

Organizations and Information



3rd Face-to-Face
INF 387C

Information and Organizations

- Knowledge Cycle (Choo)
- Sensemaking
- Information
- Knowledge Organizations

Knowledge Cycle

- Definition
 - Shared meanings
 - Knowledge creating: tacit and internal; explicit and external
 - Decision making

Sensemaking

- Definition
 - Identify gaps of information, knowledge, experience
 - Bridge gaps of information by using criteria to
 - ascertain usefulness or value of new knowledge
 - determine if new knowledge fits with old knowledge or experience
 - make up what we don't know (rumors, misinformation, misinterpretation)

Seven Properties of Sensemaking via Karl Weick

- Grounded in identity “parliament of selves”
- Retrospective
- Enactive of sensible environments
 - people shape & are part of their environment
- Social
- Ongoing - never starts and never stops
- Focused on and by extracted cues
- Driven by plausibility rather than accuracy

More Sense or Nonsense via Karl Weick



- Actions affect situation & yourself
- Intuition and experience interprets non-sense
- Effects of action cannot be predicted
- Patterns may be evident after the fact
- Every representation is an interpretation
- Language is action

Scenarios

- Not to predict future
- Enables envisioning behavior
- Reveal nature and dynamics of forces shaping the environment
- Use hard, analytical data and soft intuitive hunches

Information ↔ Action

When action grows unprofitable, gather information; when information grows unprofitable, sleep.

-- Ursula K. LeGuin

Questions and Information

- Question reveals nature of problem
- Amount and reliability of information
- Multiple conflicting interpretations of information
- Varying value orientations, political/emotional clashes

Information: Ambiguity and Change

- Goals are
 - Unclear
 - Multiple
 - Conflicting
- Roles are vague, responsibilities are unclear
- Success measures are lacking
- Symbols and metaphors used unclear
- Participation in decision-making is fluid.

Information: Diversity and Consensus

- Sensemaking constructs framework
 - Shared meanings
 - Purposes for concerted action
- Shared meanings
 - Social order
 - Temporal continuity
 - Goal-directed clarity

Organizational Sensemaking Process



Arguing: creating meaning by connecting the contradictory

Expecting: creating meaning by connecting the similar

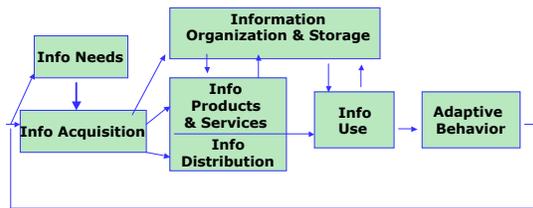
Committing: creating meaning to justify actions high in choice, visibility, and irrevocability

Manipulating: creating meaning to explain actions taken to make things happen.

Models of Information Use



Information Management



Central Info Problem in Organizations

- Reduce ambiguity
- Develop shared meaning for
 - Collective and purposeful action
- Maintain a level of information equivocality
- Accommodate a diversity of interpretations
- Allows cognitive “white space” for its members to
 - Inquire
 - Experiment
 - Discover

Organizations as Sensemaking Communities

Man is an animal suspended in webs of
significance he himself has spun.



- Max Weber
