



UNDERSTANDING KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

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RESOURCES

- Bridging the Gaps: How to Transfer Knowledge in Today's Multigenerational Workplace
 - The Conference Board Research Report R-1428-08-RR
 - <http://www.wpboard.ca/english/pdfs/Bridging%20the%20Gaps.pdf>
- Knowledge Transfer in Today's Multigenerational Workplace
 - International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, <http://www.iita.org/>
 - Presentation: <http://www.slideshare.net/IITA-CO/knowledge-transfer-in-todays-multigenerational-workplace-what-it-takes-to-do-it-best>



OVERVIEW

- Define Knowledge Transfer
- Art and Practice of Knowledge Transfer
- 4 Generations of Learning Styles
- Process
- Methods of transferring Knowledge
- Barriers to Knowledge Transfer
- Benefits of Knowledge Transfer
- Questions/Comments



DEFINITION OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

- The practical problem of transferring knowledge from one part of an organization to another.
- Seeks to organize, create, capture or distribute knowledge and ensure its availability for future users.



DEFINITION OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER



- Knowledge Transfer is not about transferring knowledge alone, it involves the willingness of the other party or recipient or absorb the knowledge to his/her benefit.
- More than just a communication problem. If this were the case a memo or email would suffice.



ART & PRACTICE OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

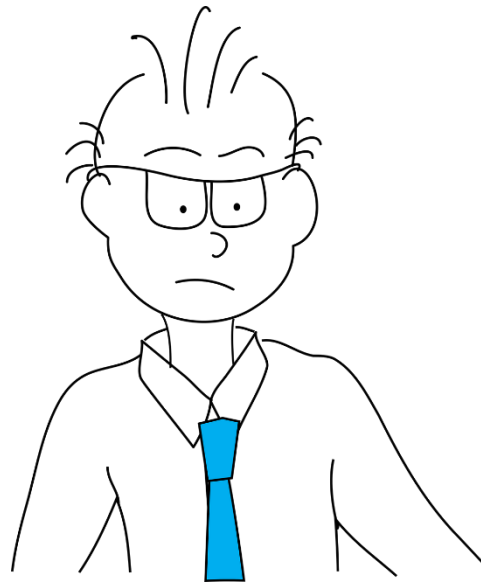


- In our private lives, often we transfer knowledge so easily and efficiently we don't even know we're doing it
 - Example: Asking for directions



ART & PRACTICE OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

- However, in organizations, effective and sustainable knowledge transfer is more complex because:
 - Knowledge resides in organizational members, tools, tasks and their subnetworks
 - Much knowledge is tacit or hard to articulate



IN KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER, AGE MATTERS

- Four Generations of Learning Styles
 - Matures or Veterans (born 1925-1945)
 - Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964, after WWII)
 - Boomers and their predecessors were educated through formal classroom instruction and texts
 - “Digital Immigrants”, did not grow up with computers
 - Like hard copies
 - Learning styles: verbal and text-driven, formal, and deductive (logical)



IN KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER, AGE MATTERS

- Four Generations of Learning Styles
 - Gen Xers (1965-1982)
 - Business casual
 - Formal and informal learning
 - Like to find real solutions to real problems
 - Adopted technology
 - Gen Yers/Millennials (1983-1995)
 - Digital Natives
 - Learn by discovery and exploration
 - Want to do, not be told
 - Jump right in – prefer trial and error
 - Connectivity is a hallmark (trademark)



IN KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER, AGE MATTERS



CAVEAT

When making generalizations about any group, caution is warranted. One will still find many differences within the generations, in addition to differences between them.



Knowledge Transfer Life Cycle*



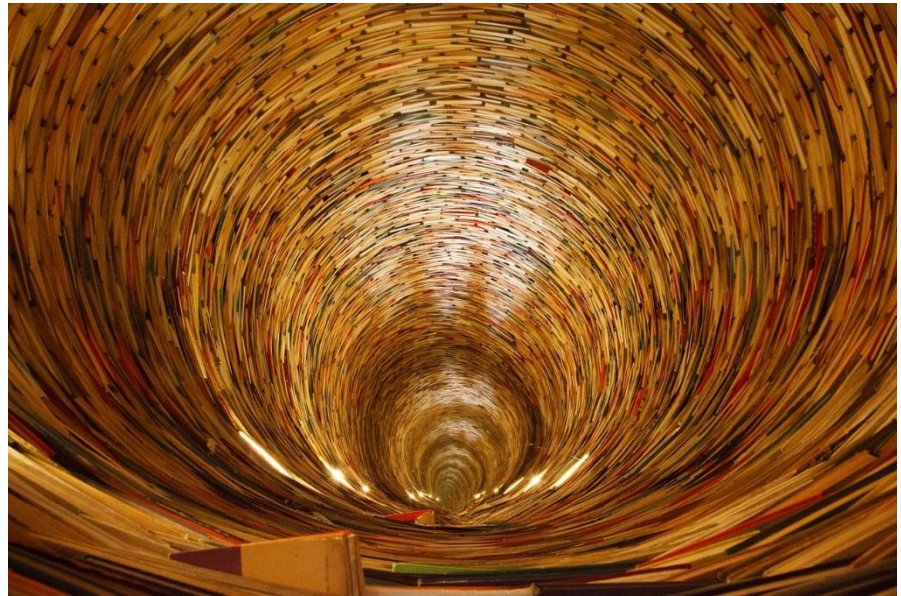
*International Institute of Tropical Agriculture



STEP 1

IDENTIFY & EVALUATE THE KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge doesn't exist in a vacuum
- Must be defined in terms of its
 - Context
 - Impact
 - Application
 - Contact Information
- Answers are essential to an transfer process



STEP 1

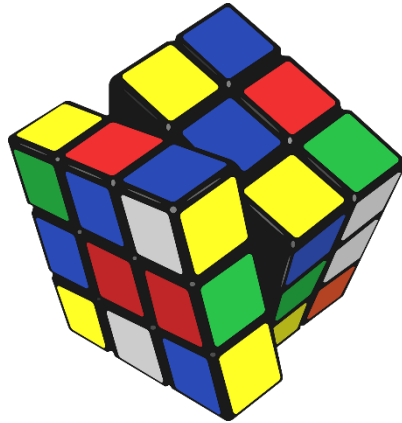
IDENTIFY & EVALUATE THE KNOWLEDGE

- Sources and Receivers of Knowledge
 - What is nature of the knowledge?
 - Why is it important to transfer?
 - How will it be used?
 - Who are the target users?
 - What are their learning styles/levels of expertise?
 - What knowledge is critical for success?
 - How will the users find and access the knowledge?
 - How will it be maintains and remain relevant and useable?



STEP 2

VALIDATE & DOCUMENT THE KNOWLEDGE



- Knowledge is usually complex
- Successful transfer efforts actively involve both the source of the knowledge and the receiver
 - Almost always a two-way street
- Receiver learns something new
- Knowledge source (or giver) may need to be persuaded of the value of the process



STEP 2

VALIDATE & DOCUMENT THE KNOWLEDGE

- Putting a value on knowledge
 - Helps those involved prioritize their times and effort accordingly
 - Motivates people to participate in the process
 - Helps both sources and receivers to determine if participation is worth their effort
- Establish performance expectations
 - Asking the source to provide documented value of the knowledge or practice as he/she has used it
 - Asking subject experts with relevant functions, peer groups if they have used the knowledge
 - Collect anecdotes or stories that reflect the benefit received by those who have used the knowledge



STEP 3

PUBLISH & SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge can be made public in two ways



- Push Approach

- Publishing Information
 - Website, Intranet, Newsletters, Publications

- Practitioners can find the knowledge

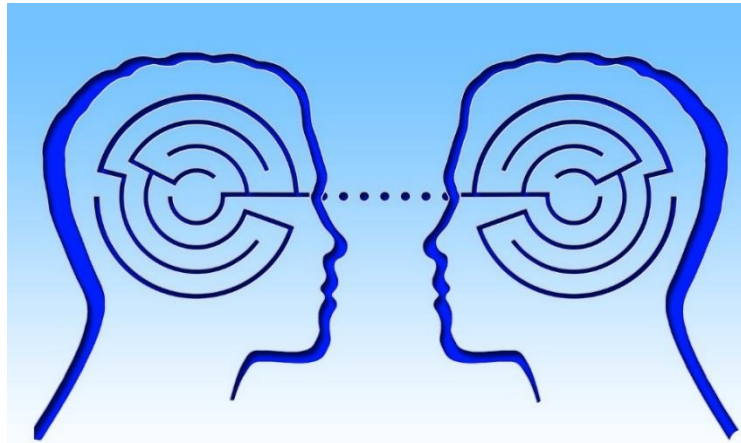
- Pull Approach

- Facilitated sharing between sources and receivers through various methods



STEP 4

TRANSFER & APPLY THE KNOWLEDGE

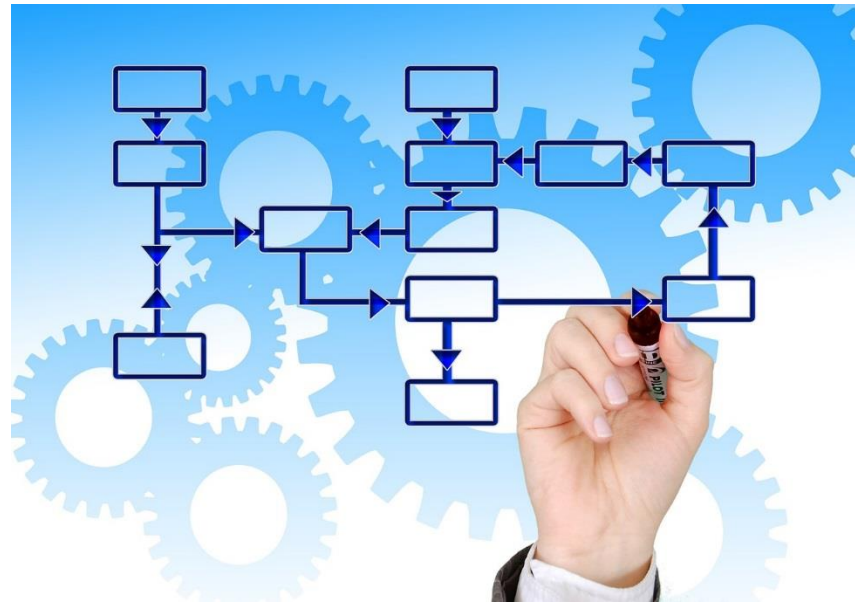


- Receiver acquires and applies the knowledge
- Variety of methods



HOW TO SELECT A KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER METHOD

- There is no “RIGHT” answer
- Why you want to transfer knowledge
- Receiver’s
 - Level of expertise
 - Learning styles/preferences
 - Applicable to same or different environment
 - Type of knowledge being transferred



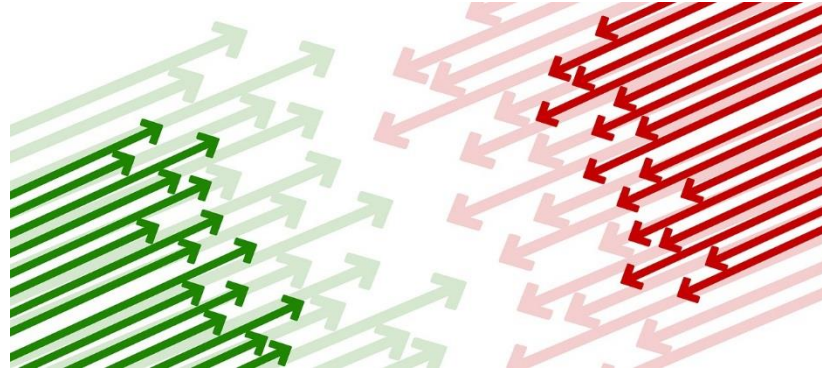
3 APPROACHES TO SELECTING A KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER METHOD



- By user needs
 - Individual, team, or organization has a specific need
- By context and types of knowledge
 - Individual, team, or organization has a type of knowledge to be transferred
- By level of experience
 - When the potential receiver of the knowledge has a specific level of experience



METHODS OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER



- Formal education & training
- Mentorship
- Paired work
- Apprenticeship (expert & novice)
- Work shadowing
- Narrative transfer
- Communities of practice (CoPs)
- Job rotation
- Knowledge elicitation interviews
- Guided experimentation
- Instant messaging



4 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

- Relational channel
 - Provide human-to-human connection necessary to support the transfer of tacit knowledge
- Partner similarity
 - Refers to the similarity that exists between the knowledge giver and receiver.
 - Similar backgrounds, level of experience, etc.
- Organizational self knowledge
 - Individual knows what they know as well as what other people know
- Divergence (difference) of interest
 - Divergence of interest between the sender and receiver can inhibit knowledge transfer



BARRIERS TO KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER



- Lack of Trust
- Motivational Issues
- Generational differences
- Misconceptions
- Lack of Interest
- Organizational Culture non-conducive to sharing (knowledge is power)
- Bad interpersonal relationship
- Lack of incentives
- Technological limitations
- Lack of Time
- Pride or low self esteem



INCENTIVES TO KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER



- 3 Key Incentives come into play
 - Reciprocity (mutual benefit)
 - Recognition
 - Altruism (selflessness)



BENEFITS OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

- Benefits range from tactical to strategic
 - Capturing of knowledge before it leaves
 - Step-change in productivity
 - Speed and agility
 - Transformation of organization's bottom line
 - Building to relationships
 - Creation of a conducive workplace
 - Risk reduction
 - Saving of time and costs



CONCLUSION

- People will continue to change jobs and/or retire
- Significant opportunity in strategic and targeted knowledge transfer
- Technology has created a larger gap between outgoing and incoming workforces
 - thus increasing the demand for knowledge transfer at the organization level
- Retaining critical knowledge in order to perform core processes seamlessly as a workforce



CONCLUSION

- Select a knowledge transfer method that suits your workplace
- Ensure flexibility on hierarchical structure and respect for individual values
- Encourage a two-way communication model
- Have a knowledgeable management database
- Provide a policy manual on knowledge transfer
- Recognize successes with knowledge transfer



QUESTIONS/COMMENTS



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