“Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?”

— T.S. Eliot
Learning Objectives

• To Understand the meaning of KM
• To appreciate the importance of KM
• To familiarize ourselves with various KM Cycles
• To gain an insight into the two major forms of knowledge:
  • Explicit & Tacit Knowledge
Introduction

The ability to manage knowledge is becoming ever more crucial in the knowledge economy.

• Where creation and diffusion of knowledge are increasingly important factors in competitiveness.

• Knowledge is a commodity now
  • Embedded in products, especially hi-tech products.
  • Embedded in the knowledge of highly experienced employees.
Why Knowledge Management (1)

• Corporate amnesia.
  • We are more mobile as a workforce, which creates problems of knowledge continuity for the organization and places continuous learning demands on the knowledge worker.
  • We no longer expect to spend our entire work life with the same organization.
Why Knowledge Management (2)

• Increasing Organizational Complexities
  • Today’s work environment is more complex due to an increase in the number of subjective knowledge items we need to attend to everyday. i.e.
    • Filtering over 200 emails, faxes, voicemail messages on a daily basis – how to prioritize?
    • Having to “think on our feet” as expected response time has greatly decreased as well.
Why Knowledge Management (2)

• Increasing Organizational Complexities Cont’d.

• KM is a response to the challenge of trying to manage this complexity amidst information overload.
  • A “science of complexity”
  • Knowledge and entropy production have an inverse relationship
Why Knowledge Management (3)

- The realization of transition from physical assets to knowledge assets
  - Knowledge has now become more valuable than physical “things”

- Managing information is not enough, we now have to manage the knowledge that is generated from information.
Understanding KM...

• Understanding Knowledge Management requires an understanding of knowledge and the knowing process and how that differs from information and information management.
Recap of the Knowledge Pyramid

- Data
- Information
- Knowledge
Categorize the following under DAT, INFORMATION, & KNOWLEDGE:

- An online listing of the times and locations of all movies and plays being shown today on all of UG campuses.

- “I can’t leave before 5pm so I will go to the 7:00 P.M. drama at the Efua Saderland Drama Studio.”

- At that time of day, it will be impossible to find parking. I remember the last time I took the car I was so frustrated and stressed and I missed the first scene. I’ll therefore take the campus shuttle.
Data, Information & Knowledge (2)

- **Data**: Content that is directly observable or verifiable; a fact.
  - An online listing of the times and locations of all movies and plays being shown today on all of UG campuses.

- **Information**: Content that represents analysed data.
  - “I can’t leave before 5pm so I will go to the 7:00 P.M. drama at the Efua Saderland Drama Studio.”

- **Knowledge**: Applying information with experience.
  - At that time of day, it will be impossible to find parking. I remember the last time I took the car I was so frustrated and stressed and I missed the first scene. I’ll therefore take the campus shuttle.
What is Knowledge Management? (1)

• What are your ideas?
• What have you read?
• What have you heard?
• What do you imagine?
What is Knowledge Management? (2)

KM is the process of capturing a company’s collective expertise wherever it resides: in databases, on paper, in people’s heads – and distributing it to wherever it can help produce the biggest payoff (Hibbard, 2014).

It is the attempt to recognize what is essentially a human asset buried in the minds of individuals, and leverage it into an organizational asset that can be accessed and used by a broader set of individuals on whose decisions the firm depends.

— Larry Prusak
More KM Definitions

- KM applies systematic approaches to find, understand and use knowledge to create value (O’Dell).

- KM is the explicit control and management of knowledge within an organization aimed at achieving the company’s objectives (van der Spek).

- KM is the formalization of and access to experience, knowledge, and expertise that create new capabilities, enable superior performance, encourage innovation and enhance customer value (Beckman).
Multidisciplinary Nature of KM

KM draws upon a vast number of diverse fields such as:

- Organisational Science
- Cognitive science
- Information and Library Science
- Linguistics and computational linguistics.
- Information technologies
- Communication Studies
- Anthropology and Sociology
- Education and Training
KM is:

• A management philosophy that takes systematic and explicit advantage of knowledge to make the organization act more intelligently
• Knowledge is used/applied for both operational and strategic purposes
• Ways to find, analyze, categorize critical knowledge areas to make sure appropriate knowledge is available when and where needed
KM is NOT....

- KM is NOT power, it is how you use it that matters!
- KM is not archiving all existing explicit knowledge
- A set of isolated techniques without a common framework
- a different label for IT, HR or training
- A command and control system for knowledge
The Major Forms of Knowledge

• The two major forms of knowledge are:
  • Explicit Knowledge
  • Tacit Knowledge

• Some experts in the field also talk about Embedded Knowledge.
  • This differentiates knowledge embodied in people from that embedded in processes, organizational culture and routines (Horvath, 2000).
Tacit and Explicit Knowledge

- When asked, most company executives say their greatest asset is knowledge held by their employees.

- They also state they have no idea how to manage this knowledge.
Explicit vs. Tacit Knowledge

Tacit Knowledge

80-85% active

Explicit Knowledge

15-20% passive

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"We know more than we can tell"

Polanyi, 1966
Tacit and Explicit Knowledge

Tacit knowledge is difficult to articulate and also difficult to put into words, text, or drawings. In contrast, explicit knowledge represents content that has been captured in some tangible form such as words, audio recordings, or images.

Moreover, tacit knowledge tends to reside “within the heads of knowers,” whereas explicit knowledge is usually contained within tangible or concrete media. However, it should be noted that this is a rather simplistic dichotomy.
Another perspective is that explicit knowledge tends to represent the final end product, whereas tacit knowledge is the know-how or all of the processes that were required in order to produce that final product.

Tacit Knowledge is transferred based on methods like coaching, mentoring and apprenticeship. That is; experiential knowledge on a one-to-one, face-to-face bases.

Explicit Knowledge is transferred through documented processes.
Knowledge Management Cycles

• Major KM Cycles
  • Knowledge-Information Cycle (*ACIIC Knowledge Economy)
  • Meyer and Zack KM Cycle
  • Bukowitz and Wiliams KM Cycle
  • McElroy KM Cycle
  • Wiig KM Cycle

*Australian Centre for Innovation and International Competitiveness
Knowledge-Information Cycle*

• Knowledge-information cycle looks at how information is transformed into knowledge and vice versa via creation and application processes.

*Australian Centre for Innovation and International Competitiveness  www.aciic.org.au
Knowledge - Information Cycle

• Need to systematically identify, generate, acquire, diffuse, and capture the benefits of knowledge that provide a strategic advantage.

• Clear distinction must be made between information – which is digitizable, and knowledge – which exists only in intelligent systems.
Knowledge-Information Cycle

Knowledge Creation → Information Use → Information Technology → Information Creation → Knowledge Use → Intelligent System → Knowledge Creation
Knowledge Economy & the Knowledge-Information Cycle

• Some paradoxes of knowledge:
  • Using knowledge does not consume it.
  • Transferring knowledge does not lose it.
  • Knowledge is abundant, but the ability to use it is scarce.
  • Much of knowledge walks out the door at the end of the day.
Knowledge Management Model

• The major activities of the KM cycles require a conceptual framework to operate within; otherwise the activities will not be coordinated and will not produce the expected KM benefits.

• That is; knowledge management initiative must have a solid theoretical foundation.
Major KM Models

• The von Krogh and Roos Model of Organizational Epistemology
• The Nonaka and Takeuchi Knowledge Spiral Model
• The Choo Sense-making KM Model
• The Wiig Model for Building and Using Knowledge
• The Boisot I-Space KM Model
• Complex Adaptive System Models of KM
The Nonaka and Takeuchi Model of Knowledge Conversion

There are four modes of knowledge conversion. These are explained as follows:

1. From tacit knowledge to tacit knowledge: the process of **socialization**
2. From tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge: the process of **externalization**.
3. From explicit knowledge to explicit knowledge: the process of **combination**.
4. From explicit knowledge to tacit knowledge: the process of **internalization**.
Forms of Knowledge Sharing

• **Knowledge repositories** for tacit knowledge that has been made explicit.
• **Best practices databases**
• **Communities of Practice (CoP)**
• **Mentorship**
• One of the major criticisms of KM is that in practice, organizations turn to focus on explicit knowledge to the exclusion of tacit knowledge.
ANY QUESTIONS?
Assignment IV

• Explain the ethics of information management and demonstrate how it differs from the legal use of information. Identify and discuss the laws in Ghana that an information professional should be aware of in dispensing his/her core duties of managing information.
Group Assignment V

• Account for the assertion that ‘we are in the knowledge economy’ and defend the view that KM is imperative for the modern organisation. Is KM any different from IM? Discuss and state your position with justification.