Interdisciplinary Network for Group Research (INGRoup)

Third INGRoup “HACKmanATHON”
CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS
Fifteenth Annual Conference
July 30-August 1, 2020
Hyatt Regency Bellevue
Eastside of Seattle, Washington, USA

To respond to INGRouper’s desire for the conference to be more interactive and interdisciplinary, and to strengthen ties between academics and practitioners, the “HACKmanATHON” was introduced. This call announces the Third HACKmanATHON, continuing what is becoming a tradition that tackles some of the biggest challenges facing modern groups and teams in organizations. This element to the program is modeled after the “hackathon” -- a creative problem-solving session constrained to a relatively short time period – and is named in honor of a major figure in our field who applied theory and problem-solving to address wicked problems involving groups--J. Richard Hackman.

Owing to the ingenuity and tenacity of INGRoup members who participated in the previous HACKmanATHONs, the past two HACKmanATHON presentations have gone on to become publications in peer-reviewed journals. From an academic development perspective, that translates into a presentation at a professional conference and a peer reviewed publication on one’s CV. Further, the most recent HACKmanATHON teams are in the process of pursuing external research funds to support their work related to the ideas generated by this event. We encourage all INGRoup members to consider submitting as a core team or individual for potential inclusion in the 2020 HACKmanATHON (details for submissions below).

The theme for the 2020 INGRoup HACKmanATHON is:

“Increasing Connectedness while Managing Interruptions in Social Engagement Platforms for Virtual Teams”
Problem Summary

When employees began telecommuting in the 1990s, researchers noticed a decrease in the informal communications that occur when group (and team) members pass each other in the hall or meet each other over the watercooler (cf., Wiesenfeld, 2001). These non-scheduled interactions were important not only in sharing informal information about work and projects but also in developing social relationships important for keeping the team connected.

The relatively recent development of online collaborative platforms like Slack and Teams have shown promise in addressing this problem. They can be used for posts and direct messaging like social media, but can also facilitate file sharing, videoconferencing, audio calls, calendars, and task integration. They also allow integration with other software. Currently there are 12 million Slack users and 20 million Teams users indicating the widespread use of these online collaborative platforms for employees.

However, these platforms are not without problems. The increase in online communication (e.g. emails) has led to a greater sense of being overloaded (Barley, Meyerson, & Grodal, 2011) and to more interruptions which are known to have negative effects on individual performance and productivity (cf., Jett & George, 2003; Leroy, 2009; Leroy & Glomb, 2018; Speier, Vessey & Valacich, 2003). Further, we have growing evidence that multitasking which includes attending to the notices on social media reduces performance (Monsell, 2003; Rubinstein, Meyer, & Evans, 2001).

How can work teams maximize the benefits of collaboration platforms while minimizing the negative effects of interruptions?

And this is where INGRoup and the HACKmanATHON come in! We believe that bringing together subject matter experts (SMEs) on groups and teams as well as on dispersed teams platforms in an INGRoup HACKmanATHON may uncover new ways to solve the interruptions-to-productive dilemma. Specifically, INGRoup HACKmanATHON facilitators have partnered with leaders at Microsoft Teams to provide SMEs who experience both the facilitating function of these platforms AND the frustration that can arise from the interruptions. HACKmanATHON teams should consider the organizational, social, and technological environments in which groups operate. They may want to consider the technologies in which these teams are embedded, though this is not required for the final proposed approach/solution. They may also want to consider the virtualness of the teams that use these collaboration tools as some may be collocated while others may be dispersed geographically and collaborate primarily by virtual means, including these platforms. The hope is that between the teams experts and the SMEs, new and novel potential solutions may be identified.

Program Schedule
June 15: To help facilitate HACKmanATHON teams with groups platforms, we will set participants up with accounts and "channels" on the teams platform. We will distribute academic materials on this technology, have teams meet and interact through ice breakers, and have exercises to help participants understand the advantages and challenges of working in these environments.

Wednesday, July 29. The HACKmanATHON will have a brief orientation session in the late afternoon. The orientation session will include description of the problem of group interactions and interruption challenges. In this session, teams will be given the specific task-related challenge they are to address. The overall schedule and rules of participation will be reviewed as well. During the work session in the afternoon, teams will have time to begin discussing ideas of their approach to this challenge. This will include time with SMEs from Dr. Sophie Leroy and Microsoft Team experts who can provide context details necessary to assist with idea development.

Thursday, July 30. From 8 am until 4:30 (depending on when posters need to be set up) teams will be work throughout the day. A rule of participation is that HACKmanATHON work is permitted only during these designated sessions.

Thursday night, July 30. Teams will present their solutions to the conference at the opening dinner. The winning team will be determined by voting of conference attendees.

HACKmanATHON team members are expected to be present for all of these sessions. Please note that participation in this event will not count toward the limit of no more than two submissions to the program.

For questions or further information please contact the HACKmanATHON Chair, Anita Blanchard at Anita.Blanchard@uncc.edu.

***Submission Instructions***

SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 1, 2020 23:00 EDT

You may submit either a core team, or as an individual to be added to a team. Details below:

Submitting a core team
Participants interested in forming and captaining a team should submit the names of no more than four people to form the core of the team. A minimum of two different disciplines must be represented in this core team, and teams are strongly encouraged to include at least one student member. The conference program committee will assign additional members to each team, for a maximum of 6 members. Core teams that were selected and participated in the previous year’s HACKmanATHON will not be considered for the current year’s event.
Submissions should be 900 – 1,500 words. They should describe each member’s discipline and contributions to the team with respect to the HACKmanATHON theme, and include a statement of commitment from each person on the core team to participate in all parts of the activity. Please also identify each member’s institution and academic/professional status (e.g., professorial rank; student; post-doc; professional, etc.), and who will be the team captain.

**Submitting as an individual**
Submissions should be no more than 500 words. Individuals interested in being added to a core team should submit description of their background and what they believe they could contribute to a team with respect to the HACKmanATHON theme, and include a statement of commitment to participate in all parts of the activity if added to a team. Be sure to identify your institution and academic/professional status (e.g., professorial rank; student; post-doc; professional, etc.).

**Send all submissions via email to Anita Blanchard, INGrroup HACKmanATHON Chair, 2020 at [Anita.Blanchard](mailto:Anita.Blanchard) by February 1, 2020, 23:00 EDT.**

References


229. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(00)00096-9