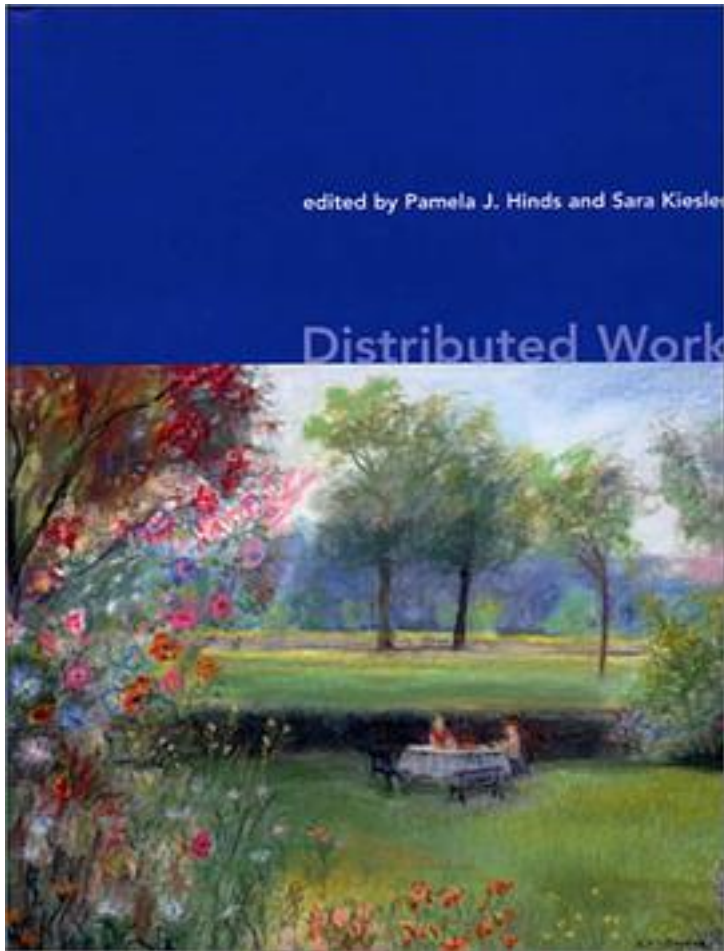


Distributed Work



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Technological advances and changes in the global economy are increasing the geographic distribution of work in industries as diverse as banking, wine production, and clothing design. Many workers communicate regularly with distant coworkers;

some monitor and manipulate tools and objects at a distance. Work teams are spread across different cities or countries. Joint ventures and multiorganizational projects entail work in many locations. Two famous examples--the Hudson Bay Company's seventeenth-century fur trading empire and the electronic community that created the original Linux computer operating system--suggest that distributed work arrangements can be flexible, innovative, and highly successful. At the same time, distributed work complicates workers' professional and personal lives. Distributed work alters how people communicate and how they organize themselves and their work, and it changes the nature of employee-employer relationships. This book takes a multidisciplinary approach to the study of distributed work groups and organizations, the challenges inherent in distributed work, and ways to make distributed work more effective. Specific topics include division of labor, incentives, managing group members, facilitating interaction among distant workers, and monitoring performance. The final chapters focus on distributed work in one domain, collaborative scientific research. The contributors include psychologists, cognitive scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, historians, economists, and computer scientists.

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