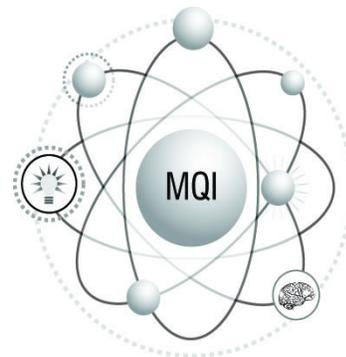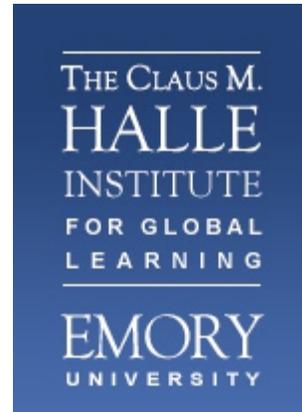# Knowledge Futures: The Agility Imperative

The 21st Century is transformed by true globalization, almost ubiquitous connectivity, and exponential increase in access to data. This degree of access and connectivity has blurred lines of organization and social settings. New demands require us to rethink the way we structure and manage our activities and organizations. Decisions must be made more rapidly and more collaboratively. The ability of organizations to increase their responsiveness, resilience, innovation, and adaptation is not simply an opportunity to be taken advantage of - it is an absolute requirement for survival. The agility imperative is leading us to re-imagine the ways that organizations must function in order to adapt to the complexity, volatility, and uncertainty of 21st-century life.

This public conference will bring together diverse thought leaders such as Richard Hayes, David Alberts, Vivek Wadwa, John Schlichter, Jimmie McEver, Vallabh Sambamurthy, Arun Rai, Amrit Tiwana, and David Bennet. They will discuss the nature of the agility imperative, lessons learned from recent experience, and emerging work that has the potential to inform transformation efforts. Participants will attempt to identify useful frameworks/standards for agility and best practices, as well as an agenda for future work that will address identified open questions and continue to grow the tools, techniques and methods.

"**Knowledge Futures: The Agility Imperative**" was the firstsymposium in a series hosted by OPM Experts LLC, Emory University's Goizueta Business School, the Halle Institute, and the Mountain Quest Institute in Atlanta, GA in March 2011. For more information or to learn how to become a sponsor for the next one, contact info@opmexperts.com.

Related:

The Agile Organization - A Meeting at The Mountain Quest Institute (video)

In March 2011, join us for a forum at the Goizueta Business School, Emory University, co-sponsored by OPM Experts LLC, the Halle Institute, and the Mountain Quest Institute (MQI) to explore Knowledge Futures: The Agility Imperative. This event will include panels with experts involved in facing and solving these issues drawn from various contexts including business, military, non-profit and government.

Participants include individuals involved with World Bank operations, Project Management Strategy at IBM, emerging technologies at Gartner, the former Chief Knowledge officer of the US Navy, a co-author of NATO's standards for cooperative engagement, and others. Our goal is to have equal representation among partners from industry, government, academia, and non-profit sectors. For more information, contact info@opmexperts.com.

The symposium is two days. Day one is open to all comers. Day two is available only to sponsors. Additionally, symposium organizers will conduct primary research engaging sponsors prior to the symposium, analyze the results, and deliver findings on topics of interest to sponsors at the event. Sponsors will be invited to participate in the development of a book, and to join a benchmarking network designed to help sponsors:

• *Learn how others are solving problems of mutual interest*

Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning (Wicked Problems) - Rittel and Webber ▶

Public Administration in a World of Complex Markets and Complex Organizations - Herbert Simon (video) ▶

The Digital Disruption: Connectivity and the Diffusion of Power - Eric Schmidt and Jared Cohen ▶

Trust in Society - Cook ▶

The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference - Gladwell ▶

Science, Strategy, and War - The Strategic Theory of John Boyd - Osinga ▶

Swarming & The Future of Conflict - Arquilla and Ronfeldt ▶

Beckstrom's Law - What is the value of a network? (DHS) ▶

On a Smarter Planet... Some Organizations will be Smarter-er Than Others - Jonas ▶

Measuring the Agility of Networked Military Forces - Dekker ▶

The new dynamics of strategy: Sense-making in a complex and complicated world - Kurtz and Snowden ▶

ICAS: The Intelligent Complex Adaptive System - A. Bennet and D. Bennet ▶

Associative Patterning: The Unconscious Life of an Organization - A. Bennet and D. Bennet ▶

A Leader's Framework for Decision Making - Snowden and Boone ▶

• *Determine how well you compare to others*
• *Improve beyond the bounds of industry standards*
• *Prioritize opportunities for improvement*
• *Locate your performance gaps*
• *Promote "ownership" of key issues and processes in your organization*
• *Increase openness about relative strengths and weaknesses*
• *Increase confidence in developing and applying new approaches*
• *Expand participation and motivation of staff in change programs*
• *Increase willingness to share solutions to common problems and build consensus about what is needed to accommodate changes*
• *Increase collaboration and understanding of the interactions within and between organizations*
• *Develop valuable relationships with others*
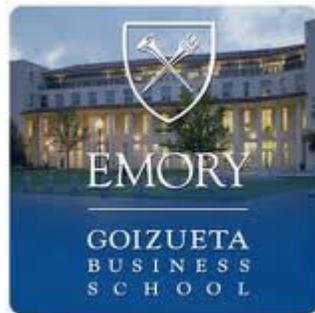
Please note that the following schedule is evolving and subject to change.

The keynote speaker invited to present at this event is Dr. David Stephen Alberts, Director of Research for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (OASD) for Networks and Information Integration (NII). See PPT : PDF for some of his recent work.

Then keynote speaker Dr. Richard Hayes, President of Evicdence Based Research (EBR) will present on the Agility Imperative.

Panel Discussion: The Future of the Organization

Becoming More Agile and Adaptive: Global Trends 2015 - Bray

Extending March's Exploration and Exploitation: Managing Knowledge in Turbulent Environments - Bray and Prietula

Power to the Edge - Alberts and Hayes

Toward Harmonizing Command and Control with Organization and Management Theory - Alberts and Nissen

Campaigns of Experimentation: Pathways to Innovation and Transformation - Alberts and Hayes

Knowledge Mobilization in the Social Sciences and Humanities: Moving from Research to Action - A. Bennet and D. Bennet

Enterprise Command, Control, and Design: Bridging C2 Practice and CT Research - Nissen

Maturity Frameworks for Enterprise Agility in the 21st Century - Schlichter, Hayes, and McEver

Hell with Rules - Jonas

Shaping Agility through Digital Options: Reconceptualizing the Role of Information Technology in Contemporary Firms - Sambamurthy, Bharadwaj, Grover,

Real Options and Value Driven Design in Sprial Development - Dahlgren

Complexity, Networking, & Effects-Based Approaches to Operations - Smith

Increasing complexity and volatility drives our future. Problems like unstable markets and currencies, political and social clashes and terrorist strikes, and fundamental questions about economic models make organizational futures uncertain and planning and management increasingly difficult. Emergent solutions suggest that in some contexts, distributed, loose networks of individuals may work together to accomplish tasks only large corporations could accomplish in the past. Think of the Linux operating system versus Microsoft Windows or the 911 terror strike versus a large coordinated military campaign in a foreign land. Does this indicate that corporations will not be necessary in the future? What will their role be if not controller of resources, process and goals? What skills will they need?

Panelists

• Benn Konsynski [moderator] (Professor at Goizueta; noted author, long-time advocate for organizational innovation and researcher on how to make it happen)

• Steve Delgrosso (Director of the Center for Project Management Excellence at IBM; former Director for IBM Healthcare US Division, board member at PMI)

• David Bennet (Founder of the Mountain Quest Institute; noted author, strategist for the US Navy)

• John Houseal (Deloitte Consulting; Senior Manager with experience in various global health projects including one developing global standards for assessing pandemic response capabilities)

• Mark White (Centers for Disease Control; founder of global network of public health professionals; in charge of document clearance at CDC).

Panel Discussion: Crossing Borders through Coordination & Standards

Another way to look at the agility imperative is through coordination. Organizations have traditionally served as

Structure in Social Networks - Christakis

The Agile Organization: From Informal Networks to Complex Effects and Agility - Atkinson and Moffat

Adaptive Use of Networks to Generate an Adaptive Task Force - Grisogono and Spaans

Engendering Flexibility in Defence Forces - Unewisse and Grisogono

Networks, Crowds, and Markets: Reasoning About a Highly Connected World - Easley and Kleinberg

A Cognitive Systems Engineering Approach to the Design of Decision Support Systems - Smith and Geddes

Complexity, Coherence, Constraint, Cognition & Context - Aberdeen

An Approach to Modeling Group Behaviors and Beliefs in Conflict Situations - Geddes and Atkinson

Intent Inferencer-Planner Interactions - Stitts and Hammer

Collective Intelligence and Knowledge Ecosystems - Bray

Davos 2010 - IdeasLab with MIT - Malone

MIT's Center for Collective Intelligence - Malone

Evidence for a Collective Intelligence Factor in the Performance of Human Groups - Woolley, Chabris, Pentland, Hashmi, Malone

resource coordination mechanisms. These new forms of organization are more distributed. Distributed coordination among organizations or independent resources requires shared understanding of changing and uncertain contexts. New research is developing technologies and methods for new ways of visualizing and acting on environmental knowledge. Standards have been a key to such coordination in the past, yet, ironically, they have also led to fossilized bureaucracies and inability to adapt to changing needs. Will some new coordination mechanism emerge? Which technologies will be key in which ways? What will effective standards for agile organizations look like? How will we design them to evolve rather than fossilize?

Other issues of agile organization center on challenges in information management. Housing and distributing information has been a core activity of organizations in the past. Potential from collective intelligence through knowledge sharing, improved productivity through application of diverse skills and knowledge bases, and an increasing trend toward knowledge work all point to a need for new forms of information management in organizations. Organizations structured around knowledge control and hierarchical provision of access rights face tremendous strain as they attempt to enable strategic project groups including people outside their organizations. Worries about digital leaks lead to tight security, which disables knowledge agility. What sort of knowledge sharing norms and tools will agile organizations need? How should they be thinking about their information resources and managing them? How do you get the right information to the right people wherever they are, whenever they need it?

If you pause for a moment and consider how it is that modern economies can function, you will realize that standards are at their base. There is little capacity for trade without commoditized currency. Unless we can count on value to transfer and store, we will not give up our services and goods in exchange for those of others. Similarly, unless we have a means to understand the value of human resources through certifications and standard measures of experience that get represented in

Augmented Cognition International Society - Improving Performance on an Exponential Level Everywhere ▶

Henry Markram on Supercomputing Consciousness (video) ▶

Quantum Consciousness: The New Frontier in Brain/Mind Science - Stuart Hameroff, MD ▶

Empathic Civilization - Rifkin ▶

Decentralized Command and Control: Self-Organization in a Simple Model for Emergency Response - Bell ▶

Towards Novel Concepts for Collaboration in International Disaster Response - Richter and Lechner ▶

IBM Helps Rio de Janeiro Become a Smarter City - speeding emergency responsiveness ▶

Big Data Flows vs. Wicked Leaks - Jonas ▶

Sequence Neutrality in Information Systems - Jonas ▶

Perpetual Analytics - Jonas ▶

You Won't Have to Ask - Data Will Find Data and Relevance Will Find the User - Jonas ▶

Big Data. New Physics. - Jonas ▶

Using Transparency as a Mask - Jonas ▶

Need to Know vs. Need to Share - Jonas ▶

Smart Sensemaking Systems, First and Foremost, Must be Expert Counting Systems - Jonas ▶

standardized (comparable) forms (resumes), we have much greater risk in hiring and must organize labor into strict guilds and forms that cripple innovation of new labor pools due to monopolization of skills (eg. letters of patent, etc.). The value of standards extends beyond representation of abstract value (money) and human capabilities (skill certifications and conventions for expressing academic /job experience). Certainly, the phrase lingua franca reminds us that communications flourish when they have standards not only in vocabulary but also in usage conventions. Core cognitive capabilities are founded on the need to jointly represent and identify concepts, values and goods. These are the resources than enable us to cross barriers and collaborate effectively. With changing notions of how we can interact due to technological innovation as well as shifting and uncertain geopolitical and environmental conditions, the need to quickly reach across domains and cooperate becomes increasingly important.

With this in mind, one of the great challenges of our times is to understand how to craft and use standards that will enable agile coordination of:

• diverse groups of employees (some in our organization, most not; some co-located, most not),
• diverse methods of valuation (contracting, virtual monetization, digital assets, ephemeral assets)
• transient work (short-lived engagements in which resources need access at high speed)
• redirection and prioritization of work (crisis response reallocation of resources; reallocations into emerging opportunities more promising than existing efforts)

Panelists

• Denise Bedford (Kent State University; Senior Information Officer at the World Bank since 1997, developed core metadata strategy; incoming member of the Standards Board for the Association for Information and Image Management or AIIM)

• Geoff Berlin (FAA; incoming President of PMI Atlanta Chapter)

Intelligent Organizations - Assembling Context and the Proof is in the Chimp - Jonas

Why Faster Systems Can Make Organizations Dumber Faster - Jonas

Designing Identity Management Systems for Business Value - Chellappa, Griffith, and El Sawy

Information Age Organizations, Dynamics, and Performance - Mendelson and Pillai

Strategy and Cognition: Understanding the Role of Management Knowledge Structures, Organizational Memory and Information Overload - Sparrow

In Athena's Camp: Preparing for Conflict in the Information Age - Arquilla and Rondfeldt

Measures of Effectiveness for the Information-Age Navy - (from RAND) Perry, Button, Bracken, Sullivan, Mitchel

Information Sharing Among Military Headquarters - Perry, Moffat

Exploring Information Superiority: A Methodology for Measuring the Quality of Information and Its Impact on Shared Awareness - Perry, Signori, Boon

Network-Centric Operations Case Study - Gonzales, Hollywood, Kingston, Signori

Securing Trust Online: Wisdom or Oxymoron? - Nissenbaum

A Calculus of Trust and Its Application to PKI and Identity Management - Huang, Nicol

• John Schlichter (Founder of OPM Experts LLC)

• Kevin Stever (CARE; Director of Global Compliance)

• Benn Konsynski [moderator] (Professor at Goizueta)

Panel Discussion: Knowledge, Networks, and Advanced Technologies

Despite its preoccupation with hierarchy, classical organization theory grew up in opposition to the Weberian idea of a perfectly functioning bureaucracy. In addition to assuming lifelike agents with bounded rationality and a propensity for opportunism, the theory assumed from the start that few if any environments are stable enough to allow for perfect parsing of complex tasks; that the limits on parsability require improvisation; and that in understanding how humans act in organizations - administrative behavior - requires attention to this endemic improvising. Ironically the networked and federated organization structure outperforms hierarchy in volatile environments but only through the mechanism of standards for improvisation. As complexity, volatility, and uncertainty increase globally, networked and federated organizations proliferate, and the search expands for advanced technologies to cope with the agility imperative.

Panelists

• Dave Culbertson (VP Security Center of Excellence, CA Technologies)

• Norm Geddes (CEO, Applied Systems Intelligence, Inc.)

• Jimmie McEver - moderator (Senior Scientist, Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory)

• Jeremy Schwartz (Executive Client Manager, Gartner)

The weather in Atlanta is awesome this time of year, and the Cherry Blossom Festival 2011 will be underway. If you wish you can spend Saturday afternoon at the

A Real-Time Revolution in Routines - Sabel ▶

Pragmatic Collaborations: Advancing Knowledge While Controlling Opportunism - Helper, MacDuffie, Sabel ▶

Briading: The Interaction of Formal and Informal Contracting in Theory, Practice, and Doctrine - Gilson, Sabel, Scott ▶

Information Exchange and the Robustness of Organizational Networks - Dodds, Watts, Sabel ▶

Pragmatic Collaborations in Practice: A Response toHerrigel and Whitford and Zeitlin - Sabel ▶

Contracting for Innovation: Vertical Disintegration and Interfirm Collaboration - Gilson, Sabel, Scott ▶

Neither Modularity Nor Relational Contracting: Interfirm Collaboration in the New Economy - Sabel, Zeitlin ▶

Diversity, Not Specialization: The Ties that Bind the (New) Industrial District - Sabel ▶

festival or any of a large number of attractions that Atlanta has to offer.

For more information, contact info@opmexperts.com.