Collective Decision Making with an Emphasis on Leadership and Collective Intelligence

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Wednesday April 2nd, 2014
8:30-9:30am
Biotechnology Building BI 2221 (ITC Conference Room)

While collective intelligence has a long history and is fairly well established in several research realms, this notion is unknown within the field of organizational behavior, and yet seems linked to the established organizational constructs of leadership and decision making. Within the field of organizational behavior, the areas of leadership and decision making are among the most highly studied topics, with entire books (Bass, 2008; Yukl, 2009; Guzzo & Salas, 1995; Keeney & Raiffa, 1976) and even journals (e.g., Leadership Quarterly, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes) dedicated solely to their research. These areas are not mutually exclusive and have a long history of being studied together (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). Typically, when these two constructs are combined, a singular leader is studied in conjunction with a group which he or she leads. However, little research has been done on decision making at the collective level. The purpose here is to begin a discussion of collective-level decision making and its relationship with leadership and a construct new to the organizational behavior field, collective intelligence.

Kristie McHugh is a PhD candidate in Organizational Behavior and Leadership in the School of Management at Binghamton University. After graduation this spring, she will be joining the faculty at Ohio Northern University. Her research interests include collective intelligence, leadership, and levels of analysis.

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