

Applied Leadership and Management in the Workplace

Module Assignment Submission

Student Name:	Kirsty Rees
Student Number:	1917792
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Statement of Confirmation of Authenticity

By the act of making this submission, the student declares that this is the work of the student named above. The work has not, in whole or in part, been knowingly presented elsewhere for assessment, or where assessment has been built on a previous assessment, this has been identified. Where materials have been used from other sources it has been properly acknowledged. If this statement is untrue, the student acknowledges that an assessment offence has been committed.

Attention is drawn to the plagiarism and unfair practice policies of both the University and of ILM.

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Introduction

The purpose of this assignment is to explore the concept and essential role of knowledge and information management and their relationship to success. The author will research the importance of effectively creating, sharing, storing and managing information and how this can contribute to good knowledge information development. The relationship between data, information and knowledge will be explained whilst applying strategic management techniques. Tacit and explicit knowledge will be compared and applied to their workplace. The importance of Knowledge Management within the workplace will be explored. Knowledge management frameworks will be assessed.

Provide an evaluation of the concept and importance of knowledge management in the context of an organisation's knowledge assets

An organisation's knowledge and information are its vital resources as they provide the framework for innovative ideas, strategic choices, and the creation of competitive advantages.

Despite the difficulty in defining knowledge, it is generally recognized that knowledge is a structured set of concepts, rules, methods, and facts (Marakas, 1999).

Quinn et al. (1996) reports it is only via organisations can information processes to become knowledge.

The relationships between data, information, knowledge, and wisdom are best represented by the DIKW hierarchy (appendix 1), it is often attributed to Eliot (1934), a British poet, who, wrote "Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?" It represents a hierarchy of comprehension and insight, with each level building on previous ones. Starting at the bottom, as other hierarchical pyramid theories, data comes first, followed by information, knowledge, and wisdom.

'An ounce of information is worth a pound of data. An ounce of knowledge is worth a pound of information. An ounce of understanding is worth a pound of knowledge'

(Ackoff 1989) Through his influential work, Ackoff helped promote the DIKW framework and its use in management, research, and practice, resulting in its adoption and recognition as an established framework in understanding the dynamics of knowledge. Researchers such as Polanyi (1958) and Garfield (1955) also contributed to promoting the DIKW framework. More recently the model has been widely applied within information science and knowledge management (Frické 2019).

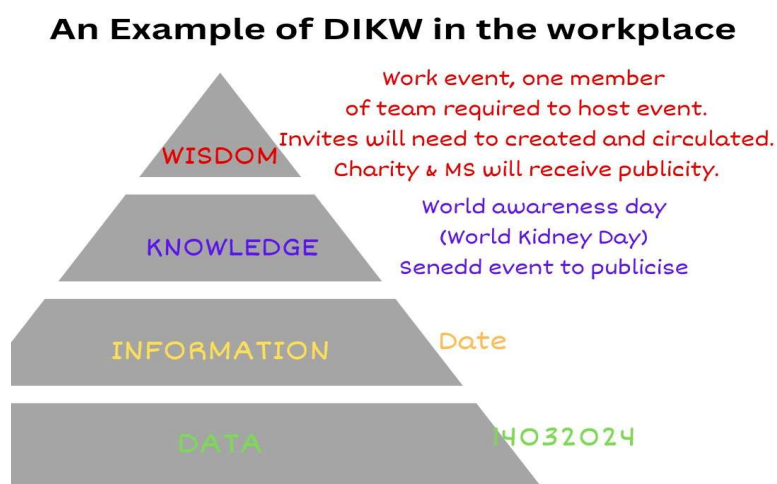
Data is raw information, unprocessed facts or statistics, by itself is meaningless and lacks value. As questions are asked it gives further insight and weight to the data. When data is processed or presented with its given context to make it useful it is then processed to information. **Information** adds context, meaning, and structure to data,

allowing it to answer queries such as who, what, where, and when. Information is usually more structured and organized than unprocessed data, and it is frequently provided in a format that is simpler to interpret and understand. **Knowledge** is formed by the deeper understanding and insight gained from information. Created by interpreting, analysing, and integrating information, knowledge is frequently combined with personal experiences. **Wisdom** is the capacity to apply information and experience in a way that demonstrates wise judgment. Wisdom is subjective and can depend on our prior knowledge.

The DIKW model demonstrates the progression of knowledge and insight, with each level building on the one before it to enable learning, decision-making, problem-solving, and creativity in both individual and organisational settings.

Whilst re-evaluating the pyramid further there is also another trend which separates the tiers. Data, knowledge and information are all established in the past, whereas wisdom is future looking, a planning element. As you move up the pyramid each tier has more value than the tier before it. In contrast as you descend the pyramid the meaning decreases.

An example of the DIKW Pyramid in practice within the authors workplace is –



The further context and information applied at each stage of the module will ensure the smooth process of the planned event.

As with all models, the DIKW pyramid has its limitations and cons. Weinberger (2010) claims the real problem with the DIKW pyramid is that it's a pyramid. Weinberger also states 'The image that knowledge (much less wisdom) results from applying finer-grained filters at each level, paints the wrong picture'. Whereas Frické (2018) describes the model as naive and unsatisfactory. They argue that two additional concepts,

document and sign, are required to offer a useful theoretical framework for knowledge organisation.

Tacit and explicit knowledge are two significant types of knowledge defined by their availability and transferability. Tacit knowledge is also known as Individual knowledge, it includes the unique skill-sets, areas of expertise and perspectives that every member of a team brings to the company. It is the culmination of learning and personal growth influenced by education, personal and professional experiences. Individual knowledge provides the building blocks for creativity, problem-solving, and teamwork, while also serving as the basis for organisational knowledge. Individual knowledge contributes and enriches organisational knowledge, enabling development, adaptability, and creativity. Individual knowledge is the foundation of organisational knowledge, with each individual contributing unique skills and experiences to the collective pool. Collaboration among members promotes the sharing of ideas and expertise, therefore strengthening the organisational knowledge base. A culture of open communication and information sharing, along with good knowledge management approaches, enhances the transfer of individual expertise into corporate knowledge and allows for effective problem solving, which contributes to increased productivity and efficiency.

It is believed that management studies have a significant misperception regarding tacit knowledge. This shared view held by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1998), is tacit knowledge is knowledge which must be translated or converted into explicit knowledge is inaccurate because, in contrary to Polanyi's (1958) argument, it lacks the essential inaccessibility of tacit knowledge (Tsoukas 2005).

Whereas, explicit knowledge is described as knowledge that has been structured, documented, and shared in a practical and accessible manner. It is readily available for all to access to others in the organisation. Isaacs (1999) claims that explicit knowledge cannot be converted to tacit knowledge. Some argue that tacit knowledge, skills, talents, and physical accomplishments may be made explicit via observation and verbal communication. Codifying and tailoring data depends upon a company's approach to business economics and personnel (Hansen et al., 2013).

Originated in the 1960s (Learned, 1965), a SWOT analysis is a valuable tool, it provides a structured framework to assess an individual, project or organisation. It highlights internal strengths and weaknesses whilst also considering external threats and opportunities. According to Glaister and Falshaw (1999), SWOT analysis is one of the most widely used and regarded strategic planning methods. Whereas Dyson (2004), claims a SWOT analysis is out of date, with resource-based planning (Wenerfelt, 1984 & Grant, 1991) and competency-based planning (Ulrich & Lake, 1990) becoming preferred options.

Due to its adaptability a SWOT was applied to enable the writer to assess the knowledge assets within their current employment.



The SWOT provided a snapshot knowledge assets, weaknesses, potential threats and opportunities of the organisation at that time.

The organisation, Welsh Parliament, overall are very good at sharing policies such as code of conduct and keeping employees up to date via an Intranet platform. Good practice is shared with all offices. Each Senedd Member (MS) has their own individual office, this is independently managed and run, in this report the findings will be relating to this office.

The findings above highlighted the strengths, over the years the MS has been elected they have gained great recognition and reputation within the constituency. Colleagues have built up great engagement within the community, especially within the schools. Weaknesses are varied and some only apply to one member of the team. Some team members lack the urgency and often miss deadlines. ICT skills are limited for some and this leads to lack of use of some systems. There are still opportunities that may appear; some communities are less engaged, and other connections could be established to engage with other political offices and exchange best practices. Other political parties and controversial policies are among the threats that cannot be managed. Whereas misunderstanding among residents about the UK Parliament and the Welsh Parliament is something that can be rectified. Social media featured at several levels of the SWOT, it is considered as a strength, an opportunity, and an obstacle.

Miscommunication is often a major risk while using social media sites. This could lead to bad press and tarnish the MS's reputation.

The Importance of Knowledge Management Processes in the Context of Organisational Development

Knowledge management is the process of utilising an organisations collective knowledge to create innovation, enhance decision-making, and improve overall performance. One of the core functions of KM is to facilitate the conversion of tacit to explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge often residing in individuals minds, represents their personal beliefs and experiences, whilst it is invaluable (Garrick & Chan 2017), tacit knowledge can be challenging to articulate and share. KM processes enable the transferring of tacit information, converting it into explicit forms that can be documented, codified and shared within the organisation. Once transferred, knowledge is documented and arranged into material resources such as manuals, policies and procedures. Codification makes transparent data accessible and retrievable making it easier to circulate throughout the organisation.

KM procedures are vital to organisational development as they provide a systematic strategy to capturing, storing and sharing knowledge within an organisation and enables organisations to utilise all of their knowledge assets. An article published in the International Journal of Business and Management (Hayfa et al. 2018), demonstrated that effective knowledge management has a substantial impact on organisational performance and creativity. KM encourages a culture of continuous development and learning by making it easier to share best practices and expertise throughout departments . This, in turn, improves decision-making processes, as demonstrated by studies published by Wheeler & Root-Bernstein (2020) which emphasizes the relevance of KM in providing decision-makers with access to sufficient information and expertise for informed decision-making.

Earlier studies by Bhatt (1998) argued that individual knowledge and organisational knowledge are distinct yet connected. The organisational culture determines how one member interacts with the other. Bhatt (2002), later went onto elaborate on this and later focused on the importance of individual and organisational knowledge varies based on task nature, training, motivation, and management's willingness to delegate responsibilities to employees. In order to do this successfully tacit knowledge must be transferred into explicit knowledge. Organisations that utilize the expanding pool of explicit and tacit knowledge possessed by their workforce in order to accomplish objectives and problem solve achieve goals and have advantages over competitors (Smith, 2001).

There are a variety of means of KM in place within the workplace, some of the most commonly used are knowledge storage such as intranet, best practice, handbooks etc. By creating a knowledge sharing culture by encouraging peer-to-peer recognition and

incentives for contributions to knowledge. Recognition can come from a variety of sources, including colleagues, managers and the community themselves (Brun and Dugas, 2008).

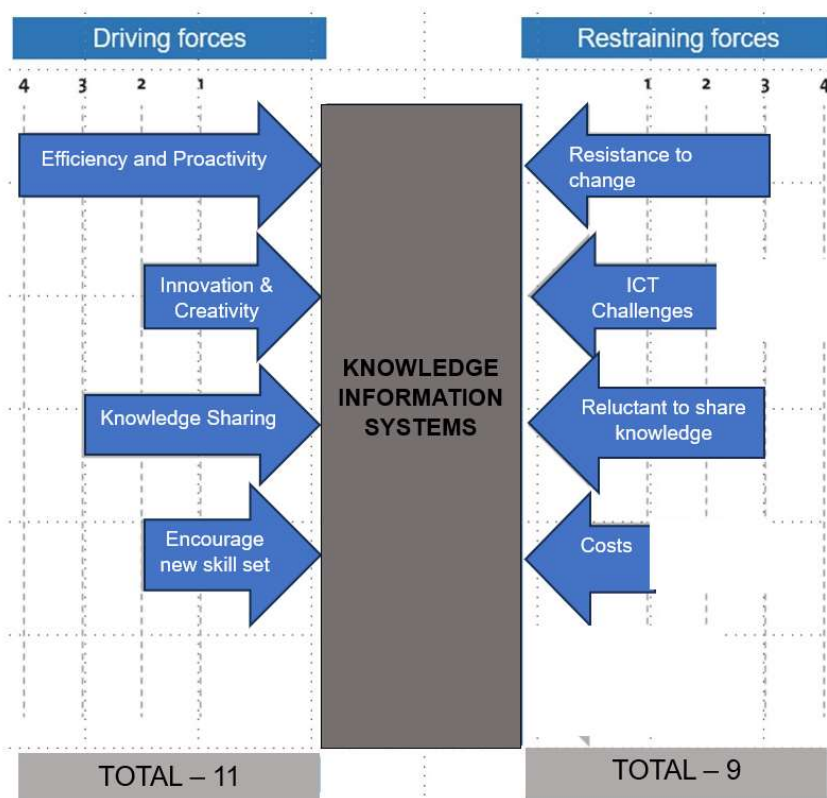
KM provides strategic advantage (Azeem et al. 2021). An example of this procedure in action at the workplace, a DIKW framework was applied to identify how the organisation applies this and KM on a daily basis. Data is captured in many forms within the workplace, the most recent being a survey which was hand delivered to residents asking for their answers to strategic questions. In order to utilize the data obtained through surveys is processed and stored in a database which is accessible by all of the team. This will give the data controller the necessary knowledge to strategically target individuals with relevant information. The most recent example of KM in the workplace is a new policy at the discussions stage, the policy, if successful, will enforce the microchipping of cats. The data retained enabled the team to engage with people who had cats or anyone who might benefit from the new policy, organisations included.

DIKW Framework Components	Definition According to the Oxford Dictionary	Applied within the workplace	How & Why
Data	Facts or information, especially when examined and used to find out things or to make decisions. <i>Raw data – not been analysed</i>	Data collection undertaken	Surveys conducted to obtain data
Information	facts or details about somebody/something	Special interests noted upon data recording	Data stored within a database
Knowledge	the information, understanding and skills that you gain through education or experience	Recognising patterns and interests	special interests noted within the database
Wisdom	the knowledge that a society or culture has gained over a long period of time	strategic decisions that lead to success	Using insights gained from data analysis to share relevant information to the correct constituent

The survey data will help policymakers make informed judgments and implement practical solutions. Additionally, it allows community members to participate in policy-making, this will lead to further understanding of the policy and will enable constituents to have a voice. Microchipping can be an effective technique for pet owners to monitor and identify their cats, particularly in times of accidents or missing pets.

Storing survey data in a database can indeed be a strategic move for organisations aiming to better understand their target audience, it can become a vital tool for strategic targeting and policy creation (Grover et al. 2018) however, in order to maintain respondent confidence and guarantee regulatory compliance, the data must be handled responsibly and transparently which will lead to greater trust in organisations (Androniceanu, 2021). Regulations such as GDPR have a significant influence on how organisations collect, store, and manage personal data, prompting them to develop strong data storage procedures and compliance techniques to safeguard individuals' privacy rights whilst maintaining regulatory compliance.

Kurt Lewin (1940) created Force Field Analysis in the 1940s. Lewin first applied it within his work as a social psychologist. Today, it is also utilised in business to make and communicate yes/no decisions. The concept behind Force Field Analysis is that circumstances are maintained by an equilibrium between forces that drive change and those that resist change, as seen in Appendix 2. For change to happen, the driving forces must be strengthened or the resisting forces lessened. A force field analysis was applied to the concept of applying a KM system in the current workplace of the writer.



The most limiting aspect in the workplace will be the unwilling employees and some employees view knowledge sharing as a negative and will be highly reluctant to participate. Also, one member of staff does not deal well with change, so any new systems will need to be handled properly. The knowledge system considered will be a caseworker system, many other offices work successfully on the system, unfortunately this has been met with mixed views within our workplace and has not been acted on to date due to the restraining forces. The above force field analysis further proves it will be worth overcoming the restraining forces and applying said caseworker system.

Intellectual property (IP) at the workplace comprises an extensive range of assets such as inventions, designs, trademarks and copyrights all of which are essential for encouraging innovation and competitiveness. Protecting intellectual property rights is essential for organisations seeking to secure innovations and maintain an advantage in the marketplace (Chesbrough, 2003). According to Birkbeck (2016), intellectual property assets constitute for a significant portion of many organisations worth, highlighting the necessity for effective IP management practices in the workplace. Intellectual property rights enable businesses to safeguard confidentiality, restrict illegal use or reproduction, and claim damages for infringement. However, maintaining intellectual property in the workplace has challenges, such as the danger of unintended disclosure, employee turnover and the necessity for continual monitoring. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of access to intellectual property during a crisis (Walsh et al., 2021). During the pandemic, intellectual property (IP) was not a significant driver of innovation (Gold & Edwards, 2022), rather it contributed to limits and ultimately postponed worldwide access to vaccinations and treatments (Ning et al., 2022). Although companies played an important role in vaccine and antiviral development, they funded their efforts through major procurement contracts rather than intellectual property.

IP are not required within the authors current workplace. Their previous role within a solicitors practice enabled them to have insight of behind the scenes of the litigation claims.

Establishing a Knowledge Management Culture Framework

Organisations must be efficient when managing knowledge assets. However, the majority of managers have several challenges in comprehending the practical aspects of knowledge management (Davenport et al., 1996).

Scholars Barney (2001) and Grant (1996) have all taken a theoretical, strategic, and organisational approach to researching the crucial role of knowledge assets to organisations. According to Bell (1973), knowledge has become a key resource to the current economy. Knowing your market, customers desires, needs and expectations this knowledge enables the organisation to target them. Policy knowledge will provide an opportunity to make advantages or be make plans for any impacts providing the organisation with strategic advantage.

When assessing their workplace the author conducted a brainstorming session with colleagues to explore their knowledge assets within the team. The answers were captured within a mind map.



Within the political sector Knowledge assets are critical tools that contribute to informed decision-making, effective governance and successful policy implementation. Knowledge assets within the team influence the language of politics, policy development and governance practices. They enable the politician to make more informed decisions, increase public trust and contribute to societal well-being and economy by harnessing the array of knowledge sources.

To facilitate and promote explicit knowledge sharing the organisational on a whole, Welsh Parliament, share all updates and best practice via an Intranet system, they offer policy updates. They provide a shared drive which is accessible to all offices, on this drive there are model replies, template letters and procedures available. Within the individual office, knowledge is shared via a secure accessible database.

Whilst researching the importance of KM and the benefits of KM systems within the workplace it appears that there can be considerable improvement within the team. At present data is written down, entered into an excel database (by only a few of the team), then exported when required. The downsides to the current system is lack on continuity, only a few colleagues use the database and it is often entered with little information when prompted to use. A caseworker system would be more user friendly and ensure continuity across the team. unfortunately the costs required to purchase said system are deemed unnecessary at present due to the reluctance it will be met

with. However, the office is due a restructuring and this will be prioritised at this stage. To further support this argument a gap analysis (appendix 3) was applied to evaluate the situation and evidence potential gaps. A gap analysis is an essential tool used by companies seeking to overcome barriers to KM systems by identifying current challenges, evaluating the fundamental causes and prioritising improvement efforts (Devi Ramachandran et al., 2013). When discussions around updating the current procedure it has been met with lack of engagement and willingness from the team. The GAP analysis undertaken to review the current situation suggests the main barriers are team members. Two staff members are retiring shortly and appear to be 'winding down'. The office will be under review once these changes have been made, the benefits of a KM system out weigh any barriers. The need within the office is growing daily as we near election period. This recommendation will be shared with the relevant colleague.

When assessing the KM framework the capturing and storage of data requires action, the colleagues capturing the data do not appreciate the importance of the data and how it can utilised. There are many recommendations to be made to make the framework more accessible and robust, such as purchasing the caseworker system which will provide a ready made system appropriate for the KM required.

The VRIO framework is an approach to evaluate an organisation's internal resources and skills to determine whether they can provide a sustainable competitive advantage. The phrase VRIO is derived from the words value, rarity, imitability and organisation. Originally established by Jay Barney (1991), who outlined four characteristics that a firm's resources must have in order to become a source of sustained competitive advantage. The framework is a flow chart (Appendix 5) which is designed to confirm if the resource adds sustained competitive advantage.

There are two types of resources, tangible and intangible. Tangible assets are physical things like land, buildings and machinery. Companies can easily purchase these items, so tangible assets are rarely the source of competitive advantage.

Whereas intangible assets, such as reputations, trademarks or intellectual property are not acquired so easily and therefore offer the benefits of sustained competitive advantage. Therefore, to find valuable, rare and costly to imitate resources, you should first look at the company's intangible assets. Upon the completion of this framework the author applied the MS's reputation to the framework. The answers were:-

Valuable?	Rare?	Costly to Imitate?	Is a company organized to exploit it?
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Result: Sustained Competitive Advantage

Another framework to be considered is KM Value Chain (Appendix 5), Value chain analysis is a strategy tool used to analyse internal firm activities. Its goal is to recognize which activities are the most valuable (i.e., are the source of cost or differentiation advantage) to the firm and which ones could be improved to provide competitive advantage.

Conclusion

This paper proposes that individual knowledge and organisational knowledge are distinct yet interconnected.

Individual knowledge is often expressed through personal creativity and self-expression. Organisational knowledge is reflected in products and services offered.

Individual knowledge in the workplace is an asset; however, if management does not actively promote individual expertise and knowledge, individual self-expressions can become organisational liabilities. Therefore, management should establish an environment that encourages its staff to cooperate and share knowledge. This leads to increased staff knowledge and the development of organisational knowledge via individual interactions.

Individuals' tacit knowledge represents intuitive understanding that individuals possess, whereas explicit knowledge contains structured and codified material that is easily conveyed and shared. Both forms of knowledge are critical for individual and organisational success. Effective knowledge management involves recognizing the benefits of tacit and explicit knowledge and utilising both to enable learning, improvements and professional development. Frameworks such as Value Chains and VRIO are best utilized for strategic analysis and planning within businesses or organizations. Value chains help to understand a company's internal operations and how they contribute value to its products or services. VRIO helps organisations assess their competitive advantages and enhance the resources allocation accordingly. Both frameworks are valuable for strategic management as they help organisations recognize their competitive position, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. They offer organised techniques to examining internal and external elements impacting a company's performance and directing decision making processes linked to resource allocation, competitive positioning and long-term growth goals.

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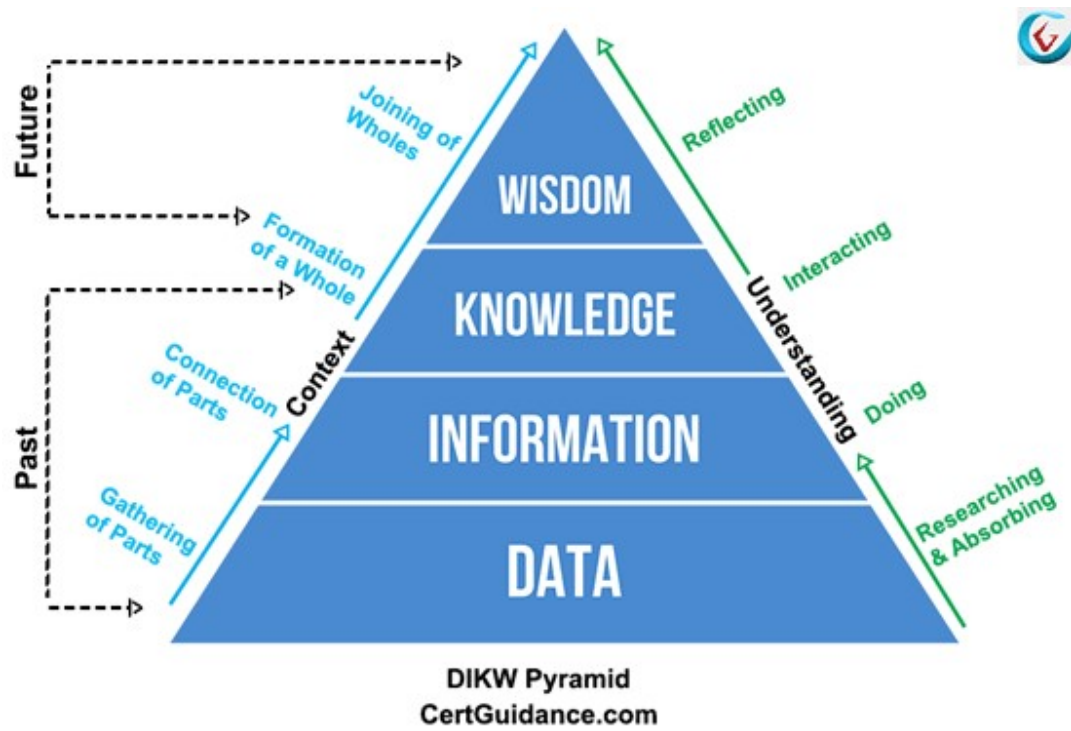
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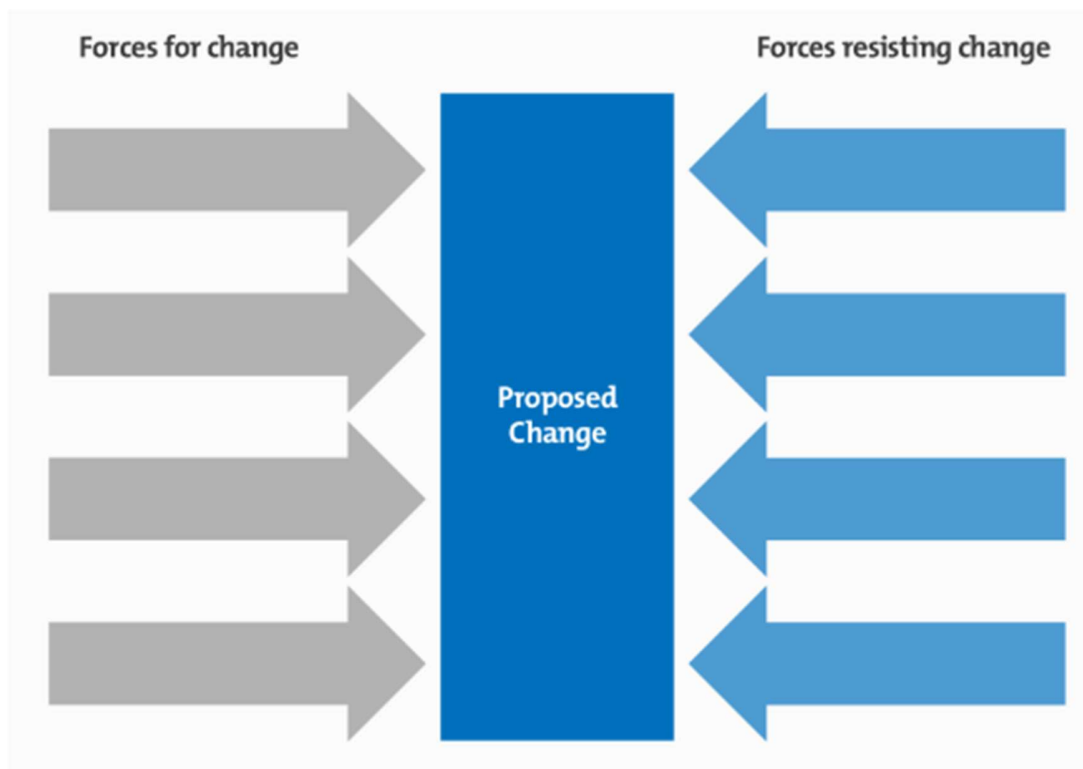
Appendices

Appendix 1



Source : <https://www.certguidance.com/explaining-dikw-hierarchy/>

Appendix 2



Source - <https://qilothian.scot.nhs.uk/pc-resource-force-field-analysis>

Appendix 3

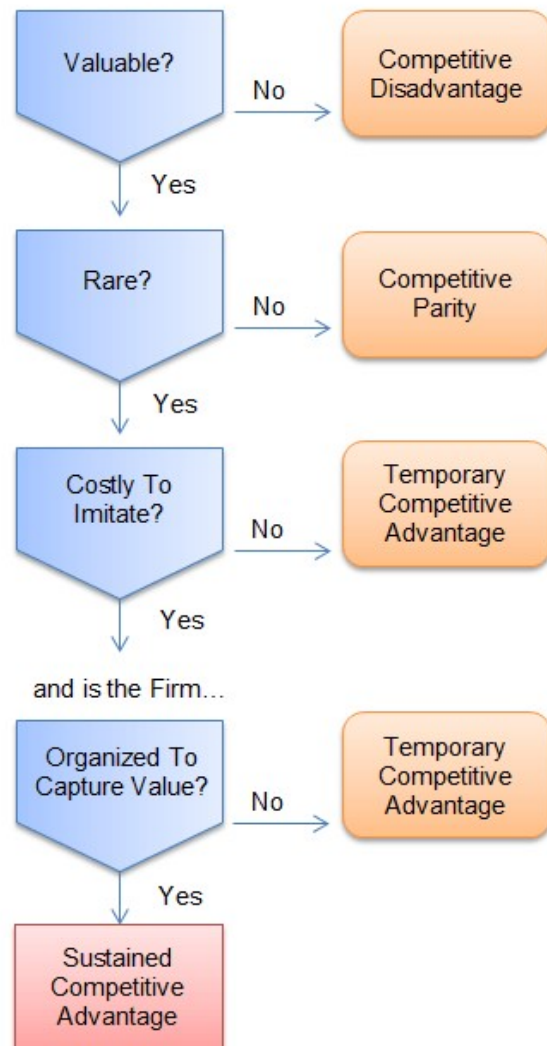
Gap Analysis

Praxie

	Current State (FROM)	GAPS	Desired Future State (TO)
Improved KM systems	Database knowledge sharing	- Reluctant staff - Budget constraints - Colleagues ICT lack of knowledge	Caseworker System
Effective capture and storage	- Employees not effectively storing data - Employees not capturing data overall	- Colleagues lack of interest - GDPR constraints	Proactive capturing, storing and utilising data
Utilising data continuously	No consistent data available to further assist with informing constituents	Colleagues lack of interest	Data available to be exported to update constituents

Appendix 4

Is the Resource or Capability...



Appendix 5

