



Knowledge and Organisational Learning Group

Research Seminar Wednesday 8th May 2013, 1-3pm

Venue: Moore Building Seminar Rom 16

Lunch: available in the Management Foyer from 1pm

Speaker: Dr. Lise Arena, CNRS-University of Nice, France

“Coordinating a Virtual Organization: The Case of an Antarctica Expedition”

Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to contribute to organisational issues in teams' coordination whilst looking at a virtual arrangement evolving under high uncertainty. Based on the case of an Antarctica expedition, this contribution deals with the organizational aspects of distributed expertise by focusing on a temporary organisation characterised by geographically dispersed and heterogeneous experts, namely expedition leaders and weather forecasters. When expedition leaders are facing emergencies, which are often life or death related, rapid and safe joint decisions are critical to enhance their security. In this sense, the research seeks to better understand how digital artifacts are combined and used to provide an efficient coordination between heterogeneous spatially dispersed experts and enhance a virtual organization's performance under uncertainty. Based on an exploratory virtual ethnography, preliminary results challenge the traditional view, stating that synchronous and personal modes of coordination provide higher information-processing and better performance and focus instead on the nature of both transmitted information and knowledge. To a large extent, results are also discussed in light with the distinction between the concepts of epistemic and hierarchical authorities in an organisation.

Speaker bio:

Lise Arena is a Lecturer in Management and member of the CNRS-University of Nice Research Institute GREDEG (France) where she obtained her Ph.D. in ICT Management. She also holds a D.Phil. in Modern History from the University of Oxford. In Management, her main research focuses on the combination and the use of digital artifacts as a support for organizational coordination. Since 2011, she belongs to the ANR (national project-based funding to advance French research) LEDEPAGOD (conducted by Prof. G. Koenig, University of Paris-Est Créteil) which investigates the nature of decision processes made by multiple distant experts in highly risky environments, applied to the context of high-mountaineeing expeditions.