Knowledge Management Practices - A Human Resource Perspective

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Abstract

Knowledge Management has been regarded as a key factor in enhancing organizational performance in organizations across the globe. Knowledge Management comprises a range of practices used by organizations to identify, create, represent, and distribute knowledge for reuse, awareness, and learning across the organizations. Knowledge Management programs are typically tied to organizational objectives and are intended to lead to the achievement of specific outcomes, such as shared intelligence, improved performance, competitive advantage, or higher levels of innovation. A critical HR function, recruitment officers are therefore entrusted with the task of finding and choosing people with the right mix of qualifications, skills, attitudes and traits to do the particular job, in a manner that is consistent with the prevailing culture. An HR department with a commitment to knowledge and Knowledge Management principles, could, arguably, be expected to actively seek recruits who also value these concepts and principles, and who would contribute to any existing Knowledge Management process. The recruitment officer would look for recruits who are willing, and able, to help convert tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. .Personality tests, here used, would also seek to discover job applicant's response to sharing Knowledge Management.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Human Resource Management

1. Introduction

Knowledge transfer (one aspect of Knowledge Management) has always existed in one form or another. Examples include on-the-job peer discussions, formal apprenticeship, corporate libraries, professional training, and mentoring programs. However, since the late twentieth century, additional technology has been applied to this task, such as knowledge bases, expert systems, and knowledge repositories. Knowledge Management programs attempt to manage the process of creation or identification, accumulation, and application of knowledge or intellectual capital across an organization.

1.1.1. Human Resource Perspective

The Department of Human Resources Management supports the management of an organization, identifies the sources of knowledge required, shows how best to collect and assess the mastery of knowledge of employees and benefits the organization. It is also reduces the gap between corporate strategy and employee knowledge. Knowledge Management can be considered successful if employees understand how the value of an enterprise raises how it is created, and why they should be managed.

The role of Human Resource Management can be summarized as follows:

(a) Education and training of workers.

(b) Train managers and team leaders known as coordinators.

 c) Building a culture of sharing.

The HR functions of training and development will have a particular important role to play in the knowledge aware organization. Conventionally, training typically emphasizes immediate improvements in Job performance via the procurement of special skills while development. It aims to prepare the employee for future job responsibility (Stone, 2002). This means that existing skills in the organization need to be inventoried, along with the number and types of task skills actually required, and access to training programme provided, internally and/ or externally, to address any gap between the two. In the knowledge –aware organization, extra dimensions would be added to the training needs analysis process. When doing the inventory of skills, the organization would also needs to take into account whether it had the ability to convert tacit, into explicit, knowledge: retain the tacit knowledge of those people about to leave the organization; use the available explicit knowledge in day to day processes and decision- making and measure the achievement of the organization in converting, retaining and using, tacit knowledge.

The inventory of knowledge skills-existing and required-would bring about the development of initiatives in the area of individual and group training, counseling, and cultural training. New ways of measuring effectiveness of training programs, as well as extended ways of measuring performance would need to take account of individual and group contributions to the knowledge bank within the organization. And substantial increases in training and development budgets would probably also be required.

KM provides two major benefits for an organization:

1. Improving the organization's performance through increased efficiency, productivity, quality, and innovation

2. Organizations that manage knowledge claim higher rates of productivity. By having greater access to their employee's knowledge. Organizations make better decisions, streamline processes, reduce re-work, increase innovation, have higher data integrity and greater collaboration.

In other words, for private sector, managing knowledge could reduce the cost of operations and

Improves customer service

3. Increasing the financial value of the organization by treating people's knowledge as an asset similar to traditional assets like inventory and capital facilities.

4. As knowledge transfer is increasingly recognized as a source of value creation, Organizations have come to identify KM initiatives as strategic facilitators of competitive advantages. According to a survey (KM magazine, 2001), an Organization's main implementation challenge stems from the absence of a"sharing" culture and employees' lack of understanding KM and the benefits it offers. Organizations can address these challenges by making; training, change management and process redesign primary components of KM initiatives.

1.1.2.Barriers of Knowledge Management

There are certain barriers to Knowledge Management that a company needs to overcome to implement it the organization. One has to understand that even though you have knowledge in the company and a knowledge about how to manage it, there exist factors which has to be considered before a company can reach its full potential of Knowledge Management. The environment has to be ready to accept the Knowledge Management. After having addressed the general of Knowledge Management it also found crucial to address the critical aspects and problems that are most likely to occur in the implementation of different Knowledge Management programs. This chapter is discussing the problems that might emerge through the implementation of Knowledge Management systems into organizations.

1.1.3.Organizational level

Davenport and Prusak (1998) have given barriers affecting knowledge transfer in companies and they also give possible solutions for each barrier

a) Lack of trust.

b) Different cultures, language and frames of reference.

c) Lack of time and meeting places.

d) narrow idea of productive work.

e) Status and rewards go to knowledge owners.

f) Lack of absorptive capacity in recipients.

g) Belief that knowledge relates to specific groups.

h) Intolerance for mistakes and lack of help.

Nonaka (2000) has also highlighted the importance of having a common language for the individual learning and sharing which limits the occurrence of misunderstanding. Riege, (2005) as many other researchers pinpoint that managerial direction and leadership can hinder knowledge sharing activities. The manager direction and leadership can hinder knowledge sharing activities. The Managers have the responsibility to highlight the importance of Knowledge Management programs. They are responsible to create awareness and process it among departments by providing training and support to advocate the premises of a knowledge sharing environment.

Mcermott and O'Dell (2011) define organizational culture as the underlying beliefs and assumptions of the organization as the "key inhibitor of effective knowledge sharing". What many companies do wrong is that the culture in organizations remains unchanged to match the Knowledge Management initiatives. It is primary the culture of an organization that promotes effective knowledge sharing. The finding of Mc Dermott and O'Dell shows us that the Knowledge Management initiative has to fit the culture and not the opposite. This means that the culture is the core of an organization and changing its core values will create uncertainty of its survival in the future. Another suggested barrier that is common within organizations is the language which is seen as an enabler in sharing knowledge with others. The problems occurs when people cannot express themselves verbally hence difficulties emerge in understanding each other (Haldin and Herrgard, 2000).

While culture not always promotes knowledge sharing activities within organization people tend to ignore the extra duties that often emerge in a Knowledge Management program. Information accumulation is also a barrier that emerges when information becomes abundant and resulting in information overload which can lead to demoralization of employees. This restrains an employee's ability to take advantage of the proper techniques in terms of its usage.

3. Conclusion

The Knowledge Management is a very wide, interdisciplinary problem treating the intellectual capital as the basic attribute of the organizations competitiveness. The Knowledge Management is the system solution which makes the radical increase of usage efficiency of possessed implicit and explicit knowledge possible causing that it will be the knowledge of the whole organizations. The researcher has attempted to contribute to developing an

understanding of

Knowledge Management Practices a Human Resource Perspective.. As conclude that, employees' in these organizations believe that KM is in moderate level. The employees' should be made aware of the benefit of using KM in every work; a new employee should be made to understand the KM efforts of the organizational in the induction itself. KM is an exciting, vibrant field of practice, full of cross-disciplinary applications and the need for innovation. But it is also a field struggling to find its foundations in a sea of communications, demands, and conflicting interests, not all of which are consistent with the need to found a productive discipline based in both theory and practice.

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