

Knowledge Acquisition in Organizations

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Abstract: In the era of Artificial Intelligence, Knowledge Acquisition process is of key importance as it helps in automating the processes which are called as Expert Systems. Transfer of processes leads to transfer of knowledge/information from one person to another or automating them. These are usually passed on to the next level either through communication (Written/verbal) or trainings so that, the knowledge can be acquired & reused. This process is part & parcel of day-to-day activity in organizations. The purpose of this study is to find the cruciality of knowledge acquisition in survival of process & organization's business.

Keywords: Acquisition, transfer, knowledge life cycle, use of knowledge.

Let's understand the term Knowledge. When we say I have knowledge, what exactly it means. Is it having mere information about a specific topic/thing?

Eg: When we say, I know how to drive a car; does that mean I can drive, or I can actually drive. I need to have practical knowledge of it for which I must practice driving, get to know the facts, pros & cons.

Knowledge is something which is supported with factual information, practically working & gaining the expertise. Then we can say, I have knowledge of that topic. In above example, I have a practical knowledge of how to drive a car justifies the statement that I can drive.

Supporting the information with facts & figures can be termed as Knowledge.

Acquiring knowledge is a very interesting process. While we decide that, I would like to learn or acquire a skill we start going through theory & practical (if need be) details available to study. While doing so, we start finding the facts as to how the process flow works. Once we feel that we have understood, we try implementing the same and check if we have got the process right with all kind of permutations & combinations. And this is how we get a hands-on experience of a skill.

There are different sources from where we can acquire knowledge like humans (our peers/seniors etc), from system by working on job etc.

In private organizations, there is churning of resources i.e. employees leave, new joiners come in, interdepartmental transfers and so on. In all the scenarios, the person coming in would need the knowledge before starting with his/her new role; to carry on with his/her responsibilities seamlessly.

This can only happen when he/she undergoes training and go through the process practically. Once the newbie (New joiner/transferred employee etc) gets the hands-on practical experience to perform his/her role, we can say that the knowledge acquisition is completed.

Why the knowledge acquisition is important?

If we consider a new joiner who has joined and underwent training but has not performed it practically; meaning do not have complete knowledge of said process. There are fair chances that the employee is lost during the process as it is difficult to recall all what is taught during training, if it was not performed practically. Obviously, this will lead to gaps in processes, errors, missing on deadlines, may directly/indirectly lead to loss to the organization. Please refer to Figure 1.

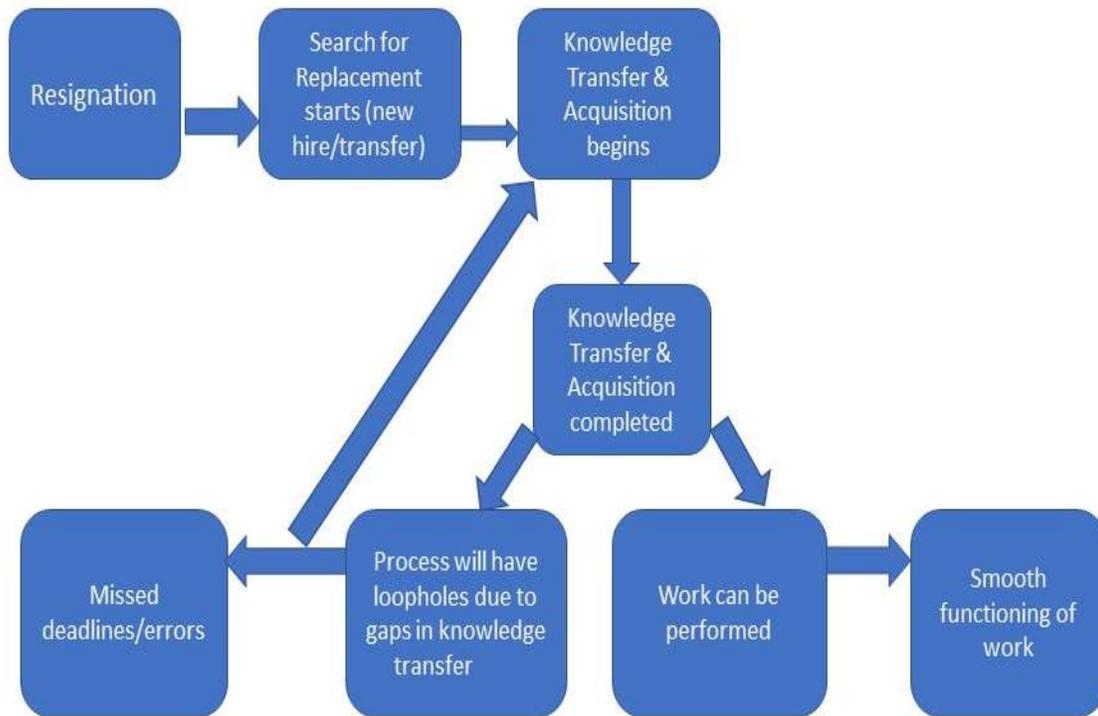


Fig 1: Process of Knowledge Transfer & Acquisition

Once the knowledge transfer is completed, knowledge acquisition is also complete considering the recipient has absorbed the said process appropriately and can perform practically.

We generally take the process of knowledge transfer & acquisition very casually, but the impacts would not turn out to be very positive for person or business. It can lead to overall lapse of process.

So, if in a scenario where, the knowledge transfer/acquisition was done for automation of process, the requirements would not be tracked & implemented appropriately causing flaws in automated system and undesired output.

In the first case, where a resource is leaving the organization (as mentioned in Fig:1) and is expected to transfer the knowledge to new joinee/ peer. The peer may not be able to perform the tasks seamlessly considering there was loophole in acquiring or transferring of knowledge.

Though we find this as a part & parcel of our day-to-day life, but it holds an important place in our work ensuring that the processes are up & running without any lapses.

I. Conclusion

While we say 'I Know' we must be cautious enough & understand that it means that we can perform the task well. The knowledge transfer & acquisition is a very critical part of our work life. We must ensure that whichever part we are in; we are imparting or receiving the details to perform our tasks, automating the systems well.

Automation of processes, leads to minimal error. This can only be achieved if, the transfer and acquisition of knowledge is considered vital for the upkeep of the processes and to keep the ball rolling causing no loss to the business.