



BA Leadership and Management Skills for the Workplace

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Introduction

Knowledge and information are important aspect for any business organization. Before business were done or decisions were taken based on value and demands of the products and delivering according to customers demand. This type of age-old traditional businesses now has been gone past. Then new era is of information and communication knowledge management system and proper knowledge management process. In this assessment, the discussion will be on the knowledge management systems, the theories and models of knowledge management systems, importance of information regarding the system and also the difference and relationship between data, information, knowledge and actual and potential knowledge assets as well. The total discussion is based on TESCO PLC, UK's largest food retail store. TESCO was established in 1919 Jack Cohen started the business of groceries in a small shop. Then TESCO started to increase its portfolio an went into tea business. From then TESCO has flourished hugely and turned into a giant retail store of UK offering a wide range of food product and other grocery items. In the year 2016-17 TESCO generated a sale of 51 billion pounds which amounted to a revenue of 57 million pounds (Tesco, 2018). TESCO has employed more than 450,000 employees worldwide among them more than 250,000 are from UK. TESCO is so large at its business that it encompasses 30% of the market share in the supermarket stores of UK.

Task 1

Knowledge information is an important aspect for an organization to consider in this century of technological advancement. To know deeply about knowledge and information the concepts of data, information and knowledge, theories and models of knowledge management, knowledge asset's concept has to be known properly which will be discussed in Task 1.

1.1 Relationship between data, information and knowledge

There is a deep relationship between data, information and knowledge. These may be stated as the level of meaningfulness of a mere tool of communication. Data refers to any collection of unorganized facts, understanding from a theory or just a mere collection of symbols which are the prime components of communication. Data can also take the form of just a sensory like a light, touch, sound and even smell or taste. Data is used just to ensure the basic representation of an object. Thus data has no reference, no time bound and might or might not be useful to a user. Thus data in other words are also called unprocessed information which has no value at all without proper reference and guidance. Information on the other hand is known as a processed data. When the data is collected and analysed altogether to find out an overall meaning from the collected data is known as information. Data only turns in to information when there is meaningfulness or any type of conclusion on the data. Information thus has reference and time of information is specific- past, present or future forecasting. Data is judged as the medium or the raw material for information. Various sort of tools can be used to turn data in to information which can be human generated or automated through technological devices. On the other hand knowledge is a far more meaningful information which needs to know the three main focuses of an information – the who, the what and the why. Knowledge is used to make our lives and processes much easier by creating a value for the information. Information is also valuable but not all type of information generates value for everyone (Ishikawa and Nakagawa, 2013). Thus information should be scrutinized under the above three question to generate a form of knowledge which is reliable and usable to specific people. Knowledge is a result of our experience, data and information. For example for TESCO plc the everyday data that is gathered from the various customer purchases and the bulk amount of orders for the suppliers can be regarded as the primary set of data. These data are so huge in amount that they cannot be of any used without being properly analysed. Thus when this data is analysed through an automated

computer system to figure out the demand of a certain product for the past day, or the number of total sales of a certain variety of product is known as information. And when the information is used for gaining further knowledge such as why the sales is so low, or how the demand of a certain product has increased can be considered as knowledge.

1.2 Relationship between individual knowledge and organizational knowledge

Individual knowledge and organizational knowledge are two different things. Individual knowledge refers to an employee or personnel's own knowledge and learning gathered from personal education, experience or any medium of personal learning. Whereas these knowledge of individual further result in the knowledge of the organization. In knowledge management, the top level of an organization should consider both these knowledge theories of individual and altogether. These theories are different in their own context and concepts but they are interdependent. After all it is individual experience which leads to the overall organizational efficiency and performance (Hislop, 2010). In this complex era of business, the hierarchy, company policies and regulations while making judgmental decisions, important rules are often ignored giving individual expertise and knowledge topmost importance. Employees are always urged to take decision which might have big impact on the organization but the policy makers or the top management rely on the expertise of the employees in this context. Because the latency might create a bigger problem than the early decision taken by the low-level employee. On the contrary, organizations have become much more complex than ever. The competitions in every sector is rising and creativity and knowledge. The higher the risks are the greater the loss involved. So, in some cases the organizational knowledge is given more priority than individual knowledge as the knowledge is dealt with more care and priority. As long as the tasks are trivial and easy to predict and control, the individual knowledge might be given priority. But the organizational knowledge is more important than the individual knowledge when the situation is complex and the consequences are severe. In such situations minor mistakes can result in large loss which is very likely to happen by individuals. So, in this case collective organization decision making and knowledge is preferred then individual knowledge. For example, in TESCO the employees are very qualified and well experienced. They are always encouraged to exercise creativity in decision making at every level. But when there are severe issues such as fixing policy for making TESCO a zero percent carbon emission company within 2050 requires a large

number of expert people's knowledge and thinking which cannot be achieved by an individual's capability. At the end, individuals will contribute to the organizations but collective development and knowledge is also needed for overall development of the organization.

1.3 Analysis and modelling techniques to identify knowledge assets

Knowledge assets refers to a firms intellectual property, which ultimately generate value for the organization by earning profit. It can be any type of information of a business – individual or organizational knowledge of employees, knowledge or information about customers and competitors, or even information about companies internal policies and management process. They are mostly regarded as the main factors behind an organization's prosperity. Knowledge assets can take many forms and come in many ideas. But it is best to identify these knowledge assets and bring them under a structure for example the copyrights, patents of an organization. These structures can set a huge advantage as the knowledge asset can be shared and implemented quite easily then unorganized and undefined knowledge assets. Knowledge asset thus consist of proper guideline, developed from real life experiences and day to day business activities which is developed to make complex decision-making processes in the decision making easier. Knowledge management has its best use when it is shared with more and more people rather between a small group or individuals. As the knowledge is shared, the knowledge assets gets more valued and thus more used (Amine Chatti, 2012). Knowledge assets can be stored in any knowledge sharing platform from where everyone can share and use knowledge when needed. But the most important criteria in knowledge asset process is identifying the knowledge assets. Knowledge assets identification requires proper knowledge management as knowledge assets are like real life assets. Where there are some assets which contribute as the main or the prime asset for the operation of the organizations, knowledge assets work as the same. The different techniques and models that can be used for knowledge management to find out and store knowledge asset. Knowledge management techniques include the SWOT analysis of a business, the SSM model etc. can be used to find out the market knowledge assets. The capabilities of the staffs, staffs individual skills, creativity and innovation can be human knowledge assets identification tools. The structural knowledge assets can be the methods and practices of internal operation of the organization. For example – TESCO has a great R&D department and is continuously trying to identify new techniques to increase efficiency of the stores. TESCO also

collects data about customers and through customer relationship management it analyzes those data and produces knowledge assets for the company which can be further used to enhance customer experience and provide greater customer values.

1.4 Actual and potential knowledge assets

Knowledge assets as already stated have to be treated as the real “Assets” of a company. Some of the knowledge have actual importance in the business which play a vital role in the competitive environment of the business. And there are some other knowledge assets which are not that vital now but will be important in the upcoming future for the organization. Knowledge assets are actually the result of the knowledge management process. Potential knowledge work as the raw material in this process. Potential knowledge assets can generate from company employees, company processes, competitors and their strategies, the customer databases, consultancy from other firms, mergers acquisitions etc. All these knowledges are potential assets for the company. But the actual knowledge comes out after proper processing of knowledge management which strategically play a vital role in the company (Hislop, 2010). The creation of the knowledge asset data start from the source of knowledge. These knowledges are then stored in database management system in a proper manner. After the data is retrieved and analyzed to find out proper data and information from the knowledge. Thus, the potential knowledge turns into actual and proper knowledge assets. This process can be done manually or through computerized software or management system. As the bulk of data in today’s business is too large, the knowledge sharing and storing manually is very tough manually. So, the storage, analysis and processes are done through technological methods using electronic devices and software which result best for knowledge asset management (Watson, 2010). For example – in TESCO, the data of the customer, the new employees in the organization and the old employees learning from the organization are examples of potential knowledge management, but when these data are put in to database management system and are analyzed properly are known as actual knowledge which can be used for building customer relationship and growing the sales margin.

Task 2

There are some specific requirements or prerequisite behind knowledge management. These are important aspects to consider while managing knowledge. Property rights are another important topic to consider to protect the rights of intellectual knowledge properties from treachery and piracy.

2.1 Requirement to create, store, apply and integrate knowledge

Knowledge management is the process of accumulating and processing knowledge and applying them for the need of organizational development. In this regard there are a few requirements or prerequisite to knowledge management. For example, the first step has to be done identify the business problem. Knowledge assets and knowledge management is actually to solve business problems and also so that the business problem does not occur more in the future. Thus, the first step should be to define the business problem clearly in order to manage proper knowledge assets. Otherwise knowledge management has no value (Thomas, 2006). Again, there are a lot of sources from where businesses can gather knowledge and transform them into actual knowledge assets through knowledge management but the process of knowledge management. But this bulk of data may create knowledge overload which hinders the objective of knowledge management. So, the knowledge management activities should be properly aligned with the business objective as well as the problem. If TESCO faces a problem regarding customer relations and after sales service than the sole focus of knowledge management should be given upon customer relationship management department and customer's needs and wants.

Knowledge management is also dependent on the support from the top management and the adaptability of the employees themselves. Because knowledge management is not a mere technology rather the knowledge management process helps the whole organization to prosper. Knowledge management involves implementation of many new projects and technologies and the employees should be able to adapt to those changes. If the employees stick to the old process of solving the problem then there is no use of actual knowledge management. Knowledge management should also be backed up by the proper assurance of the executive level employees. If they issue the process of knowledge management then they should provide the proper field of creativity and relieve to the employees so that they can exercise the change which has been brought through knowledge management process. As the team members are important, the team

as a whole another important requirement for knowledge management (Schwartz and Te'eni, 2011). The teams should be flexible and adaptable as a whole to the knowledge management process. Cross departmental and functional teams performs the best in this case because there is a free flow of information and knowledge which is the ultimate goal of knowledge management. TESCO plc organizations core teams are cross departmental teams and they are timely asked and mentored for knowledge management activities. The executive level employees also provide proper freedom and resources such as – the freedom of showing creativity, training for adapting to new technology and processes, workshops and inter departmental competitions in order to get the flow of knowledge management going through the organization.

Another important aspect for knowledge management is the knowledge audit. Knowledge audit means finding out the proper solution from where the information or knowledge will be collected. The knowledge audit should not be very precise rather it should answer three basic questions such as what is the problem that the knowledge management is required for, how severe the problem is and who will solve the problem using the knowledge management process. Another important requirement is to connecting the knowledge management process to the specific people who are involved in the process of knowledge management. The final goal of the knowledge management process is not only to use the process once rather keep using the process in the future thus sharing the knowledge assets (Maier, 2010). The sharing of the knowledge will be optimum only when knowledge management process is proper and there is relational database or knowledge management system existing. In TESCO the organization has its own database management system under which the organization's employees can search for a problem and the solution of the problem quite easily. Each individual person has a scope to ask for solution and modify solutions as well which helps the objective of the knowledge management process to become more successful. Thus, TESCO is fulfilling the requirement of knowledge management process.

2.2 Importance of Intellectual Property rights

Intellectual property actually refers to knowledge assets or any creative work which are treated as the same as the physical properties and generate extra value for the organization. The intellectual properties are generally divided in to four manners – Copyright, Trademark, The

rights of design and patent. Before looking in to the importance of the intellectual property rights, the discussion about the intellectual properties and the rights are discussed (Lehaney, 2004). Trademarks can be the sign, logo, design or even motto or the slogan of an organization which differentiates and positions the organization other than the other organizations. Trademarks are registered under UK government authority and takes a period of 6 to 12 months to be processed. Registered trademarks are identified by “TM” or R rated near the trademarked object as we can see near the TESCO logo, which has a registered copyright. National patent officer conducts the application and right storage of trademark. Copyright are the right to any intellectual property such as any book, publication, music, or any creative and intellectual work such as films etc. UK copyright registration is done by copyright authority. The UK copyright law protects the registered copyright and helps to flourish creative intellectual works. Then there are patents which are generally for new inventions and creation of any project or process. Patents are generally registered under every country’s national government and take almost 2 to 3 years to be established. Then there are rights to design work which is almost similar to copyright and has the same process for registration.

The importance of the intellectual property rights are a lot in this age of information, communication and technology. Now due to the development of technology it is very easy to copy or to conduct piracy of any intellectual property quite easily. But this should not be done freely as this discourages the creator to create and market his or her own creation and others get the creative work for free (Eliot, 2016). If the work or invention is properly protected with right then there can be no intervention in the usage of the invention by the inventor or the registrar. TESCO has its logo trademarked and copyright protected. TESCO’s website and other contents are also right protected so if anyone tries to infringe any of its intellectual properties, TESCO can take immediate action against that party. Again, these rights generate a value and also motivate inventors to invent and develop new and new things which might make our lives easier. These rights are also needed for the economic growth as the registered right remains to the owner and the owner can earn profit by selling or letting his or her products being used by others in exchange of monetary benefits. As TESCO has a good reputation of doing business, it’s logo has an intrinsic value. Thus, by providing its logo to any retailer, TESCO can ensure reliability of the customers in exchange of monetary benefits

Task 3

TESCO being a large organization, has a specific methodology to conduct and contribute to the business asset and knowledge management. There are a specific set of requirements for knowledge only. In this assessment a framework for TESCO will be developed and proper recommendation will be given to improve this frame work.

3.1 Contribution knowledge assets have on an organization

The knowledge management has tremendous value to gaining an organization's competitive advantage as well as the organization's overall efficiency and effectiveness. Knowledge management actually helps the organization to have a clear idea about the market of the company, the products, the businesses and even the customers and their demands of a certain product. TESCO has a very developed and efficient supply chain process due to its proper knowledge management system. As TESCO shares its knowledge and expertise with the suppliers and the retailers and properly manages the data which helps the organization to maintain a good market share in the business sector (Brown, 2002). Organizations can also solve the problems much quicker an in a more efficient manner due to the usage of knowledge management procedure. Knowledge management helps in cost reduction, reducing the wastage of time and effort and thus bringing more profit by creating value for the organization. TESCO Plc has recently undergone a deal with Yext, the global knowledge sharing and management platform in order to help the TESCO knowledge management become more efficient. Through the help of this platform, TESCO will be able to share information in real time from store to warehouse to vendors, and also keep track of the customer records of purchases and customers information in order to proper management of the stores. Yext will cover 4000 plus TESCO shops, offices and warehouse inventories which will encompass in UK and in Ireland as well. Like this, TESCO outsources many of its required software and services from third party companies which lets the company be more efficient by reducing time wastage and expenditure but achieving the goal in a more efficient way as these organizations are expert in the field of knowledge management (Kiyoki, 2009). In this world of competitive business environment, business organizations always thrive for innovation as the customers are more aware than ever. Thus, knowledge about market and competitor is quite necessary and proper knowledge management system helps to build this environment for knowledge.

3.2 Evaluate the knowledge requirements for the organization

Knowledge is a very important element in any organization whether it be a public or private level organization. As this world today deals with knowledge and sharing knowledge is also equally important (Dalkir, 2008). In TESCO plc the requirement of knowledge is much more important. TESCO is one of the largest retail stores in UK providing quality products to the UK citizens. It has been operating for quite a few times and is developed and required as a source of reliability and dependence to the people of Britain. Thus, to operate properly TESCO requires a lot of knowledge and information regularly. TESCO serves a customer base of more than 50 billion pounds; this huge amount of customer have a variety of choices and demands and they demand better value every day. To deal with this large number of customers, TESCO needs the knowledge of how to properly forecast sales, how to keep high inventory of which product and which products not to store in the warehouses, even the demographics of the customer such as what age of customer has the demand of which product etc. knowledge are very much required when it comes to the term of the customers (Vojtáš, 2013). Along with the customers, comes the knowledge of the suppliers, TESCO has to keep in touch with the suppliers always in order to find out a proper value and items to buy for at the optimum cost level. TESCO also has to inform in real time to the supplier of the products to supply a product and which one not to supply. These knowledges are also required to operate properly. Lastly the information about the employees regarding their performance, employee retention rate, the quality and development of each employee from a previous point of time are important to know which employee performs better under what situations. So, these knowledges is required for the internal management and processes inside the organization. Again, the knowledge about R&D and other processes of higher management and company policies also source of knowledge and these knowledges are required to continuously build up customer satisfaction and customer value.

3.3 Organization's framework for enabling knowledge sharing

TESCO plc has been successfully implementing the knowledge management and sharing process for a long time now. Here the discussion will be the framework of TESCO plc's for information sharing. To develop partner and customer relationship management, TESCO uses online channels and websites in order to be connected with the customers and provide them with

products (Conway and Sligar, 2002). TESCO established online comparison which offered the customer a more intrinsic view of a product by letting them comparing with one product to another in order to chose the optimum one. If the TESCO. Customers very much accepted the website and the sales were running ok. But there was a challenge in order to maintain the diverse and modified needs of each individual customer. To develop business challenges in this sector TESCO uses the proper knowledge management system through proper usage of IT program. The main challenge for TESCO to ensure efficiency on the online process as it created a lot of hassle for the companies as well as the supplier companies. In this case the framework of Soneto Channel Knowledge Management System were developed and as a result of this knowledge information system, which was implemented on the TESCO.com website, the data sent to the warehouses became much more efficient. This IT supported system helps the flow of product information from customer to suppliers ensuring a greater value created for both parties. The categories of the products on the website were also a quite lo easier and the online partnership could be done very smoothly. Also, there were specific categories for the retailer according to the requirement of the customers and the website.

3.4 Recommend improvements to the current framework

Although the knowledge management process of TESCO succeeded, there might be these recommendations to improve the network further. The knowledge management process could have been more user convenient as the information are for the final users. The software's shouldn't be so advanced that the normal customers or users cannot use the programs. The cost of the knowledge management system is also higher than the perceived value. The cost has to reduced in order to properly ensure the achievement of the objective of the company. The management system has to be followed with the main objective of the company and while making modifications these hast o be kept in mind. The system needs to be modified and updated regularly in order to ensure that the program is bug free and the systems are up to date. This project can also use the 80:20 rule of Pareto in which he discussed that the 80% of effort given in any task doesn't get the total output as the rest 20% does (Brown, 2002). So the main points of the modifications should be made and that could be helpful for the organization's overall management. TESCO could build an automotive report generating system which will be

regarding the performance of the employee and as well as customer order status so that both parties could be managed properly.

Conclusion

At the end it can be said that in this 21st century, where the century is all about sharing knowledge and information, the importance of knowledge management systems cannot be overlooked. The knowledge assets should be treated more importantly than the physical asset as these are the one activity bringing money for the organization. Thus every organization should be careful to use Knowledge management systems for the betterment of the companies as well as the betterment of the values that will be provided to the customers themselves. The customers should not be kept out of the picture nor the company values and norms while taking a decision for a large retailer like TESCO. TESCO has already provided a good example of knowledge management system and it is high time all the corporates should do it too.

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