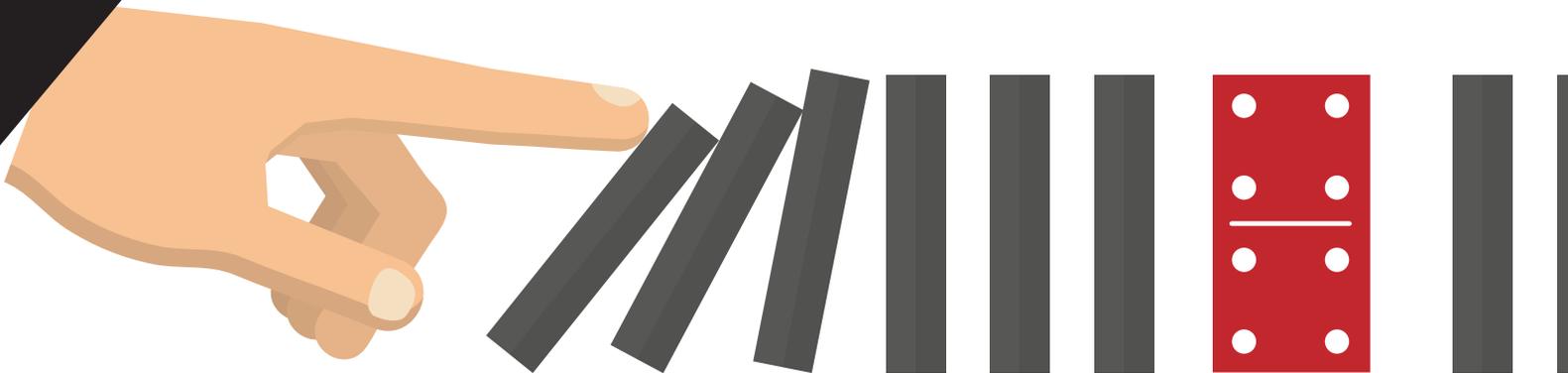


TOP 10 REASONS WHY KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES FAIL



As data stores continue to grow within companies, knowledge workers spend increasingly more time searching for information to do their jobs effectively. A constant tension exists between the corporate Knowledge Management strategy to use knowledge to achieve strategic goals and the knowledge worker's habit of hoarding knowledge to ensure job security.

Organizations want a successful knowledge management strategy. But more often than not, the time and effort spent by the organization to capture knowledge assets results in unused and out of date information. Benefits are short lived as a lack of continued interest results in the gradual degradation of the quality of the knowledge base and the eventual lack of use results in limited return on investment for the efforts to develop a knowledge management practice.

To prevent the common failures of a knowledge management implementation, organizations must

drive the organizational change that is required to support the creation, reuse, and improvement of knowledge. A successful knowledge management strategy must:

- Ensure the retention of knowledge before the retirement or loss of key personnel
- Embed knowledge management into the culture of the organization
- Engage knowledge workers to capture, reuse and improve knowledge while they perform their work responsibilities
- Use knowledge to drive innovative ideas
- Address internal inefficiencies to reduce cost and improve the quality of services

In this white paper, the top ten reasons why knowledge management initiatives fail are identified with the goal of helping organizations avoid ineffective knowledge management practices.



- 1 LACK OF ORGANIZATIONAL BUY-IN
- 2 LIMITED EXECUTIVE COMMITMENT
- 3 POORLY DESIGNED SERVICE PORTALS
- 4 CONVERTING LEGACY DATA
- 5 POOR ALIGNMENT WITH THE BUSINESS
- 6 TECHNOLOGY LIMITATIONS
- 7 FAILURE TO ESTABLISH TRUST
- 8 UNDUE FOCUS ON TECHNOLOGY
- 9 FAILURE TO ELIMINATE ERRORS
- 10 LACK OF FOCUS ON THE CUSTOMER

Knowledge management practices have historically focused on capturing knowledge from subject matter experts to share with a broader audience. The main objective is to capture what our most talented knowledge workers do to perform work tasks and share that information with others in hopes of reducing rework, improving consistency, and reducing costs. But few organizations achieve the desired results by just asking subject matter experts to contribute knowledge. There are many inherent problems with obtaining organizational buy-in.

Knowledge Management is an After Thought

When subject matter experts are asked to create knowledge, the work is often seen as additional work to their day-to-day responsibilities. To be successful, knowledge management cannot be an afterthought or an added responsibility of knowledge workers. Similar to every other business process or initiative, knowledge workers must commit to creating and using organizational knowledge as part of performing their responsibilities.

Success is driven by a deliberate and systematic approach across all levels of the organization were knowledge workers view knowledge management as a primary responsibility of doing their work.



Failure to Define the WIIFM

Knowledge workers at all levels of the organization need to understand the benefits of implementing a knowledge management strategy. Successful knowledge management practices require that subject matter experts participate in the knowledge capture, reuse, and improvement processes. No one knows the job duties better than those who perform the work on a regular basis.

One of the main reasons why knowledge workers resist participating in knowledge management initiatives is due to a lack of understanding of how knowledge can be used to benefit the knowledge worker and improve the way that the organization works.

Without an understanding of “what’s in it for me”, knowledge workers often lack support for the knowledge management initiative, often lack trust of the organization, and often mistrust their value to the organization. Without the WIIFM, knowledge workers resist change which results in the opposite of the desired behavior: knowledge workers hoard their knowledge to increase their worth and secure their position in the organization.

Lack of Communication

Leaders must tie the objectives of the knowledge management strategy to the goals of the organization and then communicate the importance of achieving those goals to all key stakeholders. A lack of involvement of key stakeholders and a lack of effort to convince the stakeholders about the impact of knowledge management practices on organizational goals will eventually lead to a lack of motivation of knowledge workers to change their work practices.

Once the strategy is clearly communicated, management must continue to communicate on the progress of achieving the knowledge management goals through the use of appropriate measurements and reports. Knowledge workers may revert back to old ways of working without a clear focus on the attainment of company goals.

Mandatory Participation

One major personal barrier to knowledge management is knowledge worker acceptance. Knowledge management should not be a forced activity but something that knowledge workers want to do. When knowledge workers do not understand and accept the benefits of knowledge management, knowledge workers only view knowledge management as an added burden or responsibility. When organization's struggle with getting organizational buy-in, attempts are made to mandate participation by establishing knowledge article quotas. By emphasizing quantity over quality, the article quota leads to the creation of duplicates and knowledge that may never be used.

Lack of Incentive

Managers often lack the ability to motivate knowledge workers without introducing a reward and recognition program. Knowledge workers need to see how the new way of sharing knowledge benefits the organization but also how their own personal efforts are contributing to overall success. By making contributions visible and introducing incentives tied to knowledge management goals, management will help to ensure that knowledge workers change their work processes and also sustain those changes over time.

Gain Full Buy-In at All Levels

When developing a knowledge management strategy, management must address each of these obstacles with the knowledge workers and leadership must gain full buy-in at all levels before rolling out the knowledge management process.

If knowledge workers do not buy-in to the knowledge management strategy, organizational efforts will fall short of expectations. ✨

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Knowledge Management Best Practices

10 Key Strategies for Obtaining Organizational Buy-In

1. **Develop a Compelling Purpose**
2. **Develop a Stakeholder Map**
3. **Develop a Strategic Framework**
4. **Performance Measurement**
5. **Rewards and Recognition Program**
6. **Training Plan**
7. **Communication Plan**
8. **Marketing Plan**
9. **Solicit Feedback**
10. **Celebrate Success**



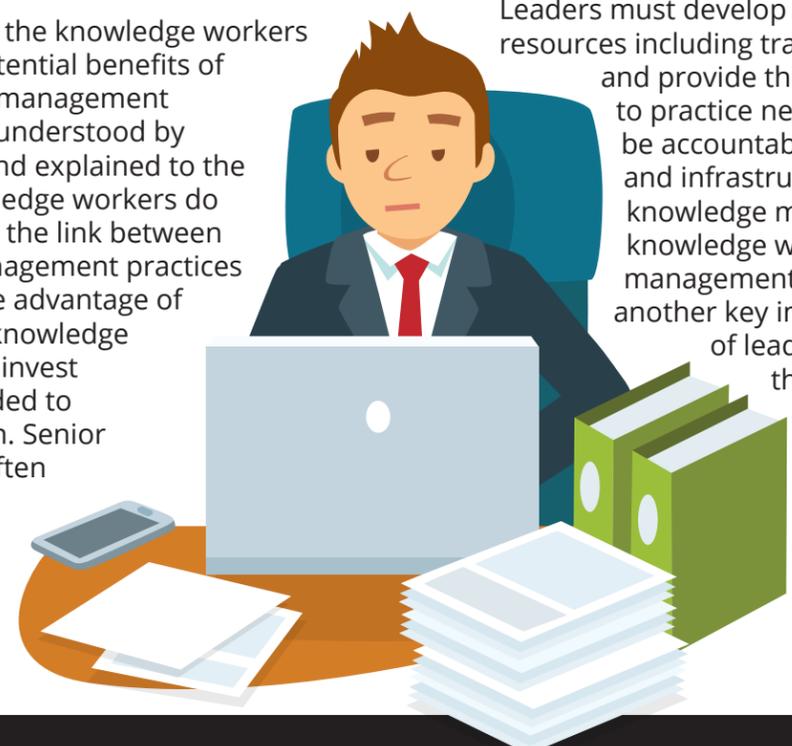
Buy-in is required not just with knowledge workers but also with managers and leaders. If there is a lack of support for knowledge management practices at the top, the effort will weaken after the initial implementation.

Limited Understanding of Knowledge Management Maturity

To establish an effective knowledge management strategy, leadership must be able to identify what knowledge is needed and compare to the actual knowledge available in the environment and identify the knowledge gaps. Performing a knowledge management maturity assessment is imperative to establishing the corresponding strategy for developing knowledge resources. However, leaders often do not understand the gap and fail to develop a strategy to overcome the lack of critical knowledge in driving strategic advantage.

Failure to Link KM Practices & Competitive Advantage

In order to gain the knowledge workers "buy-in", the potential benefits of the knowledge management practices must understood by management and explained to the all. When knowledge workers do not understand the link between knowledge management practices and competitive advantage of the company, knowledge workers do not invest the efforts needed to drive innovation. Senior management often struggles to articulate the relationship



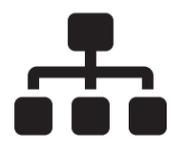
between the organization's competitive strategy and the knowledge management practices and intellectual capabilities.

Failure to Anchor KM in Structure and Culture

Another key responsibility of leadership is to anchor knowledge management practices into the organizational structure and culture. To create a cultural change, leadership needs to develop and create knowledge management champions throughout the organization. Knowledge management is a highly political initiative that requires commitment from executives to ensure that new priorities are established and that knowledge workers are shifting their priorities to engage in knowledge work. Poor management support results in a failure to recognize knowledge management results and an inability to motivate knowledge workers.

Failure to Limited Commitment to Develop and Exploit KM Resources

Leaders must develop knowledge management resources including training knowledge workers and provide them with the opportunities to practice new skills. Leaders must be accountable for investing in tools and infrastructure that supports the knowledge management practices and knowledge workers. When knowledge management practices are in place, another key important responsibility of leadership is to ensure that the knowledge assets are exploited to gain competitive advantage. Leaders must combine traditional resources with knowledge assets in new



POORLY DESIGNED SERVICE PORTALS

and distinctive ways to drive innovation in the market place.

Evangelist, Role Model & Change How Organization Thinks About KM

How people begin to change their behavior will be tied to how the organization motivates and acknowledges knowledge workers. Senior management's explicit and implicit expectations influence whether knowledge workers voluntarily share knowledge as part of their daily work or as a threat to their success.

Executives need to set a personal example by sharing knowledge freely and communicating the company's knowledge management practices value to the organization. The executives need to be evangelists, educators, and organizers of the knowledge management practices. Any effort to induce knowledge sharing without the commitment of the organization's senior management is likely to fail.

Collaboration and Cross-Boundary KM Sharing

When executive commitment is lacking, knowledge may be locked within silos of the organization. Silo'd knowledge limits the ability to learn across organizational boundaries and limits the abilities of the organization to use internal knowledge to innovate to customers externally. Executives need to break down the walls that exist within the organization and develop a multi-disciplinary approach to knowledge management practices.

All too often, the organization focuses on a technology solution to cross-boundaries and promote knowledge sharing. However, collaboration is more about changing the way the organization works and shares knowledge working collaboratively on projects and attainment of

strategic goals and objectives. The executive must be both a visionary who establishes appropriate knowledge management strategy and the builder of bridges across organizational barriers to unlock knowledge resources that support the knowledge management strategy. ✨

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Knowledge Management Best Practices:

3 Tools for the Knowledge Management Executive

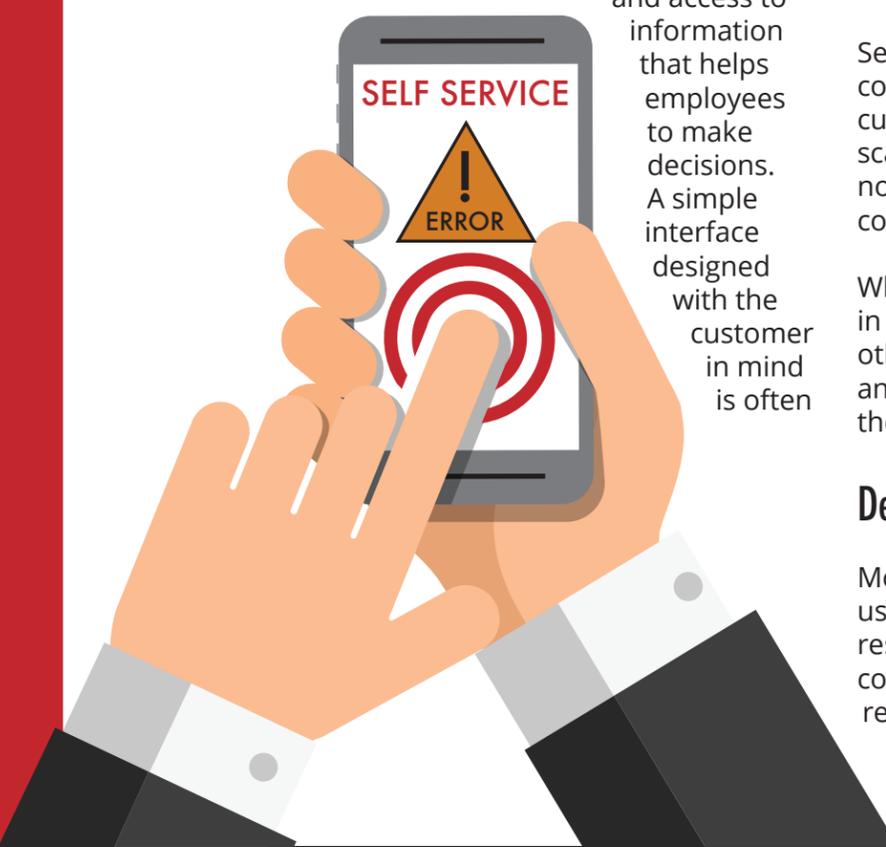
- 1. Knowledge Management Audit:**
An evident-based assessment of knowledge needs, conducting a knowledge inventory, analyzing information flows, and creating a knowledge map.
- 2. Knowledge Management SWOT Analysis**
A tool to map knowledge resources and capabilities against strategic opportunities and treats to better understand advantages and weaknesses.
- 3. Knowledge Management Maturity Model**
Five levels of maturity to assess current level of Knowledge Management Maturity in the organization.

A major benefit of knowledge management is to make knowledge available via self-service directly to customers. However, customer adoption of self service portals is highly dependent upon building a portal that works for the customer. The design of many self-service sights do not follow basic best practices that customers have grown to expect.

Process-Focused Design

When designing a portal that automates workflows in the incident management and request fulfillment processes, developers create an interface that mirrors the workflow but does not always make sense to the end users. With growing complexity of processes, the design supports a simplification of processes but should instead focus on the desired outcome of the customer.

Self-service should improve the way that employees work by providing a simple interface and access to information that helps employees to make decisions. A simple interface designed with the customer in mind is often



providing less content but in a way that drives higher use by end users.

Customers also prefer a multi-channel approach where the end user chooses the channel that works best for their process and work environment. A self-service portal should also promote collaboration between customers and create a social community for customers.

Lack of Meaningful Content

Another challenge in service portals is providing meaningful content for the customers. Poor knowledge management practices do not produce content that is relevant to the customers. Often information is out of date, inconsistent across data sources, not written in language customers understand, and is also difficult to find.

Poor User Interface

Self-service portals will not drive down support costs unless users enjoy using the port. Low customer utilization, low customer satisfaction, scattered customer data, lack of personalization, non-responsive design are some of the most common user interface challenges.

When the portal is difficult to use or creates friction in the customer experience that is slower than other channels, end user adoption will be limited and the organization will not achieve the return on the investment for the portal.

Deficient Search Capabilities

Most end users begin their search for answers using one of the major search engines prior to resorting to the corporate portal. With increased competition using search engines with better results, customers prefer to use the resources



CONVERTING LEGACY DATA

that will provide their answers in the quickest way. Often customers only resort to using a company portal when they have exhausted other available resources.

Another challenge with search capabilities is access to relevant knowledge sources. A portal should provide the capability to perform an integrated search across multiple information repositories thus supporting cross-discipline knowledge discovery.

Visual Confusion for Customers

Another significant design flaw is to provide too much information to the customers which leads to a feeling of Information overload. When customers are used to simple interfaces that streamline business outcomes, a poor design with too much information is overwhelming. Instead the self-service portal should provide a search box, smart shortcuts, and one click or no click access to relevant information that helps customers quickly accomplish their desired outcomes.

If a customer is confused on where to click or what menus to choose to accomplish their objectives, the experience often leads to frustration. Complex menu structures developed from the IT context only confuse customers and create dissatisfaction and disengagement.

Limited Marketing

If customers do not know that a portal exists, it will also limit end user adoption. New employees and existing employees need to be made aware of the available resources and promote access is 24x7 even when support staff are not available in other support channels. As the portal is updated over time, continued marketing should promote new functionality, remind customers of key outcomes,

and the availability of knowledge to support self-service. ✨

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Knowledge Management Best Practices:

10 Design MUST HAVE Features for Self-Service Portals

1. Search Box Above the Fold
2. No-click Access to Real-time Information
3. One-click Access to Common Requests
4. One-click Access to Top Knowledge Articles
5. Click to Chat with Us or Click to Call Back
6. Online Surveys and Feedback
7. Provide Online-Only Services
8. Provide Better Service Levels Online
9. Build an Online Store
10. Social Collaboration Options

Due to the efforts required of subject matter experts to capture knowledge within the organization, knowledge workers often resist the time and effort required in addition to current job responsibilities. If the organization puts pressure on subject matter experts or incentivizes them to capture knowledge, the efforts are often considered a one time requirement.

Previous Failed Knowledge Management Initiatives

Unfortunately many knowledge management initiatives that involve capturing knowledge from subject matter experts do so without capturing the context of the customer. This leads to the creation of knowledge that is often difficult to use at level one and even more difficult to push out to self service. Without a clear return on investment and inconsistent practices to maintain the knowledge, the initiatives often fail and lead to untrusted knowledge sources.

Pressure to Use Existing Knowledge Bases

When organizations fix this issue by capturing knowledge in the context of the customer and start with a new knowledge base, the organization and the subject matter experts want the organization to convert the legacy data that has already

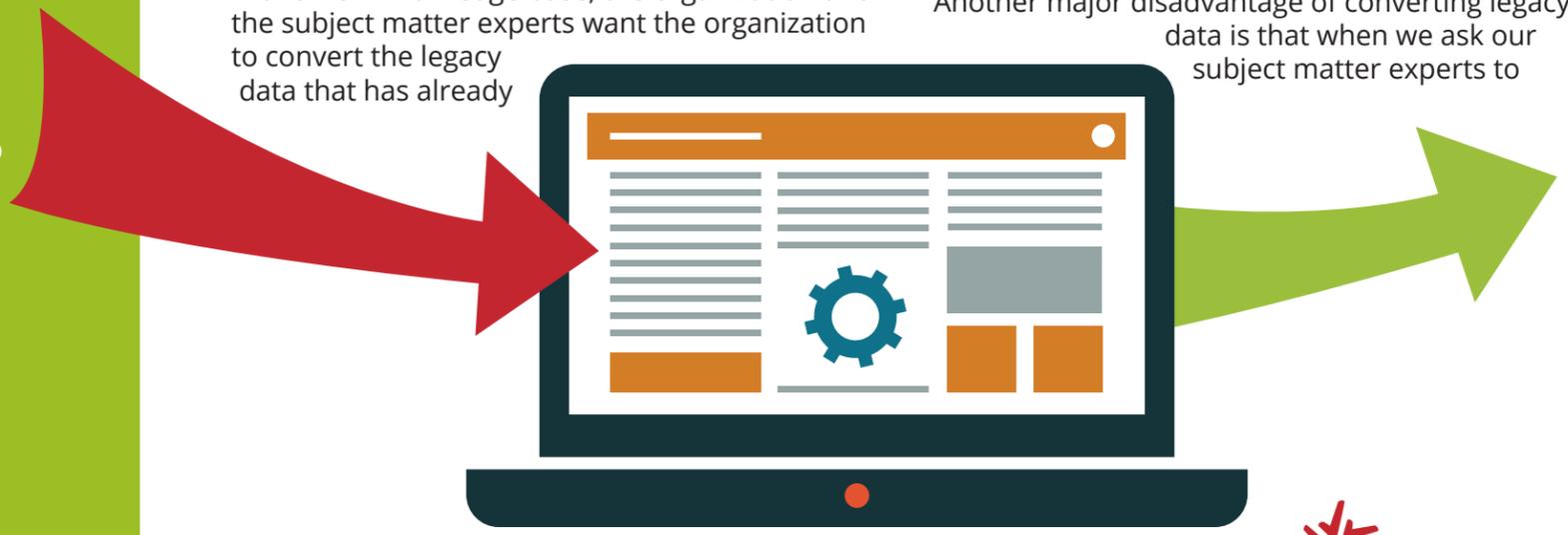
been captured into the new knowledge base. Converting knowledge from untrusted knowledge sources rarely produces the results that the organization is seeking. Converting legacy data is a time and resource intensive process. Not only are you moving existing knowledge articles from one form to a new article template, the conversion also requires verifying the solution, updating meta data and keywords, and writing it in a simple form that can be used by the customer. The time to convert and verify is much longer than just writing a new article from scratch.

Out of Date, Non-Relevant Data

Another problem with converting legacy data is that the sources of the knowledge are not actively being used today. Without constant use and improvement, the articles quickly become out of date. Forcing subject matter experts to update articles on an annual basis rarely translates into quality. When interviewed, the subject matter experts often admit that they just change the date timer without updating or worse yet they just let the article expire.

Knowledge in IT Context

Another major disadvantage of converting legacy data is that when we ask our subject matter experts to





POOR ALIGNMENT WITH THE BUSINESS

writing articles - the articles are most likely written in the IT context (written by IT subject matter experts for the use of other IT subject matter experts). If this knowledge is converted over to be used by the customers - the knowledge is often not found because customers search from their context - the symptoms that they are experiencing. A great example of this is when a customer calls and says "the Internet is down" but the IT context is "network connectivity." The customer is going to search for their context in their words and it is unlikely that they would see the "network connectivity" article in the search results.

Time and Resource Consuming Process

Imagine reading a word document and summarizing what you read by creating a PowerPoint slide, the amount of time that it takes to read, re-read, summarize, rephrase, and create concise language from a verbose document is time consuming and resource intensive. Ultimately the work and time spent doing the conversion does not create trusted knowledge in the new knowledge base.

Most organizations find that writing a new knowledge article in a simple format is easier to do from scratch than from the conversation of previously created knowledge articles. In fact many companies report that the converted knowledge is not used, not trusted, and not worth the time and effort ultimately ending in the converted knowledge being removed from the new knowledge base.

One way around this is to create scripts and automate the conversion process. While this may save time and resources, it also does not provide quality or trusted knowledge in the new knowledge base.

With all the experiences and lack of results from the conversion of legacy data, it would seem logical that organizations resist making mistakes and converting any old knowledge to place into the new knowledge base. Unfortunately this is not the case and may organizations attempt to do it anyway just because of the pressures from management and subject matter experts to not waste knowledge management efforts of the past. ✨

Knowledge management is not just an IT process or set of IT practices. Knowledge is used throughout the business in support of business processes and transactions. When developing a knowledge management strategy, IT often focuses on just the benefits and gains in operational efficiencies.

However, the benefits not only impact how IT operates, the benefits directly influence the success of the business. Critical business knowledge influences the organization's value proposition in the market, new product development, and its innovation strategies.

Lack of Knowledge-Driven Strategy

The pace of change and need for continuous innovation in today's economy illustrate the importance of knowledge management. Organizations are challenged with meeting customers' needs, staying in the forefront of competition, adapting to changes, enhancing profitability, and targeting new markets.

Senior executives need to establish a strategic direction of the business that includes its strategic approach to knowledge management practices. A well developed alignment between the knowledge and business strategy offers substantial promise for competitiveness in the market as well as organizational effectiveness.

A key benefit of knowledge management is providing information to the business on how to drive innovation. Changes are identified supported by evidence collected within knowledge management practices.

Strategic alignment between the business and knowledge management strategy is a continuous process of adaptation, change, and organizational learning. Knowledge provides staff with the

information needed to transform their way of thinking and develop exploratory and innovative initiatives. Senior executives understand and support knowledge management practices that drive savings in transactional costs and greater effectiveness and efficiency but fall short of incorporating knowledge management into the strategic and innovative planning of the business.



Lack of Knowledge Governance

Knowledge governance formally and informally defines how the organization manages knowledge. Without a formal governance model, the organization will typically lack the structure and mechanisms to support knowledge sharing, knowledge creation, and the strategic management of knowledge assets.

Knowledge governance cuts across functional silos and combines the knowledge management efforts of all aspects of the business and IT. Knowledge governance is developing a unifying organizational structure, authority structure, information systems, motivation, communication, rights and responsibilities of stakeholders, and a performance model.

By developing a formal model to managing knowledge across the organization, the executives

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Knowledge Management Best Practices:

Top Ten Common Mistakes of Our Subject Matter Experts in the Creation of Knowledge

1. Resist Participation
2. Set Goals on Wrong Activities
3. Create Documents Not Articles
4. Do Not Measure Performance
5. Create Knowledge Just in Case
6. Hoard Knowledge
7. Do Not Archive Knowledge
8. Do Not Update Knowledge
9. Lack Accountability for Knowledge
10. Do Not Leverage the Knowledge Base

will help to establish trust, improve communication flow, and change the culture among knowledge workers.

By establishing a knowledge governance model, the organization can develop methods for retaining critical and tacit knowledge, maximize productivity across the business, and develop an appropriate knowledge sharing culture. Without a governance model, the organization will be challenged to learn, accumulate knowledge from its experiences, meet strategic goals or bring new and improved capabilities to market as strategy dictates.

Inability to Measure Business Results

Another barrier to the success of knowledge management practices is the organization's inability to measure the impact or benefits of knowledge management practices. An important indicator of a success of knowledge management strategy is the utilization of knowledge to solve problems and make decisions.

When IT develops a measurement strategy for knowledge management, typical metrics are related to improvements in existing IT key performance indicators. For example, first contact rate (FCR) is a metric used to understand how well we are serving our customers. The higher the first contact rate the better the management of resources and the higher productivity for employees.

The expectation is that with knowledge management and shifting knowledge from subject matter experts to level 1 analysts, the organization will have significant gains in first contact resolution with fewer escalations to subject matter experts for resolutions. While this metric is related to customer, it is not tied directly to business outcomes. A better measurement is what is gained

by the business with fewer escalations with a metric such as productivity.

Often the measurement of knowledge management benefits falls short of demonstrating real results for the business. Without an emphasis on business outcomes and clear measurements of the impact of knowledge, it is difficult to convince the business and management that a knowledge management strategy is effective and that continued support for knowledge management practices is required. ✨

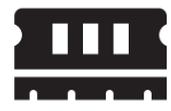
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Knowledge Management Best Practices:

8 Parts of an Effective Knowledge Governance Model

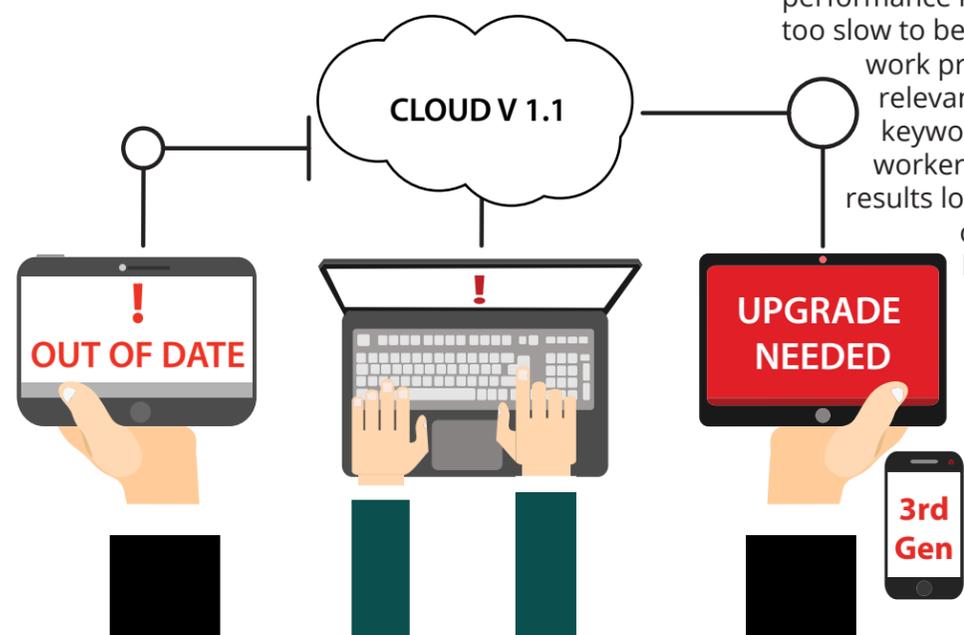
1. Knowledge Management Strategy
2. Unifying KM Organizational Structure
3. Establish Role of the Chief Knowledge Officer
4. Clearly Defined KM Roles and Responsibilities
5. Clearly Defined Knowledge Management Practices
6. Invest in Knowledge and Information Systems
7. KM Communication Plan
8. KM Performance Management Plan



While technology is a key enabler to knowledge management practices within an organization, other human factors directly effect the adoption of the supporting knowledge management systems. Knowledge workers would rather work around knowledge management systems than work with the technologies. End users often experience a high-degree of frustration when attempting to use the knowledge management systems in self-service. Organizations must address the common technology limitations or down the road find that the knowledge management initiative failed to meet the needs of knowledge workers.

Limited System Adoption

When designing a knowledge management system, it is important that the system be well accepted not just by the developers but also by the knowledge workers and end users who will be using the system. Low user satisfaction is a significant contributor to the lack of system adoption and thus limited benefits are achieved through self-service. User's perception of the knowledge management system may be influenced by the system functionality, the quality of the available knowledge, or from the support provided to users.



Another important consideration in the adoption of knowledge management system is the technology competency level of the user of the system. Often users are left with inadequate training on how to use the new system or even worse, the system does not conform to standard design standards and users are left with the impression of an overly complex system and process for using the new knowledge management system.

The new knowledge management system should facilitate the exchange of ideas, thoughts and communication between knowledge workers. If knowledge is provided to users without an appropriate context to understand the content, the system will be perceived as useless. All too often, the organization purchases the tool first and thinks about the knowledge worker afterwards.

Poor Performance

Many knowledge management systems are poorly adopted due to low service quality. Search capabilities within a knowledge management system are always going to be compared to the capabilities of major search engines. Poor performance is either search results that are too slow to be used in a typical time-bound work process, or results do not provide relevant information to the user. Lack of keywords and meta data means knowledge workers are combing through non-relevant results looking for an appropriate answer or performing iterative searches in hopes that the right search keywords will produce better search results.

Another performance limitation is that the knowledge management system does not support all types of knowledge across content continuum. The format and type





FAILURE TO ESTABLISH TRUST

of knowledge that is captured and then presented to knowledge workers is limited to one common structure that does not work well for all types of structured and unstructured knowledge.

Poorly Designed User Interface

Another major failure in knowledge management systems is that the system does not work easily within the flow of a work process. Too many steps, opening extra windows in a browser, and a cumbersome process to search for and find relevant knowledge are all examples of ways that the system does not mirror the natural flow of the work process. These limitations impact user confidence in the knowledge management system and thus will reduce the knowledge workers desire to use the system within work processes.

The knowledge management system should provide users with reliable and convenient system functions, interactivity, ease of use, and access to personalized knowledge and services. To gain knowledge worker's confidence, the system should have a need-centric interface and functionality that presents the right information clearly and effectively within work processes. The knowledge management system that does not provide communication or collaboration between knowledge workers will often lead to using collaborative platforms outside the organization where valuable learning about users and system improvements will be lost.

Retrofitting Knowledge to System Capabilities or Limitations

Too many organizations choose a tool that is within budget but doesn't provide the necessary features or functionality to support knowledge management practices. The knowledge management function of the tool is just one module in a suite of products aimed at serving the

broader IT population. Unfortunately, purchasing a tool without fully understanding the knowledge management requirements of the organization then requires the organization to retrofit the knowledge and knowledge management practices into the available tool and functionality.

Retrofitting the system to meet the needs of the organization often means that there is a lack of work task/technology fit. The limitations will impact the perceived usefulness and ease of use of knowledge management system by knowledge workers. ✨

Trust is defined as the firm belief in the character, strength, or truth of someone or something. Within the realm of knowledge management practices, trust is important at the individual knowledge worker level, as well as at the organizational level. Knowledge workers need to trust or believe that their interests will be taken into account when participating in the knowledge management practice.

Trust is a major contributor to successful knowledge management. If any one knowledge worker does not believe in the competency and commitment of others, knowledge workers will resist sharing or transferring knowledge to others or in knowledge management systems.

Knowledge Worker Competence and Commitment

Trust is often based on a team member having the competence to perform the work in the knowledge management practices and the commitment to get the work done at the required level of

quality. If knowledge workers cannot demonstrate an appropriate level of competence when performing knowledge management practices, their competence is in question and it will undermine other knowledge worker's trust in their ability to contribute positively to the results of the team.

Failure to Establish Mutual Interests

For knowledge management to be successful, the individual and company interests must be compatible and mutual. Otherwise, the perception is that the organization is trying to capture knowledge workers' knowledge for the organization's benefit only which will lead to the knowledge workers protecting their knowledge and their jobs.

When a subject matter expert is asked to share their expertise in a knowledge management system, knowledge workers often fear that this will provide unlimited access to others who may misuse the knowledge. Knowledge workers will only share knowledge if there are beneficial outcomes for both the individual and the business.

Other knowledge workers accessing knowledge often lack trust in the knowledge captured within the knowledge management system, unless they have trust or confidence in the knowledge worker that authored the knowledge articles.

Lack of Openness and Honesty by Management

If management lacks openness, knowledge workers often feel as if there are hidden agendas to the knowledge management program

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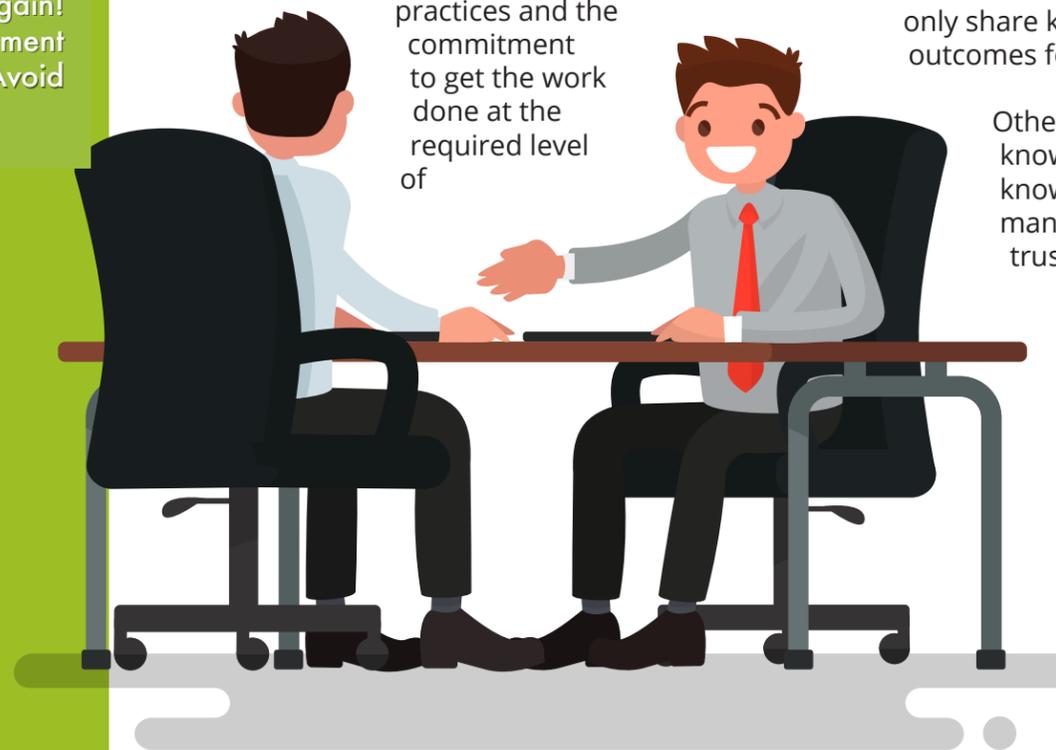


Knowledge Management Best Practices:

Don't Fail Again!
Top 5 Knowledge Management System Failures to Avoid



1. Spinning wheel of death
2. Poor search results due to limited keywords and meta data
3. Poor relevancy ratings of knowledge articles
4. Limited or no knowledge management performance measurements
5. Cumbersome user Interface that doesn't conform with UI standards



and will lack trust in the benefits and outcomes.

It is vitally important that management be transparent as to the goals and objectives, and also invite feedback and participation of knowledge workers when developing the knowledge management strategy.

Additionally, management needs to be honest about how the knowledge management initiative is progressing. The key performance indicators must be communicated to everyone and continuous improvement initiatives embraced if results are not as expected.

Managers must avoid at all costs placing blame on individuals and instead approach knowledge management as a way for knowledge workers to learn together while progressing toward common goals.

Communication is a key ingredient for establishing trust with knowledge workers and promoting the transfer and sharing of knowledge between knowledge workers.

Failure to Create Collaborative Community of Learning

When knowledge workers lack trust in the knowledge management practice and with other knowledge workers, collaboration is difficult and often ineffective in identifying innovative approaches to using the knowledge. A collaborative community is necessary for knowledge workers to share knowledge and learn from each other.

Without trust, the communities fail to form and therefore impact the learning of the organization. Innovation is driven through open collaborative environment where knowledge workers trust

their value and worth and feel free to share their knowledge freely with others.

Leaders need to openly support the knowledge management practices and reinforce the organizational goal and commitment, trust will develop within knowledge workers. Trust will help to develop learning communities and capture collective wisdom of teams which will in turn drive innovation and continual learning within the organization. ✨

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Knowledge Management Best Practices:

10 Important Ingredients to Create a Collaborative Culture and Establish Trust with Knowledge Workers



1. Invite participation of stakeholders
2. Focus on mutual benefits and outcomes
3. Establish open lines of communication
4. Lead by example
5. Train stakeholders
6. Create transparency
7. Develop feedback mechanisms
8. Create collaborative communities
9. Create a compelling purpose
10. Instill accountability



When an organization begins to think about knowledge management, almost always the discussion leads immediately to the technology solutions that will be needed to be successful. While technology is a key enabler to knowledge management, undue focus on technology in the early stage of knowledge management can bring dubious results and limit the success of knowledge management.

Choosing a Tool Before Understanding Requirements

A formal requirements definition and ranking has a significant influence on the selection of the correct knowledge management system. Once a tool is identified that meets the organization's needs, the tool can then guide the deployment approach. A requirements definition process takes time but it insures that the organization does not focus solely on technology but on enabling the correct knowledge management capability and a positive return-on-investment.

Running to the Shiny Object

Software tools alone cannot solve the institutional problems with knowledge acquisition. To have an effective knowledge management practice, it is necessary to adopt a systematic approach to planning and distributing knowledge management tasks and activities across well defined roles and responsibilities.

Many organizations focus on technology as a silver bullet, losing sight of the fact that people as well as processes are important factors in successful implementation of knowledge management culture. The key is training knowledge workers and developing a knowledge management process that focuses the organization on performing the necessary activities.

Technology can help capture knowledge but it is not the ultimate answer. Technology is merely an enabler that supports knowledge management efforts. The one-size-fits-all mentality, combined with the tendency of organizations to focus on technology rather than people and process, has obscured the real benefits of a good knowledge management practice.



Leadership's Desire to Maximize Investments

As leadership begins to develop a knowledge management adoption strategy, often they desire to use existing systems in the environment rather than spend money on systems better suited to meet the needs of the organization. While using existing systems minimizes costs, a knowledge management adoption can easily be derailed by not having a system that supports the capture and reuse of knowledge.



FAILURE TO ELIMINATE ERRORS

In addition to saving money of technology investments, leadership often has the perception that the tool is all that is needed. Without the support of leaders to obtain needed training and free up resources for the important process design activities, the organization will fail to change the culture to support the initiative.

Limited Focus on Continuous Improvement and IT Service Management

Although a focus on using knowledge management technology provides organizations with lots of data and information, implementation of the technology alone does not meet the requirements for strategically learning from the gathered information. Specifically, a reactive-based approach to knowledge management that focuses on using the technology to capture knowledge from subject matter experts to share directly with customers does not drive the organization forward to continuously gain knowledge and update IT service management processes for improvement.

Knowledge management is not just a reactive process, the organization must develop an approach that focuses proactively on capturing knowledge strategically. Specifically, the knowledge management system should support both the idea of active knowledge acquisition as well as application to serve the purpose of retaining competitive advantage through improved performance.

Knowledge management is a critical part of IT service management processes. The knowledge management process significantly contributes to the quality of the IT services. Therefore, organizations must shift their focus from knowledge management systems and instead focus on using knowledge to improve the quality of IT services and customer satisfaction.

An undue focus on technology as a solution explains why so many knowledge management initiatives have received criticism from end users, IT staff, and customers. The focus on technology degrades of the importance of development of an overall knowledge management strategy, continuous improvement of IT service management processes, and developing a knowledge management culture. ✨

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Knowledge Management Best Practices:

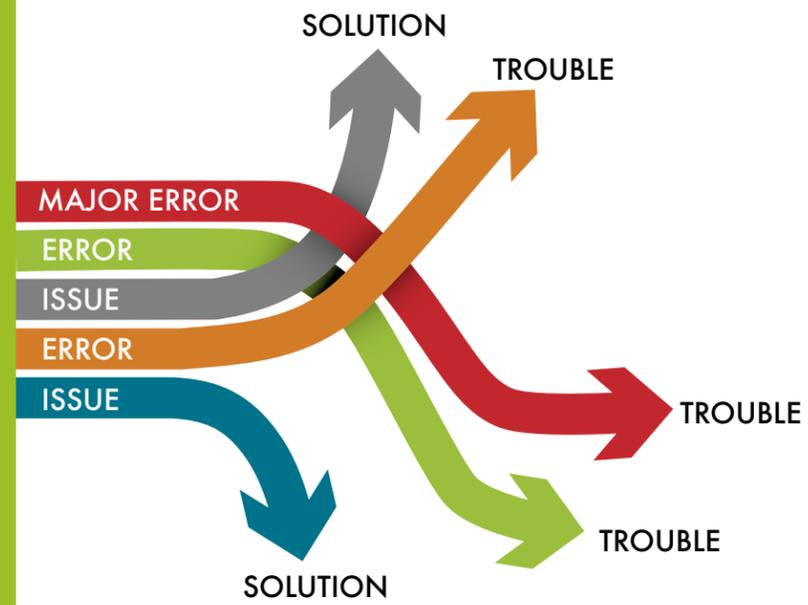
7 Ways to a Winning Combine the Power of Knowledge Management and IT Service Management

1. Continuous improvement of IT services
2. Benchmark and improve IT service management processes
3. Improve operational efficiency
4. Innovate the customer experience
5. Data-driven predictive analytics
6. Advance workflow management and system artificial intelligence
7. Drive innovation and market competitiveness

Organizations spend a lot of time and resources on repetitive problem solving. The goal is to reduce and eliminate errors and mistakes in high-priority, high-risk IT services that serve vital business functions. If efforts are taken to reduce the number of errors in IT services are successful, organizations can not only improve the quality of services but also make dramatic improvements to operational efficiency. Productivity gains are high when the organization uses the knowledge gained within transactional work to improve the availability and reliability of end-to-end services.

Lack of Focus on Repetitive Customer-Facing Issues

Work done within the development lifecycle in either the waterfall approach or using agile methods, often focuses on development of new capabilities based upon newly defined customer requirements and the removal of errors that are known to cause the greatest impact to the business. Visibility of the errors is typically restricted to just the most significantly broken issues that were escalated to the development teams.



However, the reality is that customers experience many more problems and errors than the development teams ever know about. The issues are resolved in lower levels of the support structure to drive down costs of support. An easy issue to resolve may happen more often and create greater overall downtime for customers because it happens so often that productivity is negatively impacted. But because it is easy to solve, the service desk will take care of it, log a ticket, and move on to the next call.

Knowledge management practices provide visibility into the complete customer experience with products and services. IT staff and developers can use the knowledge to make improvements that are the most meaningful and impactful to the business not just the ones that are escalated for resolution.

Difficulty in Getting Commitment from Development Teams

Access to knowledge to support improvements of IT services through the elimination of errors holds great promise for substantial value-added change. However, having access to knowledge does not mean that the subject matter experts understand the importance of working with the knowledge to gain insight. Knowledge workers do not focus proactively on using knowledge as staff are caught up in daily fire fighting and solving incidents and problems reactively.

Another struggle is that organizations in an effort to reduce the costs of providing service and support often cut staff to minimal levels. Subject matter experts often complain that the organization is constantly asking the teams to do more with less. The perception is that there is no time to participate in capturing knowledge let alone time to use the knowledge that is captured for continuous improvement.





LACK OF FOCUS ON THE CUSTOMER

Lack of Data Analysis Training and Skills

While organizations can use the capabilities of knowledge management systems and business intelligence tools to complete scanning and processing of collections of data and information, knowledge workers are often needed to interpret the results and use the information to drive continuous improvement. In many cases, knowledge workers lack the skills to perform an effective analysis of available data to understand what issues are the most impactful and need to be resolved to close the gap between what IT delivers and what the customer's expect.

Without the appropriate analysis skills, knowledge workers will often struggle to identify errors within the infrastructure. Additionally, it is equally difficult to identify correlations between events to prevent errors that may happen in the future. Without the appropriate skills, most of error removal is reactive across the organization.

Failure to Include All Stakeholders

A significant limitation in many knowledge management initiatives is the use of a small number of subject matter experts. By limiting the stakeholders involved in capturing and using knowledge, the knowledge base is limited in its scope and depth. Additionally, without a broad base of knowledge workers involved, knowledge is also limited in its rigor.

The organization should strive to have more knowledge workers involved who are constantly interacting with knowledge, improving knowledge, and challenging the validity of knowledge. Through the interactions of all stakeholders, the knowledge base will contain a broader range of knowledge that has a higher relevancy and is more trusted by the knowledge workers.

High-trusted knowledge is more effective in the elimination of errors. The knowledge itself provides greater insight into the errors that have been identified in the infrastructure and greater insights into the relationships between issues. ✨

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Knowledge Management
Best Practices:
8 Ways to Identify Errors in
Products and Services

1. Analysis of knowledge captured during customer interactions
2. Major problem reviews
3. Trend analysis (incidents, problems, and changes)
4. Identify fragile components in the infrastructure
5. Act on monitoring events
6. Preventative maintenance
7. Communications with All Stakeholders (suppliers, customers, end users, and IT staff)
8. Analysis of digital traces in online systems (web-click analysis/web site analytics)

Knowledge management is critical for improving customer focus. Knowledge workers need to improve their knowledge management capabilities to help the organization identify and meet customers' needs in today's agile and demanding business environment.

A critical objective of knowledge management practices is increasing customer satisfaction and it requires that the organization focus on customer outcomes. By synthesizing and analyzing current data about the organization's relationship with customers, the organization can use the information to provide higher quality services and products.

Lack of Knowledge-Driven Customer Strategy

The processing of knowledge should drive the creation of customer strategies and not vice versa. In traditional knowledge management initiatives the goal is to confirm strategy by supporting innovative ideas with knowledge that is already captured within the knowledge management system. The strategy is therefore based upon what is known about customers.

A better and more effective way to drive strategy is to base the strategy on what is not yet known. In high-performing knowledge management systems the goal is to engage in deep questioning about our customers by developing a strategy that captures knowledge about what is known but also about what is unknown. Through our interactions with customers we learn about their preferences and requirements. The knowledge is captured during interactions between knowledge workers and customers.

Inability to Respond to Changing Needs of Customers

Many companies lack a systematic approach to capturing and analyzing customer knowledge. Deep learning strives to learn about our customers in other ways such as collecting large datasets about what our customers do, how they use more than just the services that we provide, and the questions they ask about our products and services that we don't have answers to. The organization is capturing knowledge in real-time that drives continuous learning and adaptation to customer's changing needs.

Developing a knowledge management strategy that captures information about customers real-time requires using additional services for collecting data than just traditional knowledge management system. Mobile application data, website log files, and CRM records provide a more comprehensive view of the customer experience.



Lack of Cross-Functional Processes

A successful data-driven customer strategy also requires the organization to work together to establish a unified view of the customer. Leaders must change the culture to focus on capturing knowledge across functional boundaries to capture the complete experience.

Sales teams may identify information about customers through meetings and phone calls. The captured data is typically entered into a CRM system. When direct observations are combined with data from website clicks, views, watched videos, how to articles, requests for support, issues reported by the customers - the view becomes something much more significant and informative.

If leaders do not establish the appropriate cross functional processes and enable the knowledge sharing with appropriate knowledge management systems, the limitations of the captured knowledge may also introduce risks and errors. Working together with the right supporting systems, organizations can turn the captured knowledge into real value for customers and innovate and lead in the market. ✨

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Knowledge Management Best Practices: 9 Best Marketing Ideas to Win Back Your Customers

1. Email signatures
2. Corporate announcement
3. Add link to KB on all support channels
4. Advertise in IVR
5. Contests or incentives
6. Demo cart in business units
7. Social networks
8. Gamification events
9. Creative marketing messages

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Julie L. Mohr is a dynamic, engaging change agent who brings authenticity, integrity, and passion to practitioners worldwide. Through her books, articles, speaking, consulting, and teaching — her purpose is to spark change in the world with thought-provoking dialog and interaction. Julie has a B.S. degree in computer science from The Ohio State University, a MaED from the University of Phoenix, and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Management and Organizational Leadership in Information Systems & Technology from the University of Phoenix. Julie is a certified ITIL Expert and a Certified Governance IT Professional. Julie captivates audiences at conferences worldwide on topics of authentic leadership, business strategy, artificial intelligence, the disruption economy, knowledge management, organizational culture, and innovation.

