



KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR THE WORKPLACE (BMSW5106_LON)

By Artiola Stana



LECTURER: NADEEM MIRZA
UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SIANT DAVID

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Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of the contemporary business, the strategic deployment of knowledge management (KM) stands as a pivotal asset for organizations aiming to stay ahead. This report navigates the realm of Knowledge Management applied to the globally renowned Samsung, exploring its implementation within Samsung SDI, a key player prioritizing Process Innovation (PI) for core competency. Efficiently utilizing tools such as Brightics AI, Cello, Foresight, and Shared Knowledge Repository, Samsung intertwines advanced technology with insightful practices. Through a combination of brainstorming sessions, social networking, and shared knowledge repository, Samsung cultivates a culture of innovation and knowledge dissemination. Furthermore, this KM system seamlessly interacts with other facets of Samsung's operations, contributing to its transition for a low-cost imitator to a design-focused market leader. The management style, a fusion of Japanese and American approaches, reflects a focus on technology, brand, and design. The report further illustrates how tools like Brightics AI are integrated into Samsung's processes, emphasising the tangible benefits and challenges encountered in this Knowledge Management journey. The benefits encompass competitive enhancement, reduction of lead time, and global application of PI, positioning Samsung SDI as a multinational corporation embracing sophisticated procedures for sustained competitiveness. However, challenges

arise in the face of increased competition and economic uncertainties, especially in the technology industry. This exploration underscores Samsung's strategic embrace of Knowledge Management, weaving it intricately into its organization fabric to foster innovation, efficiency, and global competitiveness.

Knowledge and Information Management

Background of Samsung

Samsung's early history was defined by founder Lee Byung-Chull's emphasis on industrialization post Korean war. The company diversified into textiles, finance, and various sectors, evolving into a prominent conglomerate or "chaebol". During the 1960s and 1970s, Samsung entered heavy, chemical, and petrochemical industries. (Kraar,2019) The electronics era for Samsung commenced in 1969 with the introduction of black-and-white televisions. Over time, diversified its technology divisions, establishing semiconductor and electronics branches, and entered the global market. Samsung's commitment to information technology services and research and development institutes expended its technological scope. (Kraar,2019) In 1987, Lee Byung-Chull's son, Lee Kun-Hee, assumed leadership, instigating substantial changes to combat complacency and foster global competitiveness. Under his direction, Samsung underwent restructuring, emphasizing product quality, innovation, and departing from bureaucratic practices. The 1990s witnessed Samsung's global expansion in the electronics market, notwithstanding challenges like corporate scandals and legal issues. (Kraar,2019) Despite setbacks, the company thrived in technology and product quality, securing leading positions in various markets. The 2000s marked the rise of the Galaxy smartphone series, a flagship product that garnered acclaim and commercial success. Samsung's involvement in supplying microprocessors for Apple's early iPhones and its dominance in the television manufacturing industry solidified its global presence. (Kraar,2019) The narrative encompasses key events, such as Lee Kun-Hee's

2008 indictment leading to resignation and legal troubles. The Galaxy series expanded into tablets and smartwatches, and in 2019, Samsung introduced the groundbreaking Galaxy Fold, a foldable smartphone. (Kraar,2019)

Definition of Knowledge Management System

Knowledge Management (KM) originated in management consulting, utilizing intranets for information sharing and later becoming a marketable product with tools like dashboards and expertise locators. Knowledge Management (KM) seeks to promote extensive communication, mirroring successful R&D environments in various organizations. (Koenig,2018) It also emphasizes situational awareness for informed decision-making. According to the Gartner Group, Knowledge Management is defined as a comprehensive approach to recognising, capturing, evaluating, retrieving, and sharing an enterprise's information assets. The operational elements of KM system encompass:

- **Content Management:** Enabling access to organizational data through dashboards, portals, and content management systems, including features for enterprise search. (Koenig,2018)
- **Expertise Location:** Identifying and finding experts within an organization through methods such as employee resumes, self-identification, and algorithmic analysis of electronic communications. (Koenig,2018)

These elements contribute to the overarching objective of effectively managing knowledge within and outside organizational boundaries.

Furthermore, Tom Davenport coined Knowledge Management (KM) as “the process of capturing, distributing, and effectively using knowledge”, originating from management consulting in the internet era. (Koenig,2018) Consulting firms utilized intranets for information sharing, developing tools like dashboards and expertise locators, leading to KM emerging as a marketable product. The term was first introduced at McKinsey in 1987 and gained public attention at a 1993 conference organised by Ernst and Young. (Koenig,2018)

Knowledge Management strives for two primary objectives:

- **Facilitating Rich, Deep, and Open Communication:** Creating an information environment akin to successful R&D by fostering extensive communication within and beyond the organization, aligning with the post-industrial information age where everyone is considered an information worker. (Koenig,2018)

- **Enhancing Situational Awareness:** Recently incorporated into KM, situational awareness, originating from Cold War-era fighter pilot studies, aims to establish organizational capabilities for excellent situational awareness, enabling well-informed decision-making. (Koenig,2018)

Both definitions highlight KM as a discipline extending beyond organizational boundaries, emphasizing the comprehensive management of knowledge on a larger scale. (Koenig,2018)

The importance of KM for the organization

Knowledge management is integral for organizations as it facilitates the continuous sharing of data, emphasizing the importance of learning. This approach places a primary focus on information sharing, enabling innovation and facilitating cultural changes within the company when necessary. (Indeed,2022) Accessible knowledge and expertise from management contribute to a positive work environment. Beyond this, effective knowledge management supports creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge to help organizations meet their objectives. On the crucial aspects is providing information to management, enabling informed decision-making for structural and procedural matters. This process also encourages an organic evaluation environment, where information sharing fosters a focus on knowledge, learning, and self-assessment. (Indeed,2022) Employees are empowered to enhance their individual performance, leading to improved overall company success. Furthermore, knowledge management promotes teamwork by actively sharing information, fostering innovation through dialogue, and encouraging employees to share experiences. This collaborative environment stimulates culture change and enhances the workplace. (Indeed,2022) The benefits of successful knowledge management are diverse, ranging from improved organizational efficiency to effective problem-solving and a focus on employee development. In addition to these advantages, recognising and valuing contributions through knowledge sharing enhances morale. This aligns individual professional goals with company objectives, creating a corporate culture where knowledge is freely shared among employees and management. (Indeed,2022) The goals of knowledge management are the centre to open communication, easing decision-making processes, and capturing and connecting expertise within the organisation. By establishing a system for storing, sharing, and creating valuable information, knowledge management propels the organisation forward and equips its members with the tools necessary for better decision-making. (Indeed,2022)

Knowledge management for sustainable competitive advantage

In today's business landscape, companies encounter challenges from factors such as globalization, technological progress, and the increasing importance of knowledge. To excel in this changing environment, organizations must explore novel avenues for gaining a competitive edge. (Jackson, DeNisi and Hitt, 2003) The widely accepted resource-based view of the firm posits that a company's success or failure is intricately tied to its distinctive resources and capabilities. Sustainable competitive advantage, according to this framework, stems from resources that are rare, valuable, and challenging to replicate. While tangible assets like building and machinery held paramount importance in the past, the significance of intangible resources, including reputation, brand equity, and notably, human capital, has grown. (Jackson, DeNisi and Hitt, 2003) Human capital, due to its challenging imitability, emerges as a crucial intangible asset for securing a competitive advantage. The intricate integration of resources within a firm, encompassing human capital, adds to the difficulty of reproducing, contributing to sustained competitive advantage. The importance of human capital is exemplified through instances like the prosperity of Hollywood studios in the 1930s and 1940s. (Jackson, DeNisi and Hitt, 2003) Stars, seen as a form of human capital, possessed unique reputations that proved difficult for rival studios to emulate. Despite the mobility of human capital, organizations can mitigate the threat to their competitive advantage by integrating it with complementary resources and building organisational capabilities. In this context, the loss of a few individuals may not endanger the competitive advantage, as competitors would need to replicate the entire integrated system. Consequently, human capital is now acknowledged as one of the most pivotal sources of sustained competitive advantage. (Jackson, DeNisi and Hitt, 2003)

Evaluation of Knowledge and Information Management theories

Information is frequently ingrained into products and service concepts by relying on the tacit knowledge held by individuals, encompassing both employees and customers. This implicit knowledge, rooted in unspoken and experiential insights, significantly contributes to the design, creation, and implementation of offerings within the realm of products and services. (Jewel, 2021) Employees bring their expertise and experiences, while customers contribute

through their preferences, feedback, and usage experiences. The synergy of tacit knowledge from both employees and customers actively influence the characteristics, standards, and overall perception associated with a given product or service concept. (Jewel,2021)

A methodical approach, often facilitated by Management Information Systems (MIS) or comparable systems, plays a pivotal role in empowering organizations to efficiently share and exchange their knowledge base. MIS delivers a structured framework for managing information and knowledge internally. (Jewel,2021) Leveraging databases, communication tools, and collaborative platforms, MIS enables the organized storage, retrieval, and distribution of information, cultivating a culture of knowledge sharing among employees. These systems optimize communication channels, ensuring pertinent knowledge is readily accessible to the appropriate individuals or departments. (Jewel,2021) Moreover, MIS supports real-time updates, collaborative projects, and feedback mechanisms, fostering an environment where the organization's knowledge base continually thrives through shared insights and expertise. (Jewel,2021)

Using Nonaka's SECI model is highlighting that tacit knowledge held by individuals significantly contributes to product and service development. For example, the bread-making case exemplifies how tacit skills acquired through socialization enhance product quality. (Gourlay, 2003) The case is used to illustrate the socialisation aspect of the SECI model, focusing on the transfer of tacit knowledge between individuals, particularly between software engineer and a master baker in the context of developing an automatic bread-making machine (2. "The imperial basis for the SECI model") This emphasizes the importance of individual insights in shaping the features and innovation of products and services. (Gourlay, 2003) Furthermore, externalization is the SECI model involves converting tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. In an organization context, a Management Information System (MIS) can play a critical role in structuring and storing explicit knowledge systematically. (Gourlay, 2003) MIS facilitates organised data sharing, aligning with the principles of Combination in the SECI model. This implies that systematic approaches like Management Information System are essential for efficient knowledge management within organizations. (Gourlay, 2003)

Samsung's Knowledge Management techniques

Definition of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Creating a clear, concise, and consistent Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is crucial for maintaining uniformity and achieving quality outcomes across industries. SOP serves as performance standards, instructions, references, and tools for review and improvement, ensuring safety, efficiency, and adherence to best practices. (Madhusudan,2019) Writing SOP in plain language, avoiding technical jargon, and using active voice are essential practices to enhance their effectiveness. SOP play a pivotal role in training, communication, teamwork, and continuous quality improvement in various sectors, including healthcare. (Madhusudan,2019) Furthermore, Standard Operating Procedures are detailed written instructions crucial for guiding regular activities within an organization, ensuring consistency, compliance, and adherence to business standards. (Brush,2021) The process of developing an effective SOP involves defining task goals, identifying potential risks, and determining the document's format. Authors need to consider dependencies, understand their audience, and maintain a clear, concise writing style. (Brush,2021) Implementing SOP best practices, such as a common style, accessible online storage, and continuous employee training, contributes to their successful utilization. SOPs bring benefits to organizations by reducing errors, enhancing efficiency, ensuring safety, and promoting effective communication, fostering a consistent and streamlined operational environment. (Brush,2021)

Knowledge in Samsung and main outcomes

In the dynamic real of Samsung, the increasing significance of knowledge embedded in their Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) becomes apparent amidst the rapid advancements in technology. (Jang et al., 2002) Recognized as a global leader in the tech industry, Samsung understands that maintaining a pioneering role in innovation necessitates a workforce equipped with the latest insights and skills. The company places a high value on continuous learning and professional development, fostering a culture that encourages employees to enrich their knowledge base. (Jang et al., 2002) This dedication to knowledge is deeply rooted in the company's SOP, guaranteeing that staff members are well-informed about innovative technologies, industry trends, and emerging market demands. Given the swift evolution and apply current knowledge has become a fundamental aspect of Samsung's operational efficiency. (Jang et al., 2002) This emphasis not only enhances the overall quality of their products and services but also positions Samsung as a leading force in shaping the future of technology. Through ongoing educational initiatives and a steadfast

focus on integrating knowledge, Samsung ensures that its workforce remains adaptable, innovative, and proficient in addressing technological landscape. (Jang et al., 2002)

The implementation of rigorous Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) at Samsung yields several key outcomes. Firstly, it ensures consistency and uniformity in operations, promoting efficiency and reducing errors. (Jang et al., 2002) Secondly, adherence to (SOP) enhances product and service quality, contributing to customer satisfaction and loyalty. Additionally, it fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, as employees stay well-informed about the latest technologies and industry trends. (Jang et al., 2002) Moreover, these procedures aid in risk management and compliance, crucial in a dynamic business environment. Overall, Samsung's commitment to Standard Operating Procedures results in streamlined processes, heightened competitiveness, and sustained advancements in the rapidly evolving technology landscape. (Jang et al., 2002)

Areas to improve-overcoming challenges:

Samsung is a diverse conglomerate with a presence in various industries. Some challenges it faced include legal issues, intense competition and shifts in the global economy impacting demand for its products. (Brands, 2023)

- Innovation stands for a pivotal strategy for Samsung to surmount challenges and uphold its leadership in the global market. The company's extensive history of investing in research and development (R&D) is evident, with a specialized team dedicated to pioneering technologies and collaborating externally for novel product and service creation. (Brands, 2023) Beyond internal R&D Samsung actively pursues and integrates startups and emerging technologies to complement its existing operations, fostering an environment where innovation flourishes. Encouraging a culture of creativity and risk-taking is integral to Samsung's success, supported by training programs, rewards for inventive ideas, and open communication channels for employees engaged in innovative pursuits. (Brands, 2023) Furthermore, collaborating with external partners, particularly universities and research institutions, is crucial for Samsung. This strategic approach enables the company to accelerate innovation by sharing knowledge and expertise, ultimately helping it navigate challenges, meet changing consumer demands, and sustain global leadership in diverse industries. (Brands, 2023)
- Diversification emerges as a vital strategy for Samsung to surmount challenges and sustain competitiveness globally. (Brands, 2023) Operating in various industries,

such as electronics and semiconductors, Samsung must expand its product offerings to mitigate reliance on specific lines. This can be achieved by entering new industries, like healthcare or renewable energy, or by innovating within existing sectors, ensuring the company adapts to economic shifts and geopolitical risks. (Brands, 2023) While diversification opens new revenue streams, Samsung needs to carefully balance it with core business focus to maintain alignment with overall strategy and competencies. In essence, diversification is crucial for Samsung to navigate challenges, mitigate risks, and capitalize on growth opportunities worldwide. (Brands, 2023)

- Addressing cybersecurity is crucial for Samsung to uphold customer trust and protect its reputation, given its status as a target for cyber threats. (Brands, 2023) To tackle this challenge, Samsung should focus on implementing robust measures like firewalls and encryption, conducting regular security audits, educating employees on cyber security through training programs, simulations, and communication, partnering with cyber security experts, and fostering a cyber security culture within the company. These strategies will help Samsung proactively manage cyber security risks and maintain its global leadership in various industries. (Brands, 2023)

Recommendations

Samsung should prioritize continuous innovation by fostering a culture that encourages research and development, rewarding inventive ideas, and collaborating with external partners. A strategic diversification approach within and outside existing industries is recommended to mitigate risks and align with the overall business strategy. Strengthening global collaborations and research institutions will provide valuable insights, helping Samsung navigate challenges and stay at the forefront of emerging technologies. Robust cyber security measures, including advanced technologies and comprehensive employee training programs, are crucial for maintaining customer trust and reputation. Investing in strategic human capital development ensures a skilled and adaptable workforce, contributing to sustained competitive advantage. Proactively monitoring economic shifts and geopolitical risks enables Samsung to anticipate changes and capitalize on global growth opportunities. Additionally, enhancing knowledge dissemination methods are regularly assessing KM systems will keep the organisation agile and well-prepared for the dynamic business landscape.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Samsung's strategic embrace of Knowledge Management (KM) stands as a pivotal asset in the rapidly evolving business landscape. The company's adept use of tools like Brightics AI, Cello, Foresight and Shared Knowledge Repository, coupled with a culture of innovation and knowledge dissemination, positions it as a global leader in technology. The emphasis on Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) further underscores Samsung's commitment to consistency and quality. However, to sustain and enhance its competitive edge, the company should consider continuous innovation, strategic diversification, global collaboration, robust cyber security measures, and ongoing human capital development. These recommendations aim to fortify Samsung's position, ensuring it not only adapts to challenges but also proactively shapes the future of technology. As Samsung navigates the complexities of a diverse and dynamic market, a holistic approach to Knowledge Management and strategic initiatives will be instrumental in maintaining its leadership and fostering sustained advancements.

References