

Appropriateness of different KM solutions in the IT industry

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Agenda

- Research topic
- Research aim
- Research questions
- Research method
- Propositions
- Research outcomes
- Conclusions
- Further research

Research topic

Analysing the appropriateness of different KM solutions in the IT industry.

Current status of the research:

For the time being only one company has been analysed.



Research aim

- Highlighting an appropriate composition of KM solutions in an IT-based company.
- Main features of the company analysed:
 - Knowledge intensive
 - Innovation oriented
 - Turbulent operational environment
 - Operates in the international market
 - Possesses a KM-system (database, forum, chat, wiki surface)

Research questions

- **RQ#1:** What are the likely ways of knowledge sharing when there is no formalized KM system in a company?
- **RQ#2:** What is the solution of KM preferred by the PMs?

Research method

- **Literature review**
- **Qualitative research method:** open ended interviews with project managers (PMs)
- **Population:** 50 PMs
- **Sample size:** 15 PMs
- **Duration of interviews:** ranged from 60 to 120 minutes

Propositions

- **P#1:** If there is no formal knowledge management system within the company, there is a high potential for the emergence of an informal knowledge sharing system.
- **P#2:** Project managers prefer interpersonal solutions to non-interpersonal (codified) solutions.
- **P#3:** Besides a knowledge management system (codified, non-interpersonal) the company needs interpersonal based solutions for knowledge management.

Research outcomes #1

- Before initiating any formal knowledge management system an informal and interpersonal knowledge sharing system existed:
 - *Self-organized forum*
 - *Contact list of other PMs*
 - *Basic solutions (discussion, phonecall, email, chat)*

Research outcomes #2

- Interpersonal solutions:
 - + *Providing sufficient information for the daily work*
 - + *Importance of human factor*
 - + *Faster adaptation to the changes*
 - + *Dynamism*
 - + *Speed*
 - *Limit of information*
- Non-interpersonal (codified):
 - + *Always available*
 - ± *Amount of information*
 - *Accessibility*

Research outcomes #3

- Process of knowledge gaining method:
 - First interpersonal
 - Then codified
 - Both are used
- Reasons:
 - Reliability
 - Availability of information
 - Organizational culture

Conclusions

- **P#1:** confirmed
Project managers used informal solutions (only interpersonal) before the development of the formal knowledge management system
- **P#2:** confirmed
Project managers emphasized especially the importance of the human factor but the other advantageous features are also significant.
- **P#3:** confirmed
PMs used both interpersonal and non-interpersonal (codified) knowledge sharing methods in order to gain the required amount of knowledge.
- Thus the existence of a formal knowledge management system is inevitable which encompasses both interpersonal and non-interpersonal (codified) solutions.

Further research

- Extend the number of companies involved in the research.
 - Analyze companies in the same industry with similar features
 - Analyze companies in the same industry with different
- Analyze other industries.