

## Preface

When a firm moves into a new technology or market base developing complex and integrated products and solutions, it needs dynamic process of building capability over time. For this purpose firms have to rely on information and knowledge, creating new managerial roles to deal with uncertainty and competition. Their adaptive dynamic aim is to create sustainable sources of competitive advantage: as a consequence, firm centric model of learning are inadequate and should be more and more supported by network learning and learning networks. The diffusion of networks is generating a new context for organisational learning. These processes are therefore “sine qua non” condition for firm’s strategy and become important vehicles for managing emergent strategies. And that is where this book comes in, presenting an integrative view on dynamic learning networks. Just as the focus of computing in recent years has moved from the node to the network, learning networks possess the potential to harness greater efficiencies and greater capacities (both in individuals, organizations and inter-organisation). In other words firms must develop processes to:

- integrate learning that occurs at the core and multiple edges of organizations
- combine learning that takes place at individual, organizational and inter-organizational and network levels
- organize themselves in networked form to manage the uncertainty and the complexity of the competitive environment.

By connecting people in networks, we can leverage learning in organizations, and by networking organizations, we can exponentially expand the reach and value of learning. To compete “on the edge” organizations have to learn “on the edge”.

The book represents an attempt to provide a network perspective of organisational learning to drive dynamic competition through extended firm learning processes, exploring enabling and constraining mechanisms associated with effective learning in networks.

This book draws on topics related to discussions from the 10<sup>th</sup> session of the Advanced International Summer School on “*Managing Uncertainty and Competition Through Dynamic Learning Networks*” held in July 3rd–5th, 2008 in Ostuni and organised by the e-Business Management Section of the Scuola Superiore ISUFI (University of Salento, Italy).

## Target Audience

*Dynamic Learning Networks: Models and cases in action* is a book targeting three categories of readers:

- business strategists providing them with a conceptual framework and a set of guidelines for the development of learning networks as a key process to lead change in complex environments;
- academics through insights and best practices for analyzing learning processes in terms of different literature perspectives including organizational development, strategic management and organizational learning;
- practitioners and consultants, providing them with a holistic view of emerging trends in dynamic learning processes arising in network context, whose nodes are partners, suppliers, users, customers, employees, teams and organization, depicting the emergence of the next-generation’s learning organizations.

We are interested in hearing your comments about this book. In times of proliferating management bibles, roadmaps and receipts for success, our objective is to share with the reader our belief that in management, as in life, everything starts with Learning, Interaction and Networks. We hope you enjoy the journey.

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Dynamic Learning Networks

Models and Cases in Action

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