

## THE DISCOVERY OF LEADERSHIP'S CHARACTERISTICS BASED ON THE CYNEFIN FRAMEWORK FOR DECISION MAKING TO ENHANCE ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING PROCESSES

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Richard Lalleman is currently studying for an MSc in Information and Knowledge Management at London Metropolitan University. As part of his studies, Richard is required to complete a piece of independent research on a subject related to information and knowledge management, starting in February 2008 and to be completed by September 2008. Richard would therefore be grateful for the opportunity to carry out this research within your organisation, and would be very happy to discuss the research plans in more detail either by email, by phone or in person, if the research plan and outcomes outlined below would be of interest, or benefit to your organisation.

### INTRODUCTION

Organisations used to consider its tangible capital, such as machinery and money, as their organisational assets. However, nowadays, organisations need to work towards achieving competitive advantage by also managing intangible assets, which can be best described as the collective brainpower of an organisation, also referred to as intellectual capital.

Managing this intellectual capital is the discipline of knowledge management. One of the more important aspects of knowledge management, and also the topic of this research, is the way to guide and steer innovative organisational learning processes through appropriate forms of leadership. Organisational learning processes are dynamic processes of creating new knowledge – exploration - and using existing knowledge – exploitation.

### RESEARCH PROPOSAL

This research will seek to discover the crucial characteristics of leadership behaviour and to identify the ways in which certain leadership behaviour enhances organisational learning processes, utilising the Cynefin framework. The Cynefin framework identifies managerial decision making styles in different contexts. Each of these contexts, leadership in a *simple*, *complicated*, *complex* and *chaotic* context, requires different actions. By identifying these actions, managers in your organisation can lead more effectively in a variety of situations.

#### OBJECTIVE 1:

Within best practice organisations, this research seeks to identify managerial decision making styles, as detailed within the Cynefin framework contexts. It is proposed to identify these governing styles through observation and storytelling with managers. Observation results in indirect contact while storytelling sessions with managers will involve more direct contact and will take about two to three weeks in April/May 2008 and 45 to 60 minutes per session. Managers of preferably one or two departments within your organisation, aiming for a maximum of five to eight complete interviews, will be asked to tell their stories about decision making and how they apply organisational learning processes to improve decision making among staff members. Storytelling is a powerful technique because it does not follow a linear sequence over time, but jumps around in time with series of anecdotes and lessons learnt. Therefore, due to the time limitation of this research, storytelling is adopted in this research.

#### OBJECTIVE 2:

This research also seeks to identify how the organisational learning processes described by managers are recognised and viewed by the staff members. It will assess the current organisational learning processes through carrying out a survey amongst staff members within the case study department(s). Consequently, through this completed research, your organisation may ensure the application of the best organisational learning processes within the identified governing context, thereby enhancing innovating processes within your organisation.

### OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

This research will result in a full and summary report. These reports may become part of the reflective knowledge of the client organisation.