Keynote

How do we know, what we know?

or

Knowledge Management Challenges in Industry

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The morning after...
No academics inside!

• THIS IS AN INDUSTRIAL PRESENTATION
• Please do not expect academic standards
• Please do not expect an academic structure
• My world might be different from your world
• ENJOY
AGENDA

- Current status of Industry
- Some examples
- What to do?
- All lost?
If we knew, what we know...

The knowledge management of most industry companies is immature

Mack the knife
And the shark, it has teeth,
And it wears them in its face.
And Macheath, he has a knife,
But the knife one doesn't see.
If we knew what we know

- Only few companies have a clear picture of their knowledge
- Knowledge Management is often focused on today's problem
- There is no sustainability approach in place for knowledge
- Industry companies do not have an appropriate overview of their knowledge
- Learning and Knowledge Management is either performed by a “global” approach or by personal preferences of the knowledge manager
Still sitting in the Ivory Tower?

- Knowledge Management is often seen as something from the “ivory tower”
  - Academic
  - Not generally applicable
  - No clear benefits case
  - Too complex for day to day work

- Knowledge Management is an academic approach, finding its way to industry, but has not been fully absorbed

- Paper ratio (academic / industry background)
  - Eknow 21:7
  - eLmL 14:7
Manage knowledge on appropriate level

- Is an Alpaca a Lama or a Camel?

Vicugna → Lama → Camelus

vicugna → pacos → guanicoe → glama → dromedarius → bactrianus
Campaigning with Quality Assurance

• In industry Knowledge Management is often combined with Quality Assurance

• It is not recognized that QA and KM might have completely different points of view

• QA measures against defined processes, procedures and rules

• KM defines the basis for setting up the rules

• How can I measure something, required to set up my measures and metrics?
Lying with Lessons Learned

- Knowledge Management is often reduced to Lessons Learned
- Lessons Learned are collected on project or programme level
- Lessons Learned are always evaluated based on the latest events and findings
- An approach, to derive knowledge from Lessons Learned, is missing
- Lessons Learned are often a “fig leave” (has to be done…) but not understood as an aid for the company
Trainers tick the box

• Training is performed on current needs

• Seldom training is used to deliver basic knowledge
  – What does an employee need to know, to do his job? vs.
  – What does an employee need to know to add benefit to the company?

• Training usually is properly planned, performed against plan, delivered and participation is recorded,

• BUT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

• How are progress and benefits measured?
The eLearning Myth

• In industry, eLearning is a tool approach, not a management approach

• eLearning is used to reduce the effort of trainers, not to extend the knowledge of employees

• eLearning allows companies to fulfil their responsibilities in the easiest way

• Focus is not knowledge improvement, but evidence that employees have been informed
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“No need to change, why should I?”

• In a large chemical company, it has been recognized, that the Standard Service Catalogues (SSC) are too complex.

• To help employees reducing the complexity of their SSC:
  – An analysis of the SSC content has been performed.
  – Rules for SSC simplification have been defined.
  – Employees have been trained in SSC complexity reduction.
  – A complexity reduction too has been provided to the employees.
  – The reasons for change have not been communicated.

• After 12 months, complexity of SSC has increased!
Have they learned their Lessons Learned?

Major Programme, 27 projects

Project Lessons Learned

Programme Lessons Learned

Organisation Lessons Learned

817 Lessons Learned

5% 43 Lessons Learned

5% (0.25%) 2 Lessons Learned

Motivation
Is a Code of Conduct or Onboarding important?

- eLearning Tool
- “Should not take longer than 60 minutes”
- “Should not take longer than 30 minutes”
- Videos between 2 and 5 minutes
- Standard test
- Average time till test has been passed
  - 19.5 minutes
  - 10.5 minutes
- Due to
  - “creative” usage of eLearning tool
  - Answer list on the intranet
How is knowledge delivered?

- Selection of training provider
- Tailoring of Standard Trainings
- Perform Training (25 Sessions, 260 employees)
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Trust

- Knowledge Management requires TRUST
- Managers have to trust in their employees capabilities
- Employees have to trust in the companies will to change
- Employees have to understand that knowledge sharing is appreciated
- Employees have to understand that required knowledge is provided, collected, used and improved
Reduce the noise

- Knowledge has to be collected and provided on the right level of detail

- Too much knowledge leads to “noise”. If a company does not understand what their essential knowledge is, how can they manage this knowledge?

- If companies do not provide sufficient knowledge, how can they expect that employees deliver the best results?
Insight!

- Knowledge has to be trustworthy
- Knowledge is based on evidence, not based on guessing
- Guessing leads to non-evaluated knowledge, ending in wrong decision
- To deliver good Knowledge Management, insight into knowledge and its base has to be reached
- Knowledge has to be stripped to the bone (but please to the right…)
What’s the knowledge behind knowledge?

- Often there is more knowledge than the obvious
- Even though high level knowledge is provided, it is not sufficient to fulfil the users need
- Good Knowledge Management looks after the “back story”
  - What do I need to know, to use this knowledge?
  - Are there any rules that have to be followed?
  - Under which circumstances has this knowledge already been used?
  - Are there “ceremonies” / “politics” around this knowledge?
What is the right way for you?

• Often there is more than one way to elicit, collect, document, evaluate and provide knowledge

• What do I need for my company?

• What do I need for my employees?

• What do I need for my management?

• What do I need compared to my competitors?

• What do I need to reach my benchmark?
Tools

- What are the right Knowledge Management Tools?
- Elicit knowledge
- Collect knowledge
- Document knowledge
- Evaluate knowledge
- Provide knowledge
- Measure progress
Who is in and who is out?

- Silverbacks are typically more than 12 years of age
- named for the distinctive patch of silver hair on their back which comes with maturity
- have large canine teeth which also come with maturity
- Without a silverback to protect them, the infants will likely fall victim to infanticide
- The silverback is the center of the troop's attention, making all the decisions, mediating conflicts, determining the movements of the group, leading the others to feeding sites and taking responsibility for the safety and well-being of the troop
Doing the right things right – what is the strategy?

• In lots of companies, Knowledge Management is a buzz word

• *They know that they need it, but don’t know how to use or facilitate it*

• Most companies are lacking a strategy, how Knowledge Management should be managed

• *Somebody has to lead the path from small and simple to big and beautiful*

• How much failure is allowed? (*before I do something wrong, I don’t do anything at all*)
Benefits!

- Every company needs a clear and well defined approach, how knowledge has to be managed
  - What are the goals?
  - What are the benefits?
  - What are the costs?
  - What are the work packages to reach Knowledge Management?

- Knowledge Management implementation is a benefits driven project!
Benefits!

- **Increase Benefits, Increase Cost**: Manage it!
- **Increase Benefits, Decrease Cost**: Do it!
- **Decrease Benefits, Decrease Cost**: Review it!
- **Decrease Benefits, Increase Cost**: Forget it!

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What is important?

- Stick with it!
- Allow them to run!
- Use the whip with consideration!
- Keep contact!
  But don’t hurt!

The blondes are nice, but not required!
What is the best approach to implement Knowledge Management in my company?

- Slowly and stepwise? – don’t overstrain the employees
- Big Bang? – make an impression, show that it is important!
- Am I mature enough for a Big Bang?
- Am I patient enough for a slow and stepwise implementation?

There is no silver bullet for the implementation of Knowledge Management. As in each major project, goals have to be defined at the beginning!
A new Management Discipline?

- Knowledge Management deserves the status of an own Management Discipline

- It is neither part of project management nor of change management, training, or process improvement

- Each major activity should have knowledge management as product or process attribute
  - Which existing knowledge is reused?
  - Which knowledge is added to the knowledge base?

- There is no result without learning

- There is no learning without knowledge
A new discipline for managers

- Managers have to share their knowledge
- Manager incentives should be based on company knowledge enhancement (at least partially).
- Usual incentive models are based on short term benefits (in time project completion, sales increase of the last 12 months…)
- A knowledge based incentive model looks for long term improvements
- This is only possible, if benefits from Knowledge Management are measured (⇒ visit the eLmL and eKNOW Panel tonight!)
Does KM go south?

- Knowledge Management is a hot potato in most companies – there is a risk that it gets burned!

- If Knowledge Management is used as management “fig leave”, it will degenerate to a YAM

- To allow proper Knowledge Management, there has to be a benefits case

- A benefits case can only be defined if metrics are in place to measure the current status of Knowledge Management and progress against the baseline

While yet a child
And ignorant of life,
I turned my wandering gaze
Up tow’rd the sun, as if with him
There were an ear to hear my wailings,
A heart, like mine,
To feel compassion for distress.
(Prometheus, J.W. von Goethe)