

The Internet and Knowledge Management for the Bahá'í Faith

A slide presentation

2002 – Port Elizabeth

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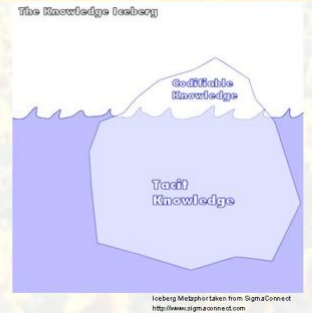
Origins of Knowledge Management

- > In the late 80's, early 90's, large organisations began to experience new pressures
 - > They found that they were unable to respond quickly enough to changing environments
 - > Being a large organisation went from being an asset to a liability.
- New Pressures on Organisations*
- Cheaper Telecommunications
Internet
Deregulation
Globalisation
- 

Slide No. 1

Tacit vs. Explicit Knowledge

- > Only a small portion of what we know is codifiable or "explicit"
- > The vast majority of knowledge is "tacit" or uncodifiable.



Slide No. 4

Current Knowledge Sharing within the Baha'i Community

- > Conferences
- > Community gatherings (deepenings, etc)
- > One on one sharing
- More recently
- > Email lists
- > Websites
- > The Institute process

Not very systematic
Much knowledge remains in isolated groups
Difficult to access best knowledge

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3 But what is knowledge?



Data

A record of a change of state



Information

Data organized with a purpose.
A message



Knowledge

Literally... what people know.



A Music Note



A Music Score



A Performance

Slide No. 2

Increasing Access to key information and resources

Examples of how KM can increase effectiveness...



A community in Chimanani wants to start a CSED wood processing enterprise

Reviews lessons learned from Nur and contacts project in Bolivia who successfully developed micro enterprise



A community in KW wants to develop a more effective child education program

Finds sample lessons on the Bahai net and emails successful examples

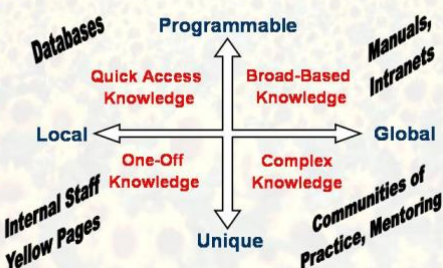


Treasurer in PE wants to develop a better accounting system to take care of earmarked funds

Downloads treasury system used in Malaysia and modifies for South Africa

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Differentiating Knowledge



Slide No. 3

Early KM Efforts...

- > Needed to recognize the importance of tacit knowledge
- > Focused more on Knowledge Stock rather than Knowledge Flow



- > Beginning with...
 - Document Management Systems
 - Best Practice Databases
 - More reporting

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People are the key...



- > **Best Knowledge Transfer Technology**
 - Face-to-Face Interaction
 - Not always possible but everything else aspires to it
- > **Best Knowledge Repository**
 - A Community or Group of people
 - The holographic effect of knowledge in community
 - break a hologram into many pieces; each piece will still contain an image of the whole

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Benefits of Communities of Practice

- > **For the organization**
 - Help drive strategy
 - Solve problems quickly
 - Diffuse best practices
 - Cross-fertilize ideas, increase opportunities for innovation
 - Build organizational memory
- > **For the community**
 - Develop professional skills
 - Develop a common language
- > **For the individual**
 - Help people do their jobs & save time
 - Building a sense of community bonds within organization
 - Helps people to keep up to date
 - Provides challenges and opportunities to contribute



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Elements of Knowledge Management

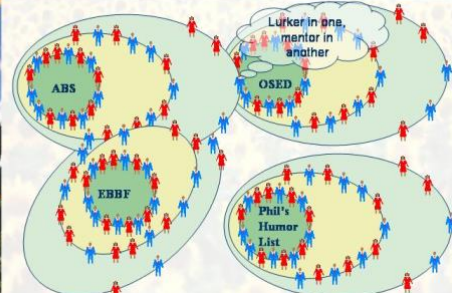


Strategy Tools Culture

- Top:** Committing the Organisation, Crafting the vision, Leadership
- Left:** Email, Doc. Man., Yellow Pages, Event management
- Right:** Face-to-Face Facilitation, New Approaches to Learning, Knowledge Asset Mapping
- Bottom:** Recognising the importance of knowledge sharing, Valuing those who share knowledge, Developing a knowledge sharing culture

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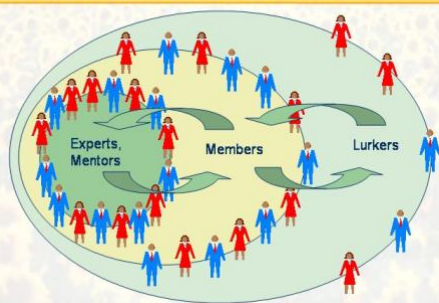
Multiple Communities



Communities: ABS, OSED, EBBF, Phil's Humor List. A note mentions 'Lurker in one, mentor in another'.

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Community of Practice



Roles: Experts, Mentors, Members, Lurkers.

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New Approaches to Learning being promoted by Institute process

Learning should happen immediately

The bar needs to be set very low

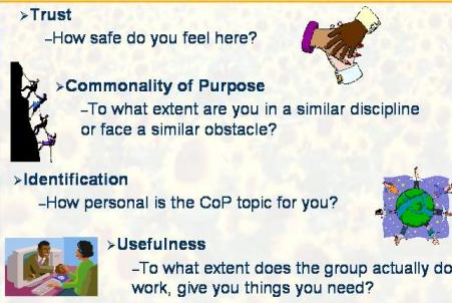
Learning needs to connect to behavior change



Slide No. 14

Success Indicators for CoPs

- > **Trust**
 - How safe do you feel here?
- > **Commonality of Purpose**
 - To what extent are you in a similar discipline or face a similar obstacle?
- > **Identification**
 - How personal is the CoP topic for you?
- > **Usefulness**
 - To what extent does the group actually do work, give you things you need?



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Before, During, and After Learning



Learning **Before** (Peer Assists) → **Activity** → Learning **After** (Reflection)

Learning **During** (After Action Reviews)

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Changing community culture

- Include knowledge sharing in goals and expectations
- Acknowledge conspicuous knowledge sharers
- Create spaces for knowledge sharing
- Recognize conversation as a core practice

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Some needs

Better **directory** systems which connect Bahá'is with skills and needs

Better **document management** systems that allow you to search effectively

More list serve and community of practices developed

Some good general resources

www.bahai-index.com

www.bahai-studies.org

www.bahai-education.org

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Technology...

- Necessary for distributed organizations
- Should facilitate the way people already work
- Should never drive the process



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Knowledge Made Manifest

"Knowledge is twenty and seven letters. All that prophets have revealed are two letters thereof. No man thus far hath know more than these two letters. But when the Qa'im shall arise, He will cause the remaining twenty and five letters to be made manifest.."

Kitab-I Iqan p. 243



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Learning Approach

- Begin Simply
- Focus on Core Functionality and building a culture
- Build Understanding and Buy In from the entire community of practice

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