the tension between divergent and convergent strategic processes through implementation of a set of communication tactics available to an innovation advocate to champion an innovation initiative.

Communication is the primary tool of an innovation advocate to secure participation and social support from interpersonal channels to enhance confidence in the outcomes of an innovation (Johnson, 1990). It is the responsibility of the innovation advocate to advance the innovation by cultivating broad general knowledge regarding the specific benefits of the innovation as a solution to a business issue or market opportunity (Howell, 2005). To accomplish this, information needs to be widely dispersed with opportunities for individuals to provide rapid feedback through formal and informal channels (Johnson, 1990). These channels provide the structure to communicate the innovation through stories, allowing innovation advocates to bring issues to light and sustain them (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). These stories allow the innovation advocate to increase participation in discussion and information sharing, while connecting past performance with the present issues and the future benefits associated with the innovation (Hunt et al., 2009). The innovation advocate leverages channels to consult a wide variety of agents from differing business units and environmental perspectives (Howell, 2005). Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) state through continual communication of specific information based on the needs of each innovation opportunity in the spaces between agents, described as *white space* by Ray and Elder (2007), collaborative disruptive innovation movement emerges.

Communication Tactics That Support Innovation Advocacy Leadership

Floyd and Lane (2000) examine strategic behaviors based on formal management roles and correlate middle management behaviors with the role of the innovation advocate described previously; behaviors that garner support and facilitate information flow. These behaviors describe what a person is responsible to accomplish when in the middle management or advocacy role, but not the tactics necessary to be successful.

Tactics represent practical steps describing how an innovation advocate can leverage the three larger advocacy leadership attributes described in the Review of the Literature section of the study, to successfully fulfill their innovation advocacy role. What follows is a set of six tactics presented as a guide that the innovation advocate can use during the disruptive processes prior to organizational strategic adoption in support of the goal of moving innovation through the organization to the formal strategic decision-making processes. The guide is designed to aid innovation advocates as they attempt to convey an understanding of the dominant strategic perceptions within the organization and provide a cognitive and procedural bridge to the new ideas they propose.

Communication tactic #1: Build social capital. The ability to garner support is highly dependent upon interpersonal relationships and perceptions. Tsai (2000) states building social capital over time through tacit knowledge and trust create opportunities to garner support. A conscientious individual is skilled in listening and following up on the input of others (Witt & Ferris, 2003) which builds tacit knowledge and trust. These iterative interactions with follow through demonstrate a willingness to forgo short-term, self-interested benefits which contributes to trustworthiness (Tsai, 2000). Leavy (2000) and Deschamps (2005) identify three

communication rules for innovation advocates when delivering an innovation message that will support using a tone that matches the message, enhancing the development of social capital.

- Utilize respect as the primary source of influence (Leavy, 2002).

- Be strong without being directive (Leavy, 2002).

- Be pragmatic over controlling (Descamps, 2005).

Blumentritt and Danis (2006) state that communicating or behaving unpredictability, or simply creating the perception of unpredictability, in interpersonal relationships weakens trust and reduces information sharing, negatively impacting social capital and interpersonal influence.

Communication tactic #2: Define innovation context. The development of interpersonal relationships necessary to build social capital creates a flow of information that cultivates contextual knowledge regarding business level and organizational goals so the innovation advocate can align the innovation message with the organizational strategy (Howell, 2005). According to Deschamps (2005), Dutton and Ashford (1993) and Floyd and Lane (2000), understanding the context of an innovation is critical in the process of garnering support in the early stages of innovation by allowing the innovation to be tied to the business level strategy of the differing business units. The context shifts throughout the life of the innovation as it moves through the organization, so maintaining a fluid understanding of the context facilitates growth among supporters and ensures the innovation maintains a strong relationship to the dominant organizational strategy, encouraging strategic adoption at the highest level (Floyd & Lane, 2000; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007).

According to Tsai (2000), the innovation advocate frames the innovation message to convey strategic relatedness in multiple consistent messages with an understanding of the particular contextual needs of each business unit or stakeholder group. Tufte (2010) states it is

imperative that information is selected to convey a balanced presentation of the facts based on

the needs of the recipient, delivering a factually persuasive message that reinforces credibility

and builds trust. According to Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) and Floyd and Lane (2000), this requires

the advocate act as an information hub, gathering and disseminating information to facilitate

learning and move the innovation through the organization. Accomplishing this requires

innovation advocates identify key actors in each innovation initiative and in strategic processes

(Howell, 2005). This understanding allows the advocate to aggregate ideas, blend strategies and

increase appeal, and thus gain commitment from stakeholders (Floyd & Lane, 2000; Uhl-Bien, et

al., 2007).

    Communication tactic #3: Channel opportunities. Hunt et al. (2009) state an

innovation advocate must modify, combine and implement the results of experimentation as

innovations that may be important to the organization, defined as *channeling*. To accomplish this

Leavy (2002) states the innovation advocate engages in exploration of multiple issues facing the

organization. According to Dutton and Ashford (1993), *issue selling* or defining the issues that

face an organization rather than proposing the innovative solution allows interrelated issues to be

explored and combined to deliver a more compelling message for a broader base of support.

Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) state that framing the broader issue and gaining support for it prior to

proposing the solution creates relationships between multiple business units and encourages

participation in the innovation process. According to Dutton and Ashford (1993), this approach

allows greater identification with the issue and increases motivation to adopt the innovative

solution through the creation of shared meaning. To formulate issues rather than solutions the

innovation advocate needs to be involved in aggregating opportunities and crafting new

initiatives and foster growth through direct influence or through altering the existing processes

(Hunt et al., 2009). Issue selling facilitates greater collaboration and a thorough vetting process which provides feedback that informs the value of an innovation (Dutton & Ashford, 1993) which, according to Deschamps (2005), is critical to informing an innovation advocate regarding when they need to demonstrate the courage to stop a project.

      Communication tactic #4: Develop dynamic networks. According to Tsai (2001), innovation advocates are likely to be in a central network position, providing greater access to other business units and additional channels to stimulate broader support and participation. The central position is a component of social capital and suggests a closer direct relationship to executive management and the associated resources and communication, resulting in the perception of leadership and encouraging network participation by others (Tsai, 2000). According to Johnson (1990), the innovation advocate begins innovation communication through immediate networks available or interpersonal contacts. Subsequently, *complex adaptive systems* (CAS) consisting of dynamic networks develop through altering connections and changing patterns of interaction (Howell, 2005) which, according to Tsai (2001) and Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) emerge based on social context and business process changes (Tsai, 2000). It is the responsibility of the innovation advocate to cultivate and incorporate *boundary spanning* networks, described as networks that reach across organizational units or beyond the perimeter of the organization (Jemison, 1984), into a web of dynamic networks supporting innovation communication to ensure the innovation message is broadly disseminated to increase the potential for support (Floyd & Lane, 2000). These networks exist in a flexible, overlapping structure and readily propagate waves of information to permeate disparate groups with a single message when thoughtfully leveraged by the innovation advocate (O'Connor & Rice, 2001).

Communication tactic #5: Leverage network audiences. O'Connor and Rice (2001) state that innovation advocates create a chain reaction with dynamic networks through the organizational levels by clearly articulating the innovation message. Through boundary spanning activities and network development, they develop channels of communication for specific audiences, including individuals who are positioned to provide greater access to individuals key to gaining support from critical stakeholders (Jemison, 1984). The innovation advocate needs to effectively leverage these networks based on the position and roles of the participants with upward networks providing resources and protection and broad-based lateral networks and downward networks providing information and validation of the innovation (O'Connor & Rice, 2001). By creating, modifying and being aware of organic changes in these networks, the innovation advocate can be more attuned to the audience so the message can be delivered within a channel that addresses the personal and organizational needs of network agents (Johnson, 1990).

Communication tactic #6: Frame perceptions and focus attention. Particularly during the initial stages of an innovation initiative, often characterized by ambiguity, advocates build the context for transition by defining loose processes that encourage valued information sharing and coalition building. This stage involves iterative redefinition of those processes to provide tighter controls as the initiative progresses, leading to organizational adoption and standardized processes (Leavy, 2002). According to Uhl-Bien et al. (2007), through this transition the innovation advocate, as a leader, facilitates non-linear change and correlates action among those with diverse interests to gain support and adoption of the innovation. The need to follow an innovation through to adoption and commercialization is stressed by Floyd and Lane (2000) and Leavy (2000) who state that innovation has not taken place until it is implemented.

According to Howell (2005), the innovation advocate needs to craft their communication to convey what information is important and needs to be given attention, described as *patterning attention.* Ray and Elder (2007) state that all agents in dynamic networks act as contributors to the message through a rapid process of feedback and information sharing, creating a sense of responsibility and accountability across organizational units and strengthening both the solution and support for it. According to Johnson (1990), well received messages within these networks create links to new interpersonal networks, increasing the reach of the innovation message while individuals continually transition in and out to maintain network fitness for the specific information needs of the audience (Tsai, 2000). In addition to dynamic networks, Johnson (1990) states that information disseminated through temporary coalitions based on differing preferences and perceptions of power garners growing support and builds consensus among participants. While other researchers did not identify coalition building as a successful influence tactic (Farmer et al., 1997; Schilit & Paine, 1987), it was noted to be an effective communication tactic for innovation advocacy (Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Johnson, 1990).

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Appendix A

Preliminary Research Results and Evaluations

Search Engine/ Database	Search Terms	Results#	Results: Quality/Relevant Titles	Comments
UO Libraries Catalog	Strategy	98	Poor: reasonable number of results but not relevant	This catalog was easy to use but not productive with the preliminary search terms for this study.
	Strategy, Competitive Advantage	0		
	Innovation, leadership	1	Poor: Irrelevant result and too few items returned	
	Strategy, Innovation	0		
	Upward influence	0		
Summit	Strategy, Innovation	18065	Fair: Although the search needs to be refined, some relevant results were returned.	This catalog was easy to use and integrated well with the UO catalog, but it did not return a strong result set based on the search terms.
	Strategy, Innovation, competitive advantage	1947	Fair: Some relevant content returned, but the majority was off topic.	
UO Libraries Quick Search Articles, Databases, Indexes	Strategy, Innovation	102	Poor: reasonable number of results but not relevant	This search was very easy to use and included a variety of indexes and provided direction for further searches, but it is not well suited for focused research.
	Competitive advantage, leadership	92	Good: reasonable number of results and 3 relevant sources in top 10 returned.	
	Upward influence, competitive advantage	60	Poor: reasonable number of results but no relevant sources in top 10 results	
EBSCO Business Source Premier	Executive Decision Making, strategy	18	Good: 1 highly relevant source	This is an excellent source of literature for this research. Result sets included literature from well-published authors who are cited in the works of others. Their work was appropriately objective and identified limitations of studies and opportunities for future research.
	Strategy, competitive Advantage, leadership	291	Fair: 2 relevant sources returned in top 20 results.	
	Strategy, network centrality	5	Good: 2 relevant sources	
	facilitate, innovation, strategy	202	Fair: 2 relevant sources in top 20 results.	
	Strategic planning, upward influence	14	Good: 6 relevant sources	

	strategic planning, divergent thinking, competitive advantage	1	Poor: no relevant results	
EBSCO Academic Source Premier	Executive Decision Making, management influence	4	Poor: no relevant results	This database does not appear to be a strong source for this research.
	Executive Decision Making, upward influence	1	Poor: too few results and nothing relevant returned	
	Strategic planning, innovation	386	Poor: no relevant results in first 10 items returned	
	Strategic planning, innovation, upward influence	0		
	facilitate, innovation, strategy	13	Poor: no relevant results	
EBSCO Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection	Divergent thinking, upward influence	0		This database did not provide relevant results for the search terms. Approaching the topic from this perspective does not appear to be a reasonable pursuit.
	Strategy, upward influence	2	Poor: too few results	
	executive decision making, informal communication	0		
Google Scholar	Divergent thinking, strategic planning, upward influence	10900	Fair: Search terms need to be more specific to reduce the number of articles returned and to increase relevance.	This search engine is a reasonable option for further research, though with more specific search terms. Even terms that were very fruitful previously yielded too many articles and they were largely slightly off topic.
	Innovation, strategy, upward influence	89500	Fair: Search terms need to be more specific, though 2 of the initial 10 results were relevant	
	managers, network centrality, competitive advantage	22700		
Clusty.com	competitive advantage, upward influence, leadership	54792	Poor: Results were not relevant including additional clusters.	This search engine did not yield relevant resources and incorporated advertisements and sponsored links. Further use of this engine is not worth pursuing.
	Competitive advantage, flexibility, leadership	16	Fair: 1,620.000 initial results, but when leveraging clusters, such as Networks, a few relevant results were found.	

	executive decision making, breakthrough thinking, informal communication	77000	Poor: Results were largely advertisements for professional training	
ScienceDirect.com	Divergent thinking, strategy, influence	5450	Poor: The introduction of "divergent thinking" in this index was interpreted as developmental or diagnostic.	This is a reasonable index to pursue further. The "Refine Results" option provides greater control.
	Innovation, strategy, middle management	16314	Fair: Several relevant results were returned.	
	managers, network centrality, innovation	1008	Fair: Without refining results there were 2 relevant sources returned.	

Appendix B

Desires and Responsibilities of an Innovation Advocate

What Personal Champions Want (Howell, 2005, p. 115)	*What Innovation Advocates Do*
To work in an organization that grows through innovation, operates flexibly and exploits new product and market opportunities	Passionately pursue innovation opportunities (Deschamps, 2005)
To work with other innovators in the organization	Work in the white space in the organization to create a system of experimentation and validation of innovation opportunities (Ray & Elder, 2007; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007).
To be constantly challenged and to learn	Seek understanding of business unit and organizational challenges to engage in aggregation and channeling of innovation opportunities (Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Johnson, 1990)
To be connected internally and externally	Engage in dynamic interpenetrating and boundary spanning network development (Jemison, 1984; Johnson, 1990)
To be recognized	Occupy a position of network centrality that corresponds to a leadership role and formal communication channels to executives (Pappas, 2004)
To work for breeders of champions	Develop executive openness to upward influence for allocation of resources and innovation adoption through the establishment of interpersonal relationships and issue selling (Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Pappas, 2004)