The Dissolution of Swift Trust in a Cross-cultural Temporary Work Group Facing Acute Stress

By

Prof. Richard Priem
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

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All interested are welcome
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ABSTRACT

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Temporary work groups can be sources of organizational flexibility and effectiveness, because they allow the application of needed skills to critical, time-sensitive tasks. Yet to be successful these groups of relative strangers must overcome challenges not faced by on-going work groups. Challenges include the development of swift trust to allow immediate communication and coordination among group members, and the maintenance of this swift trust even when the group faces acute stresses from the task or environment.

We analyze swift trust development and dissolution in the natural context of a British Army expedition to Borneo, during which a cross-cultural, temporary work group of ten soldiers struggled for their lives as swift trust dissolved and the group split into four subgroups. As we conduct these analyses, we offer new propositions regarding the development and dissolution of swift trust in temporary work groups facing acute stresses.