HR’s Strategic Role in Knowledge Management

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Knowledge Management defined...

“Systematic approaches to help information & knowledge emerge & flow to the right people at the right time to create value”

American Productivity & Quality Council (APQC) Working Definition

Capturing – Sorting – Communicating - Training – Protecting - Retaining

For more information, contact susan@hamptonassociates.org
Typical Knowledge Management
Mission Statement

Promote a *culture of continuous learning & innovation* by enabling *collaboration & leveraging talent* to retain & grow a premier workforce.

Leveraging Talent is critical to moving forward on the path to premier...
Knowledge Retention Issues & Realities: Facing the “Brain Drain”

- Near-term retirement of near 77M baby boomers will result in significant losses of critical tacit knowledge, including loss of tribal knowledge on key processes & competencies.
- Big demographic shift in industry & government due to large generation retiring.
- Difficulties pinpointing when and where in the organization critical knowledge losses will occur – both internal & external (vendors, partners, customers, etc.).
- Loss of customer confidence due to perception that organizations are out of touch or behind the times.
- Steeper, longer learning curve for new people in the midst of high demand for faster revenue & higher productivity.
- Generation gaps in how people work & collaborate with each other (i.e.: Millennial turnover every 1.3 yrs, Boomers staying).
- Reduced efficiencies.
- Costly errors.

Source: APQC 2004
Typical Symptoms - Where’s The Pain?

- **Performance Failures**
  - Repeated errors – failure to apply lessons learned
  - Recurring cost and schedule slips
  - Partnership failures – internal & external
- **Dissatisfied Customers**
- **Dissatisfied Managers & Employees** – leading to higher turnover, feeling undervalued, burnout, attitude & behavior challenges.
- **Repetitive expense & burnout** associated with continual interruptions of subject matter expert’s (SME’s) attention to addressing what should be “common” knowledge

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Business Challenges

• What will it cost to:
  – Replace a high-performing, experienced manager or individual contributor?
  – Let a subject matter expert (SME) leave without capturing the tacit knowledge and resources they developed over many years?
  – Fail to capture key knowledge and relationships from key individuals transitioning anywhere inside or outside the organization?

  Time?
  Money?
  Reinvention of solutions?
  Repeated mistakes?
  Inconsistent service to customers?

Can we afford the “CONK” (cost of not knowing)?
Multiple Approaches to Knowledge Management

**Tacit (Harder)**
- Self-Service +
- Common Templates
- After-Action Reviews
- Lessons Learned
- Project Milestone Reviews
- Process Improvements

**Explicit (Easier)**
- Network-Based KM
- Facilitated Best Practice Transfer
- Peer Assists
- Video Interviews
- BP Develop/Revision Mentoring
- Communities of Practice (CoPs)
- Team Meetings
- Virtual Collaboration
- Orientation & Awareness Ed.

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**Portals**
- Departmental Repositories
- Dept Handbooks & Guidance Manuals
- Expertise Locator Systems/Mgt & SME Referral Contact Lists
- E-mail/Discussion Boards
- Past Presentation Archives
- Org Assimilation/Orientation Information
- Search Engines & Web Navigation Instructions

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Model adapted from APQC 2004
Range of Knowledge

• **Explicit – formal / codified**
  - Books, documents, formulas, project reports, contracts, process diagrams, lessons learned lists, case studies, white papers, policy manuals, etc.

• **Implicit – middle ground**
  - Can be codified once value is established.

• **Tacit – informal / uncodified**
  - “Know-how”, past experiences & expertise found through interactions with employees, customers & vendors

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Quick Assessment

Make a quick list of what you currently have in place to capture & transfer knowledge that matters in each of the following categories:

1. People
2. Processes
3. Technology
4 Major Elements to Consider in KM

**Content**
- Project management manuals
- Standard project procedures
- Project activity models
- Specifications
- Compliance Requirements
- Proposals
- Lessons learned
- Risk assessments
- Project profiles
- Employee Handbooks

**People**
- Core Groups
- Advisory Groups
- Champions & Mentors
- Community leaders and members
- Career Development Plans
- Performance Management & Recognition systems
- Education & Training
- Communication

**Processes**
- Knowledge flow process
- Forming Communities of Practice
- Collaboration processes
- Transfer of Best Practices
- Shared standards
- Common taxonomy
- Metrics and reporting
- Feedback loops/Performance Improvements

**Technology**
- SharePoint
- Expertise locator database
- Workflow & project management software
- Repositories
- Content & document mgmt.
- Portals
- Social networking
- Wikis, Blogs, etc.
- Software Help

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Model Adapted from APQC
Value is Created Through the Knowledge Flow Process

Approaches to enable the Knowledge Flow include:

- Communities of Practice
- After Action Reviews
- Transfer of Lessons Learned
- Transfer of Best Practices
- Mentoring
- SharePoint/Searchable Databases
Knowledge transfer fosters learning & growth
HR’s Strategic Role in KM

• Review existing strategic goals.

• Identify & gauge the level of competency or expertise currently available to meet strategic goals of your organization. (Knowledge Mapping)
  - Talk with departmental management to help you determine if there are any talent gaps that could impact ability to successfully achieve goals.
  - Work with management to develop plans for addressing any gaps you identify.

• Observe & Ask Questions to understand the “people” issues involved when there are failures/set-backs in executing goals or when risks are identified. Work with management to develop action plans for addressing needs.

• Facilitate the usage of After Action Reviews & the capture of Lessons Learned.

• Keep the need for Knowledge Management visible & engage the rest of your leadership team in the process.
Areas to consider:

- Competency Development
  - Identification of Current & Future Needs
  - Gap Analysis
  - Competency Development Planning

- Talent Development
  - Career Path Development
    » Talent Database
    » Progression Criteria
    » Talent Assessments
    » Employee Development & Mobility
      » Cross-training/Rotational Assignments
  - Recent Hire Orientation/Assimilation
  - Educator & Professional Partnerships
    » Subject Matter Expert Seminars
  - Career &/or Job-Relevant Mentoring

- Knowledge Management
  (knowledge capture-retention-retrieval-protection)
  - Self-Service web-enabled reference material
  - After Action Reviews
  - Lessons Learned
  - Best Practices
  - Communities of Practice
  - Internal & External Benchmarking

- VOC Input/Feedback – internal & external stakeholders
- Change Management processes
- Benchmarking Trends – local & beyond
- Performance Goal Linkage & Evaluation

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After Action Reviews – Lessons Learned

• What did we want/expect to happen?

• What **actually** happened?

• Why were there differences?

• What did we learn that we want to: adjust? avoid? repeat?
After Action Review Meeting Process

**Prior to the meeting:**

- Identify appropriate stakeholders.
- Distribute the ARR template and subject to be discussed (i.e. mishap, risk mitigation, cost / schedule / quality issue, conflict, etc.)

**During the meeting (4 AAR Questions):**

- Establish the facts.
  1. What did we want/expect to happen?
  2. What actually happened?
- Analyze for each of the processes under review.
  3. Why were there differences?
  4. What did we learn that want to adjust? avoid? repeat?

**After the meeting:**

- Organize the findings.
- Coordinate with SME to revise appropriate documents and ensure timely electronic posting / distribution.
Lessons Learned Reviews

- Facilitated session held at end of an important phase or project.
- Structured agenda.
- Simple process – common template.
- All stakeholders invited.
- 90% of attendees have learned something they can apply in the future (Rolls Royce benchmarking data over 2 decades).

Lessons Learned Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do we need to replicate or reuse in the future?</th>
<th>What do we need to adjust or avoid in the future?</th>
<th>SOP/SPI Document Revisions Recommended?</th>
<th>Best Practice Revision Recommended?</th>
<th>SME Review &amp; Approval (List Name &amp; Contact Info)</th>
<th>Other Reviewers &amp; Approvals Required</th>
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So...What is a “Community of Practice”?
CoP Model

Crosses traditional organizational boundaries
Typical Community Functions

- Contribute and prepare valuable knowledge content, including “tribal knowledge”, for others to access & use.
- Capture, review & publish relevant lessons learned & BP’s.
- Collaborate to create innovative solutions.
- Document relevant practices and procedures (i.e.: SOP’s, SPI’s, Guidance Manuals & Handbooks).
- Identify valuable industry benchmarking & reference sources.
- Create and maintain community web micro-site.
- Provide SME responses to FAQ’s & requests for assistance relevant to CoP area.
- Create targeted professional & leadership development roles.

Bind Together & Sustain Professional Practice Areas & Common Interests

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CoP’s & Career Path Development

- Creates additional leadership opportunities.
- Encourages networking and career path exploration beyond current practice area.
- Builds systems thinking – provides bigger picture context.
- Expands transferable knowledge, skill and ability awareness.
- Links to internal promotion guidelines.
- Identifies opportunities for mentoring.
- Ties to performance goals & evaluation.

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KM Best Practices – Common Themes

- Active Communities of Practice
- Expert Locator Systems
- Simple web-based lessons learned databases
- After Action Reviews & Lessons Learned – critical to successful KR&T
- Knowledge Stewards - key role in managing documentation
- Resource constraints - challenge to speed & quality of implementation
- Pace KM implementation conservatively – use pilots and allow time to adjust/adapt lessons learned to increase success...culture change required (avg. 5-7 years)
- Face-to-face interviews - best approach to gathering tacit knowledge
Additional Resources

APQC (American Productivity & Quality Council), apqc.org, 123 N. Post Oak Lane, Houston, TX 77024.

“Communities of Practice & Associations: How to Build and Sustain Effective Communities in Your Associations, APQC Publications, Houston, TX 2006.


Thank You for Attending Today!

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Knowledge Management

- Compliance
- Lessons Learned
- Policies & Procedures
- After Action Reviews
- Training
- Training
- Training
- Training
- CoP
- Mgrs & SME’s

Building the foundation for success

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Knowledge Mapping

3 Major Categories:

- **Enterprise Knowledge**
  - Strategic Overview
  - Enterprise Overview

- **Cross-functional**
  - Expertise Tacit Knowledge
  - Technical/Functional Knowledge

- **Process Explicit**
  - Document Explicit Knowledge
  - Job & Role-based Knowledge
  - Competency/Learning Needs

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