

CENTER STAGE PODCAST CLUB

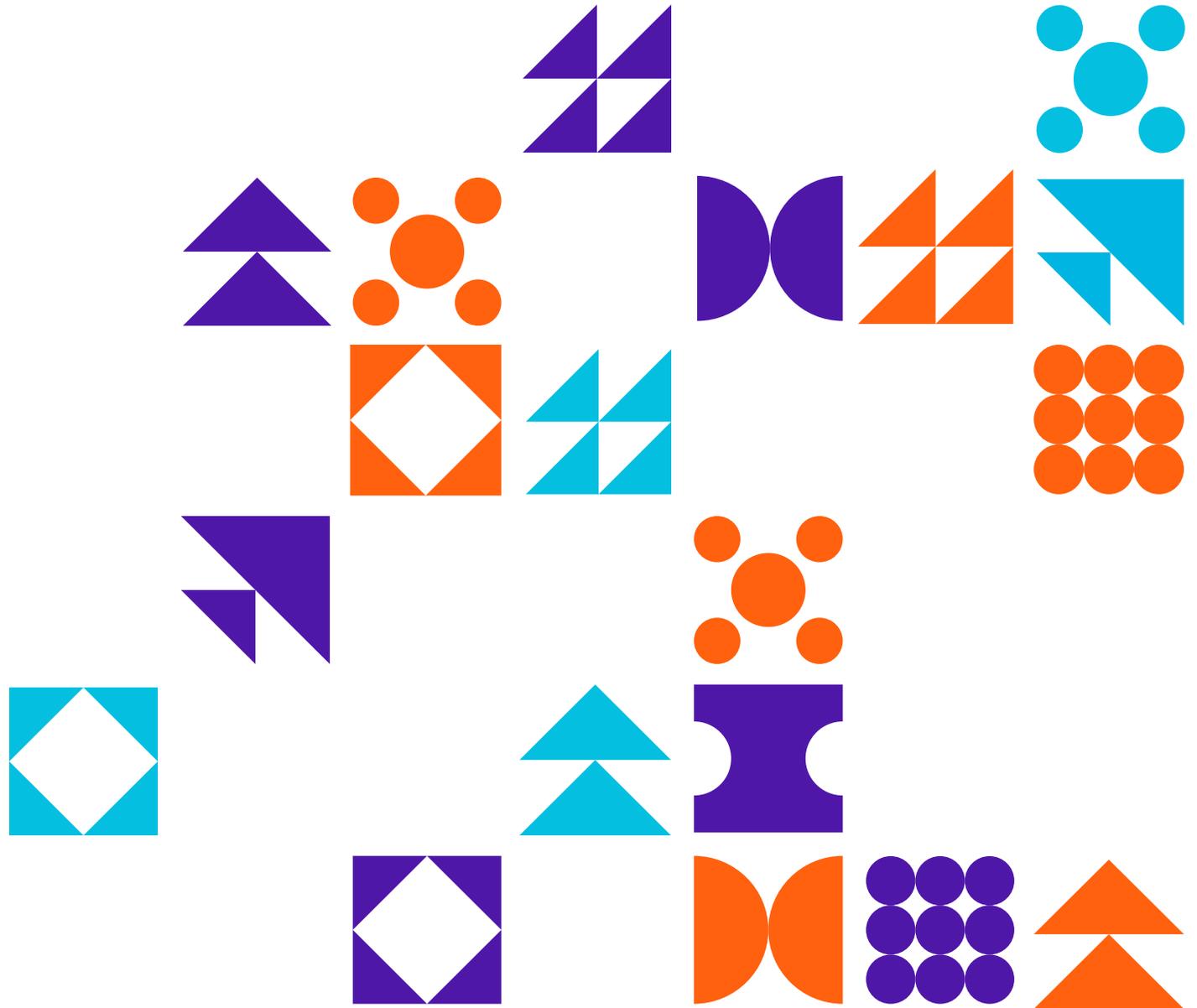
THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF
WORKING WITH KNOWLEDGE

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS

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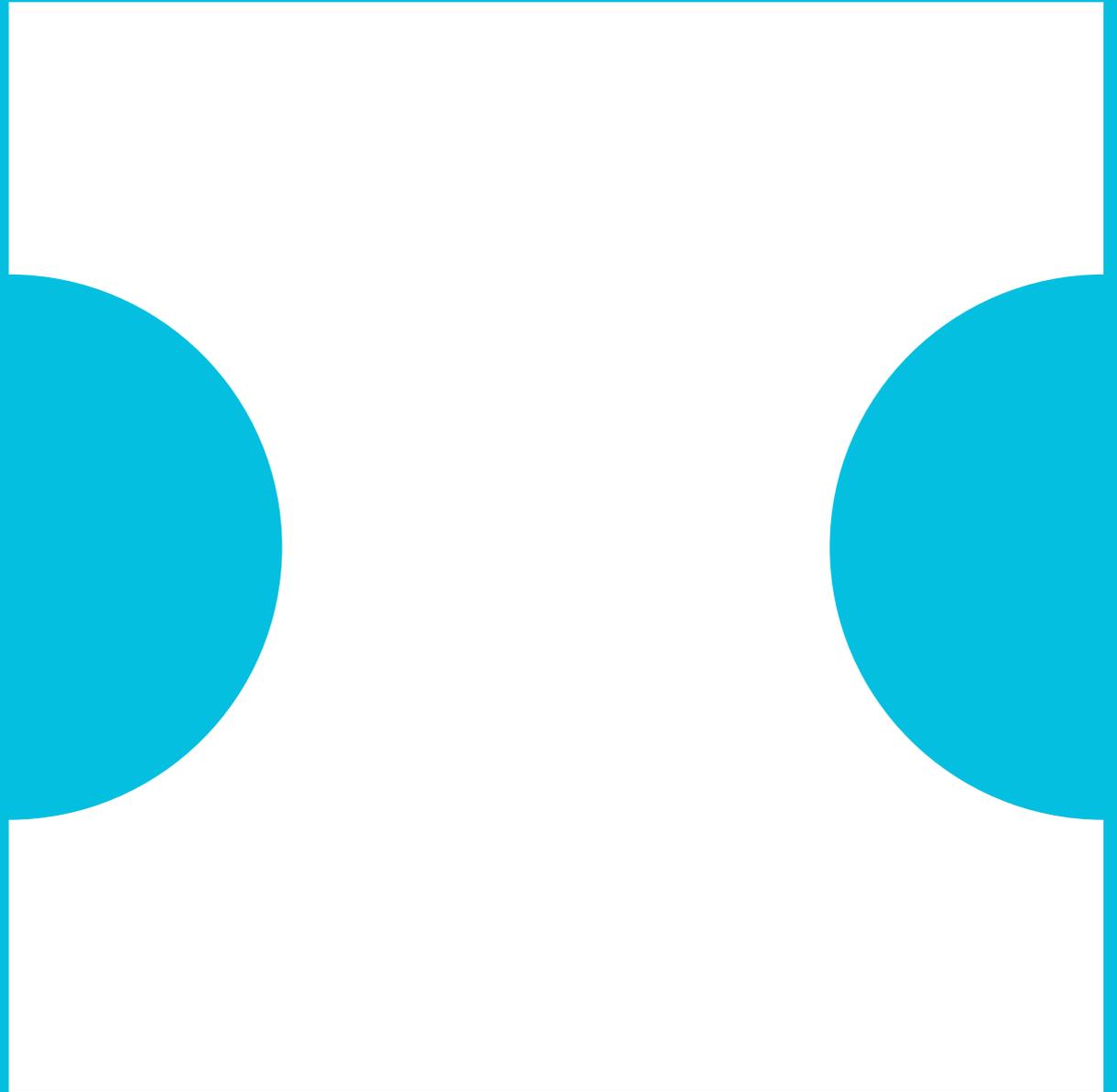
Larry Prusak



Ed Hoffman



BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF KNOWLEDGE





Larry Prusak

Knowledge is a human attribute that allows individuals to do things. The Greeks identified nine forms of knowledge. In the work environment, we focus on working knowledge. It's expensive to acquire. It's experiential. It involves learning and framing it in a way that is useful to them.



Ed Hoffman

The name “knowledge management” is a big problem because you cannot manage knowledge. You use it. Organizational and project leaders tend to focus on knowledge when there is a failure or to look into the future to understand where things are going.

Knowledge is extremely important. It must be maintained, so repeat events and re-learning does not occur. I share knowledge with younger team members and have consciously been trying to capture knowledge for turnover.

Sharing knowledge is one of my most important tasks: knowledge-sharing events (forums, online sessions, internal trainings), lessons learned library and documentation and initialization of best practices are all a regular part of my work.



Participant insight



Participant insight



(All remarks attributed to speakers are summaries, not direct quotations.)

How does information become knowledge?



Larry Prusak

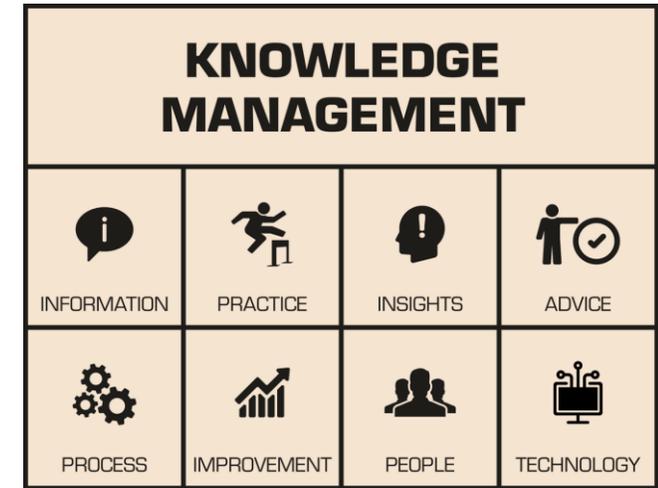
For an individual, reading a document is informational. If you link the reading to your experience, it becomes part of your knowledge. As the knowledge gets vetted and evaluated by your community, it is absorbed into the knowledge of the group...At the organizational level, there is a political dynamic with different currents – defending turf, pet projects or interests, etc. When knowledge reaches the higher leadership level, it has to overcome those political dynamics.



Ed Hoffman

Information is cool while knowledge is hot. Knowledge can be wrong, knowledge prompts change, so there is risk and change connected with knowledge.

Knowledge is about ideas, possibilities and how we make things better. It is profoundly social. Knowledge requires conversation to turn information into know-how...Knowledge and learning happens at individual, team and organizational levels. Leading organizations develop individual knowledge. These organizations focus on building environments where people share, collaborate and engage to build team knowledge. Organizational leaders build systems and capabilities to change, improve and grow based on what is important.



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The north star on a project is what the project is supposed to accomplish and then the team's knowledge is incorporated with historical knowledge, producing a new hybrid path to accomplish the project's objectives.



Participant insight



Participant insight

We need to use all team members' knowledge, plus see what other knowledge is available from others that could help our project. We need to share knowledge, so the project will not fail if a person leaves the team.

How do you personally value knowledge and how do you connect it to your career path?

Knowledge is my career path. Knowing how to do things and advancing that knowledge continually is how I (and I think everyone) succeeds.



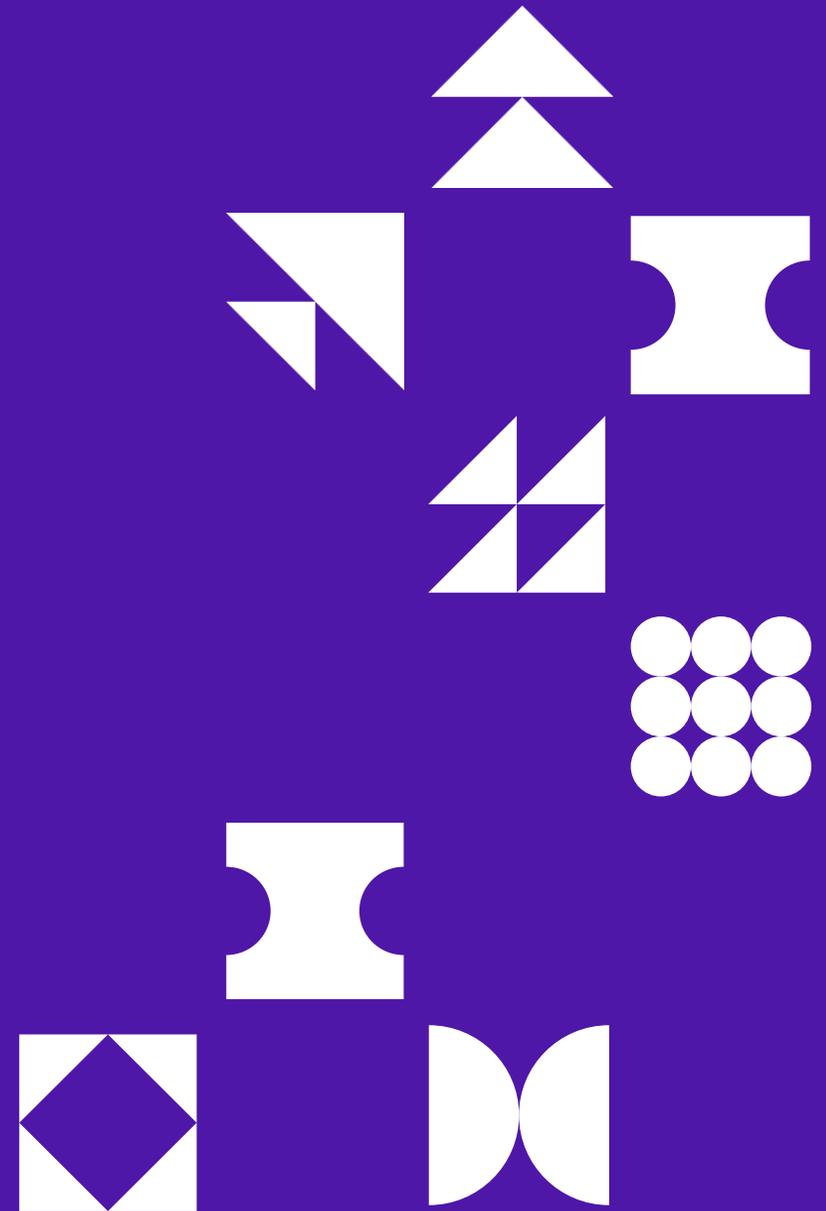
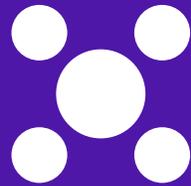
Participant insight



Participant insight

Knowledge sets the path for me in completing my projects. Helps me to grow in a fast-paced world. Keeps me focused on what my goals are and helps me to help others..

EVOLUTION OF KNOWLEDGE ACROSS GENERATIONS





Ed Hoffman

The agile rebellion two decades ago focused on trusting people, relying on teams and sharing knowledge to continuously learn. It shifted the focus to people being supplemented by processes, and methods and reflected a massive generational change. Emphasis on participation requires you get involved with people, network with others, create a means for people to be heard. Technology has amplified the speed with which people need knowledge.



Larry Prusak

We live in a knowledge economy. Knowledge is the most widely sold product in the world today in different forms. People are trying to identify what they can do today in a way that cannot be replaced by an algorithm or technology. Capital looks to exchange labor for something cheaper, and there is nothing cheaper than technology versus people. It's causing tons of disruptions.

My organization welcomes further education. It is top notch for employees to research and become familiar with new topics, old topics, and anything that gives us information.



Participant
insight



(All remarks attributed to speakers are summaries, not direct quotations.)

Is there such a thing as bad knowledge?



Ed Hoffman

You can run into bad knowledge if you have a capable workforce whose skills and talents are not relevant for the challenges you face today. It's difficult to get leaders to change after doing things that were once successful but are not necessarily relevant today.

It can also take a long time to identify which knowledge is no longer relevant. There is also a need to let go of things that don't work and to build new capabilities. That's why learning is the other side of the knowledge coin. Learning opens up understanding when knowledge evolves. You cannot have knowledge and learning without cultures which support both. Culture is vital.

Knowledge and learning are only valued if leaders acknowledge them. It comes down to what is accepted, endorsed and recognized. If you select leaders who don't share, collaborate or encourage conversation, then others will follow that by watching those who align with the leaders' values advance. If organizations are only talking about processes and tools, that focus also tells people what is valued.

Participant reactions to knowledge and learning discussion...

Does the following relate to your ideas of “knowledge” and how it is “managed”? In my sector, all organizational, program, and project work has an applied research component, as part or sometimes at center. We assess needs, define questions that need to be answered, develop a plan for answering them, collect and analyze data, interpret results, disseminate them, “process” results for learning and action however that is relevant for the context.



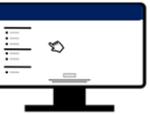
We promote uptake and use of learnings, and work to retain and maintaining knowledge so it is not lost. Sometimes when the project is particularly research based, we think of findings and learning as “evidence” which we work to apply to practice which then becomes “evidence informed”, if not “evidence-based”.



Participant
insight

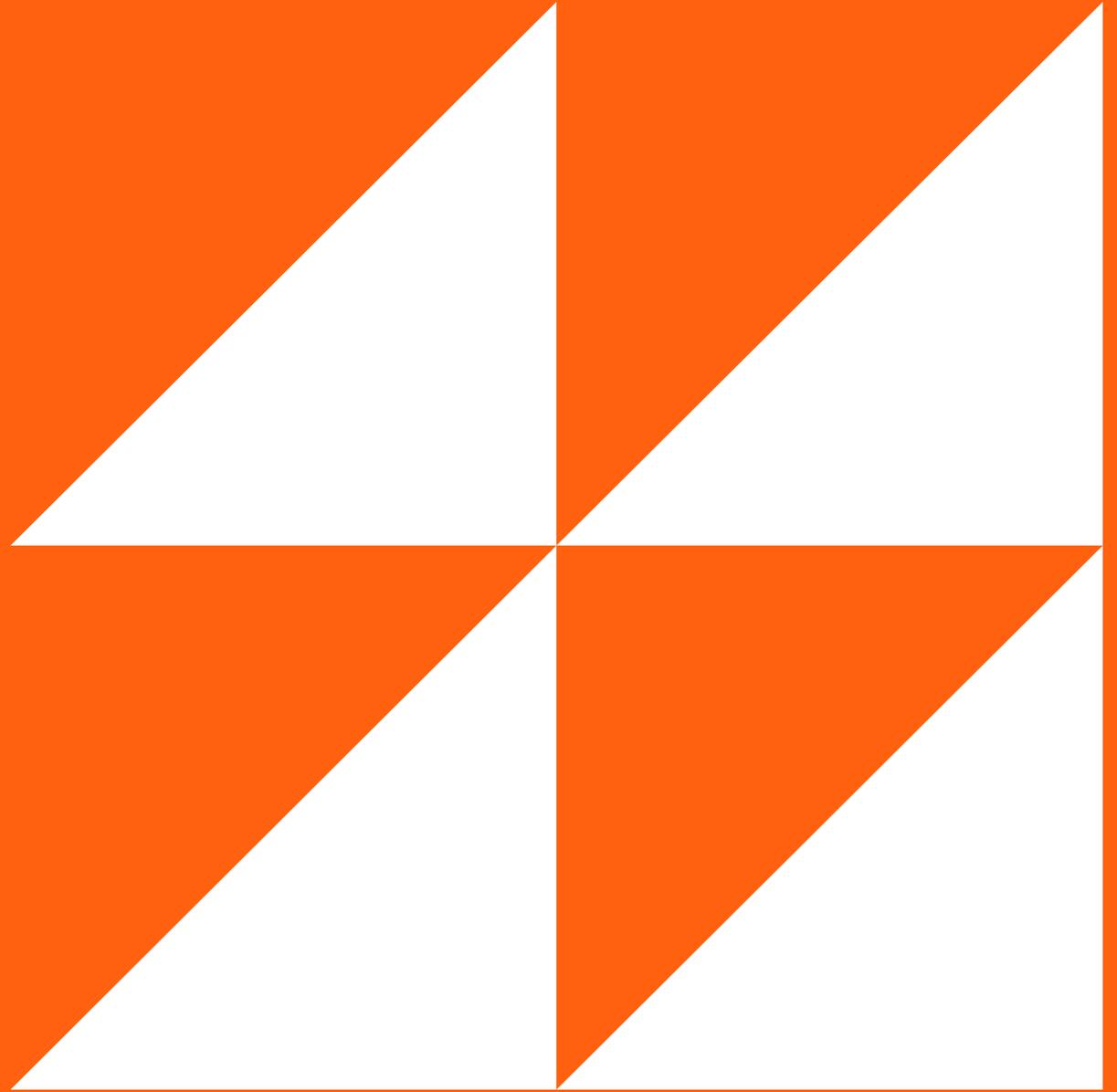
You can call all that whatever you want. If we are calling it “knowledge management”, there are processes and structures that have to exist/occur, which I have described.

HR talks about learning and offers online courses. Little direction is provided for navigating that learning and little time is allotted for gaining it. Learning is something you get as you do your job, or something you fit it when it doesn't keep you from doing your job.



Participant
insight

VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE IN ORGANIZATIONS





Larry Prusak

In an organization I worked in, bonuses were based on individual performance. A new CEO changed that so that bonuses were based on team effort. People were up in arms because they felt they should not be judged with people they felt were not participating at the same level. But the change worked by changing behaviors. People share and engaged because they were being judged on team performance.

What is the value of knowledge to the professional?



Larry Prusak

Professionals are paid for the knowledge they bring and can apply. Organizations spend about 50-60% of their non-capital resources on knowledge. Knowledge gains when it is shared and increases reputational capital. Knowledge creates power.



Participant reactions to “Knowledge creates power...”



Participant
insight

That last comment rings so true - I constantly run into knowledge = my power.

In my experience, as knowledge is perceived as power, some professionals tend to keep "key" information (or knowledge!) to themselves. How can we encourage sharing effectively?

How does an organization promote knowledge sharing to individuals who typically keep their knowledge due to fear of job security?

How do you handle a situation where someone is not sharing his/her knowledge (as a way to make their role indispensable)?

Sharing Knowledge gives increases the sharer's power by extending their network and worth within the organization.

Sharing knowledge begets diversified inputs. Diversity leads to better decisions.

There is not an “I” in team. If you want your projects to be successful, you need to share.

Knowledge helps to climb up our career ladder. Knowledge sharing is one of the key character for leadership.

Participant reactions to “Knowledge creates power...”

Isn't the point of sharing the continuity of the successful enterprise?

Knowledge should be shared to save lives in public health, to expand human wellbeing in various expertise areas, and in any area to enrich each other's stock of knowledge and therefore push back the frontier of ignorance.

Worst thing to happen in a project is to have a member who can get sick or on vacations. Knowledge segregation is a recipe for failure.

Knowledge has no boundaries and as long as you keep gaining more knowledge then sharing the same with others won't affect you, as mentioned by Larry.



Participant
insight

I think it's fair to say that a collection of files in a folder somewhere does not equal "knowledge management". What do you recommend for taking steps to convince leadership that current knowledge management methods aren't adequate?



Ed Hoffman

Knowledge is what people know and are willing to talk about. If leaders experience the challenge themselves, the leaders may become more open to making significant changes. If leadership is complacent and comfortable, they are less likely to change. Change usually happens when there is an urgent need for it.

Anything that is deep knowledge in a project world is something that smart leaders will leverage. It's through knowledge that power and growth happen.



Larry Prusak

Leaders are often the single largest impediment for knowledge management to succeed as an organizational practice. People don't know the difference between knowledge and information because it's not taught in business schools. If you don't pay attention to the differences, then you may have the wrong systems to capture and use it.

Participant questions about knowledge and technology



Participant
insight

In a technological era where certain knowledge and skills become rapidly obsolete, what would be the best sources for acquiring knowledge that machines will not replace?

Knowledge is artificial intelligence in a sense?

Nowadays, as information technology grows very fast, people have much more information but less knowledge. Please shed light on this.



Larry Prusak

What can a person know that a machine cannot know? Intelligence can only exist among active participants in the world. Machines do reckoning and computing but are not intelligent like people are. All the skills that humans have cannot be replicated by machines. Humor, empathy, non-verbal cues, etc. are distinctly human. Knowledge gives meaning to information. A machine cannot give meaning to something.



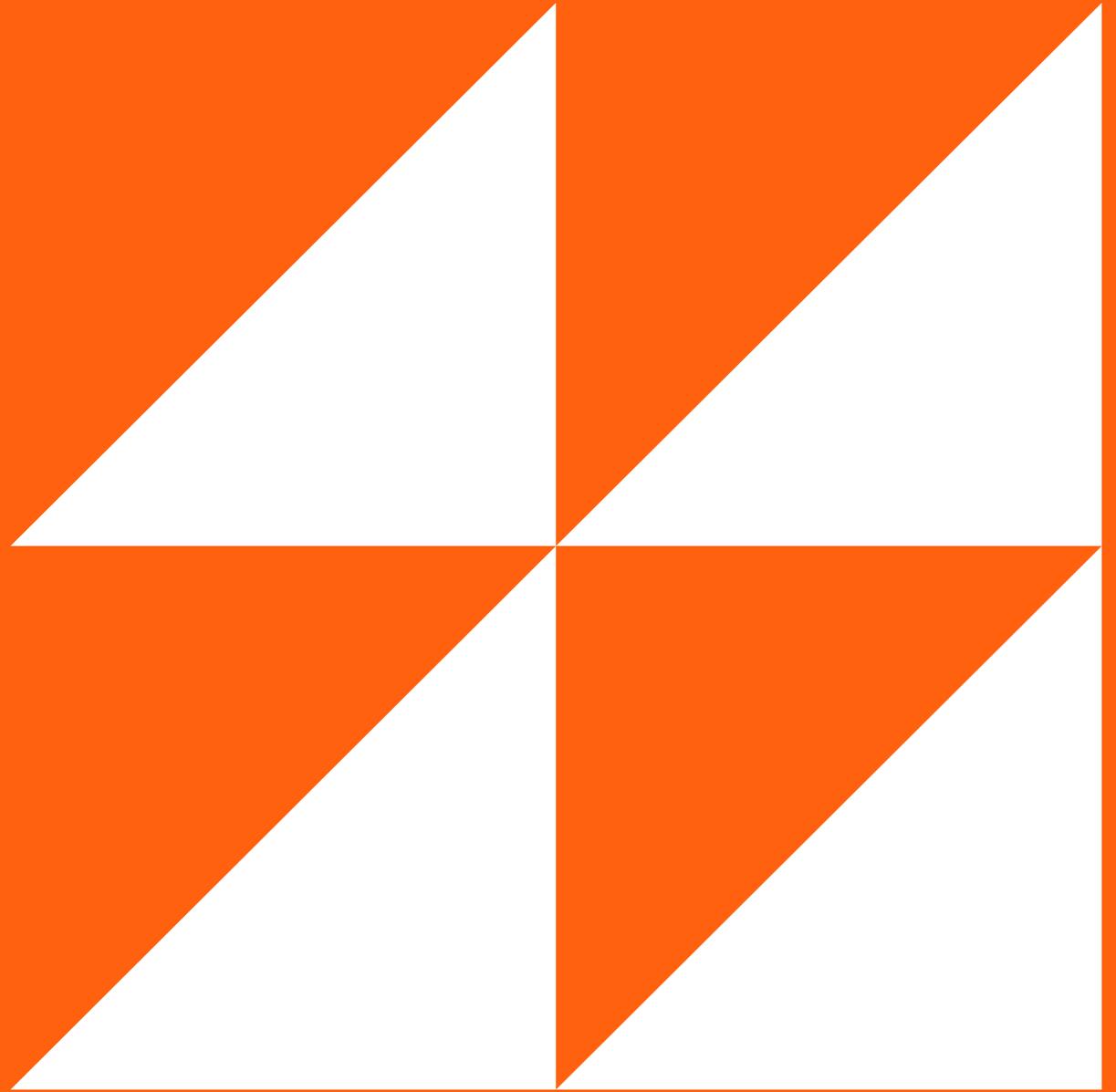
Ed Hoffman

PMI's new AI Knowledge Network is exploring what these changes mean when we don't have answers. We are learning together about how AI and other applications can add value to project work. That said, I think we can use robots to do things that humans cannot do or that would put them at risk.



(All remarks attributed to speakers are summaries, not direct quotations.)

ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANT INSIGHTS



How does your organization support the development of new knowledge through learning?

As time has gone on (over a period of years), I have seen more of a focus on getting more done with less more quickly, and the organization has really left decent development programs by the wayside. It is up to individual leaders more than anything these days.



Participant
insight



Participant
insight

It supports some attendance at industry working groups, meetings and benchmarking to learn from others.

10% courses, 20% observation or consultation with experts, 70% on the job learning; with the framework of a learning journal.



Participant
insight

How well or poorly does your organization effectively use the knowledge it has?

Practices and processes are formalized. Planning for turnover needs improvement and is partly based on the individuals involved.



Participant insight



Participant insight

Poorly. Knowledge management is not thought of as something to focus on.

Fairly good. Sometimes the team disdain the already existing knowledge.



Participant insight



Participant insight

These programs tend to be "on again, off again," and do not permeate the organization.

I think my organization is not using the knowledge fully - there would be many more possibilities and there is a lot of knowledge that isn't shared within the organization.



Participant insight



(All remarks attributed to speakers are summaries, not direct quotations.)

Moderator Insights

Tammy Ashraf



- Disruptive technologies such as AI have revolutionized the rapid pace of how knowledge insights can be derived from raw data in organizations.
- Organizations with thriving knowledge management environments have a strong social and cultural component of employee relationships and interactions.
- Aside from major technological influences, workplace generational factors play a role in the methods used to gain knowledge.
- Knowledge management strategies should look to generational factors to ensure thriving knowledge exchange environments across the organization.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

BOOKS

- Working Knowledge by Thomas Davenport and Laurence Prusak
- Wellsprings of Knowledge by Dorothy Leonard
- Common Knowledge by Nancy Dixon
- The Knowledge Creating Company by Ikujiro Nonaka and Hirotaka Takeuchi
- Knowledge Management in Organizations by Donald Hislop
- Organizational Learning by Linda Argote
- The Knowledge Managers Handbook by Nick Milton
- Teach What You Know: A Practical Leader's Guide to Knowledge Transfer Using Peer Mentoring by Steve Trautman
- The Employee Experience Advantage: How to Win the War for Talent by Giving Employees the Workspaces they Want, the Tools they Need, and a Culture They Can Celebrate by Jacob Morgan
- Critical Knowledge Transfer: Tools for Managing Your Company's Deep Smarts by Dorothy Leonard, Walter Swap and Gary Barton
- Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know by Adam Grant.

ARTICLES

- Amin, A. and Cohendet, P. (2003). [Architectures of Knowledge: Firms, Capabilities, and Communities.](#)
- Milton, N. [Knowledge management resources on his blog.](#)



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