

Case Study – Invited Talk

Knowledge Networking in the Public Sector

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In 1999, the Center for Technology in Government (CTG) began a three-year study, sponsored by NSF, that could not have been attempted without the existence of mutually beneficial working relationships with government agencies. The purpose of the study was to examine the formation and operation of knowledge networks in the public sector. The study was designed to describe, evaluate, and compare several empirical cases involving groups of agencies in New York State engaged in programmatic or administrative innovations that depended on the sharing of knowledge and information across multiple organizations. The research focused on identifying the dimensions of success and on understanding how organizational, technological, and political factors influence results. These cases emerged from long-standing problem solving relationships between CTG and the involved agencies. These problem-focused collaborations with government agencies built a foundation of familiarity and trust that allowed the researchers to have exceptionally intimate long-term access to these organizations. As a result, the study generated new theoretical knowledge about these networks--and returned ongoing benefits to the agencies in terms of organizational learning and reflection about their knowledge sharing practices and needs.