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CRM IN CALL CENTRES

The Logic Of Practice

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Abstract: We are said to be living in a new and global ‘knowledge economy’ where individuals and organisations are urged to change their way of working, learning and living. Nevertheless there are limitations and contradictions when it comes to managing knowledge, let alone making sense of knowledge management in the context of organisational practice. This paper focuses on research analysing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, their relationship to knowledge management and their use in call centres in the UK. Assuming a critical research approach, case analysis shows significant contradictions between system objectives and outcomes in practice. By referring to the work of Pierre Bourdieu, a sociologist and critical social theorist, Information Systems (IS) researchers are provided with tools of analysis. In this paper I shall show how key concepts of field, habitus, logic of practice and symbolic violence gave fresh insights into the study of CRM systems in call centres.

Keywords: CRM systems, call centres, knowledge management, critical research, field, habitus, logic of practice, symbolic violence.

About the Authors

Helen Richardson joined the University of Salford in 1998 after a varied career including working in the field of Social Care and running a Research and Training Unit promoting Positive Action for Women at Work. Her research interests lie in the area of Critical Research in IS particularly looking at Cultures of Consumption and Gender issues in IS. Helen can be reached by e-mail in H.Richardson@salford.ac.uk