

Islands of Expertise – Analysing Global Knowledge Transfer in a Technology Service Firm

Johannes Glückler (Geography), Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt (Germany)

This paper conceptualizes knowledge management in a trade-off between geographical distribution and organizational coherence. It focuses on an extensive corporate case study of a globally distributed medium sized technology service firm to explore the constraining and enabling conditions of interpersonal knowledge transfer. A social network analysis visualizes the architecture of knowledge flow and assesses its vulnerability. The paper illustrates how fragile knowledge transfer relations may be within multinational companies and how much knowledge exchange depends on key individuals. Implications are discussed for how global corporate knowledge transfer may be sustained and developed in managerial practice.