Knowledge Transfer: A Toolkit that Works
Knowledge Capture: A Toolkit that Works
For Water & Waste Water Utilities

Workshop Objectives

- Introduce a case study showing how one organization – the Sacramento Municipal Utility District – designed and deployed a Knowledge Capture Toolkit company-wide.
- Orient participants to a wide variety of strategies for capturing and transferring knowledge
- Give participants an opportunity to practice applying Knowledge Transfer Toolkit components to a critical role at your organization
- Familiarize participants with the elements of a knowledge transfer action plan

Presenter Bio

Gabe Lewall is a Senior Learning & Development Specialist with the Sacramento Municipal Utility District. He led a cross-functional task force that developed and deployed a practical toolkit designed to help SMUD capture and transfer expert knowledge. Gabe has over 17 years of experience in human resource management. He earned a Master’s in Human Resource Management at Chapman University and Master’s in Instructional Design at the University of Massachusetts-Boston. Gabe can be reached at gabriel.lewall@smud.org or 916.732.6094.

SMUD at a Glance

- Nation’s 6th-largest community-owned electric service provider
- 50% of power from non-carbon-emitting sources
- The first large California utility to receive more than 20% of its energy from renewable resources
- For the 12th consecutive year, in 2014 SMUD was 1st in California & 2nd in the nation in the J.D. Power & Associates survey of residential customer satisfaction & 1st in the nation among business customers.
- 2,200 employees
- 1.4 million residents in 900 square mile service territory
Types of Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explicit Knowledge</th>
<th>Tacit Knowledge</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Formal</td>
<td>• Difficult to formalize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Systematic.</td>
<td>• Not easily expressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Can be easily communicated &amp; shared.</td>
<td>• Difficult to communicate to others</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Typically has been documented</td>
<td>• Highly contextual / situation-specific</td>
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Knowledge Management Defined

Knowledge management is the discipline of enabling individuals in an organization to collectively ________________, ________________, and ________________ knowledge to achieve business objectives.

- Accenture

Knowledge Management Process

CAPTURE  STORE  SHARE  APPLY
When to Harvest Knowledge

SMUD’s Knowledge Capture Initiative

- Internal & External Research
- Toolkit Development
- Executive Sponsorship
- Company-wide Rollout
SMUD’s Knowledge Capture Initiative

- **Internal** research to uncover
  - Current approaches
  - What’s working
  - Challenges
- **External** research to identify
  - Industry best practice leaders
  - Benchmarking of SMUD to others
  - Existing tools to leverage
- Timeframe: Approx. 6 mos

- Practice leader interviews
- Formation of cross-functional team
- Toolkit design & development
- Beta testing & feedback
SMUD’s Knowledge Capture Initiative

- Practice leader interviews
- Formation of cross-functional team
- Toolkit design & development
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- Pre-briefings with HR Manager & Chief Workforce Officer
- Presentation to Executives outlining
  - Business Case - “Why Now?”
  - Process - “What to do about it?”
  - Needed Support (all levels of leadership)
SMUD’s Knowledge Capture Initiative

A two-pronged approach

- Memo from Chief Workforce Officer to all Leaders
- Meetings with business unit leadership teams to identify “at risk” individuals & work groups
- Training for “champions” to help deploy locally
- Open enrollment training
**SMUD’s Knowledge Capture Initiative**

![SMUD’s Knowledge Capture Process Diagram](image)

**Application Activity: Rollout Approach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach to developing &amp; rolling out a knowledge capture program/initiative?</th>
<th>Key drivers for knowledge capture at your organization?</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Potential concerns / barriers?</th>
<th>Ideas to address concerns?</th>
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SMUD’s Knowledge Capture Initiative

Knowledge Capture Toolkit

STEP 1: Complete Knowledge Loss Risk Assessment

Purpose: Identify individuals at greatest risk of departing with critical/unique knowledge or skills.

Who Completes Step: Management

Knowledge Capture Toolkit

STEP 1: Knowledge Loss Risk Assessment

Position Risk \times Departure Risk = Total Risk
(1-5 Rating) \quad (1-5 Rating) \quad Factor
**Application Activity: Assessing Knowledge Loss Risks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What would make a position “high risk” for knowledge loss where you work?</th>
<th>Greatest departure risks?</th>
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</table>

Factors you would want to consider when assessing who is most at risk for loss of critical skills/know-how?
SMUD’s Knowledge Capture Initiative

Knowledge Capture Toolkit

STEP 2: Complete Knowledge / Skill Criticality Assessment

Purpose: Identify what knowledge / skill is most “at risk”

Who Completes Step:
• Option 1: SME only
• Option 2: SME + Supervisor

Knowledge Capture Toolkit

STEP 2: Knowledge / Skill Criticality Assessment

Ratings of:
Importance X Rarity X Documentation
(1-5) (1-5) (1-5)
Application Activity: Assessing Knowledge/Skill Criticality

In your organization, how would you define...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“High” vs “low” importance skill/knowledge areas</th>
<th>“High” vs “low” rarity for skill / knowledge areas</th>
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<tr>
<th>“High” vs “low” levels of documentation</th>
<th>Other factors to consider when assessing which areas of expertise or skill should be the priority?</th>
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SMUD’s Knowledge Capture Initiative

Knowledge Capture Toolkit

STEP 3: Create a Knowledge Retention Plan

**Purpose:** Identify who will do what by when & current status.

**Who Completes Step:** SME + Supervisor

Knowledge Capture Strategies

Knowledge Retention Plan

Interviews
Knowledge Capture Strategies

Documentation

Examples:
- Manuals
- Checklists
- Inventories
- Job Aids
- Handbooks
- Diagrams & flow charts
- Procedure guideline

Job Shadowing

After Action Review

1. Initial Objective
2. Reality
3. What we learned
4. Goals
5. Experiments

Communities of Practice
**Application Activity: Knowledge Capture Tactics & Plans**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Which of the knowledge capture tactics would you likely rely on for knowledge capture/transfer? Why?</th>
<th>Other tactics for knowledge capture?</th>
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Resources

BOOKS

1. *Lost Knowledge: Confronting the Threat of An Aging Workforce* by David DeLong


3. *If Only We Knew What We Know: The Transfer of Internal Knowledge & Best Practices* by Carl O’Dell & C. Jackson Grayson

WEBSITES

1. Inside Knowledge Magazine - www.ikmagazine.com
   Contains resources related to both technology-oriented solutions to KM as well as human–centered solutions (e.g. CoPs, interviews).

2. Knowledge Management World - www.kmworld.com
   Emphasis on technology solutions, social networking, customer knowledge management, CRM, content management, records management, web self service, & business process documentation.