Knoco Newsletter

Sept 2015
The innovation issue

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KM Starter Offers

We have introduced a range of

What's the link between Innovation and KM? Are they opposites? Are they the same? Are they two sides of the same coin?

This newsletter explores the two concepts, and suggests ways in which they can be combined and made more effective.

(cc) BY

by Kay Kim(ê¹€ê¸°ì›…)

The myths of innovation

companies wishing to get started in KM.

These include quick and easy ways to

[Assess KM in your organisation](#)

[Build a KM Strategy](#)

[Scan knowledge topics, to find those most in need of attention](#)

[Gain engagement though a workshop](#)

[Understand your org. learning culture](#)

[Create a KM "proof of concept"](#)

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In his book ["The myths of creativity"](#) , David Burkus demystifies the innovation process, and explodes what he calls the top ten myths about creativity, based on his research with highly creative individuals and firms. These myths are as follows:

- The Eureka myth - that innovations arrive "out of the blue". The reality is that innovations occur as a result of a lot of hard work.
- The Breed myth - that some people are just more creative than others. The reality is that anyone can be innovative given the right process.
- The Originality myth - that creative ideas are original. The reality is that most innovations are a combination of existing knowledge.
- The Expert myth - that creativity comes from people who are experts in their field. The reality is that it often takes an outsider to spot the innovation potential.
- The Incentive myth - that you can incentivise people to be creative The reality is that incentives are usually counterpropductive.
- The Lone Expert myth - that creativity comes from inidividuals working alone. The reality is that innovation comes from teams working within [an innovation process.](#)
- The Brainstorming myth - that you can brainstorm creativity. The reality is that sitting round a table tossing out ideas is not enough.
- The Cohesive myth - that you have to suspend conflict to be able to innovate The reality is that a bit of conflict may be necessary to spark new ideas.
- The Constraints myth - that creativity must be unconstrained. The reality is that innovative teams work best under pressure.
- The Mousetrap myth - that once you have the creative idea, the world will beat a path to your door. The reality is that it won't. There is a lot of hard work needed to turn an idea into a product.

Contact us to develop an innovation approach that busts these myths.

In a contest between innovation and knowledge re-use, which would win?

The question of whether innovation or copying is a more effective social learning strategy was tested a few years ago in an online tournament. The competition involved several software agents, each programmed with different social learning strategies and diffieent approaches to learning/innovation, competing for scarce resource in a changing environment.

The results of the competition may surprise you.

The competition winners were the ones that spent most of their time learning from others rather than innovating

- Doing all the learning up front was is not a great idea, and the winners were good at spacing out learning throughout the agents' lives.
- They could almost learn at random. Other agents were already doing the filtering, and the unsuccessful agents did not survive to be copied.
- In variable environments the winning agent placed a higher value on more recently acquired knowledge and discounted older knowledge more readily.
- However for overall success, there needed to be some innovators around to learn from. Where the only agents were copiers with no innovators, they tended to end up with a poorer overall result.

Your knowledge management strategy should recognise the relative strengths and roles of innovation and knowledge re-use.

A personal view of innovation

By Ewa Stelmaszek

Yesterday somebody asked me for my opinion on a new client. Could they be a good target group for our product? Did I know this market? I had never worked with such a client, but something told me this could be important, so I called my friend who I supposed knew this market and asked him the same question. It turned out he also had no direct experience, but we started to talk, ask questions and give answers.

Ewa Stelmaszek, Knoco Poland

And so the rocket took off! After a 30-minute call we designed an outline of a great project that open new opportunities for my company. Does it turn the world upside down? No, but I believe it will open a new market, just because the turning in our thinking resulted in excellent idea. This was innovation, and the innovation was driven by the questions we asked. Every question triggered an answer, and every answer triggered a new question.

Knowledge arithmetic is different from what we were taught at school. At school we were taught that 1+1=2; but with knowledge, co-created between individuals, 1+1 is always more than 2. This is the way to innovation - giving people a chance to talk, a desire to talk, and to ask questions. This is the core of Knowledge Management and Innovation - having the right conversations about the right possibilities.

Developing the capacity for innovation

By Ian Corbett

What I want to share today is a new insight that has come through Knoco SA's investment in social responsibility through which we support Starting Chance - an intensive programme uplifting early childhood development centres in the poverty-stricken communities within the Cape Town metropolitan area.

My own ability to develop a problem statement and identify connections that enable innovation flows from an inherent (i.e. largely unconscious) capability linked to my early development of "Language for Reasoning" - this underpins capability in critical thinking and problem solving. If you don't have it, problem definition, for example, and the ability to apply insight to a situation, can be seriously impaired.

Our rigorous evaluation and monitoring of early childhood development in poor township communities has shown that the development of Language for Reasoning is a critical learning gap that is largely not addressed in pre-schools attended by children in poverty. Sadly, the parents of these children appear not to naturally help their children to acquire this core learning area in the home environment either. Evidence of this "learning gap" can also be seen in research I have been conducting in the University of Cape Town with post-graduate students for a number of years.

Ian Corbett, Knoco S Africa

Excitingly though, we are finding that capability in reasoning can be developed in pre-school teachers and their assistants (who generally have a basic secondary school education) through careful programme design. Lessons learned by KnocoSA through assisting Starting Chance to develop a knowledge asset for fieldworkers supporting the development of ECD teachers in poor communities are proving to be invaluable in identifying how to improve ways in which Knowledge Management can underpin the development of professional expertise in organisations.

Contact us to help develop your innovation capability

Knowledge, Innovation and Creativity

By Stephanie Barnes

One definition of creativity says it is the reorganization of experience into new configurations, a function of imagination, evaluation and knowledge.

When we talk of knowledge, that leads us to KM, which involves doing something with that knowledge. Sometimes that is something routine, like a support desk finding an answer for a customer; sometimes it's non-routine, like completing a project, or creating a strategy. Sometimes it's something brand new, like improving outpatient experiences at a hospital, or the creation of the iPhone.

Stephanie Barnes

KM processes support these activities. They are the left-brained processes that enable these things to happen, whether they are routine, non-routine, or brand new. I am an accountant by training, which involves a lot of processes, numbers, and guidelines, and which introduced me to the idea of knowledge management. We didn't call it KM, but we were expected to re-use the previous year's audit or tax file: we had checklists to follow to make sure we didn't miss anything, and we were supposed to talk to whoever had worked on the file the year before. These knowledge management activities made us quicker, more efficient and more effective.

So where do the creativity and innovation come in? The answer is TIME. TIME is what is necessary to create new knowledge and to learn. The reorganization of experience into new configurations through the use of knowledge, imagination, and evaluation are right-brain activities: creativity and innovation practices. Designing time into our processes and activities to create new knowledge or finding existing knowledge is the key success factor.

Contact us for help in planning what to do with that innovation time.

Innovating while having fun

By Javier Martinez

"Boss, we can have fun while working and generating a pipeline of innovative projects at the same time!!!" This was said by one of the employees at the Superintendence of Electricity

and Fuel (Chile) to their General Manager, at the presentation of one of the prototypes from several months of teamwork related to implementing an Innovation Management System with the assistance of Knoco Chile.

Since Sept 2014, Knoco Chile has been assisting SEF in implementing an innovation management system through an on-going process of training, coaching and on-the-job innovation. In the process, strategic challenges were laid out, 6 innovation teams were put together, knowledge innovation maps were generated, design-thinking methodology was followed, more than 300 new ideas were generated, 6 prototypes presented, and three projects are now under implementation.

Javier Martinez, Knoco Chile

Throughout the project, Alfresco was used as a collaborative software to document and share project knowledge, presentations, and products. One of the most noteworthy activities was the prototype testing with clients. For a public sector organization which is not used to talking to clients when designing its services, this was a major breakthrough, since having the clients´ view at the design stage changed significantly the way solutions were initially thought of.

Resistance from middle management has been an obstacle to overcome. Since ideas arise from a team, and reviewed by Innovation Committees, middle managers can feel left aside, and could prevent innovation from happening by, for example, not providing enough time to dedicate to innovation processes.

Innovation nowadays is critical for both private and public sector organisations, and often requires changes in the way innovation projects are generated and implemented. Innovation doesn´t happen when the same operational principles are applied, there has to be time and space dedicated to innovation with its own rules and process. Today many organisations are obsessed with operational results, and do not dedicate time to explore and innovate. According to a study from the John M. Olin School of Business at Washington University estimates that 40 percent of today's F500 companies on the S&P 500 will no longer exist in 10 years. Perhaps it is time to innovate?

KM Summit, Indonesia

Nick and Sapta at the Indonesia KM summit

KM Summit Indonesia was the first summit on Knowledge Management in Indonesia. This event was held on 25-27 August 2015 in Jakarta, Indonesia and attended by nearly 200 KM practitioners from various industries and organizations. The summit theme was "Boosting Business Result through Knowledge Management" and organized by Knowledge Management Society Indonesia (KMSI) and supported by Knoco Indonesia, SBM ITB and CKB4C.

Nick Milton from Knoco Ltd became a Keynote Speaker with a topic on "Innovation and KM, partners or competitors?" and a Workshop Facilitator discussing "How to introduce Knowledge Management and make it stick. Two of plenary speakers were from Pertamina and Unilever, winners of the 2013 Asian Most Admired Knowledge Enterprises (MAKE) study. The interesting one was that two other speakers shared their success stories without awaring that they had already implemented KM structurally. They were the Head of Agency for the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Aceh and Nias and the Head of Bantaeng Regency South Sulawesi. Other speakers were from BCA, Perusahaan Listrik Negara (PLN), Telkomsel, Pembangkit Jawa Bali (PJB), SBM ITB, and Aparatur Sipil Negara.

Other News

Knoco Spain

Knoco in Spain is now being represented by Neos, headed by Joaquim Carbonell. He believes that as knowledge is in people, people are the basis of every KM project.Since 1999 Joaquim has been developing Knowledge management projects, and providing training in soft skills related with KM and Strategic business planning. Contact Joaquim for details of the support he can offer you.

Joaquim Carbonell, Knoco Spain

Welcome to the Knoco family, Joaquim!

Reflections from KM Australia

This was a successful conference and my reflections centred around the following:

a) Change Management Projects still present a problem for organisations. Perhaps introducing a scheme of continuous improvement would be more productive given that, in our world today, change is constant. We believe the Knoco KM Strategy and Implementation Road Map is a plan to be implemented progressively through a series of pilots, not a single shot event or project.

Ian Fry, Knoco E Australia

b) The outcome of KM is the improved capability of the knowledge workers. This was brought home to me especially in the excellent session from Cirque du Soleil. This is what distinguishes KM from IM, and also represents a single phrase to discuss in order to gain buy-in - which still remains a hot topic amongst delegates.

Tom Young retires

As we announced in our last newsletter, Tom is retiring from Knoco at the end of September. All other contact details for Knoco remain as before, and Nick Milton will take over the chairmanship of the

company.

We wish Tom a long and happy retirement!

Stephanie Barnes moving

Stephanie will be standing down as our East Canada representative, and is moving to Berlin to mix KM with a growing career in the art world.

Nick Milton at KM world

Nick is planning to be at KM World in November, to deliver a workshop on "Pitfalls in KM implementation" together with Patrick Lambe of Straits Knowledge, as a way to build awareness of the book they are currently writing on Knowledge Management Implementation.

Busy times in South America

In August, Knoco Venezuela and Knoco Chile worked together to deliver part of the knowledge management training course for the Venezuelan Oil Giant PDVSA, and helped them launch their first 5 technical communities.

In September, Knoco Chile will be in Mexico be participating in the "360 Education Congress, strengthening Intelligence"