

Maintaining Awareness in Distributed Team Collaboration: Implications for Leadership and Performance

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Summary

In distributed work, there is considerable uncertainty about others' behaviors. To reduce uncertainty, group members need information about the remote work and what other group members are doing. This chapter reports a study of the process of collaboration in short term teams with a deadline. The study shows how group awareness of others' actions, and the behavior of the leader in creating or reinforcing this awareness, was related to successful collaboration outcomes. Teams in which members periodically gathered information about others and revealed information about themselves performed better than teams in which members did not do this. Project leaders made a substantial difference in how teams performed, though their efforts to lead successful teams at a distance were difficult. Implications for managing teams in distributed work settings are discussed

In P. Hinds & S. Kiesler, Distributed work (pp. 311-333). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002.