

# Leveraging New Technologies to Improve Teamwork

Charles Wankel

St. John's University, New York. [wankelc@stjohns.edu](mailto:wankelc@stjohns.edu)

## Abstract

A hallmark of our current business epoch is teamwork. New social technologies support collaboration and communication, which are essential to the effectiveness of teams. This paper is a report on the currently available new technologies that support teams in their endeavors.

An important part of the human capital of contemporary organizations is the know-how that organizational members have in leveraging the strength of social media. These can be deployed to not only support traditional team activities, but also open-up new vistas of teamwork involving higher levels of interactivity. Facebook, blogs, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Wikis, Meetup, Whatsapp, and Second Life will be considered, with a focus on their utility for making teams more effective.

Given the rates of change in the preponderance of businesses and jobs, learning must be deployed in an ongoing and robust manner. How new technologies support peer-mentoring will be discussed (Bullen, Morgan, and Qayyum, 2011; Lai and Kong, 2015). Social media is particularly a great way to engage millennials in organizations' peer-training efforts (Wankel, 2009, 2016).

A powerful use of social media such as LinkedIn, is to develop a huge array of connections with expertise that might be organization-wide, industry-wide, regional, national, or international. LinkedIn even provides connections in Antarctica. Rather than rely on traditional face-to-face contexts, a manager can have thousands of experts clarify business issues. Young employees feel very comfortable in reaching out to global virtual teammates for conferences using apps such as Whatsapp. Rather than traditional text, learners in organizations utilize word clouds to present emerging ideas.

Conferencing using WebEx or Zoom can accommodate scads of team members in robust exchanges. Virtual world interfaces such as Second Life are becoming more polished with newer video cards, higher bandwidth, and exploding computer memories.

Teams must not become complacent in the use of particular social media since what might be best one time might be eclipsed the next. Also, consciously checking for new functionality of social media can be important. Indeed, new platforms and apps are arising sometimes bringing along new dimensions with them. Social media are shifting sands where new features are constantly being added, new platforms are arising, and some popular platforms are in decline. This requires those using these technologies to optimize teams to be alert to emerging opportunities through membership in social media expert groups such as those in LinkedIn.