Chapter 16
Information Management in Complex and Turbulent Environments

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ABSTRACT

Information management is a well-established yet ill-defined management sub discipline. This chapter defines and explores information management through the development of a generic framework. This framework investigates and interrelates the different components of information management. Developed as a re-interpretation of and as an extension to the widely propagated model for strategic management, it deals with the interrelationship of business, information, and decision making at the strategic management, structural, and operations level. The framework and its government maxims place us in position to fundamentally reconsider information management.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter our attention is focused on Information Management in complex and turbulent means. The current state of knowledge on this topic presents its main gap that is the fact that both theory and practice relate vaguely, at best option.

When new approaches emerge, there is no basis for a previous proof of its validity or to define the limits of its application. The existing theoretical insights are mostly partial, refracted by the light of a theoretical discipline in particular, which is derived either from Economics, Management, Psychology, Political Science or General Systems.
Theory. These theoretical insights are limited, become inadequate and are even able to distort, when you want to make a multidisciplinary theoretical explanation.

The aim is to make our contribution towards filling the gap in knowledge in order to contribute to the establishment of a universal identity of Information Management in the context of Information Sciences. Its main purpose is to build a bridge over the gap that separates theory from practice, providing an explanatory theory so that it can be useful for different subjects.

The multidisciplinary exploratory theory seeks a perspective appropriate to the problem and not a particular scientific discipline. There are two ways to get to such a perspective. One is attempting an integration of existing disciplinary insights to form a coherent whole. This requires leaving the problem of the “real world,” to make abstraction of the characteristics that appear to be critical and withdraw selectively from the existing theoretical insights what best suits.

The second path taken was chosen because most of my professional life has been passed doing management consulting in large, small and medium enterprises and, thus, have been faced with a wide variety of complex and turbulent engaging means. My comparative advantage rests on an understanding of the real world, rather than a universal knowledge of the available literature.

Like all theories, the one exposed here has its own self limitations in two senses: the scope of the phenomenon is limited, as does the depth at which the phenomenon is treated.

INFORMATION

Information as a key resource for the development of organizations emerged in the 70s and 80s of the twentieth century; the act of reducing the role of the U.S. in 1977 led to the recognition that the production of information for competitive public procurement had a high cost, the same applying to the storage and information security at the level of each federal state.

At business level, information also began to be seen as a resource that has value to the business and the costs for their acquisition, storage, handling and use, shall be known and that organizational budgets should recognize those costs.

The emergence of management information and its consequences for research were significant: the economics of information, i.e. the information as an economic good that had been an insignificant part of the economy reaches a new importance. So far, the economy had underestimated the importance of information in their models of the perfect market, where they considered information as perfect.

Finally, the information policy and strategic information became key terms in the research and the need for policies and strategies at national, local and organizational was recognized. Four decades have passed since the emergence of information management as a field of research. During this period it was developed by scholars and professionals worldwide. In addition, there was a change in the handling of information and information technologies and communication.

Empirical research in the areas of economics, management, and organization theory, information systems for management, library and information sciences served as a basis for theoretical development in these fields. All of this had a significant influence on the work and research of information management.

In the last decade there were many changes and it was developed so much knowledge that has been accumulated especially by academia. The aim of our work is to disseminate the change in the research of information management during the past decade (1989 to 2000) and contribute to its development in the field of business sciences. The work consists of the overview of discussions on information management and information management research.