

Required Unit Resources

In order to access the following resources, click the links below.

Asrar-ul-Haq, M., Anwar, S., & Nisar, T. (2016). A systematic review of knowledge management and knowledge sharing: Trends, issues, and challenges. *Cogent Business & Management*, 3(1), 1–17.

<https://libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=120794137&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

Intezari, A., Taskin, N., & Pauleen, D. J. (2017). Looking beyond knowledge sharing: An integrative approach

to knowledge management culture. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 21(2), 492–515.

<https://search-proquest.com.libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/docview/1889365849?accountid=33337>

UNIT III STUDY GUIDE

Knowledge Share and Learning Transfer

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Zhang, X., & Jiang, J. Y. (2015). With whom shall I share my knowledge? A recipient perspective of knowledge sharing. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 19(2), 277–295. <https://search-proquest.com.libraryresources.columbiasouthern.edu/docview/2138080008?accountid=33337>

Unit Lesson

In today's business environment, the competitive advantage that many organizations rely upon is the experience, skill, and knowledge that has been acquired over a certain period of time. The coined phrase knowledge is power may sound very much like a cliché, but in the context of business practices and processes, we can see some truth to this. According to Liu (n.d.), knowledge management (KM) is the method of acquiring, producing, sharing, and managing the knowledge of an organization. The extent to which an organization practices KM can differentiate the competitive capabilities of that organization. There

are a number of beneficial outcomes that KM brings to an organization. Some of the outcomes observed are

shown in Figure 1 below.

By observing the benefits above, it is no secret as to why organizations would like to master the practice of KM. The two characteristics of KM we will explore during this lesson are knowledge sharing and learning transfer.

Knowledge Sharing

According to Serban and Luan (2002), in its simplest form, knowledge sharing is the activity of exchanging

knowledge (experience, skill, and information) among people within an organization. For many organizations,

it is important to store and retrieve knowledge that has been acquired over a long period of time. Much of this

knowledge resides in the minds, skills, and experience of employees. Hence, when experienced employees

leave an organization, they take with them their knowledge and, if not captured and appropriately stored for

retrieval, this could be considered a heavy loss for any organization. However, technology has made it much

easier to capture, store, and retrieve knowledge that has been obtained.

One of the challenges that many organizations face in terms of knowledge share is the willingness of employees to share that knowledge (Desouza & Yukika, 2003). There are a couple of reasons as to why this

happens. For one, obtaining the contribution of knowledge can be a time-consuming effort. Also, those who

possess valuable knowledge may see the sharing of that knowledge as a threat to their competitive edge and

employment viability (Serban & Luan, 2002). This is observed in highly competitive roles where employees

compete with each other. For example, a sales associate decides not to share the name of a sales lead with a

colleague because that lead can be considered as a big sale and can increase commission for the one who

closes the sale. Furthermore, Desouza and Yukika (2003) espouse that the reason knowledge is not shared

is because there is no incentive put in place to share knowledge. As a result, employees have less reason to

Better Decision-Making

Increased Innovation

Improved Efficiency

Higher Productivity

Increased Revenue

Figure 1: Beneficial outcomes of knowledge management

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share knowledge and will hoard knowledge and use it as a source of power to gain advantage within the organization. Lastly, the reason that knowledge is not shared is because information tends to lie in many different areas within the organization. The knowledge has not been arranged in an organized fashion, and

employees are left to fend for themselves in gathering the information to leverage to their advantage. This is

particularly observed in large organizations where information and data can sit in different pockets throughout

the organization.

Although there are some challenges to knowledge sharing, there are a number of solutions to these challenges that we will explore. Some of the solutions to the issues mentioned are below.

- Rewards program for sharing knowledge: Organizations incentivize employees who share knowledge with colleagues. This motivates employees to share information across the organization.
- Collaboration: This includes groupware activities such as sharing calendars, sharing databases among departments, and hosting virtual meetings where information is shared among employees.
- Job rotation: An employee is assigned from one position to another within the same department or in a different one for a specified period of time, which is usually 6 months to 2 years. This allows the employee to acquire skills and knowledge from different areas across the organization.
- Cross training: An employee will typically spend 1 day to a week in another role within the same department to learn the tasks and responsibilities of that role. For example, cross training may occur when a supervisor allows a subordinate to learn the tasks and responsibilities of being a supervisor

so that when the supervisor is away, the employee has the appropriate knowledge of the supervisor.

- Sharing sessions: This includes small group sessions among team members to discuss best practices or ideas about a given job, project, or situation. Information is allowed to flow freely, and participants are expected to share and learn from one another.

Also, training professionals can play a vital role in ensuring that knowledge is appropriately shared throughout

the organization by leveraging the organization's knowledge sharing strategy to strengthen their training programs. By using the resources the organization already has and by relying on internal experts, the training

professional can design training programs to promote knowledge share. For example, in the onboarding process, new employees are often reluctant to share their ideas and ask questions. To help these employees

to benefit from the knowledge and experience of the current team, the training professional can match the

employee with a mentor who has successfully demonstrated his or her efficiency and skill at implementing the

company's processes and practices. Additionally, some training programs have adopted a knowledge sharing

platform that gives employees a central location to capture, store, and easily access knowledge. Through

these platforms, knowledge can also easily be transferred between employees, and collaboration can be encouraged regarding the available knowledge.

Learning Transfer

The transfer of learning is the continuing and effective on-the-job application of the skills and knowledge

gained through the training experience (Society for Human Resource Management [SHRM], n.d.). Here, the

learner applies learning from one situation to another. The transfer of learning begins prior to the employee

stepping into a training or learning scenario. Leaders build a culture where learning is incentivized and sharing is encouraged. This can help set the expectation that knowledge, when acquired, should be shared.

The two types of learning transfer are near and far.

Near learning transfer (NLT): NLT is where employees use skills they are learning in one area and apply those skills to a situation they are currently experiencing. For example, the customer service representative

can take the skills they have acquired in dealing with difficult customers to effectively handle difficult situations

with internal employees during management training for their current department. The skills are transferable

between both scenarios.

Far learning transfer (FLT): FLT is where employees take the skills that they learn and apply them to an entirely different context. For example, an employee who has worked as a customer service representative in

an organization now works in the human resources (HR) department for the same organization as an employee relations associate. The employee will be able to apply his or her skills of dealing with difficult people to now dealing with difficult employee relations cases. The skills are still transferable, but the context is

entirely different.

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The challenge that many organizations face is how to get employees to effectively put into practice what they

learn or know to a given scenario. Per SHRM (n.d.), there are four strategies that training professionals can

implement to ensure proper knowledge transfer, which are listed below.

- Explicit learning: This is where organizations train employees on what they need know and how to apply what they learn in a structured environment.
- Group learning: This involves allowing employees to work in groups that mirror the type of work experiences they may encounter.
- Reflective learning: After a task has been completed, the trainer can ask the employee to reflect on what was learned through that task. This can aid in improvement of the given skill or knowledge learned.

- Learning through analogies and metaphors: The trainer can take what employees already know and apply it to the given learning situation to understand it better.

While it is important that learning occurs as an outcome for employee development programs, it is equally

important that the participant share the new skills and knowledge gained with their colleagues. One of the

methods that organizations use to ensure the appropriate transfer of learning is the 30/60/90-day action plan.

When formal learning has been completed, the 30/60/90-day action plan can aid in enhancing the transfer

and retention of learning and connect the learning to enhanced job performance. The components of a good

30/60/90-day plan are shown in Figure 2:

Additionally, requiring the trainee to discuss “lessons learned” with coworkers, mentors, and/or managers is

important. Giving the trainee opportunities to directly apply the newly acquired knowledge or skill and coaching sessions are all activities included in a 30/60/90-day plan. The activities in the plan will vary depending on the factors below:

- the type of learning intervention (e.g., competency development, new-hire onboarding, product knowledge);
- the level of the trainee (e.g., executive, sales, technical); and
- the organization’s culture and receptiveness to training.

Knowledge share and learning transfer are important concepts in all organizations in order to stay competitive

in today’s business environment to achieve a competitive advantage.

Objectives are clearly defined.

Deliverables are aligned with objectives.

Themes are present for each stage of the plan.

The plan includes a clear set of activities with due dates.

A scorecard is used to measure achievement of milestones and transfer of learning.

Figure 2: Components of a good 30/60/90-day plan

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