



KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR THE WORK PLACE

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Introduction

Knowledge management is a vital segment of the business organisations that ensures magnification of growth and competitive advantage for the organisation. In today's scenario, there are several organisations that are using their former experiences and knowledge to gain a competitive advantage over their competitors. Knowledge management is an effective mechanism that is used to organise the assets of an organisation that leads to increased profits in the precise run, whereas it improves inventiveness in the longer run. In this study, the importance of data, information and knowledge has been studied. The study focuses on the analysis of the techniques that help in identifying the knowledge assets of John Lewis and evaluating the potential assets of the organisation.

The study converge the need for creating, storing and integrating the knowledge of John Lewis. The impact of the knowledge assets on John Lewis and the importance of intellectual property has been analysed in the study.

Evaluation of concept and importance of knowledge management in John Lewis

Relationship between data, information and knowledge

Data

Data comprises of basic, uncouth and usually general information in regards to a topic. Data is collected by several organisations for the need for scientific or other research or for the requirement of an organisation. According to Thomas *et al.* (2018), data is evaluated, collected and interpreted which can be further envisioned by the use of tools, images, graphs or other tools. The collection of data can be done through primary resources or a secondary resource. The primary sources of data collection are through a person who engages in data and secondary resources are disseminated through the former works, journals and literature.

Information

On the other hand, information consists of much more refined data that has been developed to a point of being valuable for some or other analysis. Information is processed data that has been formally apprehended and can be used again and again. The information provides the meaning to the data and this information is the foundation of knowledge. According to Bovi *et al.* (2015),

information may also be defined as data that has been stored, analysed and displayed through graphic interpretation or tables. It is data that has some context, usually with a flow of messages. The information can be analysed through quantitative analysis.

Knowledge

Knowledge rests within the human and it can only be achieved by the incorporation of human perspicacity and experience into the information and the gathering of data. Girard and Girard (2015), defines knowledge as an amalgamation of experiences, values and information of a human being that paves the way for a framework for seeking new information and experiences. Knowledge encloses the beliefs and values of an individual as it ultimately being linked to action. Knowledge may also be defined as the linking of meaningful links that human beings develop in their minds and applies it to a certain perspective. Knowledge is the range of one's understanding, the sum of what one knows, the body of truth and principles related to the information that humans apply to that situation.

Relationship between data, information and knowledge

Data is unprocessed information that does not have any context. After the data has been processed or refined, it is known as information. The information would provide a result to the data. Knowledge comprises of both data and information. This is the next stage of development of the information. Knowledge is gained by applying experience, judgement and other principles to the information that we have received.

Analysis and modelling techniques to identify knowledge assets

Common KADS Model

This modelling technique encourages structured engineering models and provides tools and methods that can be used to perform an accurate investigation of knowledge-intensive tasks and procedures. The study mainly focuses on the problems and opportunities that are related to a knowledge asset. It can be used to concentrate on the areas of structure, process, people, human resources and others. In the words of Saleh *et al.* (2018), the main aim of this model is to understand the role of an agent in carrying out a task. These agents can be computers or people that perform a task. This model also focuses on the impacts that a model will have on an

organisation. It describes the application related knowledge that is used to perform problem-solving activities. As stated in the works of Chuang *et al.* (2015), there are three segments of this model, which are task knowledge that describes the way of execution for reasoning steps, a description of the reasoning step and domain knowledge of the asset itself that would include characteristics of the asset.

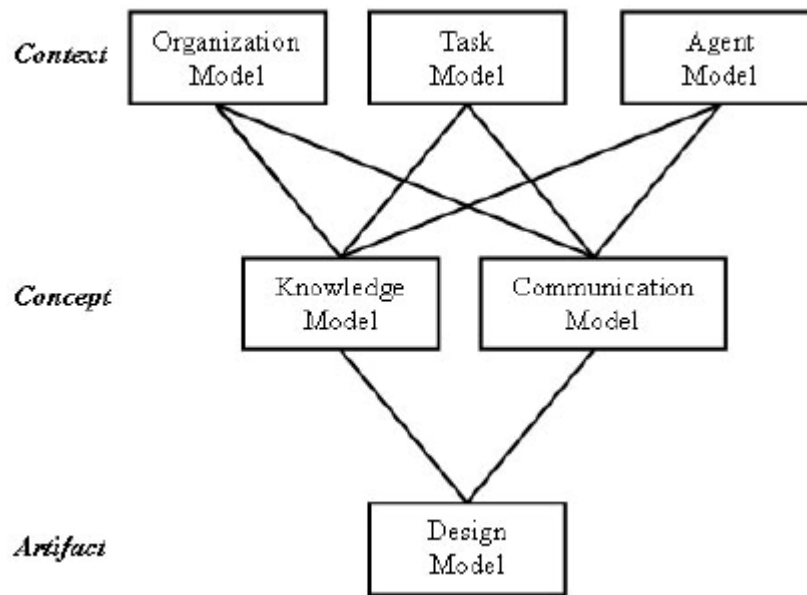


Figure 1: Common KADS Model

(Source: Chuang *et al.* 2015)

Multi-Perspective Modelling

This modelling technique comprises of several modelling techniques to be incorporated into a single process. The techniques that are incorporated into this process has to imply the need for the knowledge asset. As stated in the works of Overbeek *et al.* (2018), multi-perspective modelling is essential for an organisation as a single model is not sufficient to identify the knowledge assets. The multi-perspective modelling uses Information System Framework and comprises of six segments that view the knowledge. These six segments are what, when, how, who, were and why of the knowledge asset. In the words of Kingston (2016), the appropriate techniques that should be used in this process can be selected from the business management procedures, software engineering techniques and knowledge engineering techniques. However,

three main methods have been defined that is used to represent the knowledge, these are CommonKADS, UML and IDEF.

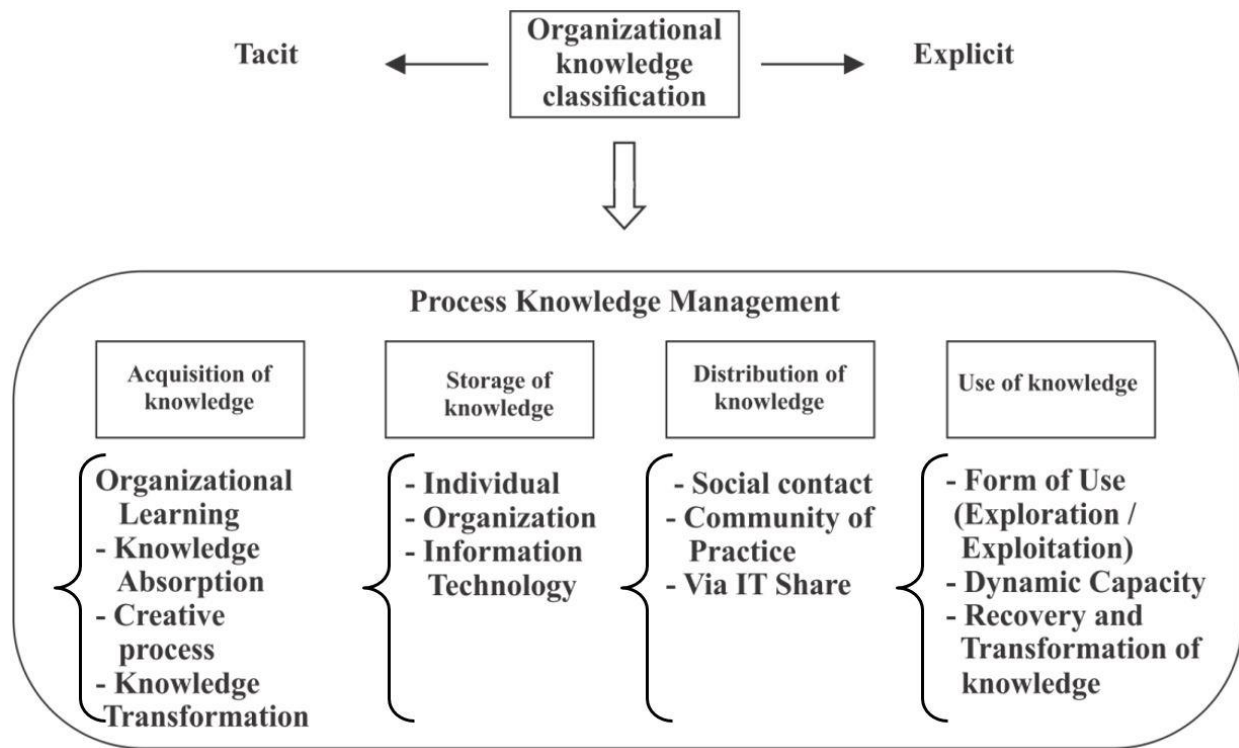


Figure 2: Multi-Perspective Modelling

(Source: Kingston, 2016)

Evaluation of actual and potential knowledge assets

Knowledge assets are the collective intellectual resources of an organisation. It comprises of the knowledge that is possessed by the organisation and the workforce in the form of ideas, understanding, knowledge, cognitive skills, technical skills and capabilities. Knowledge assets are necessary for an organisation in order to invest, grow and use its full capability. According to Wang *et al.* (2016), knowledge assets comprise of three parts merged to accomplish a task, these are people, processes and technology of an organisation. Every asset is significant in the organisational growth as they connect to form an ERP system or a knowledge database for the organisation.

In John Lewis, the main potential knowledge assets are the data that is generated after the sale of materials and the consumer trends of the time. John Lewis needs to incorporate the data of sales

and the customer trends that have been in focus to get an insight into its future plans and invest in potential opportunities. The information and knowledge of these assets can lead to the competitive advantage of the organisation over others. The intellectual property rights, patents and trademarks also form a part of the knowledge asset of John Lewis. The knowledge assets are not defined on knowledge that the organisation holds but it is differentiated on the basis of knowledge that can be used for the success or growth of the organisation.

As per the views of Natalicchio *et al.* (2017), the gain of knowledge and differentiation of other assets to knowledge assets helps an organisation to develop innovation in its operations, which leads to the competitive advantage of the organisation. An instance of a smart move of knowledge asset can be, John Lewis can open up its patents to competitors but keep the main workforce, engineers and the people that worked on those with themselves. This would ensure that knowledge stays inside the organisation, inflicting less damage to the organisation.

Important knowledge management processes in John Lewis

Requirement to create, store, apply and integrate knowledge

An appropriate Knowledge Management system can be used to create, store, apply and integrate the knowledge. A knowledge management system is needed so that all these steps are being followed and addressed. This would also comprise of knowledge extraction, knowledge capture, and knowledge transfer and knowledge documentation. In order to address all these aspects of knowledge, the system must be designed in a way that people, processes and technology can be used altogether. According to Santoro *et al.* (2018), the interlinking of technological and behavioural aspects of the organisation leads to an effective Knowledge Management system. It should always be kept in consideration that people, process and technology are being used while creating the system.

The infrastructure and framework that is required for storage of the pieces of knowledge into a database are supplied by the Information and communication technologies (ICT) of John Lewis. As stated by Xiaojun (2017), the information and communication also ensure that the knowledge is supplied to all the required organisation of John Lewis. The information and communication use simulation, modelling and other techniques to analyse the knowledge that can be used in decision making, knowledge creation and for other uses for organisational growth. The

knowledge that is stored in the system is used primarily by the people who are experts in the matters. They are the one who shares and analyse the information that leads to increased growth and success of John Lewis. It is the individuals of John Lewis that add value to the accumulated knowledge and use their proficiency to gain or create new knowledge.

Laudon and Laudon (2016) stated that the individuals are the core that is the backbone for every action taken by the organisation in relation to the management of the knowledge. The energy and labour provided by the individuals of the organisation greatly affect the knowledge accumulation of the organisation. In John Lewis, there are several people that possess different qualities of leadership, motivation, cultural background and others, which make them react variedly to the knowledge hub. There are employees who are more open to sharing knowledge than others, which lead to an increase in individual knowledge and personal growth of the employees.

Importance of intellectual property rights

The intellectual properties are the intangible assets that have been created as a result of the imagination of individuals. Intellectual properties are accepted globally due to several reasons attached to them. According to Dutfield (2017), the intellectual property grants encouragement to the people who create them. Intellectual property ascertains that the person who has completed the job is awarded for the job rather than any other person getting accreditation. In the technology sector, intellectual property leads to new innovations and creativity that leads to the economic advancement of the sector. The person who creates the property is recognised in the organisation for its development.

Copyrights are a type of security that aims at preserving the work of the individual that includes literary, dramatic, arts and other works which may be published or not circulated. Copyright cannot be used by any other individual or organisation. The infringement of Copyright law is a criminal offence and no individual or organisation is allowed to use the material without the consent of the author. There was an advertisement created by John Lewis regarding the Christmas, this was copied by Aldi. Aldi faced a copyright infringement notice and had to pull down the advertisement (Drahos, 2016).

A patent gives the right to the inventor for the invention. Patent infringement is the use of the invention without the prior consent of the inventor. The patent violation has greater severe consequences as it is recognised for an invention.

The third form of intellectual property protection is trademarked. Trademarks are registered logos or symbols that a brand uses. This symbol or logo that has been trademarked cannot be used by any other organisation for its sale. Trademark infringement is the usage of the trademark by some other organisation for its service or product.

According to the views of Hagedoorn and Zobel (2015), protection of intellectual property is important as it protects an organisation against contravention by other organisation and provides the rights to an organisation for selling, importing and exporting the goods. The organisation also gains royalty by licensing the product as their intellectual property. The products can be exploited through strategic alliances by the organisation. The intellectual property also allows an organisation to make profits by selling or trading the properties.

Framework for establishing acknowledgement management culture

Explain the contribution knowledge assets have on an organisation

There are some steps that help to turn John Lewis knowledge into action. The first aspect that is used to turn knowledge into action is the core management approach that John Lewis implements among its people. John Lewis believes that its people are creative and they have the capability to learn new techniques and these people can be held responsible for the actions that they take. John Lewis believes that its people are not machines, they are human beings who need to be treated with respect (Bharadwaj *et al.* 2015).

The employees teach each other and increase the knowledge base of their teammates. They try to experiment and learn new techniques of doing old things. The people of the organisation need to have a clear concept that mere plans cannot work on paper and knowledge should be used in some way or the other to turn it into action. John Lewis has built a culture of forgiveness in its organisation and the people who are held responsible for doing mistakes are forgiven for their mistakes while keeping the beliefs and values in mind. The fear of mistake has to drive out from the employee's mind so that they experiment on new steps through the use of their knowledge

and innovation. According to Webb (2017), the employees are always asked to work cooperatively without creating conflicts within them. John Lewis believes in competition from the organisations and not within their employees.

John Lewis measures its past experiences and typical information that has been collected to decide future strategy. It analyses every situation, trends and investment that has been done. John Lewis does not completely depend on the knowledge management system for the results of the future. Knowledge is unique and difficult to copy and the great organisations attain knowledge through their experiences of past risks and investment.

Knowledge helps the organisations to gain a competitive advantage over other organisations as knowledge is sustainable and the firms can learn more if they have more knowledge. New learning opportunities for an organisation that already has knowledge in them would help it to gain more over its competitors. In the organisational terms, these are known as an increase in returns, which implies the more it is used the greater it becomes. Knowledge is a self-reinforcing asset that goes on creating more gains on greater usage. If an organisation recognises the areas in which it can use the knowledge assets, this can lead to an increase in the profitability of the organisation and also helps in creating greater sustainability of the organisation (Valmohammadi and Ahmadi, 2015).

Evaluate the knowledge requirements for an organisation

Knowledge management is the use of several practices to organise, create, represent, distribute and provide an insight into the knowledge asset of the organisation. The objectives of knowledge in an organisation are to reduce the cost and risk of the current processes which can lead to an increase in the productivity of the organisation. According to Kang (2016), the knowledge regarding the assets helps the organisation in leveraging the current assets of the organisation which can help in reducing the cost, risk and time required for the operations. The decision making and strategic planning of the organisation can be improved by gaining an insight into the knowledge of the organisation.

Jansen (2017) stated that knowledge also helps to develop new technical approaches to the operations faster which are robust and rigid. The knowledge about the main areas where the

employees are lacking can help to reduce the cost involved in the training of the employee which in turn increases the versatility of the workforce of the organisation.

It is significant for the organisation to involve its employees in knowledge management. The requirements for knowledge are in some areas of the organisation. The need for capturing the knowledge and its format has to be defined. The requirements for managing the knowledge base of the organisation according to the needed content have to be defined. There would be requirements for the knowledge management incorporation into the business work processes. The capturing of knowledge either tacit or explicit needs to be defined and their incorporation into the key business activities is required. The transfer of knowledge between the employees is also a requirement. North and Kumta (2018) stated that the policies are needed to be developed that would measure the human and social capital of the organisation. The policies and processes are also required to be developed that would enable the knowledge-based community to enhance their potential. There is a requirement for benchmarking the current phase of knowledge of John Lewis and analysing the current knowledge management capabilities. It is also required that these practices are compared against the best practices which would improve the performance.

Evaluate the organisation's framework for enabling knowledge sharing

Knowledge sharing among the employees of the organisation is important as it increases the interpersonal knowledge of the employees and leads to the growth of the organisation as new ideas are being created through sharing. John Lewis believes in sharing of the ideas between the people which helps in instilling motivation among the employees.

The evaluation of the practices that can be used for knowledge sharing is discovering the knowledge management proposition for the organisation and the employees. The career progression has to be evaluated based on knowledge management through payoff in the participation of the employees. Aljuwaiber (2016) stated that a standard approach has to be established that would help in the progress of John Lewis. John Lewis deploys role models for knowledge management through which the employees are instilled with motivation towards their growth through knowledge sharing. New program and advocates are always created in John Lewis that helps to grow the knowledge base of the employees and increase the motivation level of the employees. A document management system has been placed to record the knowledge assets growth in John Lewis which is considered as a form of digital archive and repository. The

employees of John Lewis are endlessly engaged in Knowledge management through the use of rewards and recognition they receive for their work. John Lewis has always been emphasising on the importance of knowledge management and the ways by which knowledge management can lead to the career and interpersonal growth of the employees.

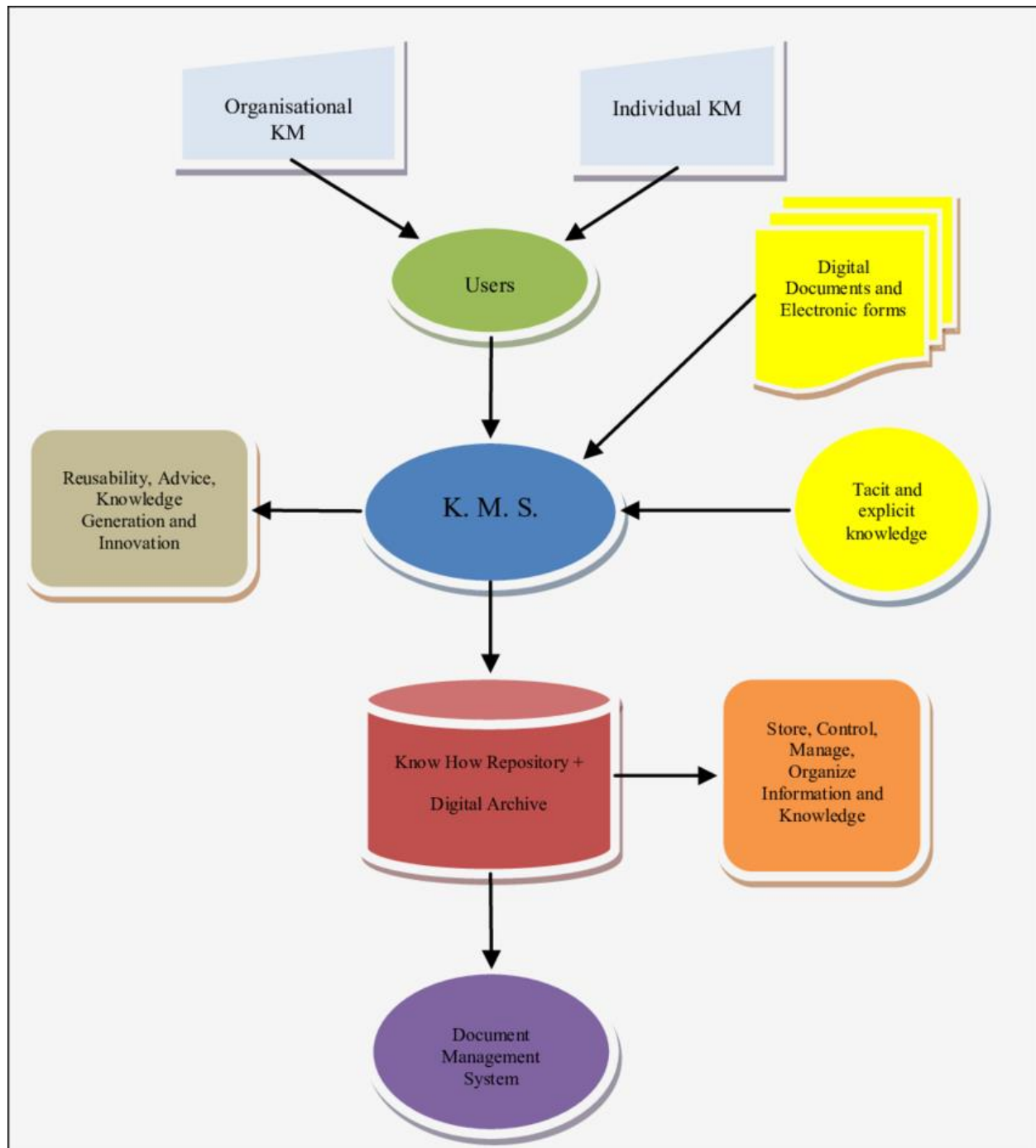


Figure 3: Framework for knowledge sharing

(Source: Created by the author)

Recommended improvements to the current framework

From the afore-discussed frameworks for knowledge management skills for John Lewis, some improvements are recommended to the frameworks in order to upgrade the skills of information and knowledge management. The governing body can recruit a special team of employees in order to identify the needs of the consumers and knowledge resources. In this process, the whole process of Knowledge and Information Skills improvement will be hastened (Asselin, 2016).

The newly recruited team has to know about how to learn, create and eliminate the resources or environments related to knowledge along with the way to retrieve, share and application of that knowledge along with storing them securely for future use. The newly recruited team can seek realism in the theories of knowledge management as all theories cannot always be applied to the organisations practically due to some unavoidable circumstances. The employees who have a specialization on strategizing or management of information or project can be included in this team.

The knowledge management team may focus on three questions to strategize the process of reaching the consumer needs. Those three questions always start with what, why and when (Linde *et al.* 2017). The question of what is to know the right process for the management of knowledge. The second question indicates the reasons for using a different method than the current method that is being used for Knowledge Management. The third question is closely related to the second question that is the proper timing to implement the new method of knowledge management. The second and third question is used to create new strategic models to take a broad perspective on knowledge management. The team recruited by John Lewis can deal with the process by analysing the answers of the latter two questions. There are many models of academic theories but these three questions are always required to improve the whole process of Knowledge Management in different business organisations (Metzendorf and Featherstone, 2018).

Application of relevant academic theories/models

There are lots of academic models for understanding the theories of Knowledge Management. Kotter's 8-Step Model is very much popular among them. This model is used to implement the

transformational change in many organisations like John Lewis. The Knowledge Management team resembles the Kotter's model as a guide with its eight steps (Figure: 1) that include: Increase Urgency, Build Guiding Team, Develop the Vision, Communicate for Buy-in, Empower Action, Create Short Term Wins, Don't Let Up, and Make Change Stick (Webb, 2017).



Figure 1: Kotter's theory

(Source: managementstudyguide.com, 2019)

Increase Urgency

In order to create a situation of urgency, the governing body of John Lewis can discuss the current financial situation with the other employees of the company. The officials are needed to reach the employees and let them feel the fear of losing their job as the financial graph has subdued in the limited revenue. In order to prevent this mishap, it is the responsibility of the team to convince the other employees about the probable change at the organisation (Navimipour *et al.* 2015).

Build Guiding Team

Now when the employees are convinced about the urgency, it is required for the governing body of John Lewis to select from the current employees to build up a guiding team. The team

members need to analyse the required equipment for change, the process of the change in policy and to make other employees habituated in the changing working environment.

Develop the Vision

During the thought process of changing, many great ideas and solutions may surface. The management team of John Lewis might build up a clear vision in order to help everyone to understand the upcoming change.

Communicate for Buy-in

The time when the vision is clear among the employees, the team and the governing body are required to communicate on a time-to-time basis with the employees about the updates so that they don't feel that the changing is happening without their knowledge.

Empower Action

In order to make certain and envisioned changes, there can be obstacles preventing the change. The obstacle can be any person or any process or structure of the organisation. The team members and the governing body of John Lewis are required to handle the situation with intelligence (Yu *et al.* 2017).

Create Short Term Wins

The employees of John Lewis can be motivated by giving the taste of short success during the ongoing procedure of changing the policy of Knowledge Management.

Don't Let Up

There is a drawback of the sixth step that is if the employees along with the team members are too much happy with the short success, the change project might fail. The permanent change requires more time. Each success gives an opportunity to build up the change properly and permanently and it also helps to find the hidden flaws of the changed policy (Lang *et al.* 2016).

Make Change Stick

In order to make the change permanent, it has to become part of the centre of the organisation. The corporate culture of John Lewis often sets about what is to be get done, in order to that, the values of behind the vision have to be seen in the daily based work.

Conclusion

Basing on this report, one can sum up by saying that the knowledge is different from information and data. Through knowledge, people can use data to create worthy information and can increase the values of the information. Knowledge of an area can be said as a true belief about relations among different concepts that are relevant to that assigned area. Every organisation like John Lewis is needed to implement its knowledge effectively by processes of management. In doing so, many benefits can be seen in business along with individual employees. The organisations are needed to get to the brass tacks of the life cycle of knowledge to manage it. The cycle includes four stages: creation, mobilization, dissemination, and commoditization. These stages point out the much-needed skills that are required to be implemented in the process of knowledge management effectively. John Lewis can form a management team and follow the aforesaid recommendations with being enlightened with the theories that have been discussed above to upgrade the internal processes of their organisation for reaching to more mass consumers.

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