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AMCIS 1999 Proceedings

Americas Conference on Information Systems  
(AMCIS)

December 1999

# Panel Discussion: Knowledge Management in Organizations: Issues, Problems and Directions for Research and Practice

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### Recommended Citation

Subramani, Mani; Davis, Gordon; Nidumolu, Sarma; and Watts-Sussman, Stephanie, "Panel Discussion: Knowledge Management in Organizations: Issues, Problems and Directions for Research and Practice" (1999). *AMCIS 1999 Proceedings*. 201.  
<http://aisel.aisnet.org/amcis1999/201>

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# **Panel Discussion: Knowledge Management in Organizations: Issues, Problems and Directions for Research and Practice**

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Panel Participants:

Gordon Davis, University of Minnesota, gdavis@csom.umn.edu

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## **Overview**

Knowledge Management is currently recognized as the central challenge facing organizations today. As we move into the information economy, the basis of competition shifts from physical assets to intangible assets and the ability of firms to coordinate and leverage the deployment of intellectual capital of the firm become the central determinants of firm performance. This panel will discuss different facets of the phenomenon and suggest directions for IS research in the area.

## **Expected Audience**

The audience for this panel will be researchers and practitioners interested in the emerging area of knowledge work and organizational expertise.

## **Panelists**

Gordon Davis holds the Honeywell chair at the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota and is interested in fundamental issues related to the nature of knowledge work and the management of knowledge workers in organizations. He is currently studying knowledge management initiatives in large firms and the role of Knowledge Managers in firms who have formalized this function. He will discuss the findings of in-depth interviews with key players and participants in a knowledge management community in the Twin Cities. His presentation is titled "Challenges in Managing Knowledge Work in Organizations: A Reflection"

Sarma R. Nidumolu is an assistant professor at the Operations and MIS Department, Leavey School of Business, Santa Clara University. He will be discussing field research that he has conducted during the past four years on knowledge management and organizational transformation. This research, which included ethnographic and case study analysis, was conducted at a pharmaceutical information provider and the emergency

department of a major Southwest hospital. In particular, he will be discussing the concept of a situated knowledge web, where peripheral participation and procedural knowledge acquire considerable importance, and the boundaries between the knowledge network and the organizational context are significantly blurred. His presentation is titled "Situated knowledge webs in Organization: The Role of Peripheral Participation and Procedural Knowledge".

Stephanie Watts Sussman (CWRU) will discuss her study of the Center for U.S. Army Lessons Learned, undertaken with John C. Henderson and James B. Thomas. She will present the theory and technologies of "Strategic Learning", in which learning opportunities are identified top-down and then pursued from the bottom-up using collaborative teams and organization-wide CMC. She will also discuss packaging and dissemination of the resultant lessons learned as a critical component of this process. Her presentation is titled "Strategic Learning in Organizations: A Study of the Center for Army Lessons Learned".