

2007 Publications (5)

Journal Articles and Conference Papers (5)



Informal leadership and networks: Lessons from the response to the West Nile Virus outbreak in North America

Paper presented at the eChallenges e-2007 Conference, The Hague, Netherlands, Oct 2007

Sharing information across organizational boundaries in support of a governmental response to crises requires intergovernmental collaboration and information sharing. Examining these efforts provides an opportunity to explore questions about the role of various actors in such response efforts; in particular, informal leaders. This paper, based on a comparative case analysis of the response to West Nile virus (WNV) in two US states, New York and Colorado, extends what is known about leadership by providing new understanding about how informal leadership affects collaborative information sharing. The case analysis contributes to current knowledge about government leadership in complex networked environments such as a public health crisis. A set of propositions drawn from the analysis provides a preliminary model of the mechanisms through which informal leadership affects intergovernmental information sharing in crisis response. The findings also provide lessons about the role informal leaders play in cross-boundary information sharing and, consequently, in generating government capacity to respond to complex public problems as well as the foundation for a set of recommendations for practitioners.

Government leadership in multi-sector IT-enabled networks: Lessons from the response to the West Nile Virus outbreak

Paper presented at "Leading the Future of the Public Sector" – The Third Transatlantic Dialogue, Newark, DE, Jun 2007

Government leaders at all levels are realizing that sharing information across organizational boundaries is essential to effectively respond to the most pressing public problems facing governments. A public health crisis, such as the outbreak of the West Nile virus in the United States, represents one of these pressing public problems. Sharing information across organizational boundaries in support of a governmental response required intergovernmental and multi-sectoral collaboration and information sharing. Examining these efforts provides an opportunity to explore questions about various actors in such response efforts; in particular, executives and informal leaders. This paper, based on a comparative case analysis of the response to West Nile virus (WNV) in two US states, New York and Colorado, extends what is known about leadership by providing new understanding about the mechanisms through which executive involvement, and formal authority, informal leadership affect multi-sector collaborative information sharing. The case analysis contributes to current knowledge about government leadership in complex, multi-sectoral network environments such as a public health crisis. A set of propositions drawn from the analysis provide a preliminary model of the mechanisms through which leadership variables affect intergovernmental and multi-sector information sharing in crisis response. The findings provide new insight for practitioners about the mechanisms through which executives and informal leaders influence cross-boundary information sharing and ultimately the capability of government organizations to respond to complex public problems.

Emergence of the governance structure for information integration across governmental agencies: A system dynamics approach

Proceedings of the Eighth Annual International Conference on Digital Government Research: Bridging Disciplines

& Domains (dg.o 2007), May 2007, pp.47-56

The purpose of this paper is to describe a dynamic theory of the socio-technical processes involved in the definition of an Integration Information problem in New York State (NYS). In April 2003, the Criminal Justice Information Technology (CJIT) group of NYS was tasked with developing a framework to give users of criminal justice data and information systems “one-stop shopping” access to information needed to accomplish their mission. CJIT collaborated with the Center for Technology in Government (CTG) for an eight-month period during 2003 to accomplish this task. The theory consists of a system dynamics model for understanding the dynamics of the collaboration involved in the problem definition stage of a project. The model was developed in facilitated group modeling sessions with the CTG team. The model is capable to generate interesting scenarios that show the importance of social accumulations in project management. Moreover, the model illustrates a powerful way to use modeling and simulation as theory-building tools.

Authority and Leadership Patterns in Public Sector Knowledge Networks

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Knowledge and information-sharing networks are emerging in an increasing number of government programs and policy arenas. This article reports the results of an exploratory investigation into ways in which leadership and formal authority shaped the course of four knowledge network initiatives. The study treats authority as both formal and perceived. Leadership is assessed in terms of style, focus, and communication strategies. Analysis of the various authority and leadership patterns found in the case studies generated a set of hypotheses with regard to their influence on success of knowledge networks. Findings reveal that formal authority, perceived authority, and a variety of leadership behaviors appear to have important influence on the development and performance of public sector knowledge networks. These factors affect the ability of such networks to achieve their substantive goals and the degree to which these efforts provide satisfying and useful networking relationships among the participants.

Understanding Context through a Comprehensive Prototyping Experience: A Testbed Research Strategy for Emerging Technologies

Proceedings of the 40th Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (CD-ROM), January 3-6, 2007, Computer Society Press, Jan 2007, Ten pages

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are rapidly changing and new technologies, processes, and skills are constantly emerging. An important challenge for the research community is to gain knowledge about these emergent technologies in specific contexts, sometimes before they are actually implemented. This paper draws on our experience in the use of comprehensive prototyping as a methodology for building understanding of emerging technologies in new contexts. A Testbed research strategy combines various prototyping, business analysis, team work, and training techniques to understand the specific characteristics of a technology and the context in which it is going to be embedded. The paper presents three cases of Testbed research approaches developed within a 10 year period and presents some insights based on those experiences to inform the efforts of both practitioners and researchers.