**Evaluation of Capturing and preparation of Knowledge Assets for**

**Organizational Learning and Knowledge Sharing**

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**Abstract**

***Purpose/ Aim:*** The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the capturing and preparation of knowledge assets for organizational learning and knowledge sharing. Organizational learning is an area of knowledge within organizational theory that studies the way an organization learns and adapts. Organizational Learning involves making tacit theories of action explicit so that people can become aware of, critically examine, and change them. It facilitates accountability by increasing self-awareness and enhancing the ability to exercise conscious choice and intention. Knowledge assets as stocks of knowledge from which services are expected to flow for a period of time that they may be hard to specify in advance with an economic life viable with industry and market context. It gave insights on knowledge sharing as how organizations systematically learns from its mistakes and build on its successes.

***Research Design:***The paper adopted conceptual approach. It determines the concept of Knowledge assets, organizational learning, Identifying and Managing Knowledge Assets, Knowledge sharing, Five- step process for capturing and preparing knowledge assets for organizational learning and knowledge sharing such as; Identification, Capturing, Validation, Formatting and Use in learning, Importance of Identification in the process of capturing solutions for learning, Comprehensive institution wide identification, Importance of capturing solutions for learning, Criteria for Knowledge Capturing, Importance of Validation in the process of capturing solutions for learning, Validation Criteria, Importance of formatting in the process of capturing solutions for learning, Importance of use in learning in the process of capturing solutions for learning, conclusion and recommendations. knowledge assets as, stocks of knowledge from which services are expected to flow for a period of time that may be hard to specify in advance, with an economic life viable within industry and market context. Organizational Learning involves making tacit theories of action explicit so that people can become aware of, critically examine, and change them. In order to make use of knowledge assets and to manage knowledge creation and exploitation. Effectively organizations must be able to identify and quantify these resources. A knowledge-sharing organization systematically learns from its mistakes and builds on its successes. Capturing means recording lessons learned from an experience or event Validation ensures that captured knowledge is presented truthfully, correctly, and in a professional and accessible manner. Formatting involves applying a common, consistent, and user-friendly presentation standard, or format, to all users

***Significance/ Implications***: In order to make use of knowledge assets and to manage knowledge creation and exploitation. Effectively organizations must be able to identify and quantify these resources. Hence, a company has to map its stocks of knowledge assets while keeping in mind that they are dynamic and new knowledge assets can be created from existing ones. A knowledge-sharing organization systematically learns from its mistakes and builds on its successes. It sees knowledge as an important currency and values its operational experiences as opportunities for learning for organizations have the potential to continuously improve service delivery their own and that of peer organizations in their country and throughout the world. However, knowledge-sharing organizations are not born they are made. They must decide to overcome natural barriers to knowledge sharing.

***Key words*:** Knowledge capturing; Knowledge sharing; Knowledge assets; organizational learning and; Organizational learning*.*

*Introduction*

Organizational learning is an area of knowledge within organizational theory that studies the way an organization learns and adapts. It is also defined as a system of actions, actors, symbols, and processes that enables an organization to transform information into valued knowledge which in turn increases its long-run adaptive capacity Schwandt (1993). Organizational Learning involves making tacit theories of action explicit so that people can become aware of, critically examine, and change them. It facilitates accountability by increasing self-awareness and enhancing the ability to exercise conscious choice and intention Lipshitz, F. & Popper (2007). To increase the organization’s readiness one must develop the capability to learn how to learn Policy, structures and skills Schön (1975). The right knowledge at the right time and place can be crucial to overcoming barriers and aiding decision making. But what is the right knowledge? Organizations need to determine what is worth sharing and what is not.

*Knowledge Assets*

Nonaka (2000) regard the knowledge assets as the basis of knowledge-creating process and define them as firm-specific resources that are indispensable to create values for the firm. There are various other definitions of knowledge assets. Boisot (1999) defined the knowledge assets as, stocks of knowledge from which services are expected to flow for a period of time that may be hard to specify in advance, with an economic life viable within industry and market context. However, Nonaka’s definition is the most comprehensive one. Knowledge assets must be readily searchable and available to serve immediate operational needs, but they are also a valuable resource for training new and existing staff members and for building knowledge-sharing relationships.

Learning organization is an organization that is skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge. It is the modifying of behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights. Dubrin (2005). As defined by Peter Senge, learning organizations exhibit five main characteristics namely; personal mastery, mental models, a shared vision, team learning, and the fifth, integrative characteristic systems thinking. Senge (2006).

*Organizational Learning*

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*Identifying and Managing Knowledge Assets*

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effectively organizations must be able to identify and quantify these resources. Hence, a

company has to map its stocks of knowledge assets while keeping in mind that they are

dynamic and new knowledge assets can be created from existing ones. Nonaka et al., (2000).

The importance of knowledge assets depends on the goals, objectives and the strategy of the

specific organization. A very important knowledge asset of one company may be useless for

another one. Therefore, the knowledge assets should be analyzed at the basis of the company’s

goals and objectives. For this purpose, Carlucci & Schiuma (2006) have proposed a

knowledge assets value spiral that aims to answer the question of identifying and improving

knowledge assets. In their framework, knowledge assets are defined on the basis of their

contribution to the organizational performance.

*Knowledge sharing*

A knowledge-sharing organization systematically learns from its mistakes and builds on its successes. It sees knowledge as an important currency and values its operational experiences as opportunities for learning for organizations have the potential to continuously improve service delivery their own and that of peer organizations in their country and throughout the world. However, knowledge-sharing organizations are not born they are made. They must decide to overcome natural barriers to knowledge sharing. Becoming a knowledge-sharing organization requires leadership that encourages needed changes in culture, provides supportive governance structures and financing, and encourages external partnerships, all to develop the disciplined practice of knowledge capture, learning, and sharing. Those organizational features constitute the enabling environment within which organizations develop the technical skills needed for effective knowledge sharing.

*Five- step process for capturing and preparing knowledge assets for organizational learning and knowledge sharing*

The followings are the five-step process for capturing and preparing knowledge assets for organizational learning and knowledge sharing.

*Identification*: Identification defines the experiences and lessons learned that should be captured for later sharing. Organizations must be highly selective at this stage to avoid wasting valuable time and resources.

*Capturing***:** Capturing means recording lessons learned from an experience or event. Using a predetermined template, practitioners document knowledge with a standardized story line, contextual information, actual actions undertaken to overcome the challenge, results of the actions, critical lessons learned from the experience and recommendations for those interested in replicating the experience elsewhere

*Validation*: Validation ensures that captured knowledge is presented truthfully, correctly, and in a professional and accessible manner. While validation should ideally happen during all stages, it must occur before using a knowledge asset.

*Formatting*: Formatting involves applying a common, consistent, and user-friendly presentation standard, or format, to all assets so that users can quickly and efficiently browse through them especially important for assets containing a variety of media and labeling assets with information, keywords, and other metadata to increase their searchability.

*Use in learning*: Use in learning refers to transforming a discrete knowledge asset into knowledge or learning product, such as a publication, presentation, or case study and designing learning activities around that product to engage an audience.

*Importance of Identification in the process of capturing solutions for learning*

To identify critical knowledge, organizations can focus on knowledge they are accumulating (assets) as well as on the knowledge they need (gaps).Continuous experience-based Identification: This method is usually centered on events or activities that led to high-value lessons learned. Some organizations may know which events qualify, while others may find it difficult to discern, but in each case, staff members make the selection as they are the facto experts involved. However initial identification cannot be time consuming if it is to be continuous few good ideas can survive a process that burdens someone’s already full workload. Staff members may require incentives to perform even rapid continuous knowledge identification. World Bank (2020)

*Comprehensive institution wide identification*

Institution wide identification systematically looks at all operations of the organization and identifies the knowledge assets in every department or business line. One way to do this is through a knowledge audit. With a knowledge audit, organizations will likely discover a wealth of know-how stemming from individual experiences that can be subsequently mined through capturing and packaging efforts. Comprehensive institution wide identification of knowledge focuses mainly on identifying knowledge assets within an organization to meet concrete demand elsewhere in the organization or externally.

If your organization has a central knowledge management team that is tasked with identifying knowledge assets, it can still be useful for individual through interviews as well as for focus groups for dedicated knowledge sharing events. Needs based identification primarily revolves around surfacing knowledge gaps that must be filled if the organization is to operate effectively and sustainably. These gaps can include individuals’ skill gaps, which can be overcome by targeted training and comprehensive capacity gaps within units or departments.

*Importance of capturing solutions for learning*

Capturing is the process of converting the knowledge that resides in people’s heads into tangible, explicit knowledge assets. This usually involves recording it in a format that can be stored, further processed, adapted, and shared. Common media formats to capture experiences and lessons learned include text, audio, video, images, and graphics. Making experiential knowledge explicit helps to surface the often hidden knowledge in an organization. Without capturing for accessibility, the knowledge that resides in an individual’s head cannot be easily distributed within the organization or with external partners. Capturing is the critical action that leads to creation of a library of knowledge assets that can be shared regardless of the availability Capturing activities, experiential knowledge and lessons learned can be captured with a variety of methods. Selecting the methods will depend on organizational policies, the availability of technology and support tools, personal preferences, and the capturer’s skill set.

We distinguish between two types of activities for capturing operational experiences and lessons learned, those conducted by an individual and those conducted collaboratively. While capturing activities can be conducted in person, they are increasingly taking place online. Some activities, such as collaborative workspaces and wikis, combine capturing with knowledge sharing so that knowledge is documented and shared at the same time. Some activities require more skill and preparation than others. But they all can provide the grist for the compilation of knowledge assets offering a story of important takeaways and lessons learned from past or current experiences and projects. Dubrin (2005)

*Criteria for Knowledge Capturing*

It would be nice to capture and share all knowledge contained within your organization, but it is simply not feasible. Tough decisions must be made when deciding on which experiences to capture, the goal must be used for limited knowledge-sharing resources efficiently and produce knowledge assets that will respond to your organization’s most pressing needs. A set of criteria helps practitioners decide whether to capture a particular lesson learned from an experience or event. In most cases, relevance will be the most important criterion. If an experience is not deemed useful for anybody, it will not warrant documenting. But what experiences are mission critical and which ones add just one more data point to an existing body of knowledge? It may be helpful to think of relevance as an initial filter. Will the organization and its staff or partners become better at what they are doing by replicating actions based on lessons learned from a given experience? If the answer is yes, the experience you plan to capture is likely mission-critical and worth documenting and sharing.

Perhaps the most challenging part of the identification process is getting the focus right. The future usability and accessibility of captured knowledge will largely depend on how well it is focused on a specific, concrete question. The broader the question underlying a knowledge asset, the less likely it will provide a useful answer. To avoid turning knowledge assets into full-fledged case studies (a common problem), regularly check whether the answers to the question are focused and practical. If a range of answers emerge, it might indicate that the knowledge asset should be broken up into smaller assets, each focused on a more specific question.

Naturally the objective for capturing an experience is to share it with others for potential adaptation and replication. It is thus critical that experiences are indeed shareable. Capturing confidential information or politically charged information for the purpose of sharing may not be worth the effort. If the capturing and sharing of knowledge can possibly do more harm than good it may be better to refrain from it altogether and focus on those experiences for which there is an appreciative audience. Capturing experiences and lessons learned should be an achievable task. If critical stakeholders are impossible to locate and relevant background information can no longer be found, sound capturing of an experience without making too many assumptions may become difficult. It is therefore advisable to focus on those experiences for which sources can relatively easily be located.

Validation is a critical part of the capturing process. It ensures high quality of the knowledge asset. Knowledge assets should be fairly easy to validate. If validators have no means to verify whether an experience actually took place as described, or the results claimed were actually achieved, the validity of the knowledge asset can become questionable. Last but not least it can be critical to capture experiences and lessons learned if they are at risk of getting lost. This can be the case when the primary experience holder retires or leaves the organization or when a restructuring process causes significant changes in organizational structures and team compositions. In such cases it is advisable to document mission critical knowledge to preserve it for those who need it. Senge (2006)

*Importance of Validation in the process of capturing solutions for learning*

Experiential knowledge is based on a personal’s recollection of events and of experiences related to those events. Personal perception is naturally subjective and influenced by underlying assumptions. So, when capturing experiences, the information is likely to be more reliable if it comes from a variety of perspective. Another key process to ensure that the knowledge asset is associated as possible and to avoid the production of misleading assets is to have its accuracy, relevance, and useful validated by one or more experts. Validation is the quality control part of the program that produces knowledge assets. Only accurate, relevant, concise, and useful knowledge assets should enter an organization’s knowledge management system, and a process must be established to uphold those standards.

*Validation Criteria*

Choosing the criteria for evaluating knowledge assets is fundamental to the validation process. Organizations must carefully select and refine the criteria and rank them by importance. Does the operational experience or lesson learned add to what is already known as a practice that yields successful outcomes? Is it a valuable contribution to the operational practice of the organization? Does the knowledge asset address a distinct issue or challenge? Is the content correct? A validation process should be established early in the planning of the overall knowledge-sharing program. The structure chosen for the validation process is likely to evolve along with the larger program because validation isn’t a single process; it can happen in different ways, ranging from a rigorous formal review process with one or several sign off stages to informal feedback by a peer. The four most common validation methods for knowledge assets are; testing them in a real-life setting, organizing a review space, checking against validation criteria, and verifying with the initial experts or authors whether the knowledge asset is correct. A fifth method, “six thinking hats,” requires assessment of multiple perspectives on the validity of the asset.

Lipshitz (2007)

*Importance of formatting in the process of capturing solutions for learning*

Formatting is important because the knowledge asset is almost complete. It has been reviewed, and its insights for operational solutions have been deemed valuable. Formatting also applies the organization’s chosen standard for presenting the content of knowledge assets, which means readers can browse quickly to find information without having to first grasp a possibly unusual structure. Thus, formatting must be done before posting the knowledge asset in a repository. Formatting involves two fundamental tasks; organizing the content and the components of the asset and adding qualifying information to make the knowledge asset findable. These tasks ensure that knowledge assets appear in a consistent and user-friendly manner and that its major content characteristics can be used to search for it. The content should follow a logical sequence or cohesive storyline and highlight the key messages the author wants to convey. If the asset contains several disparate pieces of media, such as written material, video recordings, and images, they also should be assembled in a logical way to make them accessible. Holton (2012)

*Importance of use in learning in the process of capturing solutions for learning*

The reasons why packaging knowledge is important is that presentation is critical. Professionals are solutions-oriented, and time matters, so knowledge needs to be accessible, relevant, and quickly comprehensible to be useful. Poorly crafted knowledge assets can become unwanted noise, possibly even distracting us from discovering the right solution path. The literature on adult learning confirms this notion. Adults seek learning not for general growth purposes but to complete specific operational tasks or fulfill social roles. The immediate relevance of knowledge for application and replication is much more critical in adult work settings than in academic settings. An organization dedicated to capturing and sharing knowledge needs specialized staffing to succeed.

*Conclusion*

Traditionally, important knowledge was disseminated through reports and case studies, but these long-form presentations are not always the best for on-the-job learning and decision making. Especially in situations that require fast action, professionals will not have time to read a 50-page case study to find the one bit of information they really need. Knowledge needs to be adequately packaged to make it usable for the Process: Packaging and use of the knowledge assets into learning products is more of an art than a science. We know when knowledge captures our interest and gets us thinking, and we also know when a presentation or publication does not grab our attention but rather makes our mind wander off. World Bank (2012)

*Recommendation*

* **New hires need knowledge sharing** to ramp up in their new role. One-on-one mentorships and [peer mentoring](https://www.togetherplatform.com/blog/peer-learning-benefits) are two great ways to help your new hire fit in, learn the ropes, and build connections. Knowledge sharing is key for a great onboarding experience.
* **Future leaders don’t often get the training they need** to be great leaders. Knowledge sharing and mentorship can set them up for success. They’ll learn vital skills and tips to help them meet the challenges they’ll face. It is also a crucial ingredient to any succession plan.
* **Remote workers face challenges** around feeling a part of a team and having informal learning opportunities. Connecting with other team members or leaders through [knowledge sharing activities](https://www.togetherplatform.com/blog/knowledge-sharing-activities) can fill this gap. An [MIT article](https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/overcoming-remote-work-challenges/) encourages organizations to institute water cooler calls “that can reveal experiences and ideas that otherwise would have remained unexpressed — and keep team members connected on a personal level.”

Workplaces that encourage knowledge sharing have done so in different ways, and each has unlocked employee development that has been a boon to their businesses. Here are just two examples of organizations that have encouraged knowledge sharing successfully.

Employees who connect through social learning activities are more successful in retaining what’s learned. Essentially, we learn better when we’re together. And information that is retained is there to be used. In other words, when your employees are able to remember what they’ve learned and use it, you’ll get a more efficient and effective workplace. Yet, many organizations still insist on using solitary study methods like coursework, quizzes, surveys, etc. [Social learning is the key](https://www.togetherplatform.com/resources/social-learning) that can unlock a more skilled workforce.

**Retain critical tacit knowledge**

Tacit knowledge is information that is learned through experience and not through printed documentation, such as policies or procedures. However, it is no less valuable to an organization. It can even be used to redefine processes or procedures in some cases. Yet, unless knowledge sharing opportunities are present in an organization, tacit knowledge can be lost when those with that critical information leave the company.

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