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EMERGENT LEADERSHIP IN SELF-ORGANIZING VIRTUAL TEAMS

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Abstract

In our poster we present a structuration-based theory of leadership behaviours in self-organizing virtual teams. Building on behavioural leadership theory and structuration theory, we present a two-order theory of leadership. It describes four classes of first-order leadership behaviours (task coordination, substantive task contribution, group maintenance, and boundary spanning) and defines second-order leadership as behaviour that influences changes in the structure that guides group action. We argue that second-order leadership is enabled by first-order leadership, is therefore action embedded, and is grounded in processes that define the social identity of the group. We propose that effective virtual teams will exhibit a paradoxical combination of shared, distributed first-order leadership complemented by strong, concentrated, and centralized second-order leadership. We present the design and results from a research project to test and further elaborate our theory.

Keywords: Self-organizing teams, virtual teams, structuration theory, leadership