Knowledge Management as the Creation of Intelligent Resource Sharing Cultures

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ABSTRACT

The fields of cultural studies, neuroscience, and management convince us of the importance of integrating pertinent insights into knowledge management (KM) practice. This guided study, commitment and follow-through is essential for survival in our knowledge economy. 20th century professional interpretations of how Descartes' philosophy has influenced culture help us to realize that westerners are collectively used to ignoring or hiding feelings. We also learn from current neuroscience research that paying attention to our feelings is key to our continued employment as library staff. With proven techniques developed by Watkins (2014), the author shares how, with simple attentional skills, we can heighten our senses so that data generated by feelings are escalated to the higher functioning brain areas that have evolved to incorporate them into our decisions, motivating us to act well. Individual emotional development of staff, as guided by mature leaders who have mastered the concepts and practices in this approach is conducive to better on-the-job performance. A method of knowledge management (KM) called expert practitioner-focused communities of practice (CoPs) readily incorporates the proven prerequisites to KM success. As it turns out, attention to emotions makes it much easier to succeed.

Keywords: *Amygdala, Assessment, Best Practice, Cartesian, Change Management, Coaching, Communities of Practice, CoP, Cortex, Cultural Studies, Descartes, Dualism, Education, Emotion, Feelings, Evaluation, Expert Practitioner-Focused CoPs, KM, Knowledge Management, Leadership, Legitimate Peripheral Participation, Management, Mentoring, Metacognition, Methodology, Mind/Body, Neuroscience, Philosophy, Reflective Thinking, Situated Learning, Training Metacognition*

INTRODUCTION

The knowledge management (KM) literature includes but is not limited to organizational behavior, anthropology, applied psychology, expectancy theory, behavioral science, phenomenology, human resources, social cognitive theory, strategic planning, information systems; leadership; management, library and information science, workplace learning, artificial intelligence, and neuroscience. To get started on one particular approach to knowledge management, we focus here on cultural studies, neuroscience, and management literature. Knowledge, for our purposes, is specified as that information that works in practice as opposed to unused information. Lack

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of congruence between the mind and the body in western society has plagued us for decades. Research-based means to heal the mind/body split starts with attention to "positive energy practice (PEPs)" (Watkins, 2014, p.133). Once people progress in PEPs, they will have gained enough inspiring insight to continue with related, data-driven professional development. This paper examines three previously elusive of the ten widely recognized knowledge management success factors (Kanagasabapathy, Radhakrishnan, & Balasubramanian, 2006, Table 2.2). First, we gain previously missing *upper level management commitment* for successful KM. In order to convince our administrations to partner with us in pursuit of successful KM we present precise, well-researched conclusions that support the effort. With *upper level management commitment* we create expert practitioner-focused CoPs which exercise concerted attention and reflection on and to mistakes or glitches in workflows. These anomalies serve as the curriculum for *staff motivation* to engage in *trustworthy teamwork*, the second and third elements needed for successful KM.

KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY AND CHANGING KM NEEDS

The presence of a knowledge economy means that knowledge holds heightened importance for all of our work. Knowledge is important to the economy because of what Kabir and Carayannis (2013) identify as "ubiquitous access to information thanks to the Internet and steady decline of cost related to data creation, transmission and storage" (Para. 2). Since the expectations for knowledge and its attendant innovation have escalated, we as librarians realize that the work and products of other industries dealing in information dissemination and learning mirror our work, and could very well supplant those of libraries. We need to keep up with and develop change that accommodates our patrons to a greater extent than our competitors. Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) identify a prerequisite to the development of relevant change: "if companies are going to compete on knowledge and manage and design structures and technology for it, they need to base their strategy on an understanding of what the knowledge challenge is" (p. 8). Our knowledge challenge is that administrations and managers spend their primary efforts developing information that is not used by employees. Our most important asset, our personnel, must be given information that can be utilized for better on-the-job performance. As one management professor put it: "workers will be asked more and more to learn situation-specific principles attending to a given work domain. By mastering these principles, they can be expected to handle ongoing variability in work demands" (Raelin, 2008, p.13). To better understand our current position vis à vis this challenge, let us trace KM in the literature.

The challenge of 1990s-style KM was to reveal tacit or hidden knowledge so that all knowledge could be put into a KM database with search capabilities. Today, we know that this sort of KM system is not really possible as much of tacit knowledge is not reportable. As one expert put it: "Knowledge is not literally located and stored….A knowledge inventory is not… like the inventory of a warehouse" (Andriessen, 2008, p. 6). Case in point: one place of employment utilized MicroSoft SharePoint Server as the system of record. However, the front-line practitioners for whom it was, in part, developed did not consult or contribute to it. Transfer of information from the source to better on-the-job performance did not happen. Therefore, the warehoused knowledge was more properly 'information.' To meet the challenge of generating workable knowledge we explore the ten factors necessary to KM success.

Scholars in the engineering field (Kanagasabapathy, Radhakrishnan, & Balasubramanian, 2006) have consolidated research of many knowledge management experts into a list of critical factors necessary for successful KM (Table 2.2.). These include a trusting and open organizational culture; senior management leadership and commitment; employee involvement; employee