



Academic and practitioner paper section

In this new journal our aim is to bring together academics, practitioners and also articles with news and items of general interest. This is because we recognize that in a complex world, where structures, organizations, people and their intentions evolve and change over time, then knowledge is no longer what we thought it was. We find that knowledge and ignorance trace out a delicate dance which involves the abandonment and the birth of some knowledge, possibly requiring new terms and concepts, and inhabiting some new dimensions. This fundamental creativity is not what traditional science could deal with, nor what it prepared us for, and so we must move into new territory in which continual learning and experiments occur, as actions lead on to emergent strategies and intentions. We are fundamentally in the domain of open systems interacting with their environments, and indeed participating in a coevolutionary process of mutually exploring transformations. The difference between the “academic” and “practitioner” papers is simply that we expect the former to be nested in some particular literature, and to advance the understanding, or limits to understanding of that particular domain. The insights may or may not be seen as immediately useful, as we are not faced here with needing to give a response to the “so what?” question. Rather we are interested in the behavior and surprising possibilities that complex social and organizational systems are capable of and in the way that we can understand and perhaps deal with them. We take from science the idea that we are interested in knowing more, for its own sake, but do not expect knowledge to be cumulative as it was in the “simple” sciences nor that we shall see the utility of some new phenomenon. For the practitioners, we are interested in their reporting of experiments, in the implementation in reality of some ideas or suggestions, and in the noting of phenomena that do not seem readily explicable.

By bringing together academic and practitioner papers, and also by having papers reviewed by both types of referee, then we hope to avoid pointless “academic” speculation on the one hand, and uninteresting but practical description on the other. The papers here cover a wide range of issues, from interdisciplinarity, cognition, networking and organizationally change, and give us an excellent start for this first issue of the new journal.

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