

Importance of effective research



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Numerous decisions are made everyday in business and academia based on two things: solid research and good written communication. In many ways, these two activities are the building blocks of our modern economy and civilization. Without them, we are left uninformed and confused.

Data and empirical modeling has become the gold standard for decision making. This is true to such an extent that sifting through all of the data that is generated can be a daunting task. That is where the importance of thorough, ethical research comes in. Finding the most relevant bits of data while not giving in to the temptation to ignore data that does not entirely support your hypothesis is the challenge of the modern researcher. But this research is at the very heart of the decision making process for educational entities (Marsh, 2006) business and governmental bodies. Data driven analysis is dependant on the research skills of professionals in all fields. But perhaps of equal importance is the ability to convey research results to others in writing. Good research can be made worthless by poor writing skills. Written communication is especially important in an age of e-mails. Being able to clearly convey the essence of your research will determine if the research is useful for decision making or if it is simply more confusing data that will ultimately be ignored.

Using the Work System Method as described by Steve Alter in his article “ The Work System Method for Understanding Information Systems and Information System Research” has several distinct advantages for all involved in the Work System. The stated goal of this means of evaluation is to view how objectives within the company are achieved by viewing processes in terms of a Work System and not as individual actors. The Work System includes IT and IS software in the same working group as

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automobiles or a massive drill press. All of the components of the system that produces a good for internal and external customers are evaluated as to how they relate to one another within the confines of the system (Alter 2002). This focus on internal and external customers is a strength of using a Work System approach to evaluate an Information System.

The Work System analysis approach also has the strength of allowing the evaluator to view the Work System and the Information System as separate entities when a degree of overlap needs to be viewed. The article sites three examples of when this type of analysis would be useful. In each example, the amount of overlap between the Work System and the Information System determines the role of the Information System in the Work System. This is referred to as analysis from a business viewpoint. This ensures that the Information Systems are built to support the entire work system instead of being designed by technical workers that are isolated from the rest of the business.

One potential problem that needs to be overcome in this sort of analysis is the breaking down of barriers between traditionally separate entities within the business. The IT professionals have often established their little “kingdoms” that people from manufacturing or sales have little input into. The reverse is true of management attitudes towards IT professionals. This sort of division is not good for the business but it does make some individuals feel powerful and in control. Losing that perceived control and power is sure to cause conflict. Work System analysis is a great way to transform a business but it will potentially cause conflict.

Works Cited

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