

Adaptability in Smart Business Networks

Abstract

A focal characteristic of Smart Business Networks (SBN) is their ability to adapt to the environment. However, the capacity to adapt, or adaptability of business networks, has received limited attention in the managerial discourse. The purpose of this paper is to employ theories of learning from the educational and organizational literature to develop a framework of adaptability that defines 4 distinct network adaptability modes which are functions of organizational awareness and resources employed: 1) automatic responses, 2) assimilation, 3) accommodation, and 4) environmental enactment. We demonstrate these modes in case study of Multiasistencia, the focal firm in a Smart Business Network. The case highlights the need for SBNs to design process and technology infrastructures that appropriately allocate limited organizational awareness and resources. Implications for the theory and management of SBN adaptability are reviewed.

Keywords: Adaptability, Smart Business Networks, Theory Building

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