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One Size Doesn't Fit All: Start Where You Are

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- Defining Knowledge Management
- What is Right for You: Building on What You Already Have
- Final Thoughts and Lessons Learned

DEFINING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Who Does It

- Knowledge management has flourished in the oil and gas industry, in the energy sector, in legal firms, across the technology sector, in financial services, in the pharmaceutical and medical sectors, and in manufacturing.
- The ***transportation sector*** has cultivated private- and public-sector knowledge management communities and has established a dedicated community of knowledge management practitioners—in large part through the research, information dissemination, and convening efforts of the Transportation Research Board.

How I Define KM

In general terms, it is the identification, collection, organization, dissemination, and use of critical knowledge within an organization. It is an attempt to identify what knowledge* an organization and employees hold, who has need of it and how to provide it to the right people at the right time.

*Knowledge is defined as the technical, social and political information individuals have learned through formal and informal learning, it may be explicit (information) or tacit (experience and expertise influenced by context).

Defining Your Role in KM

- Strategist: defining the role of knowledge management in reaching organizational goals and objectives
- Persuader: making the business case to invest in knowledge management techniques and approaches that makes sense to decision makers
- Organizer: providing oversight and infrastructure to KM activities
- Facilitator: providing active support to participants in KM Activities
- Measurer: ensuring there are quantitative and qualitative metrics that demonstrate the value of KM

WHAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU:
BUILDING ON WHAT YOU
ALREADY HAVE

The purpose of Knowledge Management in an organization

- Dependent on the particular organization's goals and needs
 - to mitigate the potential loss of knowledge due to retirements and the changing workforce;
 - to make knowledge and information findable;
 - to improve performance; and
 - to support innovation.

Mitigate Potential Knowledge Loss

- Are you anticipating a retirement wave?
- Do you have a lot of new employees
 - Just out of school
 - Coming from external organizations
- Do you have movement within the organization?
 - Promotions
 - Lateral Moves
- Has employee tenure shortened?

Mitigate Potential Knowledge Loss

Directories of Expertise

Capability Networks
(Communities of Practice)

Knowledge Books

Make Knowledge and Information Findable

- Do you have an intranet or knowledge portal where corporate information is housed?
- How many technology systems do you have and how do they relate?
- Do you have a library?

Make Knowledge and Information Findable

Corporate Document Centers

Integration of Systems

Common Taxonomy

Improve Performance

- Do you want to decrease time for completion of tasks?
- Do you want to better integrate functions?
- Do you want to streamline processes?

Improve Performance

Business Process Reengineering

Increasing Communication and
Collaboration within the Organization

Before- During- and After-Action
Reviews

Support Innovation

- Do you want to encourage creative thinking?
- Do you want to build new services or functions?
- Do you want to deploy new research or ideas?

Support Innovation

Adopting Innovative Practices

Encouraging Submission of Ideas

Coaching and Mentoring

FINAL THOUGHTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Final Thoughts

- Loss of knowledge is a risk for transportation agencies because
 - practitioners bring academic knowledge to the job, and
 - increase that knowledge through practical experiences.
- Preventing knowledge loss requires
 - ensuring that the knowledge remains in circulation, and
 - continues to be evaluated, validated, or invalidated.

Major Lessons Learned

Sustainability

- Personal—very tied to individuals
- Alignment –organizational goals change over time
- Measurement—if you can't show value in their terms, they will lose interest

Opportunities

- Never say no—find a way to say yes
- Build on what is there—validation of what they already know or did
- Executive buy-in—but also grassroots participation

Culture

- Leadership—it is a *responsibility* to share knowledge and expertise
- Management—make time for employees to participate
- Trust—believe in sharing and willing to ask

Challenges

- Skepticism—how will this help me
- Barriers—if you keep your eye on the goal, there is always a way, don't get distracted
- Knowledge is personal—but needed by others



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