

## Trust Relationships and Knowledge Management within Organizations: Hints for a Theory

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The aim of this contribution is explaining/modelling the relationship between K-management - and in particular knowledge (K) explicitation and sharing- and trust. Our claim is that trust plays a crucial role in making cognitive capital a collective, explicit, and circulating capital. Organizational actors do not only have the problem of being conscious about their private K or about K they store in files, data bases, etc., or in making explicit their implicit K; they might have serious troubles in sharing this K with their colleagues and employers for reasons due to social relationships, and in particular to trust. Making K explicit and sharing it is not simply a cognitive process, is a social process and decision.

On the basis of our model of trust attitude (see ref.) in socio-cognitive terms (beliefs, expectations, and goals towards the other and risk), we can model:

- > The evaluations and worries grounding X's decision in sharing (passing to Y) her K;
- > Y's evaluations and worries about X, grounding his decision about asking to Y, or believing and using Y's information and practices.
- > X's and Y's trust in authority, managers, control and technology as influencing this K sharing decision and process.
- > The importance of "conditional trust" (Jones & George, 1998) in this process and in establishing a trust atmosphere (unconditional trust)

Special attention will be devoted here to the qualitative and quantitative modelling of the networks that emerges among the actors from their bilateral trust attitudes, and their predictions. Our claim is that: *the Trust Net gives us a map of the important "channels" along which private or implicit knowledge becomes common and explicit, i.e. some of the main channels for knowledge circulation and sharing.*

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