



Knowledge Transfer Management and its Multi Dimensions Strategies

KEYWORDS

Knowledge Management, Organizational Learning, Development.

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge Management programs are tied to organizational objectives such as improved performance, competitive advantage, innovation, lessons learnt transfer (for example between projects) and the general development of collaborative practices. Knowledge Management is frequently linked to the idea of the learning organization although neither practice encompasses the other. Knowledge Management may be distinguished from Organizational Learning by a greater focus on specific knowledge assets and the development and cultivation of the channels through which knowledge flows.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

Knowledge management (KM) comprises a range of strategies and practices used in an organization to identify, create, represent, distribute, and enable adoption of insights and experiences. Such insights and experiences comprise knowledge, either embodied in individuals or embedded in organizations as processes or practices.

Knowledge management is an established discipline since 1991. It includes courses taught in the fields of business administration, information systems, management, and library and information sciences. More recently, other fields have started contributing to KM research. These include information and media, computer science, public health, and public policy.

Many large companies and non-profit organizations have resources dedicated to internal KM efforts, often as a part of their business strategy, information technology, or human resource management departments. Several consulting companies also exist that provide strategy and advice regarding KM to these organizations.

Knowledge management efforts typically focus on organizational objectives such as improved performance, competitive advantage, innovation, the sharing of lessons learned, integration and continuous improvement of the organization. KM efforts overlap with organizational learning, and may be distinguished from that by a greater focus on the management of knowledge as a strategic asset and a focus on encouraging the sharing of knowledge. It is seen as an enabler of organizational learning and a more concrete mechanism.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE VIEWS

KM efforts have a long history, to include on-the-job discussions, formal apprenticeship, discussion forums, corporate libraries, professional training and mentoring programs. More recently, with increased use of computers in the second half of the 20th century, specific adaptations of technologies such as knowledge bases, expert systems, knowledge repositories, group decision support systems, intranets, and computer-supported cooperative work have been introduced to further enhance such efforts.

In 1999, the term personal knowledge management was introduced which refers to the management of knowledge at the individual level. In terms of the enterprise, early collections of case studies recognized the importance of knowledge management dimensions of strategy, process, and measurement. Key lessons learned included: people and the cultural norms which influence their behaviors are the most

critical resources for successful knowledge creation, dissemination, and application. All the same, cognitive, social, and organizational learning processes are essential to the success of a knowledge management strategy. Further, benchmarking and incentives are also essential to accelerate the learning process and to drive cultural change. In short, knowledge management programs can yield impressive benefits to individuals and organizations if they are purposeful, concrete, and action-oriented.

KM emerged as a scientific discipline in the earlier 1990s. The objective of Chief Knowledge Officer (CKO) is to manage and maximize the intangible assets of his / her organizations. As the discipline matures, academic debates have increased regarding both the theory and practice of KM, to include the following perspectives.

- Techno-centric with a focus on technology, ideally those that enhance knowledge sharing and creation.
- Organizational with a focus on how an organization can be designed to facilitate knowledge processes best.
- Ecological with a focus on the interaction of people, identity, knowledge, and environmental factors as a complex adaptive system akin to a natural ecosystem.

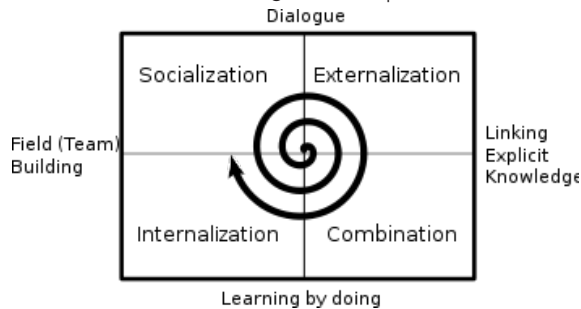
Regardless of the school of thought, core components of KM include people, processes, technology (or) culture, structure, technology, depending on the specific perspective. Different KM schools of thought include various lenses through which KM can be viewed and explained, to include:

- Community of practice.
- Social network analysis.
- Intellectual capital.
- Information theory.
- Complexity science
- Constructivism.

Multi Dimensions

Different frameworks for distinguishing between different 'types of' knowledge exist. One proposed framework for categorizing the dimensions of knowledge distinguishes between tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge represents internalized knowledge that an individual may not be consciously aware of, such as how he or she accomplishes particular tasks. At the opposite end of the spectrum, explicit knowledge represents knowledge that the individual holds consciously in mental focus, in a form that can easily be communicated to others. Similarly, Hayes and Walsham describe content and relational perspectives of knowledge and knowledge management as two fundamen-

tally different epistemological perspectives. The content perspective suggest that knowledge is easily stored because it may be codified, while the relational perspective recognizes the contextual and relational aspects of knowledge which can make knowledge difficult to share outside of the specific location where the knowledge is developed.



The Knowledge Spiral as described by Nonaka & Takeuchi.

Early research suggested that a successful KM effort needs to convert internalized tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge in order to share it, but the same effort must also permit individuals to internalize and make personally meaningful any codified knowledge retrieved from the KM effort. Subsequent research into KM suggested that a distinction between tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge represented an oversimplification and that the notion of explicit knowledge is self-contradictory. Specifically, for knowledge to be made explicit, it must be translated into information (i.e., symbols outside of our heads). Later on, Ikujiro Nonaka proposed a model Socialization, Externalization, Combination, Internalization (SECI) which considers a spiraling knowledge process interaction between explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. In this model, knowledge follows a cycle in which implicit knowledge is 'extracted' to become explicit knowledge, and explicit knowledge is 're-internalized' into implicit knowledge.

A second proposed framework for categorizing the dimensions of knowledge distinguishes between embedded knowledge of a system outside of an individual (e.g., an information system may have knowledge embedded into its design) and embodied knowledge representing a learned capability of a human body's nervous and endocrine systems.

A third proposed framework for categorizing the dimensions of knowledge distinguishes between the exploratory creation of "new knowledge" (i.e., innovation) vs. the transfer or exploitation of "established knowledge" within a group, organization, or community. Collaborative environments such as communities of practice or the use of social computing tools can be used for both knowledge creation and transfer.

Strategies

Knowledge may be accessed at three stages: before, during, or after KM-related activities. Different organizations have tried various knowledge capture incentives, including making content submission mandatory and incorporating rewards into performance measurement plans. Considerable controversy exists over whether incentives work or not in this field and no consensus has emerged.

One strategy to KM involves actively managing knowledge (push strategy). In such an instance, individuals strive to explicitly encode their knowledge into a shared knowledge repository, such as a database, as well as retrieving knowledge they need that other individuals have provided to the repository. This is also commonly known as the Codification approach to KM.

Another strategy to KM involves individuals making knowledge requests of experts associated with a particular subject

on an ad hoc basis (pull strategy). In such an instance, expert individual(s) can provide their insights to the particular person or people needing this. This is also commonly known as the Personalization approach to KM. Other knowledge management strategies and instruments for companies include:

- Rewards (as a means of motivating for knowledge sharing)
- storytelling (as a means of transferring tacit knowledge)
- cross-project learning
- after action reviews
- knowledge mapping (knowledge repositories within a company accessible to all)
- communities of practice
- expert directories (to enable knowledge seeker to reach to the experts)
- best practice transfer
- knowledge fairs
- competence management (systematic evaluation and planning of competences of individual organization members)
- proximity & architecture (the physical situation of employees can be either conducive or obstructive to knowledge sharing)
- master-apprentice relationship
- Collaborative technologies.
- Knowledge repositories (databases, bookmarking engines, etc.)
- measuring and reporting intellectual capital (a way of making explicit knowledge for companies)
- knowledge brokers (some organizational members take on responsibility for a specific "field" and act as first reference on whom to talk about a specific subject)
- Social software (wikis, social bookmarking, blogs, etc.)
- Inter-project knowledge transfer

Motivations

A number of claims exist as to the motivations leading organizations to undertake a KM effort. Typical considerations driving a KM effort include:

- Making available increased knowledge content in the development and provision of products and services
- Achieving shorter new product development cycles
- Facilitating and managing innovation and organizational learning
- Leveraging the expertise of people across the organization
- Increasing network connectivity between internal and external individuals
- Managing business environments and allowing employees to obtain relevant insights and ideas appropriate to their work
- Solving intractable or wicked problems
- Managing intellectual capital and intellectual assets in the workforce (such as the expertise and know-how possessed by key individuals)

Knowledge sharing remains a challenging issue for knowledge management, and while there is no clear agreement, barriers may include time issues for knowledge works, the level of trust, lack of effective support technologies and culture.

Knowledge Management Technologies

Early KM technologies included online corporate yellow pages as expertise locators and document management systems. Combined with the early development of collaborative technologies, KM technologies expanded in the mid-1990s. Subsequent KM efforts leveraged semantic technologies for search and retrieval and the development of e-learning tools for communities of practice. Knowledge management systems can thus be categorized as falling into one or more of the following groups: Groupware, document management systems, expert systems, semantic networks, relational and

object oriented databases, simulation tools, and artificial intelligence.

More recently, development of social computing tools (such as bookmarks, blogs, and wikis) have allowed more unstructured, self-governing or ecosystem approaches to the transfer, capture and creation of knowledge, including the development of new forms of communities, networks, or matrixed organizations. However such tools for the most part are still based on text and code, and thus represent explicit knowledge transfer. These tools face challenges in distilling meaningful re-usable knowledge and ensuring that their content is transmissible through diverse channels.

Software tools in knowledge management are a collection of technologies and are not necessarily acquired as a single software solution. Furthermore, these knowledge management software tools have the advantage of using the organization existing information technology infrastructure. Organizations and business decision makers spend a great deal of resources and make significant investments in the latest technology, systems and infrastructure to support knowledge management. It is imperative that these investments are validated properly, made wisely and that the most appropriate technologies and software tools are selected or combined to facilitate knowledge management. Knowledge management has also become a cornerstone in emerging business strategies such as Service Lifecycle Management (SLM) with companies increasingly turning to software vendors to enhance their efficiency in industries including, but not limited to, the aviation industry.

CONCLUSION

Knowledge Management helps in achieving organizational objectives in terms of improved performance, competitive advantage and continuous improvements. It will also help the citizens to use their creativity and skills better leading to improved effectiveness and greater innovation.

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