

## BUILDING THE BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP THROUGH KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

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**O**RGANIZATIONS are facing the problems, cross cultural alliance, mergers and acquisitions. The learning age demands judgment, autonomy and complex thinking right from the shop floor to the top management. The tenuous relationship between the IT organization and business presents a major challenge for business organization. Focus has been made on relationship management maturity model that was generated as a part of an action research project; the outcomes of the action research show the results of this relationship management initiative after one year and present maturity model that gives practitioners a knowledge management tool for enabling the gap to be bridged. This can be used, via further action research, to study both knowledge and relationship management in the IT discipline.

### Introduction

Knowledge learning is one of the important keys to success. Every human being from his/her birth gets into the process of learning. Organizations are now facing the problems of global competitions, cross cultural alliances mergers and acquisition, TQM and fast changing equation of power. The present learning age demands judgment, autonomy and complex thinking. Managers across the globe are busy in re-orienting themselves with strategic initiatives that could meet the upcoming challenges; strategic initiatives have to be both for becoming a global leader as also retaining the leadership.

Strategic (Harish, 2001) can be framed by acquiring knowledge with regard to.

- Customer both internal and external that the organization will be serving in the future.
- Different modes of motivation and methods of maintaining and nurturing harmonies, organizational culture, so as to keep the employees at work.
- Competitions moves and strategies.
- Skill and capacities required being cultivated in the employees to lead the organization to occupy a high ground in future.

### Knowledge Management Functionaries (Balhotra & Giriraj, 2005)

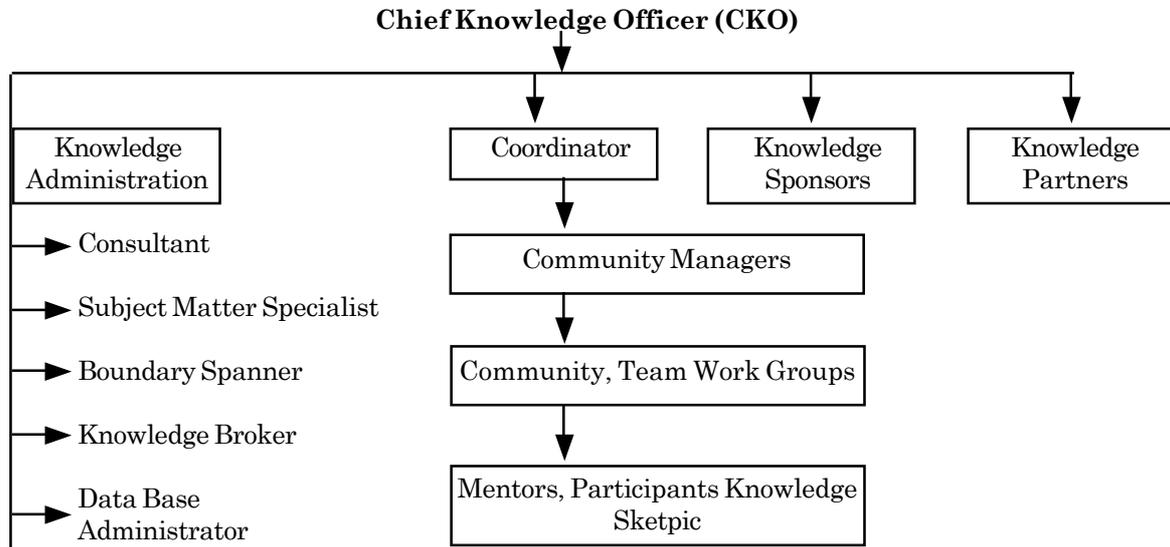
#### CKO – Chief Knowledge Officer

He is the prime – mover of the knowledge management (KM) initiatives in the organization. This role is played either by chief executive himself or the head of HRM division.

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**Subject Matter Specialist**

He is to approve contributions made by individuals / groups and assure quality in lesson in terms of readability, understandability, use of a common language etc also responsible for keeping track of new developments.

**Knowledge Administration (KA)** are responsible to help authors. KA are experts in the way knowledge elements have to be documented linked, structured and organized.

**Data Base Administration**

He develops policies, standards and procedures as well as the architecture of the knowledge management systems (KMS).

He is the final authority to develop support and maintain the technical implementation of the knowledge base ensures that it conforms with general IT standard and effect modification of the knowledge base structures.

**Knowledge Broker**

A knowledge broker is person helping participants to locate the knowledge or experts needed. He is a navigator to transfer wide KMS.

**Boundary Spanner**

He has to network fields of competencies and broken contacts between experts in different fields needed to realise new business ideas or between communities. They are responsible for the development of an inter-functional and inter-disciplinary network of relationship and thus are contact persons for the brokering of contacts with in and outside organization

**Knowledge Sponsor**

Knowledge sponsor is a senior executive of the organization implementing knowledge management who identifies with KM concepts.

**Community Manager**

He is the originator of a community sometimes split into a small group of people who initiated the community. He has the last word in the set up of policies and norms e.g. about participation in the community.

### **Mentor**

Mentor are person responsible for the development of new talent and for instilling their own tacit knowledge in new employees through a kind of informal apprenticeship mentoring is a deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced person, with the agreed up on goal of hearing the lesser skilled person grow and develop specific competencies. Mentoring function are like career functions such as sponsorship exposure, visibility coaching, protection and challenging assignment as well as psychological function such as role modeling acceptance and confirmation, counseling and friendship which enhance sense of competence, identity and effectiveness in a professional role.

### **Consultant**

He is specially trained internal or external person who interact with a member of the organization in order to improve the performance or motivation of the latter.

### **Coordinator**

The responsibility of the coordinator is to ensure that knowledge processes are carried out with in their area and oversee that knowledge created with in their unit is harnessed and spread across organization unit.

## **Wisdom Circles**

Knowledge management helps in enhancing organizational effectiveness there are organizations that are putting the concept of wisdom circle to practice knowledge management. Wisdom circle is a group of nominated individuals from various functions, having impact on the organization wisdom codes help in minimizing turn around time in strategy formation and lead to a continuous learning, ultimately leading the organization to be a learning centre and achieve competitive advantage.

Mr. Peter Senge's book on learning organization that made the term concept of knowledge management (KM). According to him "People continually expand their capacity to create result they truly desire: where new patterns of thinking are nurtured; where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn."

Some of the examples of Indian business organizations which have turned out to be successful in practicing Knowledge Management are as follows:

Satyam Computer Service (India), an ISO 9001 company, envisaged itself as a company wherein people are constantly learning how to learn together. For implementing knowledge management it has formed a core group comprising of various working groups from distant circles to debate on how knowledge can be acquired. The group is supposed of develop a prototype that would help capture and leverage knowledge and made accessible to all associates in the organization and the group came out with creation of corporate wide intranet having unique features as mentioned below:

- By replacing many routine administrative works with electronic versions on the intranet Satyam has reduced various administrative costs.
- At Satyam intranet is used for training and communicating with associates.
- Browser based library information and availability of experts on the corporate intranet makes the learning process live and meaningful.
- New job opening are posted on the intranet giving equal opportunity to all the aspirants.
- An online feedback mechanism is maintained to take care of employee's grievances and vision compass, software developed by Satyam enables associates to manage their performance with facts and data.

- Last but not the least, Satyam intranet is creation and maintenance of knowledge repository thus Satyam turned itself as learning organization practicing knowledge management successfully.

The tenuous relationship between the IT organization and the business presents a major challenge for business organization, especially in the area of knowledge management. The business IT gap can often be traced to a lack of knowledge of each other's issues and communication norms. Poor practice in these areas results in negative effects on knowledge sharing, leading to poor co-ordination of work practice, project management deficiencies and defective information system.

Here we present a relationship management maturity model that was generating as part of an action research project. It was designed to help a large financial services firm carry out an extensive effort to bridge this gap. The major focus of this program was to improve the relationship between IT and business via improved knowledge sharing. By addressing weaknesses in traditional IT driven approaches that have been regularly noted by knowledge management researchers, this innovative program accounts for the social networks between people in order to ensure that the right knowledge is shared at the right time across these networks. Over time, the program began to achieve its intended 'one - team' mentality goal and a knowledge sharing culture as the relationship management approach helped both business and IT personnel build networks that spanned the boundary them. The outcomes of the action research show the results of the relationship management initiative after one year, and present a maturity model practitioners a knowledge management tool for enabling the gap to be bridged. This can be used, via further action research, to study both knowledge and relationship management in the IT discipline.

## **Major Shortfall in Knowledge Professional Predicted by Analysts**

### ***Trained IT manpower needed to fill 5 million new jobs by 2012***

While India is riding high on the current global outsourcing wave, leading to a major growth in the ITES-BPO markets, it may not be entirely smooth sailing for the nascent industry in near future. Our silver lining, it appears has a dark cloud behind it and the dark cloud has taken the form of a severe manpower shortage, expected to hit the sector over the next few years. While India is talking with pride about its great manpower edge in the area of IT/ITES service, this giant pool of skilled professional it appears is not a self renewing resource. Industry watcher are already cautioning industry captain about the growing demand supply manpower gap in the IT sector, which could to be a major impediment to further development of the market. In the last two years – when owing to the overall global economic downturn, the IT domain witnessed a significant lowering of mercury and turned from hot to a cold market – there was a substantial dip in the number of people acquiring relevant skill for this segment. The student community, feeding on hype centered around the demise of the IT industry was the first to abandon ship and give up training for this segment. Today, when the IT market has once again done a volte face, placing the industry at the top of the job generation ladder, skepticism still persist about its viability as a career destination, preventing students and professional to come flocking back. Analysts insist that it will take a while for the IT fever to pick up once again and for IT jobs to reacquire their earlier shine and edge. These dynamic market conditions, where issues such as IT education are getting pushed to the back burner, are leading to even greater uncertainty about availability of “industry-relevant “professional.

## **Requisite Manpower: Key Growth Driver**

According to leading global business intelligence firms present in India, the Indian ITES sector is expected to grow at a CAGR of 44.2 percent during the 2003-2012 period, achieving revenues of US\$ 64 billion. The IT services exports segment is expected touch US\$ 55 billion with a CAGR of 24.8 percent in the same time frame, with the domestic IT services market recording annual growth of around 31 percent over the next eight years. Together, all three markets will log in revenues of US\$ 148 billion and momentum of 35 percent. On the manpower side, the requirement numbers are equally ambitious.

While the country currently employs around 210000 professionals in the are of IT exports, 250000 personal in the domestic IT services market and 160000 people in the ITES – BPO segments, the numbers are expect to jump substantially by 2008 and grow unto a vast need by 2012. By 2012, analysts say, India will have a requirement of 490000 professionals in the IT export market, 1.11 million in the domestic IT industry and a hefty 2.50 million in the ITES – BPO sector. In all, around five million new IT/ITES jobs will be generated over the next eight years (sources: NASSCOM- McKinesy 2004 Study/Ministry of CIT task Force Report).

### **Skill Sets Trends: Who's Needed?**

The trends indicate that very specific skill sets will be required by the IT industry over the next eight years. Tomorrow's enterprises, expected to be "completed connected," will need professional equipped to implement and manage networks. Similarly, security will also become a priority. The impacts of the 9/11 acts of terrorism in the US, escalating virus attacks and natural disasters have lead to a more serious consideration of security issues within global organization. Security has become a matter of board room discussion and companies are being to invest substantially in securing their vital information assets. The outcome of these trends is that new job profiles are emerging within the ICT sector. By 2012, the popular IT careers are likely to be those of Citrix Certified enterprise administrator, Sun certified system administrators, check point security administrators, Cisco certified network professional, Microsoft certified systems administrators, Certified information systems security professionals and Red hat certified engineers. The leading technologies available will continue to be the key development platforms. Customers will need increasingly complex and scaleable solutions that offer multi-vendor and cross- platform appeal. The software development segment will continue to generate a significant number of jobs with a large number of professional required in various new and emerging segments. The expectation is that by 2007, the ICT industry demand for java professionals will touch three million. Some of the order sill sets required will include C# and Visual Basic. net and people trained in applications development, database management, help desk end – user support, internet/ intranet development , networking, project management, systems/security analysis, database administration, Internet/Web architectures and networking. The bulk of the professionals will be absorbed by the help desk and networking segments (which will account for 28 percent and 23 percent of the available jobs by 2007). A recent study on IT jobs by India's leading IT association NASSCOM has added further insights on manpower requirement in the future. The surveys indicate that the popular platforms for software development over the next few years will be enterprise software (35.1 percent), net /Java/j2ee (22.2 percent), SQL (12.5 percent), Unix (17.7 percent), C ++ (11.4 percent). Cobol /CICS/DB 2 (10.8 percent), CRM (6.7 percent), Business intelligence / data warehousing (6.7 percent), Linux (5.8 percent), EDA/ASIC/VLSI (5 percent), ASP (4 percent), EAI (2.4 percent) and Content management (1.9 percent). India's student community needs to pay heed to these market developments and future job trends. A major career opportunity awaits them within the IT/ITES industries. They need to wrest this potential with both hands and gear up for what lies ahead. Similarly, Business Organizations coping with global competitions arisen due to shift in external environment should not behave like an Ostrich rather they should keep their antennas straight to sensitize what is occurring and what is probable to occur in the environment. Management Consultants are looking for new terms to describe techniques which are competent to make an organization progressive. Some of the terms are: Progressive Culture, Business Transformation, Re-engineering Organisation Learning, Learning Organisation Wisdom Circle and Knowledge Management (KM)

### **Conclusion**

HRD systems of an organization practicing or willing to practice knowledge management ought to be framed as follows:

- Conceptualizing organizational vision and communicating it all the members of the organization.

- Creating organizational culture that motivates promotes and rewards people to create, share and use knowledge.
- Recognizing employee's personal efforts for taking challenges, finding innovative ideas for doing the task in different ways and rewarding them accordingly.
- Drafting compensation structure that supports special arrangement of bonuses and incentives for those who seek or generate knowledge and utilize it effectively.
- Designing information systems that take regular feedback to guarantee ongoing information flow.
- Chalking out performance management system that is based on evaluation of employee's performance as well learning.
- Conducting education programmes for training and development.

In sum, it is time for organization to be flexible and thoughtful enough to open new ways of recruiting, retaining and motivating employees who are keen to learn, and can contribute to their growth and development. In an increasingly competitive market, survival and prosperity of business will depend critically on the quality of knowledge applied to the business processes. In such a scenario there is a great challenge before HRD people, to deploy the intangible asset (knowledge) of the members to the organization, if they really wish that their organization should be in business, and meet the challenges of tomorrow, successfully. If an organization aspires to be a learning organization, it should have a taste for learning and respect for knowledge. Lord David Cece has observed appropriately that – “The first step to knowledge is to know that we are ignorant”.

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