

## EMPLOYEE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN TECUMSEH PRODUCTS

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**Abstract:** Knowledge management plays a pivotal role in propelling organizations swiftly towards their objectives, enhancing the efficacy and productivity of business activities. The sustainability of knowledge advantage lies in its ability to generate increasing returns and continuous advantages. Prior to initiating the creation and management of knowledge within an organization, it is crucial to ensure that the organizational culture aligns with this endeavor. Potential challenges may arise, such as experts hesitating to share knowledge to maintain their influence. Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of management to actively support knowledge management activities, as neglecting this support would render the invested time and money futile. Internal politics within the organization can pose a hurdle to knowledge-sharing activities. Consequently, top management must take steps to create a conducive environment for the knowledge management process within the firm. The primary objective of this project is to ascertain the importance of Employee Knowledge Management, considering it as the intellectual capital of an organization. Additionally, it aims to understand employees' perceptions towards Employee. Findings from the project indicate that more than half of the employees lack proper knowledge about the systems and procedures within their departments. It is recommended that the organization focuses on activities that provide employees with more information about their respective departments. Furthermore, a significant portion of employees believes that the organization is not fully utilizing the knowledge available. Therefore, the organization should implement programs to encourage employees to contribute their knowledge in terms of innovation and creativity. To foster knowledge exchange among employees from various departments, the project suggests conducting more programs involving teams. It has been observed that a substantial amount of information is exchanged during mixed-team projects. In conclusion, creating awareness, encouraging knowledge contribution, and facilitating collaborative programs can significantly enhance Employee Knowledge Management within the organization.

## I. INTRODUCTION

People make up organizations, and the combined talents of these people make up human resources, which are among an organization's most important assets. According to Leon C. Megginson, human resources comprise all of an organization's employees' knowledge, skills, creative abilities, talents, and aptitudes as well as their values, attitudes, and beliefs. Megginson defined management as the effective method of carrying out tasks with and through people, including staffing, organizing, leading, and controlling in order to accomplish goals. As an essential subsystem, human resources are essential to this management process.

In contemporary management, human resource management (HRM) is regarded as one of the most complex and difficult domains. In addition to creating a productive workforce, HR managers have to take society's and employees' expectations into account. The traditional personnel approaches emphasizing command and control have given way to new approaches marked by greater employee involvement, allowing workers to manage various aspects, including budgets and inventory control, with minimal direct supervision from top management.

The current scenario demands a shift in how employees are managed. The need for flexibility in corporate human resource strategy has replaced the standardized and consistent approaches prevalent before the 1980s. While an organization's people are its most critical assets, the successful management of human resources is dynamic and challenging.

There is a clear difference between personnel management in previous decades and modern HRM.

The human resource method currently has priority over the scientific management and human relations approaches, which have come and gone. The "people" side of management, or HRM, includes all of the operations intended to support and manage an organization's human resources.

Employee knowledge management has become a vital business strategy for companies all over the world, particularly in the age of fierce international competition. It entails controlling and utilizing organizational knowledge to gain a long-term competitive advantage. Knowledge management has become essential due to changes in the global economy, especially for large multinational corporations that operate on a global scale.

The process of finding, choosing, organizing, disseminating, and transferring critical knowledge and expertise required for tasks like problem-solving, dynamic learning, strategic planning, and decision-making is known as knowledge management.

The coexistence of people, processes, and technology is essential to knowledge management maturity. Knowledge Management is a process facilitating organizations in finding, selecting, organizing, disseminating, and transferring crucial information and expertise necessary for activities such as problem-solving, dynamic learning, strategic planning, and decision-making. The coexistence of technology, processes, and people is crucial for attaining maturity in Knowledge Management.

To sum up, knowledge management is essential for businesses looking to gain a competitive edge in the fast-paced, cutthroat market. It entails making effective use of and investing in an organization's knowledge assets to help it achieve its goals. The significance of knowledge in making decisions and making plans for the future is highlighted by the hierarchy of data, information, knowledge, and wisdom. Managing involves dealing with individual tasks, groups, and organizational objectives at various levels. The goal of knowledge management is to advance an organization by utilizing and developing its knowledge assets.

### **OBJECTIVES OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR EMPLOYEES**

The following 13 goals guide the launch of this project:

1. To evaluate Employee Knowledge Management's importance as an organization's intellectual capital.
2. To determine how Employee Knowledge Management (EKM) contributes to efficient HRM.
3. To comprehend how staff members view employee knowledge management.
4. To investigate the procedures and techniques used in EKM, or employee knowledge management.
5. To assess how EKM affects HRM's effectiveness.

### **SCOPE OF STUDY**

The following methods can be used to define the scope of EKM:

1. Information management tools are provided by EKM mechanics.
2. EKM Culture incorporates learning as a communal endeavour.
3. EKM Systems include knowledge sharing as an essential component of the company culture.
4. EKM emphasizes cooperation and common interests among people in different places and time zones.

## II. NEED FOR STUDY

The following justifies the importance of the study:

1. A review of the procedures and techniques employed in Knowledge Management implementation.
2. Being aware of how crucial employee knowledge management is to the efficiency of an organization.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### RESEARCH DESIGN:

The research design outlines the overall framework and methods for acquiring necessary information.

### STUDY TOOLS:

- **PRIMARY DATA:**
  - Primary data is collected directly from employees through interviews and questionnaires.
    - *INTERVIEW METHOD*: Involves oral presentations and verbal responses.
    - *QUESTIONNAIRE METHOD*: Utilizes a standard questionnaire to interact with employees and gather required information.
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- **SECONDARY DATA:**
  - Secondary data is collected from company brochures, records, magazines, books, and other sources.

### SAMPLE SIZE:

A sample size of 150 employees from various departments, such as HRD, Finance, Supply Chain, Marketing, Corporate, IT, and Quality Departments.

### EVALUATION TECHNIQUE:

The percentage method is employed to calculate the percentages based on employees' responses, followed by graphical representation and drawing relevant conclusions.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is constrained by the capabilities and willingness of respondents to answer questions.
2. Some questions are restricted to managerial cadre, answered by them only.
3. Questions 15 and 16 represent the views of employees, making them non-parametric.
4. The study is limited to the Hyderabad branch.
5. The sample size may be small for conclusive results.

6. The short time period (45 days) is insufficient for a detailed study.
7. The study is confined to academic purposes only.
- 8.

### **III. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Organizations need to be able to comprehend their knowledge base and use it to their advantage in order to obtain a competitive advantage in the current competitive market environment. Nonaka and Takeuchi emphasize this need by claiming that knowledge is the only source of long-term competitive advantage in an unpredictable economy. Businesses that are successful constantly produce, share, and incorporate new knowledge into their products and technologies.

#### **EMPLOYEE KNOWLEDGE IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:**

According to Davenport, knowledge is a fluid combination of expert insight, contextual knowledge, values, and framed experience that originates and is applied in the minds of knowledge owners. Within organizations, information is ingrained in records, archives, organizational procedures, guidelines, and standards.

Ryle categorizes knowledge into knowing why (gained through understanding concepts and frameworks), knowing how (capacity for action, understanding facts and procedures), and knowing that (codification of factual knowledge based on prior experience). The importance of knowledge management is emphasized due to:

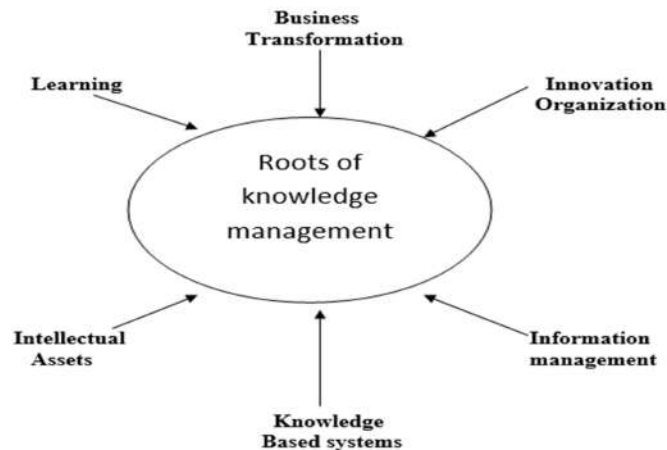
- The necessity of lifelong learning is an unavoidable fact.
- The growing importance of knowledge as the cornerstone of successful organizations.
- The inability of information technology and financial models to accurately predict and produce significant benefits.
- The spread of international competencies that result in economies centred on services. According to a PricewaterhouseCoopers and World Economic Forum survey, 95% of CEOs believe knowledge management is crucial to the success of their business.

#### **WHY KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:**

The field of knowledge management has gained prominence due to various reasons:

- The market is changing quickly, which calls for quick differentiation and cost-effective production.
- Strong competition drives companies to cut expenses, which causes early retirements and more worker mobility, which leads to knowledge loss.
- Businesses forced to compete on the basis of their expertise.
- The market's growing level of competition.
- The requirement, resulting from staffing reductions, to replace informal knowledge with formal methods.
- Pressure from competition leading to workforce reduction.

#### ROOTS OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT



#### **LEARNING ORGANIZATION:**

Knowledge management is based on an organization's adherence to required norms and its designation as a learning organization.

#### **INTELLECTUAL ASSETS:**

Intellectual assets within an organization consist of individuals who have gained expertise through years of work experience, and this knowledge, often tacit, needs to be made explicit and managed to leverage it for a competitive advantage.

#### **KNOWLEDGE-BASED SYSTEMS:**

Systems evolved within an organization to facilitate its smooth functioning should also aid in harnessing existing knowledge. These systems become a basis for knowledge management.

#### **INFORMATION MANAGEMENT:**

Information is at the core of knowledge management. Proper information management systems, combining information with experience and intuition, lead to effective knowledge management.

#### IV. Company Profile:

In Hillsdale, Michigan, Ray W. Herrick 3 founded the Hillsdale Machine and Tools Company in 1930, which gave rise to Tecumseh Products Company. Ray Herrick, a former employee of Ford Motor Company, started out making car parts and electric refrigerator components in the small town 60 miles southwest of Detroit. Later on, the business changed its name to Tecumseh in honor of the town. Tecumseh went public in 1937 with a 25,000 share offering. Tecumseh, which translates to "Crouching Panther," was named after the Shawnee chief Tecumseh (1768–1813).

Tecumseh initially did not find success in the automotive sector, but rather in the expanding refrigeration industry. The company was manufacturing 160,000 compressors per year for mechanical refrigerators by 1939. Tecumseh restarted compressor manufacturing after World War II, and in 1947 it added compressors for window air conditioners to its lineup of products. The business made a big impact on the outdoor power equipment market in 1950 when it bought Lauson Engine and Power Products, two Wisconsin-based small engine manufacturers.

Tecumseh currently has operations in more than 30 major countries and produces compressors, engines, and pumps at facilities in the US, Brazil, Canada, the Czech Republic, France, and India. Presently, Tecumseh operates over 30 principal locations globally, producing compressors, engines, and pumps with facilities in Brazil, Canada, the Czech Republic, France, India, and the US. The company's compressors are sold in four major segments:

1. Household refrigerators and freezers
2. Room air conditioners
3. Commercial devices, including freezers, dehumidifiers, water coolers, and welding machines.

Compressors are sold by Tecumseh to cooling product distributors both domestically and internationally.

The company is still investing in creating new and enhanced products, and its engineering department at headquarters serves as the Tecumseh group's technology hub, complete with a range of testing facilities.

Tecumseh Products Company, renowned for its product innovation, customer dependability, and quality, has been a constant force in the air conditioning and refrigeration industry,

touching the lives of millions of people for more than 75 years. Various milestones have demonstrated the innovative spirit of the company.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 1. How many Sub-Ordinates do you have?

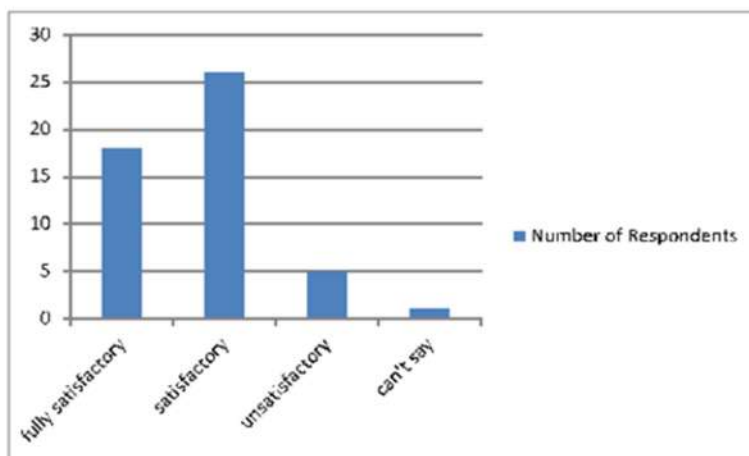
A) 1 to 5

B) 5 to 10

C) Above 10

D) None

| Attributes | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|            |                       |                |
| 1 to 5     | 15                    | 30%            |
| 5 to 10    | 8                     | 16%            |
| Above 10   | 7                     | 14%            |
| None       | 20                    | 40%            |
| Total      | 50                    | 100%           |



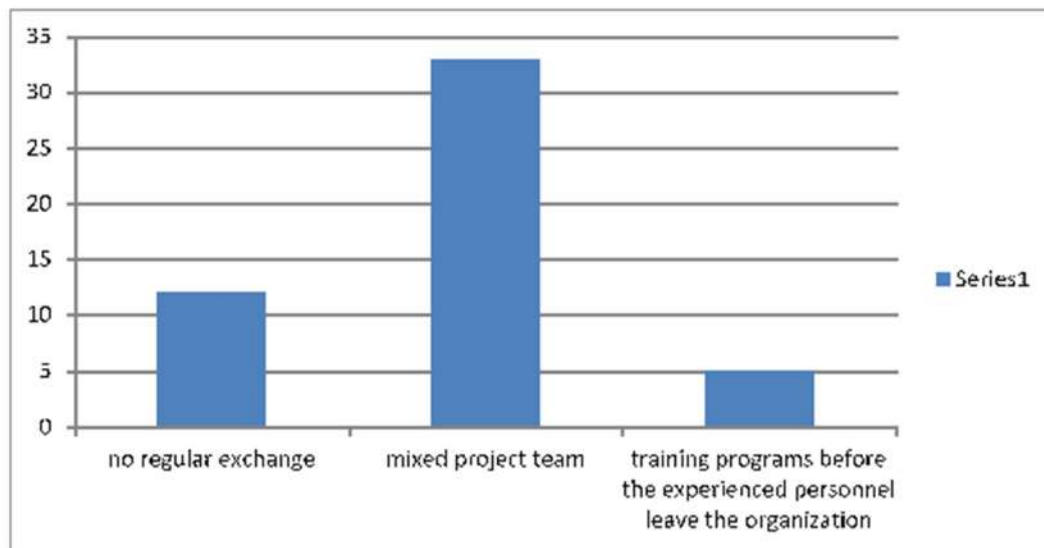
### Interpretation:

From the above table we can find that 21% of employees have 1 to 5 sub-ordinates, 18% of employees have 5 to 10, 7% have above 10 and 54% employees does not have any sub-ordinates.

## 2. Do you have an overview of the system/ procedure available within your department?

- A) Yes, I have good general overview.
- B) Yes, I have overview in my field of activity.
- C) No, I still need to get good view.

| Attributes                   | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Yes, I have good overview    | 22                    | 44%            |
| Only in my field of activity | 16                    | 32%            |
| No, I still need to get.     | 12                    | 24%            |
| Total                        | 50                    | 100%           |



### Interpretation:

From the above table we can see that 57% of employees say that they have good overview of procedure in their department, 24% say they have only in their field of activity, 19% say they still need to get the overview of their systems/ procedures

### 3. Please indicate which kind of knowledge you acquired, you are actually using?

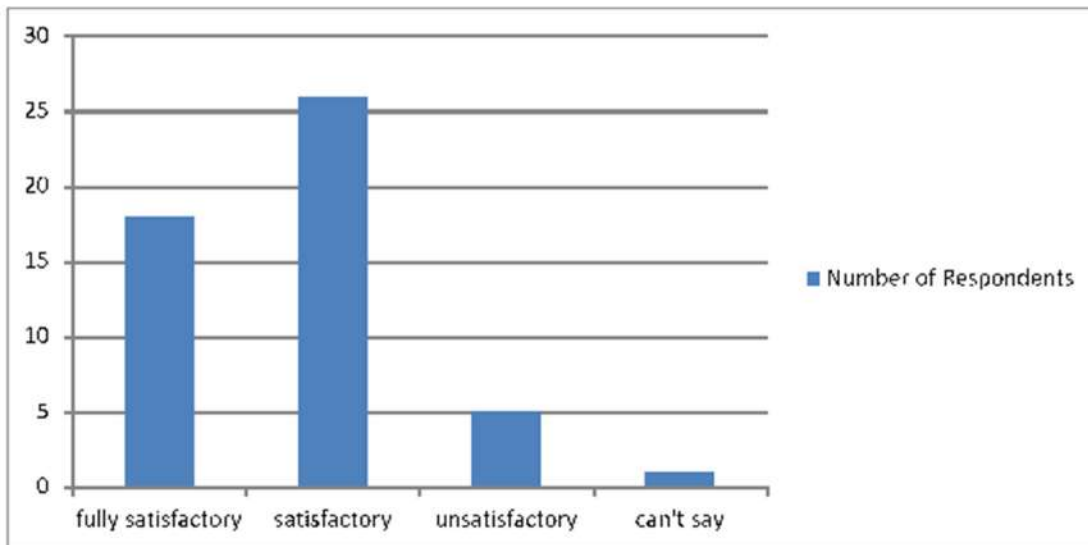
A) Knowledge gained from professional experience

B) Basic knowledge (Studies)

C) Privately acquired knowledge

D) Special Corporate In-house Knowledge

| Attributes                                  | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| knowledge gain from professional experience | 22                    | 44%            |
| basic knowledge                             | 13                    | 26%            |
| private acquired knowledge                  | 10                    | 20%            |
| special corporate in-house knowledge        | 5                     | 10%            |
| <b>Total</b>                                | <b>50</b>             | <b>100%</b>    |



#### Interpretation:

44% of Knowledge gained from professional experience. 26% from basic knowledge 20% acquired from private acquired knowledge and 10% from special corporate in-house knowledge

#### 4. How do you start to solve a problem?

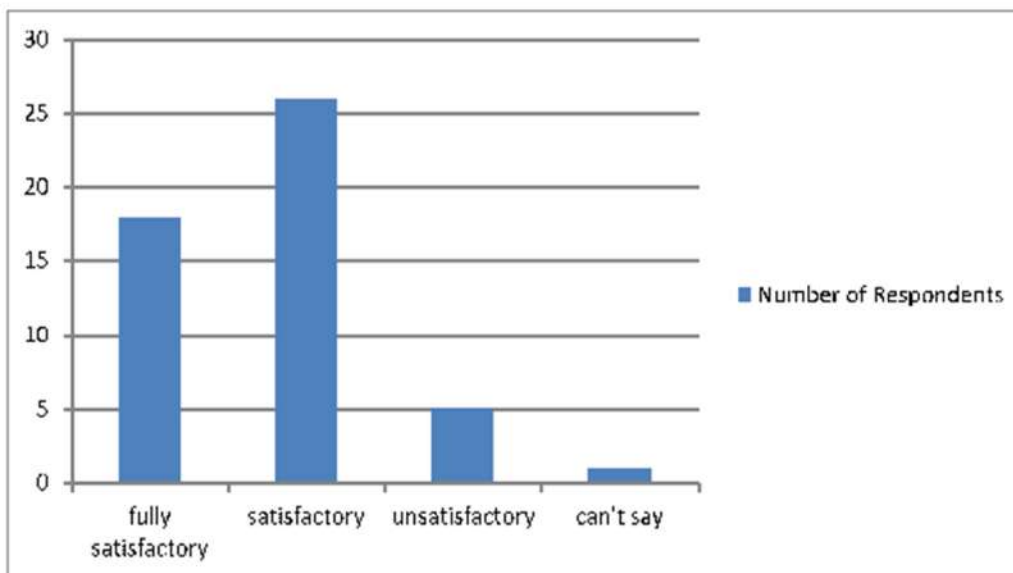
A) I try to approach the task by inquiring others.

B) I delegate the task to others.

C) I establish a team.

D) I use the know-how of previous projects.

| Attributes                                      | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| I try to approach the task by inquiring others. | 24                    | 48%            |
| I delegate the task to others.                  | 13                    | 26%            |
| I establish a team                              | 8                     | 16%            |
| I use to know how of previous projects.         | 5                     | 10%            |
| Total   | 50                    | 100%           |



#### Interpretation:

50% are trying to approach the task by inquiring others, 35% delegate the task to others. 9% establish a team and 6% use the know-how of previous projects

### 5. What external source you prefer to obtain information?

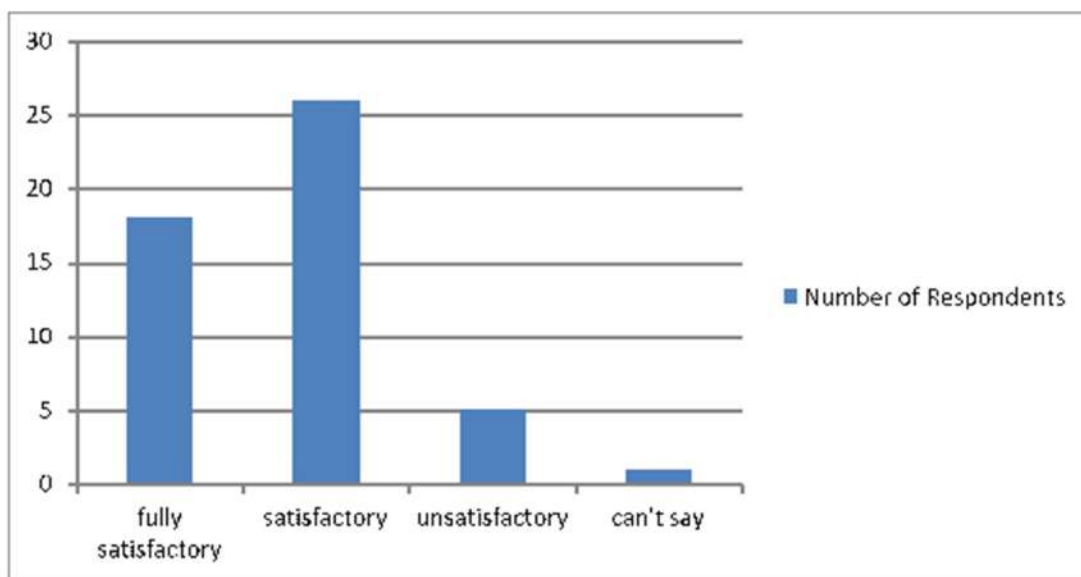
A) Internet

B) Research Institutes

C) Reading books/ Library

D) Professional Literature

| Attributes              | Number of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| internet                | 23                    | 46%            |
| research institutes     | 7                     | 14%            |
| reading books/ library  | 11                    | 22%            |
| professional literature | 9                     | 18%            |
| Total                   | 50                    | 100%           |



### Interpretation:

43% of external source of information is obtained through Internet, 10% from Research Institutes, 26% from Reading books/ Library, and the remaining 21% from Professional Literature

## V. FINDINGS & SUGGESTIONS

### Organizational Improvement Recommendations:

1. A large percentage of employees are unfamiliar with the protocols and systems 16 that are used in their departments. Consequently, the company ought to give top priority to programs that give staff member's thorough departmental information.
2. Recognizing that a majority of employees are inherently self-motivated and excel as team players, the organization should leverage this valuable human resource. Efforts should be directed towards safeguarding and promoting employee interests.
3. To enhance access to information, organization should diversify its sources for employees. Emphasizing platforms such as the internet, research institutes, and professional literature will broaden the avenues through which employees can acquire information.
4. Many employees perceive that organization is not fully harnessing their knowledge. To address this, the organization should initiate programs encouraging employees to contribute their knowledge, particularly in terms of fostering innovation and creativity.
5. To facilitate knowledge and information exchange among employees from different departments, the organization should organize more team-centric programs. Mixed-team projects have proven to be effective in promoting information sharing.
6. Solicit employee input on career development and enhancing the knowledge culture within the organization. Implementing the ideas generated from employees will contribute to a more dynamic and progressive organizational environment.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

Knowledge management serves as a catalyst, propelling organizations towards their objectives with increased speed and efficacy. This approach renders business activities more effective and productive, establishing a sustainable advantage as it continually generates increasing returns and ongoing benefits.

However, the successful implementation of knowledge management necessitates a conducive organizational culture. Potential challenges arise when experts, crucial for knowledge sharing, may be reluctant to impart their insights to subordinates, driven by a desire to maintain influence and significance. It becomes the responsibility of the management to actively support knowledge management activities to prevent wastage of time and resources. Negotiating organizational politics presents another hurdle, capable

of impeding knowledge-sharing endeavors. Therefore, top management holds the key to creating an environment conducive to the knowledge management process.

Knowledge retention emerges as a pivotal aspect of knowledge management. Organizations recognize the potential magnitude of loss associated with the departure of a key individual possessing critical knowledge. Consequently, companies must proactively work towards retaining organizational knowledge by ensuring the retention of knowledgeable employees.

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