

Next Generation Knowledge Management III

By Jerry Ash, founder and chief executive,
Association of Knowledgework (AOK)

Contents

CONTENTS	iii
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	vii
INTRODUCTION	ix
DEDICATION	xiii
CHAPTER 1	
A career, a historic journey	1
<i>Stan Garfield, worldwide consulting and integration knowledge management leader, Hewlett-Packard, US</i>	
Marching ahead of KM's time	1
Opening topics for discussion	2
Practical versus theoretical	3
Lessons from mistakes	4
Connecting theory and practice	5
Limits to case studies	11
Requiem for a pioneer	13
Lessons from Digital demise	18
Connection versus collection	22
Pioneering continues	25
Appendix: Origins of the "knowledge-based firm"	25
CHAPTER 2	
Knowledge driven from the ground up	35
<i>Raj Datta, general manager, knowledge management, MindTree Consulting, India</i>	
Fertile ground	35
Cultures, communities and change	36
Spanning the social divide	37
Open communication	38
Confronting the barcoding mindset	42
Tailor made for "units of one"	45
Self-organisation and emergence	47
Transcending paradigm with language	47
Comparing meta models	49
Wrapping up	54
CHAPTER 3	
Knowledge disruptors in mergers and acquisitions	59
<i>Arthur Shelley, knowledge manager, Cadbury Global Schweppes Science and Technology, Australia</i>	
Insecurity in times of change	60
Trust in unstable environments	61
Excuses, excuses	62

Sharing not forced by ethics or law	64
Who gets credit?	66
White owl in a dog eat dog world	67
Positive self-interest	70
Sneaky self-interest	79
Valuing, not counting heads	81
Human matters matter	82
CHAPTER 4	
Recruiting, nurturing and evaluating knowledge workers	85
<i>Tom Barfield, capability development/global knowledge management leader, Accenture, US</i>	
Tides in the culture of sharing	86
A case for training and learning – together	90
Still hung up on measuring value of CoPs	92
No everything countable counts	97
Rationalising key performance indicators	99
Measuring mindsets	101
Taking good research seriously	105
CHAPTER 5	
Low tech, high touch knowledge management	111
<i>Gary Cullen, ikonnect facilitator, Lend Lease Corporation, Australia</i>	
<i>Melissie Rumizen, KM maven, Buckman Labs and SAIC, US</i>	
Sharing begins with a question	112
Poor expertise locating skills	116
Humans-in-the-loop conversation	118
Facilitators underpin process	119
Requests for knowledge (RFKs)	123
Reluctant to ask; willing to share	127
Most Q&As unique	129
Summary: intriguing, incomplete dialogue	131
CHAPTER 6	
Managing knowledge turnover	135
<i>Scott W. Shaffar, director, knowledge management, Northrop Grumman, US</i>	
Frantic to capture departing knowledge	135
<i>Carpé diem</i> for sustainability	136
Lessons from a PeopleNet environment	138
Access, exchange in holonomy	141
CoP success stories	144
Management by “pull”, not “push”	147
Sharing based on proximity, trust	148

CHAPTER 7	
Measuring for respect	153
<i>Doug Madgic, knowledge management programme lead, Cisco Systems, US</i>	
Cisco Knowledge Connection	153
Knowledge measuring “stick”?	154
Sorting activity and outcome measures	156
Knowledge situation assessment	158
Multipliers through knowledge dynamics	161
Implications of Sarbanes-Oxley	167
CHAPTER 8	
Building sustainability into KM	171
<i>Michael Behounek, director of knowledge management, Halliburton, US</i>	
Halliburton Hypothesis for KM Sustainability	171
The Halliburton story	172
Executive support	173
Halliburton process details	175
KM and unions	176
Sponsorship, reciprocity, trust	178
Maintaining management attention	183
Worst practices, best teachers	186
Regulation and organisational leadership	188
Knowledge lifecycles	195
Back on sustainability hypothesis	198
Case studies	
Capture and re-use — Hewlett Packard: Engagement KM balances people, process and technology	205
MindTree — Ideas emerging	213
Cover Story: Fusion cooking — Cadbury Schweppes	219
Accenture — Theory of evolution	227
Low tech, high touch	233
A painful birth	241
Cisco’s KM magic	249
Halliburton: A sustained commitment to collaboration	255
Conclusion	263
Who’s who	275
Index	279

About the author

Jerry Ash is a KM coach, writer and consulting editor for *Inside Knowledge* magazine, founder and manager of the Association of Knowledgework (AOK), a global association for people in every speciality, crossing professional, geographic, cultural, economic and hierarchical borders to bring together those who are dedicated to working with this stuff called “knowledge”.

He is an international speaker and workshop facilitator and author of the first and second volumes of *Next Generation Knowledge Management*.

AOK has built a virtual community where newbies, serious knowledge practitioners, knowledge pioneers and thought leaders meet and explore new developments in knowledge work. It is from these knowledge sharings that NGKMs are written.

Jerry developed a passion for the knowledge strategy in 1995 and has championed the concept ever since. Like other knowledge practitioners, he brings to the table a diverse background full of interrelated experiences that add up to a solid foundation for knowledge work.

He is a lifelong communicator whose experience has included a broad spectrum of advocacy and leadership roles including university professor, editor, publisher, author, state senator, hospital public relations director, CEO of a state hospital association, and executive director of a human organ donor organisation. In every role, he has been an innovator and agent of change.

Introduction

Knowledge management is not the brainchild of a single author. KM's beginning is not attributed to one brilliant executive, academic, guru, consultant or software engineer.

Rather, it is the result of a real and persistent need first discovered in the marketplace by executives, managers and workers on the frontlines of savvy organizations – people who became the first of the many firsts to recognise the sea changes of social, political and economic activity that would quickly change the world and impact their businesses and their markets.

The knowledge phenomenon, then, is not an idea; it is a fact of modern life and the natural response to it. Managing knowledge isn't a fad; it is a reaction to far-reaching changes taking place in society due to a number of factors and events, not the least of which is the sudden leap – or plunge, depending on how you handle it – into a world of limitless connection and independence of thought.

And, while academics, thought leaders and advisors have also latched onto the phenomenon, the intellectual laboratory has been and still remains in the workspaces of both for-profit and not-for-profit organisations. The practitioners are the drivers and the rest are the support systems and the enablers.

These chapters are not mere experiments. They are creative ideas, theories and known practices and solutions applied with the expectations of solving problems, improving performance, staying competitive, keeping abreast of new

opportunities, knowing what is known and not known, thinking differently, innovating, and assuring profitability and sustainability in a rapidly changing world. They are the movements of agile companies intent on winning.

KM may be fuzzy in some quarters, but in the workspace the application of knowledge process is clear and the outcomes are valued even if they are sometimes un-measurable in the metric sense.

The heroes in the workspaces are the innovative knowledge professionals and their sponsors, colleagues, enablers and eager users who team up to make knowledge management a practical priority.

This report is about nine knowledge professionals and the environments that allowed them to launch and manage some of the most exceptional knowledge based initiatives in the world. And, in so doing, it is an insight into the qualities you should look for in knowledge leadership.

Rarely is knowledge leadership imported. Almost always it arises from within – either by design or through recruitment – but not because the company has an “insiders first” policy. Rather, it is because the best possible lead for a knowledge management programme is one who knows the company, the history, the goals and objectives, the people, the cultures (corporate and community), the existing technical and social structures.

Almost always the knowledge leader comes from the mid-to-upper levels of the organization – not necessarily a manager, but someone who has good personal

contact throughout the organisation, someone who is liked, trusted, respected, believed.

Ideally it is someone who has been engaged in some KM-like activity (not recognised as such, but involving “pieces” of KM like IT or HR) and the attention of upper management, ideally the CEO.

No one from outside the organisation can start with all these qualities in place and ready to go. No one from outside the organisation could have the insights honed by years of on-site experience. The only downside to an inside pick would be if the person picked were the wrong person! It is no place for seniority, favouritism or reward. Whoever gets this job has one far more challenging than the one left behind. And no choice will weigh more importantly on the future of the organisation.

You may think that choosing within would result in someone who knows the company but not knowledge management. But look at it the other way: Would you rather have a KM expert who doesn't have the first connection with the company? Is it possible to get the best of two worlds? Yes, all of the knowledge leaders in this book grew into their jobs from inside. Some gradually; others had to take the wheel almost immediately. They dove in head first – research, conferences, seminars, consultants. A consultant was often available during the early months, but ultimately it would be a KM architecture determined and driven from the inside.

If you carry these thoughts with you through this book, you will see the dual opportunity of having the best and being the best.

Otherwise, we don't like to talk of the “best” of KM, but rather, the KM that's “best” for a particular organisation or environment. What works for HP might not

work as well for Lend Lease; and what worked for Lend Lease might not work at Accenture. Yet all three are acclaimed here as known practices from which other knowledge architects can learn, borrow, choose, reject. A good idea becomes best for the company when it meets the reality of that company's environment. That's the bridge the KM leader builds.

Definitely, however, you will see among the cases and conversations a number of patterns developing that could almost be called “best practices” but only because they are repeated often in KM programmes that have been independently architected – not copied, but chosen and proven to be the right thing to do. For example: human networking. Look for a dozen other repeating and repeatable themes.

These cases and conversations also bring strategic issues to the fore across several of the projects. Can you show metric value for knowledge management? If not, what? Should communities be totally free, or is it good for management to utilise them for specific purposes? Is that possible? Does KM need to be directly linked to the company's critical success factors? If not, can communities expect sponsorship? Can we stay ahead of the competition by using our heads?

Unlike some conversations in previous NGKMs, these eight chapters focus more on the practical side; and, all the successful initiatives are characterised by being focused on the work, processes, solutions, products, services, competitiveness and serviceability associated with the sponsoring organisation. Their searches for real needs and real opportunities are pragmatic not only for the organisations but also for themselves and to establish proof and sustainability for KM.

And there's plenty of proof – outcomes, stories, testimonials and even metrics. As much as KM hates it, measurement (benefit) is a demand undaunted and practitioners can't dodge it. They have devised some worthy ways.

If you're still wondering who "invented" KM, read on. All these people are practicing it. People did before them and they will do it long after. They are discovering, applying, improving every day. They are among the "immeasurables."