

HOW NETWORKS UNDERGIRD THE LATERAL CAPABILITY OF AN ORGANIZATION—WHERE THE WORK GETS DONE

While, for most managers, the overall structure of their organization is a given, those managers—wittingly or unwittingly—create the interpersonal and interfunctional links through which the work takes place. The effectiveness of those links can be strengthened by a deliberate encouragement of networks. There are six useful ways to support such networks—through focused development of co-location, communities of practice, annual meetings and retreats, training programs, rotational assignments, and technology and e-coordination. And these efforts become even more effective when reward structures support them. © 2002 by the authors

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Organization design is still evolving as a field of study. As a result, the terminology used by different observers is varied and inexact. What we define here as lateral organization and lateral capabilities are sometimes referred to by other authors as horizontal, flattened, networked, or process-based organizations. We refer to them as integrating or coordinating mechanisms as well. All these terms convey the important idea that an organization operates in multiple directions and dimensions and must be linked together.

For example, imagine you have just been made head of the product development area in your division. The company is organized functionally. Your peers are the heads of operations, sales, marketing, finance, etc. (see **Exhibit 1**).

The general manager has made it clear that increasing the speed of getting new products to

market is a key goal. You may not be able to change the overall organizational structure, but you may be able to influence the creation of cross-functional product development teams that can help overcome the barriers created by the functional structure.

THE NEED TO GROW LATERAL CAPABILITY

Another way to look at the need for lateral capability is to consider what we ask people to do each day when they come to work. We've hired them on an individual basis, one by one, and usually pay them for their individual accomplishments. But we ask them to work together in teams and to collaborate with people in other parts of the organization and even on the other side of the world.

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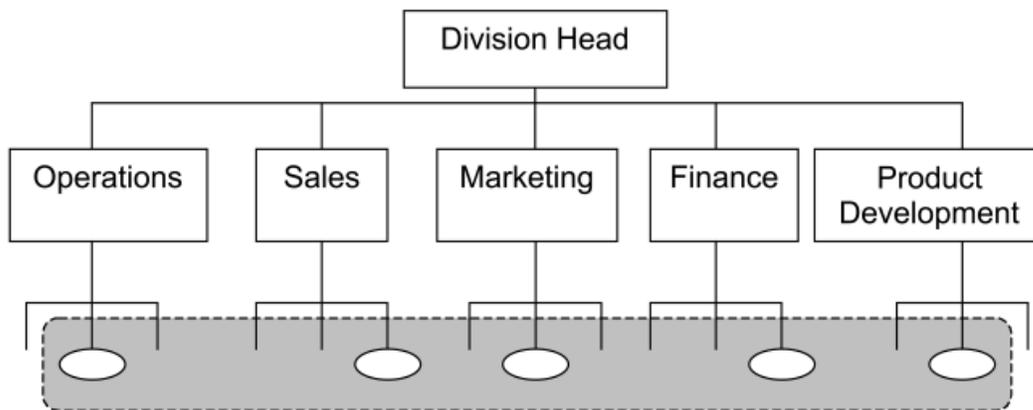


Exhibit 1. Cross-functional Lateral Team

More often than not the organization itself creates barriers to their success. Examples are likely to abound in your current state assessment, such as:

- People don't know who has knowledge or experience outside of their own department that they might be able to draw upon.
- People have never met their counterparts in other areas of the organization in order to establish relationships with them.
- Policies inhibit the internal mobility that would give employees opportunities to work in other areas of the company and broaden their perspective.
- Processes cause conflict because no one is sure who has the authority to make a decision.
- Team members lack group process skills, causing more time to be spent on navigating the group dynamics than creating results.
- Matrix relationships are created, but the "two bosses" have neither the common ground nor the skills to negotiate collaborative solutions.

Building lateral capability provides a number of *advantages*:

Better Return on Management Time. Perhaps the greatest driver for designing a robust lateral organization is the limited resource of management time. If all decisions must flow up the hierarchy, management becomes a bottleneck and a

barrier. Given that most organizations face continual change and given that the number of decisions to be made increases geometrically with the rate of change, decision making needs to be pushed to lower levels in the organization. Coordinating mechanisms designed into the lateral organization increase the organization's capacity to make decisions. People closest to the front line and customers make day-to-day decisions, freeing senior managers to focus on long-term strategic issues. In addition, the data that rise up through the hierarchy tend to get sanitized as people avoid having to deliver bad news. Building the capability to deal with issues at the level where they occur can make for more accurate decisions and actions.

Speed. People closer to the customer, the product, and the business processes are often better able to make informed decisions than managers reviewing MIS reports. Lateral capability generates speed. It is certainly quicker to make some decisions by decree at a senior level. However, significant time and energy will be spent by managers communicating the decision and the rationale down the organization to those who need to carry it out. Peer-to-peer collaboration can increase buy-in and decrease the time between decision and implementation.

Flexibility. The lateral organization is multi-dimensional. It allows a focus on whatever issue requires attention. Therefore, the company can be responsive to multiple constituencies and deal with unforeseen issues without having to reorganize. Lateral capability allows adaptability. Although the organizational structure is focused on maximiz-

ing the ability to execute today's strategy, the elements of the lateral organization can be configured to anticipate tomorrow's strategy. For example, customer teams operating across a functional structure can be an interim step toward reorienting the entire organization toward the customer.

General Management Perspective. Many business leaders are trying to get their employees to think like owners, to make decisions as though it was their own money on the line. Integrating mechanisms help employees to think more broadly and to understand and incorporate other perspectives into their own decisions and actions.

In order to make the lateral organization effective, you will also need to be aware of potential **challenges**:

Parochial Interests. Lateral mechanisms often allow for the delegation of decisions not only downward but also across organizational boundaries. It may be difficult for some people to make decisions that go against their own interests unless they are rewarded for decisions that reflect an enterprise view.

Increased Need for Information. As with any delegated decision, the quality of the outcome is only as good as:

- The information provided
- The skills and judgment of the decision makers
- The support and monitoring by the person or group delegating the decision

In order to make good decisions, people need to understand the strategy and be able to translate it into criteria against which they can test their decisions. They also need to understand the broader business and how their decisions will impact other people and other systems.

Increased Time and Meetings. Many lateral capabilities can't be dictated from the top. For example, people in the organization have to be involved in designing and developing the processes or working out team operating agreements. All of this takes time and is an internally focused activity. Although the hope is that the effort will pay off in better products or services for the customer, if not managed the discussions centered on how

to work together can cut into time spent actually producing results.

Increased Conflict. The coordinating mechanisms in the lateral organization bring people together from different parts of the organization to address an issue or make decisions. The participants still represent their part of the organization and will have differing points of view. The contention resulting from different viewpoints should make for better decisions, but this doesn't always occur. One area might "bully" other areas into accepting its point of view. This would be a bad outcome. A worse outcome would be when people make compromises to preserve their relationships but don't really resolve the issue. Lateral teams need skills to manage their meetings and discussions and resolve conflicts successfully.

Lateral capability is closely linked to empowerment of employees.

Requirement for New Leadership Behaviors. Lateral capability is closely linked to empowerment of employees. The organization's leadership needs to be willing to trust decisions that no longer rise up the chain of command but get made at the front lines by people working together across unit lines. The success of these mechanisms depends not only on new designs but also on new skills and mind-sets among managers as well.

Building lateral capability requires an up-front investment of time and energy. If people are to be empowered to make decisions, they need:

- To have tools and information systems to give them access to required data
- To have skills to manage conflict, work on teams, and to reach optimal rather than compromised solutions
- To have time for increased communication and meetings
- To be rewarded for working across organizational boundaries

Lateral capability doesn't happen by chance. It needs to be designed and supported through networks, lateral processes, teams, integrative

roles, and matrix structures. Networks, however, are the keystones.

FOSTERING AND SUPPORTING NETWORKS

Networks are the interpersonal relationships that people form across an organization. Networks are the foundation of the lateral organization and are created naturally as people interact with other employees in their office; with their boss, peers, and subordinates in their department; and with colleagues in other parts of the company. People use these networks on an informal, spontaneous basis every day. An issue arises and a few people get together to resolve it. An unanticipated event occurs, and someone calls a colleague in another office who has had the same experience.

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Successful people rely on their “know-who” as much as their “know-how.”

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It is common knowledge that people get things done in big companies by going outside of formal channels. Successful people rely on their “know-who” as much as their “know-how.” This natural tendency can be a resource to be developed as a capability for the company. The stronger the interpersonal networks—the more people know who the right person is to reach out to, and the more that others are willing to respond—the stronger the foundation for building lateral capability and breaking down the silos that tend to form in any organization.

Organizational competencies are built upon relationships. The capacity to outperform the competition can’t be considered separately from the social fabric of the organization. Conscious attention to networks is particularly important as an organization grows or disperses into multiple locations. When everyone is located together, information gets communicated in the hallway or by someone dropping into a colleague’s office for some advice. Everyone knows the level of other people’s knowledge, experience, and interests. As people are moved to different offices and new people join a growing organization, however, this informal network can fall apart.

Most people are aware that cultivating a strong

network is a personal asset. Networks are also an organizational asset. They smooth the way for information to be exchanged and developed into ideas and solutions that benefit the company. Networks provide the foundation of the dynamic organization. When it is time to reconfigure, a robust web of networks allows new relationships to fall into place faster and therefore speed everyone’s adjustment to the new environment.

Fostering networks encourages spontaneous knowledge sharing across functions, businesses, and geographies, and serves as a fertile ground for innovation. Whenever you provide opportunities for different groups to learn or work together, the process of interaction itself becomes a learning experience: an experience of broadening one’s perspective, learning from one’s peers, valuing knowledge sharing and collaboration, and an experience that further embeds and reinforces the organizational culture.

Although the interpersonal interactions that create these experiences will remain somewhat spontaneous and informal, the underlying networks can be strengthened through deliberate design decisions. At some level there is no substitute for face-to-face interaction, but many of these efforts can be aided by technology. Since bringing people physically together is expensive, particularly for national and global companies, the challenge is to get the most from network-building practices. There are six useful ways to foster networks:

1. Co-location
2. Communities of practice
3. Annual meetings and retreats
4. Training programs
5. Rotational assignments
6. Technology and e-coordination

CO-LOCATION

Physical proximity increases the probability that people will initiate, build, and productively leverage relationships. While e-mail, voice mail, and video conferencing can bridge some of the communication barriers caused by people working remotely, the predictions made just a few years

ago—that time and space won't matter with more use of the Internet—haven't come to pass. Pixar, the computer animation studio associated with Apple Computers, consolidated all of its employees into one building in San Francisco in the fall of 2000. They had previously been scattered among four different sites, but CEO Steve Jobs found that creativity and collaboration suffered when people weren't able to work in the same physical space. Co-location is particularly important in organizations that depend on teams and high levels of collaboration.

A by-product of co-location is the increased chance that people will form personal relationships that will allow them to handle work conflicts better. For example, engineering and manufacturing departments might be co-located to facilitate formal workflow communication. People meet each other in the cafeteria, at the coffee machine, at the copier, and in the parking lot. Relationships start with conversations about the Super Bowl, elections, or a new mall in town. Then, when controversial design changes need to be hammered out between engineering and manufacturing, the participants already have a relationship within which a problem-solving dialogue is more likely to happen.

BMW used co-location as a temporary design intervention for facilitating cross-functional collaboration when introducing the 300 Series model. During this period, all groups responsible for the redesign efforts were moved into the prototype factory: product designers, manufacturing process designers, purchasing negotiators, designers of training programs, marketing product managers, and financial analysts. The groups communicated as the design process proceeded from concept to drawings to models to full-scale clay models to driveable prototype.

Co-location can also improve internal customer service relationships. For example, an operations group in a large insurance company was dependent upon three different technology platforms for processing claims. The information technology (IT) function that supported these systems was located in another city and provided service remotely. System updates, enhancements, or fixes would be sent by work order to the IT group. There were continual conflicts between the two areas

around issues of responsiveness, accuracy, speed, and flexibility. A new head of IT decided to co-locate a small IT group on-site at the operations facility. Immediately, the relationship improved. The technologists could talk to users; observe how they used the system; and suggest when training, rather than enhancements, was needed. This IT outpost still worked closely with the centralized IT department for making systems changes, but co-location allowed for better service overall.

When you are able to locate people together, design the space to encourage interaction and reflect the new organization's spirit.

A by-product of co-location is the increased chance that people will form personal relationships that will allow them to handle work conflicts better.

Provide communal space. To save on real estate costs, companies are squeezing the amount of office space dedicated to individuals. Particularly in consulting, IT, and other knowledge work where employees are frequently out of the office or are able to telecommute, "hotelling" has gained popularity. Rather than having a fixed "address" when they are in the office, employees are assigned a fully equipped office for the day, which reduces the amount of space that sits empty at any given time. Despite the obvious cost advantages, hotelling has some negative impacts on morale. People lose the sense of identity that comes with having "my space" decorated with the photos, mementos, and other decorations we use to mark our personal space. Therefore, the design of communal space becomes even more vital for creating a shared identity with the organization and colleagues when people can't retreat into personalized space. Communal space in the reconfigurable organization is central to supporting a flexible organization. Communal space should be more than the traditional conference room that must be reserved days in advance. Create collaborative workspaces in a variety of sizes. Some spaces can even be open, allowing others to notice and easily join the discussion. Make finding an inviting, functional meeting space on the

spur of the moment almost effortless if you want people to work together.

Create natural interaction hubs. Michael Bloomberg purposefully designed the headquarters of his Bloomberg media group to allow the elevator from the lobby to stop only on the middle floor of the six floors he leases on Park Avenue. This forces everyone to come in and leave by the same door, passing and interacting with other people on the way to their desk. A central spiral staircase becomes a vertical meeting room as people share information before heading in opposite directions.

The trend when designing private offices is to use a lot of glass when a quiet environment is required but a sense of openness is desired.

Base the design on function, not privilege. Office size and location still communicate status in most companies. Some companies have switched from walls and cubicles to open plans to reduce the sense of hierarchy but found they are less than optimally functional. Organizations that implemented open space plans—with low walls and joined desks instead of traditional cubicles and offices—found that it made it difficult for employees who wanted to conduct private conversations, who had to discuss sensitive matters with clients, or who just needed a quiet place to work. On the other hand, supervisors, who should be out on the floor coaching their teams, would have little need for enclosed offices. The idea, however, of allowing people to see their colleagues working and being able to initiate discussions without having to knock on doors has merit. The trend when designing private offices is to use a lot of glass when a quiet environment is required but a sense of openness is desired. Allocate and design space based on function, not status.

Provide tools. Flipcharts, markers, and walls uncluttered by pictures and suitable for posting visual displays are the basics for meeting rooms. Many companies go further by installing computers with projection displays, so that ideas and notes can be captured immediately and shared with others, and encouraging video conferences when in-

person meetings are impractical. Consider IT and connectivity needs as part of the design so that people can plug in their laptops and access information remotely without having to return to their own space.

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Communities of practice are networks of employees with shared organizational interests. They allow people to learn and share knowledge for their personal benefit. They also help to avoid the divergence of procedure and standards when people with similar positions work in isolation from each other. They can be informal networks that depend on the group's members to initiate and sustain, or they can be formalized with dedicated budgets and administrative support.

The education practice in Andersen Consulting, now renamed Accenture, created formalized communities of practice in the mid-1990s to promote networking and sharing of learning-related ideas. The groups are open to all employees and structured around projects and topics that are of importance to the firm, such as computer-based education, classroom learning issues, or virtual learning. Although the intention is to encourage the generation and testing of ideas in a safe, internal environment before they might be developed into products for clients, the other goal is to create time for reflection and learning within the groups. To support them, each employee is allowed to spend about two hours of billable time per week involved in community of practice activities.

Communities of practice can have even more direct business results. When Xerox connected its 17,000 technical representatives around the world on an intranet site for sharing ideas, knowledge, and experience, it found it had created a rich source of direct feedback from Xerox customers around the world. The role of the technical rep, previously one of the lowest in the company, changed to one of the most important. The company saved \$100 million a year from the suggestions posted by technical reps. Rather than being viewed as merely repairpersons, they became a source of intellectual capital for the company.

The Ford Foundation created an informal community of practice to knit its IT people closer to-

gether. The Ford Foundation has thirteen offices around the world to support regional grant making. Most of the IT infrastructure as well as the technology specialists are located at the New York headquarters. Each field office has one or two technical advisers who support local technology needs. It was becoming apparent that although there was frequent communication between New York and each individual office, there was limited communication among the offices. The result was little sharing of learning or experience. In fact, the technical advisers were developing duplicate solutions to common problems occurring in multiple offices.

The chief information officer brought together all the technical advisers for a five-day meeting. At the meeting they spent extensive time reviewing the technology capability and projects in each office. Time was also allocated to structured socializing in order to allow this group to create personal relationships. During the meeting, the group developed the specifications for an intranet-based “virtual forum” to share information, post help requests, and discuss IT issues.

Communities of practice are most successful when:

- ***They are formed around common interests.*** Functional or staff groups make natural communities of practice. The lawyers dispersed across a product or customer structure may be working in different business lines but will have a lot to share in terms of methodology and the types of issues they encounter. Communities of practice rely on the voluntary participation of their members to make them useful. They have to be formed around topics people care about and to which they see some self-interest in contributing.
- ***They use both technology and face-to-face meetings.*** Most communities of practice are sustained on-line through bulletin boards, chat sessions, discussion forums, databases, frequently-asked-question lists, and directories. They are aided, however, by occasional live meetings, where people can establish personal connections and put names to faces.

- ***They have a dedicated coordinator.*** Successful communities of practice designate a coordinator or facilitator to identify topics of interest, set agendas for discussions and meetings, and promote participation in the group. This can be a rotating role within the group or a permanent part-time role. At the World Bank, communities of practice are so highly valued as a tool for learning and coordination that the budget for each community includes funds to pay for a staff person to organize meetings, edit each group’s newsletter, and perform other administrative chores so that the group members can focus solely on their subject.⁵

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ANNUAL MEETINGS AND RETREATS

Your organization’s annual meeting or retreat is probably a significant expense in terms of travel and hotel costs in addition to the cost of taking people away from their day-to-day jobs. Use the meeting not only to accomplish the stated agenda, but also as an investment in building the organization’s networks, building commitment, and improving interpersonal relationships. For your next meeting think about maximizing these elements:

- ***Participation.*** If you tend to have the same people attend each time, consider whether there is an opportunity to broaden the participation for your next meeting. Invite some high-potential people from a few levels down. You will help them build their network by introducing them to the organizational leadership. Another option is to invite partners from other parts of the company outside of your organization. Too often these people are only engaged when there is a service problem, a conflict, or an issue to negotiate. Use the meeting to

build relationships with them in a more neutral setting.

- **Small Groups.** The agendas for many meetings consist of one presentation after another followed by questions and answers. Interaction among participants is limited to breaks and meals. Structure the meeting so that people have multiple opportunities to discuss issues in small groups. Configure the group assignments to mix people as much as possible. The small group discussions not only allow for better responses to the presentations, but also permit people to hear other people's perspectives, observe their working styles, and plan for how they can engage them as resources in the future.

Training programs that bring people together from different departments are most effective when they create relationships across the shared work flow interfaces.

- **Structured Social Time.** Designers of multiday off-site meetings face the "social time" dilemma. Do you build social time into the agenda hoping that it will pay off in networking, or do you work people from morning until night in order to get them back to their offices and their families as quickly as possible? Either way, some people will be unhappy. If there is an afternoon off, or even if social time is limited to meals or a free evening, deliberately shape some of it to encourage participants to meet new people. Sign up cross-functional foursomes for golf. Assign seating at meals. Plan an evening murder-mystery entertainment so that people don't just wander off to their rooms after dinner. Although it is important to allow some completely unstructured time for participants, get the most out of each element of the meeting.

TRAINING PROGRAMS

Enterprisewide training programs are another forum for connecting the organization. If you struc-

ture participation and use the programs as a forum for creating shared values and understanding, you can achieve two goals in addition to the stated training objectives:

- **Connections.** Training programs that bring people together from different departments are most effective when they create relationships across the shared work flow interfaces. Rather than just allowing open enrollment, participants can be assigned to programs that will bring them in contact with others whom they could benefit from knowing.
- **Shared Values and Understanding.** Each training event, even if as mundane as business writing or time management, is an opportunity to communicate the direction of the organization, the leadership's key messages, and the values of the organization. Customization of programs can be justified when it is employed not just to make the material more relevant to the participants, but to create a shared culture, language, and set of organizational values. For example, case studies, vignettes, and role plays that are used to illustrate the course material can be written to reinforce behavioral norms. A management skills course can incorporate practice scenarios that illustrate the new performance expectations or new roles of the organization. When seen this way, course design becomes not only a matter of teaching the topic at hand, but also an opportunity to build common organizational understanding among a group of diverse participants.

ROTATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Rotational assignments move people laterally through the organization at defined intervals. Rotational assignments can be used to broaden skills, promote and reinforce best practices and knowledge transfer, and embed an enterprisewide perspective. Many companies have used cross-functional rotational assignments as a two-pronged organizational strategy: to train functional managers to become generalists and prepare them

for their next career move, and to help them to build networks of contacts and communication channels that they can use to leverage knowledge across the organization.

Dow-Corning, for example, places new chemical engineers in the product development function. From there, they follow their new product into manufacturing. Once in the factory, they may move to the quality function and then become a controller for the plant. The next move may be as a controller in a factory in Europe to gain international experience. Careers are designed to move people among line positions, as well as between line and staff positions. Each rotation reinforces some roles that are familiar while introducing new ones. With each new move, the engineers learn to adapt more quickly and effectively. Over time, they spend time in different functions, in different businesses, in different geographies, and in both line and staff roles. They learn to be accountable for results and to influence staff without necessarily having formal authority.

Another organization that uses rotational assignments is McDonald's. In an organization with a strategy focused on operational excellence, it is essential that all functional fast-trackers rotate through operations and actually have the experience of running a restaurant. No one is considered for senior leadership positions who hasn't had this experience.

In large, multibusiness companies, the audit function can be used to build cross-functional and cross-business knowledge and networks. Citigroup rotates high-potential managers through audit positions not only to build their appreciation for the discipline of good control practices but also to expose them to the workings and issues of different business lines. Audits are opportunities to learn and develop, both for the unit being audited and for the auditors themselves. When correctly positioned, the function can spread best practices, develop talent, and build networks across borders. A corporate banker participating in a cross-geography audit team looking at the Malaysian consumer business for three months will get to know the other team members, while also meeting people in the Malaysian subsidiary. Each experience provides another opportunity to extend one's network of contacts.

Shell Oil uses job rotation to tie together an otherwise highly decentralized organization. Although local operating companies are empowered to make almost all sourcing, recruiting, and selection decisions concerning management staff, all units give a new manager at least two assignments during his or her first five years. Directors of the local operating companies conduct a series of swaps and negotiations in order to provide the best possible development opportunities for their people. The local company absorbs any costs associated with a swap (e.g., moving other people into new positions to make room for a high-potential manager who is ready for a new developmental assignment). The ethic of growing management talent internally permeates the entire company. Many, if not most, of the senior executives started as junior management partners.

To avoid having people perceive that they are missing opportunities up the career ladder, rotational assignments have to be part of a defined career path with a set time limit and clear next steps.

Rotational assignments are typically lateral moves that add new skills and experience but not necessarily a greater scope of responsibility. To avoid having people perceive that they are missing opportunities up the career ladder, rotational assignments have to be part of a defined career path with a set time limit and clear next steps. People who participate in these assignments also have to be rewarded commensurately so they don't feel they might have done better financially if they had stayed in a narrow functional career path.

TECHNOLOGY AND E-COORDINATION

One of the most powerful current and future shapers of informal networks is IT. Although it can't replace face-to-face interaction completely, technology has the potential to remove significant time and space barriers to communication as well as organizational barriers of hierarchy and department. The organization becomes opened up to virtually limitless communication. Informal networks

or communities of interest spring up naturally through chat groups and electronic mail distribution lists on a company's intranet. LotusNotes, Microsoft Exchange, and other group interaction tools allow instant messaging, group discussion, scheduling and group calendar management, and document and work flow management.

It is the role of the organizational designers to shape relationships and networks that can be facilitated by the new technology available. Most companies have a personnel database, which is accessible via the company intranet. Often it is little more than an electronic Rolodex with name and contact information. CARE International, one of the world's largest private international relief and development organizations, took its existing contact database and enhanced it with the kind of information that would make it easy for people with congruent interests and needs to find each other. Each person has listed past responsibilities and experience, current responsibilities, language abilities, country knowledge, emergency experiences, skills and core competencies, and interests. This searchable database has increased the ability of people working across borders and across projects to seek each other out and share ideas, information, and solutions. The cost of creating and maintaining it is very low.

Even more promising are the enterprise technology packages, such as customer relationship management (CRM) systems that are beginning to harness all the customer information that is dispersed throughout organizations. CRM systems have the potential to integrate all relevant data so that a company can truly present "one face" to the customer.

You most likely will agree that fostering strong interpersonal networks, collaboration, and knowledge sharing is a good thing to do. However, if you look at your organization's reward and recognition systems, they may tell a different story. They may not reward people at all for reaching out to others or providing help when requested. See "Building Networks" below to assess your current networks and identify ways that they can be enhanced and better support your organization. ■

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BUILDING NETWORKS

Purpose. Use this tool to assess your current networks and think about how you can foster and support them in your organization.

Co-Location

1. What areas in your organization would benefit by being co-located?

2. What are the opportunities to move some service and staff functions closer to their internal clients?

3. What are the opportunities to redesign your physical space to encourage interaction and make it easy for people to spontaneously collaborate?

Communities of Practice

1. If you have a functional group dispersed into your business, product, or customer organizations, what mechanisms are in place to maintain their functional identity?

2. Do you have communities of practice in existence? What formal encouragement or support is in place for them?

Annual Meetings and Retreats

1. What are the norms for inviting people to management retreats and off-site meetings? What are the opportunities to use participation as a means to build networks?

2. What mechanisms could be used at these meetings to encourage networking and to help people stay connected afterward?

Training Programs

1. How could participants in enterprisewide training programs be more deliberately selected to maximize network and relationship building?

2. What key themes should be included to ensure that the scenarios, cases, and role-plays used in customized programs reinforce the desired messages, values, and cultural norms of the organization?

Rotational Assignments

1. Does your organization use rotational assignments? What are the typical paths? How are people rewarded for taking lateral moves?

2. If your organization does not use rotational assignments, what are the key positions that could provide managers or high-potential talent the skills, exposure, and experience that would prepare them for the next level of responsibility?

Technology and E-Coordination

1. Does your organization’s use of technology support creation of networks? If so, specify how.

2. What type of systems, access, and technological tools beyond e-mail would allow people to better communicate and collaborate?

Rewards and Recognition

1. List your organization’s “heroes” and role models.

2. What are they known for? Are they people known for learning, teaching, and sharing or only for delivering the results?

Yes **No** 3. Are people rewarded for taking time away from their own job to help someone else even if, as a result, they deliver less on their own objective?

Yes **No** 4. Are people given the same recognition for borrowing and modifying an existing solution as inventing something new?

Yes **No** 5. If people want to create a community of practice are they given time and resources or do they have to do it in their own time?

Yes **No** 6. If people make a lateral career move to broaden their skill set and perspective, does their career advance as rapidly as those who choose to climb a narrow functional ladder?

If you answered "no" to any of the questions above, what reward systems need to be examined? What changes would make your organization more integrated?