

Free essay on coevolutionary gaming strategy and group decision making

[Business](#), [Company](#)



Introduction

Coevolution is used mostly in the field of biology. Coevolution is defined as “the change in the genetic composition of one species (or group) in response to a genetic change in another” . Coevolution is a reciprocal change between species that are interacting with each other. Because all species seem to have, in one way or another, interaction then everything is categorically involved in coevolution, based on this biological definition. The Berkley University webpage on coevolution describes it as a case wherein two or more species affect each other’s evolution . The coevolution is witnessed in any one of the following relationships: predatory (predator and prey) or parasitic (parasite and host), competitive and mutualistic relationships. Coevolution exists in business as well. The website Business Alignment (2011), states that there have been notable alignments between businesses and information technology to reduce the complexity surrounding both topics. By concentrating on the aspects of alignment that reduce the said complexities, strategies can be developed that are envisioned to result in idealized futures for both IT and business. However, it is noted that this alignment of strategies or coevolution between diverse disciplines rarely happen and when they do, happen at the executive level and not at the operational level.

Coevolutionary theory was developed by Campbell and Peppard to provide an alternative explanation to how this type of complexity and subsequent alignment happens. The Coevolutionary theory is a bit counter intuitive. The individual requirements of persons or groups prevent cooperation between two or more similarly oriented groups . Even in today’s advanced business

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development systems, the benefits that are offered by cooperative behaviour of any two parties tend to be less than optimal. Coevolutionary theory however, says that these potential benefits can be had and implies that strategies also evolve.

Coevolutionary Games

In today's business environment, there are many uncertainties in the market that require companies to plan different types of scenarios and structure their responses appropriately to ensure that those scenarios, when they happen, are addressed adequately. This exercise is key to providing managers the right tools for responsive management. Scenario planning is important in that it opens new and innovative ways of working and keeps the company with a sharp competitive edge. Traditional scenario planning does not provide this and only provides for things that are known to the company. What competitors would or could do is not considered and therefore the company can possibly be blindsided when competitors act differently in the marketplace .

What we now know or refer to as contemporary coevolutionary gaming scenario planning is a process of formulating a strategy. In coevolutionary gaming scenario, managers are grouped into teams that try to come up with counter strategies that have been developed by the company from its base scenario planning. The formulation on counter strategies brings in a defensive mind set to the organization as well as a foresight that is helpful in eliminating the uncertainties brought about by competition. The base-case strategic framework is what is required as the starting point and the primary

consideration for coevolutionary games.

Experts believe that the use of coevolutionary gaming scenario planning is an efficient and effective management tool. The hypothesis is that coevolutionary gaming scenario planning influences a group to make decisions based on the competitive management level that the organization would like to or is assuming. Proponents of this management approach say that the adoption of this proactive strategy helps the organization deal with uncertainty because any and all possible uncertainties are compared by the organization to its strategic formulations. The organization ends up having the capability to address unforeseen concerns and have institutional memory on how it is best to resolve significant yet unforeseen business concerns.

Coevolutionary systems assume that companies will be:

- Changing over time.
- Connected in the sense that when something happens to one segment, the other segments of the business are affected.
- Self-governing in the sense that it will decide on its future actions on its own, mostly based on feedback that it will receive. The companies also organize themselves on their own either due to their own directives or as a response to the environment.
- The effects of different changes to the organization is not distributed in proportion to all its segments and is thus “ non linear”.
- Is dependent on the examination of its historical performances to determine its future strategies. Hence companies are adaptive. Companies may change their decisions as a result of learning from their mistakes or

successes.

- Companies also exhibit a lot of counter intuitive nature. This means that companies react to symptoms and not to causes of business issues or concerns. This means that companies often make the situation worse by working on the symptoms with obvious solutions instead of looking at long-term solutions.

Coevolutionary gaming theory is limited by its very nature. The scenarios that are utilized in coevolutionary gaming exercises rarely happen in real life and companies rarely “ evolve” beyond what they do. Their “ way of doing business” is a very difficult hurdle that organizations seem to be underestimating towards changing for more efficient organizational structures . Additionally, for an organization to make use of coevolutionary gaming results, it must be fit in form, function, capacity and value creation with the environment that the organization itself exists in.

Conclusion

The use of coevolutionary theory and coevolutionary gaming for developing, understanding and managing unforeseen scenarios is a helpful management tool and a unique process that develops proactive, responsive and reliable managers. The use of coevolutionary gaming theory supports continues change for the company’s strategies, which are appropriate since the environment by which the company operates continuously changes as well. It would be interesting to note that the use of coevolutionary gaming as a management tool is confined to teams or groups that are within the organization, thus they have similar objectives. The applicability of using

coevolutionary gaming in a dynamic setting, for example to different organizations, would provide an idea for the potential of cooperative movement which is not examined in current coevolutionary gaming studies or examples.

Coevolutionary gaming is a very effective management tool for building team work and it also is a very important tool in developing the organization for short-term shocks. It would be very interesting to determine which aspect of the coevolutionary gaming results would result in long-term changes for the organization or if the coevolutionary gaming results are simply for short-term use.

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