

# Virtual team management and systematic organizational research case study example...

[Business](#), [Management](#)



## **Abstract**

The emergence of virtual teams has changed the marketing ball game as well as strategically placed organizations in such positions that they are able to improve their innovation stance by employing professionals to their projects that are geographically disperse. Virtual team has in the last decade gained popularity with more intense research works being carried out to enable faster execution and communication during the whole project phases involved. As a matter of fact, virtual teams have been found to be useful in gradually decreasing costs associated with physical infrastructure as well as the risks associated with working under the same roof for a crucial project. Additionally, the management of virtual teams led to proper strategies that can be applied in systematic organizational research. In this case study, the learner takes a look at some fundamentally important facets of virtual team management and what can be borrowed from these approaches for systematic organization research.

## **Introduction**

According to Tranfield et al. (2002; Lettieri, Masella & Radaelli, 2009), there are five stages that are involved in systematic review. To start with, there is “review of the planning phase” (p. 118). This then leads to identification as well as evaluation of the study materials (Lettieri, Masella & Radaelli, 2009). The next step is one of “extraction as well as data synthesis” that is followed by a report that describes the thematic findings (Lettieri, Masella & Radaelli, 2009, p. 118). Finally, there is utilization of the “findings for future research and practices” (Lettieri, Masella & Radaelli, 2009, 118). However,

despite such a predictable aspect that is presented by the systematic organizational research, there is a great disparity when it comes to managing a virtual team as will be discussed curtly.

It is important to note that there are great deals of challenges that are posed by the virtual environment (Gressgård, 2010). For example, it is clear that when dealing with “ virtual teams, members are most likely geographically dispersed and this poses another kind of challenge” (Behrend & Erwee, 2009, p. 99 +). There are however five aspects that are evident that can be properly catapulted in systematic organizational research.

Second, there is the aspect of control that needs to be addressed (Behrend & Erwee, 2009). The issue of control raises a multifaceted façade where there needs to be address on issues dealing with gender especially in hiring (Behrend & Erwee, 2009). Voss and Procter (2009) are careful to note that in some regions, imbalance can send the wrong signal and thus striking a balance is inevitable. However, systematic organizational research would play an important role in maintaining control of the situation. It is also anticipated that the terms of the tenure and the exact requirement of the job descriptions should be controlled by the organization and not the virtual team par se (Behrend & Erwee, 2009). There is little that can quite by done in as far as “ proximity” is concerned although in some cases (Behrend & Erwee, 2009), for a member to be considered in the virtual team on a specific project, they have to lie in a certain region and control measures put in place such that access to vital information is only authenticated for users in a given geographical space (p. 109). Based on SNA (social networking analysis) it is possible to gain control over a sub group (Behrend, 2005;

Behrend & Erwee, 2009).

Third, it is normally thought that virtual teams, given a vast technological advancement as far as networking and telecommunication infrastructure is concerned, there would be better communication and better interaction (Behrend & Erwee, 2009). However, this is not the case as the virtual space, unlike real space tends to miss the aspect of emotional touch that the later possesses and thus posing another challenge. Being able to integrate systematic organization research in this case would, to some extent aid in bridging the existing gap. Conversely, there is a better interaction that tends to be inimitable that characterizes virtual team interaction and its management that provides a rich environment to do business. For example, teleconferencing arouses an interconnection and a sense of confidence within the members involved as expounded in the works of Hey and Hey (2006), Foster and Kesselman (2004), Berman et al. (2003) as cited in Voss and Procter (2009).

Fourth, virtual teams have a vast exposure to project-related information that some have to be purchased while others are offered for free, thanks to the generosity of the online family (Behrend & Erwee, 2009). There is a lot that can be borrowed by systematic organization research teams in this arena in that, the more the information the better the services since there is both synthesis as well as critique of the information presented and devising of an arguably suburb plan for sustainability and organizational progress. Lastly, there is consideration of the activity of knowledge sharing (Behrend & Erwee, 2009). Virtual teams, unlike other teams have a tendency to share whatever information that they have. Take for example, in most

organizational settings; it is quite hard for a superior person to pass their knowledge to the juniors for fear of losing their job positions and end up on the road looking for another job opening. Contrary to this, on the virtual team platform, the story is different since team members ask and share information freely knowing that they are striving towards an ordained goal.

## **Conclusion**

Virtual team has in the last decade gained popularity with more intense research works being carried out to enable faster execution and communication during the whole project phases involved. Additionally, the management of virtual teams led to proper strategies that can be applied in systematic organizational research. In this case study, the learner takes a look at some fundamentally important facets of virtual team management and what can be borrowed from these approaches for systematic organization research. There is utilization of the findings for future research and practices. However, despite such a predictable aspect that is presented by the systematic organizational research, there is a great disparity when it comes to managing a virtual team as will be discussed curtly. For example, it is clear that when dealing with virtual teams, members are most likely geographically dispersed and this poses another kind of challenge. First, there is a level of independence that virtual teams tend to share. Secondly, there is the aspect of control that needs to be addressed. Based on SNA it is possible to gain control over a sub group. Thirdly, networking in virtual team is guaranteed. Fourthly, virtual teams have a vast exposure to project-related information that some have to be purchased while others are offered

for free, thanks to the generosity of the online family. Finally, virtual teams unlike other teams, have a tendency to share whatever information that they have.

## References

Behrend, F. D. (2005). Socio- cultural challenge of know ledge management in virtual project environments, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Southern Queensland (unpublished).

Behrend, F. D., & Erwee, R. (2009). Mapping knowledge flows in virtual teams with SNA. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 13(4), 99-114. doi: 10.1108/13673270910971860

Berman, F., Fox, G., & Hey, T. (Eds.) (2003). *Grid Computing: Making the Global Infrastructure a Reality*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons.

Foster, I., & Kesselman, C. (Eds.) (2004). *The Grid: Blueprint for a New Computing Infrastructure*. (2nd ed.). San Mateo, CA: Morgan Kaufman Publishers.

Gressgård, L. J. (2011). Virtual team collaboration and innovation in organizations. *Team Performance Management*, 17(1), 102-119. doi: 10.1108/135275911111114738

Hey, T., & Hey, J. (2006). E-science and its implications for the library community. *Library Hi Tech*, 24(4), 515-528.

Lettieri, E., Masella, C., & Radaelli, G. (2009). Disaster management: Findings from a systematic review. *Disaster Prevention and Management*, 18(2), 117-136. doi: 10.1108/09653560910953207

Stare, A. (2012). The impact of a project organizational culture and team

rewarding on project performance. *Journal for East European Management Studies*, 17(1), 40-67. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/924073021?accountid=45049>

Tranfield, D., Denyer, D., & Smart, P. (2002). Developing an evidence-informed approach to management knowledge by means of systematic review. Working Paper. Cranfield University, Cranfield: Cranfield School of Management.

Voss, A., & Procter, R. (2009). Virtual research environments in scholarly work and communications. *Library Hi Tech*, 27(2), 174-190. doi: 10.1108/07378830910968146