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Simplification of work:
Knowledge management
as a solution within
the European Institutions



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Simplification of work: Knowledge management as a solution within the European Institutions

European Institutions are increasingly required to do more with less resources whilst functioning in an environment with an overload of data and information. For individuals, it can become difficult to filter out what content is relevant for a given task, and once identified, frustrating to find that it is out of date or there is no single source of truth.

Today, Institutions struggle with many of the same issues associated with data, information and knowledge. One of the challenges we see is a tendency of silo working behaviour and as an outcome, the wheel is regularly reinvented. Another challenge is the difficulty of collaboration across boundaries and easy access to lessons learned, interlinked content and specialist knowledge. A further challenge is the establishment of a knowledge sharing culture where knowledge management is part of the business processes and where there is a clear knowledge management governance supported by roles and responsibilities regarding knowledge management and knowledge sharing.

Recognising a need to respond to this increasingly complex data driven landscape, Deloitte has invested in expertise and experience to help prepare European Institutions to effectively respond to these challenges. We have a proven methodology, the necessary experience and an established track-record having delivered knowledge management outcomes for a number of European Institutions.

What is knowledge management?

Knowledge management is the art of transforming information and intellectual assets into enduring value for an organisation's clients and its people. The core objective of knowledge management is getting the right information to the right people at the right times to help people share experiences and insights, and to improve the productivity of teams.

Knowledge management misconception:

A stand alone programme or project and should not be measured as such
An off the shelf product or programme that can be copied
Just about getting information and document management
Overloading people with information
Creating additional workload which will not add value
Purely a technology solution

Knowledge management is:

A way to improve efficiency and productivity to support achievement of organisational goals
Customised to the organisational structure, products and services
KM has an impact on systems, processes and people. It leads to a change in employee's behaviour and attitudes
Identifying and sharing the organisation's critical knowledge
Getting the most from the intellectual capital of the entire organisation
Integrating knowledge management in daily activities, processes and culture

But first, what is knowledge?

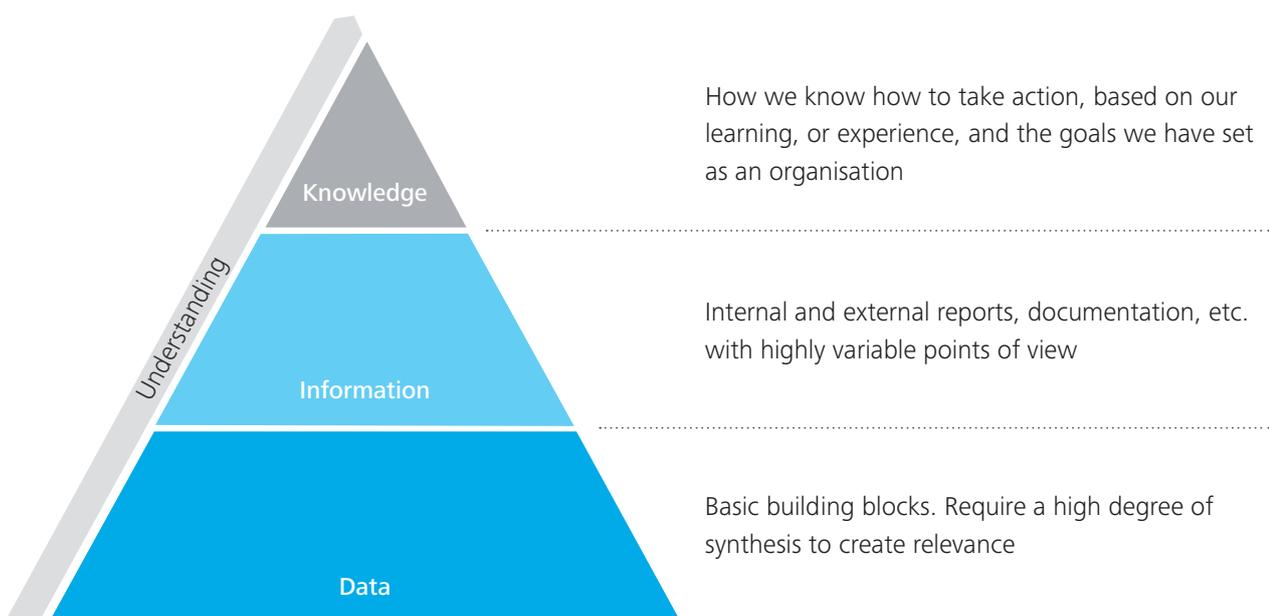
Knowledge is the most complete and relevant form of content exchanged within an organisation; but it is also the most difficult to capture. Data only becomes information and eventually knowledge through insight and experience. The question remains, how do we capture all of this knowledge?

When we talk about knowledge, we need to distinguish between two types of knowledge:

- **Explicit knowledge** – the captured facts, figures, data and information which physically exist in documents, repositories, etc.
- **Implicit / tacit knowledge** – the knowledge that is acquired over time through experience and education and that only exists in the heads of the people.

Explicit knowledge relates to the capture and storage of physical data and information in specific formats, files and composition. Explicit knowledge needs to be managed via effective document management systems that allow people to find back easily the knowledge they are looking for.

The management of **tacit knowledge** can happen in different ways. As there is a vast amount of critical knowledge in the heads of people, the goal cannot be to capture it all in documents or systems such as wiki's, memo's or learning. A way of managing this knowledge is by creating an expert network, where people can easily find experts that can help them in doing their job. Effective tools such as expert locator link people in an organisation to their expertise and contact details. Another way of managing tacit knowledge is to transfer to a broader group of people via mentoring, lunch seminars, etc.



Why invest in knowledge management?

Investing in knowledge management has proven to have numerous benefits to an organisation's ability to operate. For the Institutions we have worked with in the European Commission we have found that improved knowledge management has the following impacts:

- **Stimulates collaboration** – through knowledge forums and platforms and a desire to share the most up to date information
- **Increases efficiency** – via a reduction in search times and duplication of effort
- **Prevents outflow of knowledge** – as the knowledge is documented and remains accessible to the entire Institution
- **Improves decision making** – knowledge is accessible and decision making based on available facts and up to date data
- **Improves policy making** – due to accessibility of information, subject matter experts and insights
- **Fosters innovation** – increased efficiency leads to innovation as the capacity of staff increases and time is available to consider multiple solutions to a given task or problem
- **Improves reputation** – consistency of advice and ability to respond in short timeframes improves the overall reputation of an Institution
- **Increases personal satisfaction** – availability of information leads to lower levels of frustration, and increased job satisfaction as staff are more readily able to contribute and add value to existing data and insights

“Knowledge management is a discipline that promotes an integrated approach to identifying, capturing, evaluating, retrieving, and sharing all of an enterprise's information assets. These assets may include databases, documents, policies, procedures, and previously un-captured expertise and experience in individual workers.”

(Duhon, 1998)

Deloitte's view on knowledge management

Deloitte has a proven track record of delivering knowledge management services for European Institutions.

Deloitte has built a globally accepted knowledge management methodology with six components. All six components of a knowledge management framework must be addressed in order to create a sustainable knowledge sharing culture within an organisation. Improvements of knowledge management are facilitated through a combination of processes, tools and behaviours, enabling better connections and motivating people to share expertise, insights, learnings and best practices.



Strategic Alignment

Success requires knowledge management initiatives that contribute to the Institutions' strategy and goals. Success requires strategies to be part of employees' everyday actions and decisions. Establishing a clear vision and link between organisational strategy, organisational objectives and knowledge management strategy and practices is imperative for creating a shared understanding amongst leaders and staff around the decisions, actions, behaviours and messages required.

Leadership and governance

A governance structure with clear roles, responsibilities and top management sponsorship is essential to defining, driving, controlling and overseeing the implementation of knowledge management.

Effective governance translates senior leadership decisions into Institution-wide behaviours and ensures adherence to knowledge management practices. Assigning leadership roles and responsibilities is necessary to embed and support knowledge sharing, organisational learning and set knowledge management priorities, commitments and resource allocations.

People and Culture

Aligning key employee behaviours and creation of a knowledge management culture is essential for a successful execution of the knowledge management strategy. Creating a culture that shifts from "knowledge is power" to "we share our knowledge because we and our organisation benefit from it" is a very long journey. User adoption is created in stages and needs a multi-angled approach.

Process and Organisation

Leading organisations typically create defined methods for sharing knowledge and expertise. Knowledge goes through different lifecycle stages which need to be structured in a way that allows for consistency and standardisation in the capture, organisation and dissemination of knowledge.

Content and Context

There needs to be a focus on the identification, capture and management of core knowledge "assets" in order to better access and exploit intellectual capital.

Identifying Institution critical content & expertise and understanding the context of the events or situations in which it is used is imperative to delivering the right information to the right people at the right time. Employees will only engage in knowledge sharing practices if they get the information they are looking for when they need it.

Technology

Tooling must be in place to facilitate the knowledge management process of capturing, organising, searching, maintaining and disseminating the knowledge. Effective knowledge management therefore requires appropriate tools and technology to support the integration and automation of knowledge sharing into daily work activities. Technology helps to facilitate collaboration across the organisation providing the right content and expertise to the right people at the right time.

How can Deloitte Help?

Understanding your Institution and developing a knowledge management maturity

Linked to the knowledge management framework explained above, Deloitte has developed a knowledge management maturity scan, which is used to measure the maturity of knowledge management within the organisation (both 'As-Is' and the desired 'To-Be'). This maturity scan is an excellent basis to develop the knowledge management strategy and also an understanding of what areas of the framework need to be improved and how these should be prioritised in order to have the most disproportionate impact on the organisation's ability to improve operations. It serves as a guide for implementation efforts as well as a baseline comparison when reflecting on achievements over time.

The maturity scan can then be used to develop targeted implementation initiatives aligned to the six components of the knowledge management framework to improve knowledge management over time. As knowledge management is an evolutionary process and as knowledge management improves in the organisation, adhesion and success will come gradually. It is therefore better to plan multiple iterations and continuously make/review the business case to reach the target.

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Success requires knowledge management initiatives that contribute to the organisation's strategy and goals
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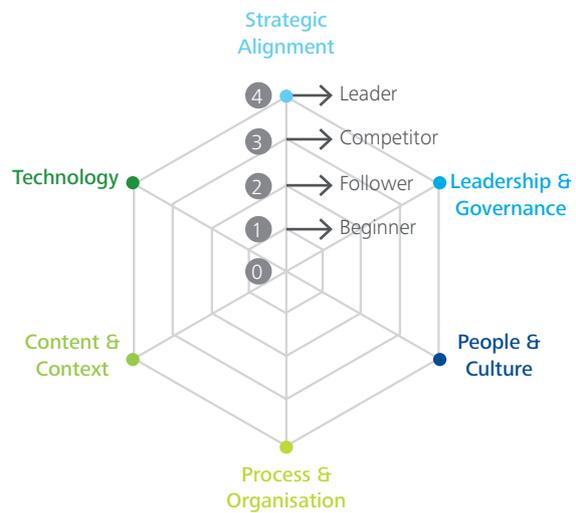
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Creation of a knowledge management culture is essential for a successful execution of the KM strategy. Stimulation of the behaviours of people in terms of knowledge sharing
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Processes provide a structure that allows for consistency and standardisation in the capture, organisation, maintenance and dissemination of knowledge
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Focus on the identification, capture and management of core knowledge „assets“ in order to better access and exploit intellectual capital
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Tooling must be in place to facilitate the knowledge management process of capturing, organising, searching, maintaining and disseminating the knowledge



Taking the next steps in improving the knowledge management maturity of your organisation

Next to the maturity scan, targeted implementation initiatives aligned to the six components of the knowledge management framework can be used to improve the knowledge management maturity over time. Furthermore, this initial analysis serves as a baseline for future comparisons.

Typical activities around each of the six components include:

Strategic alignment

Strategic alignment

Senior leadership alignment and establishing a clear vision and link between organisation strategy, organisation objectives and knowledge management strategy is imperative to creating a shared understanding amongst leaders and staff around the decisions, actions, behaviours and messages required. This can be amongst others achieved through a high impact workshop process with key decision makers from the Institution. Deloitte has designed and delivered this style of workshops many times over the past years and proved its added value through real impact and follow-up.

Leadership & Governance

Leadership and Governance

Leadership alignment programmes and clear knowledge management governance structures need to be put in place to assist in raising the awareness and understanding of why knowledge management practices are important and should be embedded within the workplace. The Deloitte team consists of a large team of experts in building these leadership alignment programmes and setting up governance models.

People & culture

People and Culture

Cultural change programmes including training and communication are aimed at building awareness in the organisation about what good knowledge management and knowledge sharing behaviours look like. These can be designed so behaviours can be tracked and monitored over time. Deloitte has a long-standing experience in building those programmes.

Processes & Organisation

Process and Organisation

Leading organisations typically create defined methods for sharing knowledge and expertise. Knowledge goes through different lifecycle stages which need to be structured in a way that allows for consistency and standardisation in the capture, organisation and dissemination of knowledge. Deloitte can assist by creating these formalised processes and defining the knowledge management organisation.

Content & context

Content and Context

Identifying Institution critical content & expertise and understanding the context of the events or situations in which it is used is imperative to delivering the right information to the right people at the right time. Employees will only engage in knowledge sharing practices if they get the information they need at the right time. Deloitte can help Institutions in creating a taxonomy and a knowledge assets inventory to classify and structure knowledge. This will lead to a clear overview of which knowledge can be found where.

Technology

Technology

Effective knowledge management requires appropriate tools and technology to support the integration and automation of knowledge sharing into daily work activities. Our Deloitte 'Technology' capabilities are fully in line with the standards at EU including Microsoft SharePoint, Atlassian/Confluence Wiki, SAP ECC, SAP Business Objects, Qlikview, SAS,

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Conclusion

Deloitte is known as a trusted advisor and implementer for knowledge management solutions within the European Commission. We have worked with a number of Directorate-Generals in implementing knowledge management systems and supporting the associated culture in order to help DG's realise their aspirations of improving knowledge sharing and reducing silo working behaviour.



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