

Collaborative Engineering of Organizational Vision, Strategy and Processes Introduction to the minitrack

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The minitrack on Collaborative Engineering of Organizational Vision, Strategy and Processes deals with the support for groups to participatively develop visions, strategies, and processes regarding their organizational systems. It focuses on different tools, techniques and activities that can structure, guide and improve a collaborative design process of organizational systems at different levels: vision, strategy, and processes. This year, we selected four interesting papers for the minitrack, which give a good insight into the current state of the field and the opportunities that are still ahead of us. Collaboration between different stakeholders such as business managers and information technology analysts is the central notion in each of the papers. Each paper addresses this topic from a different perspective: simulation, collaboration, communication, and distributed communication.

Paul and Serrano open this year's minitrack with an approach to analyze the relationship between business processes, information systems, and computer networks. The authors make clear that design approaches for business processes, so far, have been separated from design approaches for information systems and information technology. They present a simulation framework that provides guidelines to develop simulation models to depict the dynamic relationships between business processes and information systems and technology. The simulation framework does not only allow to analyze the relationships between business processes and information systems, it can also be used as a vehicle for communication between business process analysts and information system analysts.

The next paper also stresses the importance of simulation in change management programs and pays special attention to the combination of collaboration and simulation. In their paper, den Hengst, Hlupic, and Currie illustrate the increasing need for integrating simulation and collaboration. The authors present four different change management programs and provide information on the added value of simulation and collaboration. It is argued that the need to

integrate simulation and collaboration is higher for change management programs such as Business Process Reengineering and Process Innovation than for change management programs such as Total Quality Management and Just In Time. This increasing need is supported by two case studies: one on Total Quality Management and one on Business Process Reengineering.

In the third paper, Coughlan, Lycett, and Macredie continue with analyzing relationships between business processes and information technology and focus entirely on collaboration. They present Relationship Management as a method to mediate and improve organizational relations by bridging activities between business and information technology. The authors present a communication framework to evaluate the quality of communication in an organization. The communication framework has been used in a case study to analyze the quality of communication between business managers and IT specialists.

Audy, Evaristo, and Watson-Manheim close this year's minitrack and continue with the collaboration topic between different stakeholders. They focus on distributed communication with emphasis on the role of context sharing. They present an experiment on distributed communication between business managers and information system specialists. Problems in communicating in a distributed setting are presented and the authors use this as background information for setting up the experiment between Brazilian and US students. The experiment showed that context sharing is important and is perceived different based on one's cultural context. The authors furthermore point at the influence of training on the success of distributed communication.

The papers in this minitrack provide new insight into the field of collaborative engineering of organizational strategy and processes. Both the theoretical background and case evidence that the methods work in real life cases are presented. We commend the papers to your attention and trust that they will stimulate discussions and future research.