The Way We’ve Always Done It:
Intermediary Perceptions of Barriers to Technology Adoption in Rural Firms

Rachel Poole, Student Research Assistant
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What barriers restrict rural firms’ success in regards to technology adoption?

What strategies can be used to avoid or overcome these barriers?

Study Participants
Research Questions

Have you worked with a business that tried to adopt a new technology that didn’t get it done, or did it and found it didn’t work?

Can you tell me a story of a firm in your region that successfully adopted a new technology?

Can you think of a business in your region that failed to keep up with the competition and suffered as a result?

Recruiting and Retaining Employees in Rural Areas

WAGE INCENTIVES

ISOLATION

WORKPLACE CULTURE

INFRASCTURE

OTHER HUMAN CAPITAL BARRIERS

Local Rural Workforce
- Substance abuse
- Workforce leadership and development
- Vocational training
- “Wearing Many Hats”

Resistance to Change

- Established businesses become comfortable in their habits
- Necessity can drive change
- Openness, acceptance of change

“What if we don’t change at all... and something magical just happens?”
Financial Capital

Internet Access

Recommendations for Firms & Next Steps

- Address human capital issues:
  - Pay higher than industry-standard wages, adopt a flexible and modern workplace culture, advocate for local vocational training, bring in consultants when possible
- Strive for an attitude of openness to change
- As much as possible, accept that technology adoption requires financial investment and risk
- Leverage the internet to make up for geographic isolation, advocate for broadband expansion
- Study should expand to include other states

References

References