

For more than a decade, public agencies have been making major changes in the philosophy and operation of key service and administrative programs. In this process they have been moving away from centralized, command and control management models, toward collaborative and distributed ways of working. CTG's "Knowledge Networking in the Public Sector" research project was designed to examine this trend. Now in its third and final year, the project has focused on interorganizational information sharing as a fundamental feature of innovative public sector programs. The main project goals were to identify the dimensions of success in public sector knowledge networks, and to understand how organizational, technological, and political factors influence results.

Funded by a \$1-million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), the study examined the formation and operation of knowledge networks (KNs) in the public sector. The research studied seven cases involving agencies in New York State that depend on the sharing of knowledge and information to achieve an administrative or policy purpose. The study addressed the following research questions:

- What are the defining characteristics of successful interorganizational networks for information sharing in the public sector?
- What activities comprise the processes of planning and implementing interorganizational information sharing?
- What organizational, technological, and political factors influence public sector KNs and how can they be measured?

The results of the study will include an enhanced model of knowledge network formation and operation in the public sector, as well as recommendations to practitioners about planning and implementing knowledge networks. Research themes include:

- Leadership - how leadership emerges, changes, and influences the effectiveness of knowledge networking
- Knowledge sharing - how various forms of knowledge sharing work in interorganizational settings
- Success - what factors constitute successful knowledge networking and how they can be observed or measured
- Trust - how trust among individuals and organizations is related to knowledge sharing activities
- Research results have been reported in several papers that are available from CTG, and additional publications are in preparation.

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Partners

- National Science Foundation
- New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications
- NYS Council on Families and Children
- NYS GIS Clearinghouse
- NYS Office of Real Property Services
- NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Bureau of Shelter Services
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